



# Lesbian Widows: Invisible Grief

*Victoria Whipple*

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## **Lesbian Widows: Invisible Grief** Victoria Whipple

The unseen issues of grief and discrimination—lesbians becoming widows

The death of a life partner poses unique challenges for lesbians. *Lesbian Widows: Invisible Grief* reveals the touching and very personal stories of twenty-five women, including the author, who were widowed at a young age and forced to create a new life without their life partners. The book follows the widows from the time the couple met, to the time when one of the partners died, and beyond, to show how the surviving partner coped with her loss.

Many lesbians feel that the intimacy felt between two women in love goes deeper than what can be experienced by heterosexual partners. *Lesbian Widows: Invisible Grief* reveals themes common to all these women's experiences while offering practical advice about coping techniques and resources for support. The widows discuss their efforts to create funerals and memorial services, give their accounts of the overwhelming grief throughout the first two years, and explain the legal and financial discrimination they encountered. The author provides a chapter specifically for caring family and friends, another chapter for professionals working with this sensitive population, and a bibliography of helpful coping resources.

*Lesbian Widows: Invisible Grief* explores the topics of:

- caregivers/caretaking
- death and dying
- grief journeys
- the similarities and differences between lesbian and married widows
- the lack of support services for lesbian widows
- the legal and financial discrimination against lesbian widows
- the effect of being “in” or “out” on grief recovery
- the issues faced by widows in starting new relationships
- spirituality
- gay marriage

*Lesbian Widows: Invisible Grief* provides an insightful look into the grieving and recovery process, inspiring hope with the knowledge that others have survived this tragedy. This moving book is an essential resource for lesbians, friends and family of lesbians, mental health professionals, medical professionals, psychiatrists, LGBT health providers, feminist and lesbian organizations, and anyone involved with grief training programs such as hospice.

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