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The Center for Good Mourning at Arkansas Children's

In the Spotlight

It's been needed for a long time, and now it's here: a new and greatly improved edition of the *Handbook of Thanatology: The essential body of knowledge for the study of death, dying, and bereavement*.

Handbook of Thanatology: The essential body of knowledge for the study of death, dying, and bereavement, Third Edition. Edited by Heather L. Servaty-Seib and Helen Stanton Chapple. Association of Death Education and Counseling, 2021.

Most people know about biology—the study of life or “bios” in Greek. Not as many people know about “thanatology”—the study of death or “thanatos” in Greek. But as noted thanatologist Robert Kastenbaum noted, thanatology is the study of life with death left in. However, those who work with grieving people or people who will die—all of us—deal with thanatology on a regular basis. For someone wanting to know and understand more about the broad and deep field of death, dying, and bereavement, it was hard to know where to start. This new edition of the *Handbook of Thanatology* from the Association of Death Education and Counseling (ADEC) meets that need better than any resource I have seen. In twenty-two accessible chapters, it covers topics from the criteria of death, palliative care, foundational grief theories, problematic grief, death education, and non-death losses. Contributors are some of the most noted figures in the field and intentionally inclusive of US and international voices. For both new and experienced students of thanatology, this will be an important and useful foundational resource.

Full disclosure: While not a contributor for the *Handbook of Thanatology*, I am a member of ADEC and was part of the task force that helped to develop its vision and scope in its early planning stages. I am very pleased with the final product.

