

The Symposium¹

Bereavement following the death of a twin or higher multiple birth has special features and this was the first international symposium on the subject. Much interest was shown in it and we have included papers from the four main speakers. Two of these were studies reported as scientific papers. The other two were derived from the speakers' own experiences and reviews of the literature.

Two extracts from the symposium's notable section on *Bereavement in the Arts* are also included. So is a summary of the Panel Discussion in which we felt honoured to have a contribution from the patron of the Congress, Countess Mountbatten of Burma, herself a bereaved mother of a bereaved twin.

Foreword by The Countess Mountbatten of Burma CBE CD JP DL

As Patron of this Congress I offer a warm welcome to every one of you.



My personal interest in twins started over 30 years ago with the birth of my fifth and sixth children, identical twin boys. I am therefore especially pleased to be involved in an event where twins are the common interest of every participant. This three-yearly international congress provides a wonderful opportunity for scientists and clinicians from different fields of interest both to meet each other and to learn from those who personally experience the pleasures, fascinations and, not uncommonly, the stresses of parenting twins or indeed of being a twin.

As a mother of twins myself, I am well aware that they can bring not only enormous extra joy but also extra problems. Sadly, I have also seen the very special sorrow of a child whose twin dies, when Nicky, one of my twins, was killed, aged 14, by the IRA bomb which killed my father and also my mother-in-law. I am therefore glad that, for the first time, the problems of bereavement in multiple birth families will be addressed in an international symposium.

That so many of you have gathered here from all over the world clearly shows the growing importance of twins and twin studies. I am sure you will find your participation in this Congress profoundly rewarding as well as enjoyable. (See painting of Nicky and Tim on page 245.)

Footnote

- 1 The symposium was sponsored by the Department of Postgraduate General Practice Education, North Thames (West).

PROGRAM

The Loss of a Twin: Theory and Practice Revisited

Chaired by Patricia Swanson and Barbara Read

Bereavement in the Arts

Poem — Penny Healey

Healing Loss Through Creativity — Colin Caffell

The Significance of the Ibeji in Yoruba Culture
— Taiwo Olaleye-Oruene

Effects of Twin Loss in Pregnancy
as Portrayed in Art — Elizabeth Noble

Poems — Elizabeth Jennings

Papers Presented

How Families Cope with Perinatal Loss of a Twin
— Patricia Swanson (Australia)

The Context and Long-term Impacts
of a Multiple Birth Loss — Jean Kollantai (USA)

Loss in Higher Multiple Pregnancy
and Multifetal Reduction — Elizabeth Bryan (UK)

When Twins Lose Twins: Implications
for Theory and Practice — Nancy Segal (USA)

Panel Discussion

Patricia Swanson (Chairman)
with Countess Mountbatten of Burma,
Jim Brockbank, Judith Houghton, Barbara Read,
Alistair Ross and Joan Woodward