12 Relating to the Dead
Social Cognition and the Phenomenology of Grief

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1 GRIEF AND SOCIAL COGNITION

Philosophical work on interpersonal and social cognition tends to address only our relations with the living. In this chapter, I turn to our relations with the dead and, more specifically, to experiences of grief. Many philosophers assume that social cognition centrally involves attributing beliefs and desires to other people, in order to predict and explain their behavior. The focus of discussion is on whether we do this by 'simulating' another person's situation and/or mental processes, using a 'theory of mind,' or relying on some combination of the two (e.g., Davies & Stone 1995a; 1995b). Given this, our relations with the dead do not seem to pose any special problems. When thinking about what a person, S, would have said or done were S still alive, we use the same simulation mechanism or theory that we would have used were S alive but absent from a situation. And, if one further maintains that S continues to have beliefs and desires after death, one is relying on these same abilities, but in a way that is decoupled from behavioral evidence. So, how we understand and relate to the dead might be regarded as—at most—a peripheral issue for social cognition research.

However, others have challenged the emphasis on belief-desire psychology by drawing on themes in phenomenology, developmental psychology, and elsewhere (e.g., Gallagher 2005; De Jaegher & DiPaolo 2007; Ratcliffe 2007; Hutto 2008; Colombetti & Torrance 2009). It has been argued that not all social interaction depends upon belief-desire psychology and that, even when belief-desire psychology is at work, it is just one aspect of social cognition, which should not be ascribed undue importance. Furthermore, we make sense of others' activities against the backdrop of a shared social world, where artifacts have established functions, people have prescribed roles, and behavior is regulated by shared norms. Immersion in this world makes a substantial contribution to our ability to interpret, anticipate, and explain others' behavior, a contribution that is neither reducible to nor somehow secondary to belief-desire psychology. Another criticism is that we understand others *through* our relations and interactions with them. Much of the literature on belief-desire psychology assumes that, when we

address and interact with someone as a 'you,' we rely on the same cognitive mechanisms that facilitate a detached, third-person understanding of a 'she,' 'he,' or 'it.' But it is arguable that 'second-person experience'—of a kind that involves sustained interactions and feelings of connection—differs in important respects from the disengaged, third-person attribution of mental states. For instance, when relating to someone as a 'you,' it matters *who* she is, not just what kind of thing she is and what mental states she has. Hence, second-person experience is essentially a way of relating to someone as *this particular person*, something that is not captured by the attribution of mental states to one or another token of the type 'possessor of mental states' (Ratcliffe 2015, chap. 8).

It is debatable whether and to what extent such approaches pose a challenge to orthodox accounts of 'folk' or 'common-sense' psychology. To some extent, the difference may be one of emphasis, and my aim here is not to arbitrate.[1] Rather, I seek to show how three of the principal themes emphasized by critics of belief-desire psychology are also central to an understanding of the phenomenology of grief: the shared social world, interpersonal relations and interactions, and second-person experience. Furthermore, it is not just a matter of applying what we might say about our relations with the living to our relations with the dead. Grief can involve 'finding oneself in the social world' in a way that is profoundly different, along with distinctive ways of experiencing and relating to other people, both the living and the dead. So, when the emphasis is moved away from belief-desire psychology and towards a wider-ranging account of social cognition, the importance of grief as a topic for enquiry becomes clearer. In what follows, I thus adopt a broad conception of social cognition, which encompasses all of the ways in which we experience, think about, and interact with other people (alive or dead) and the social environment.

It might be objected that grief is not a pervasive aspect of social experience, but an occasional disruption that should not be overemphasized: one suffers a loss, experiences grief for a finite period, and (usually) moves on. However, such a view is simplistic and inaccurate. First of all, grief is not an emotional 'state' that is endured for however long, but a process that varies in its character and duration (Klass et al. 1996; Parkes 1996; Goldie 2011).[2] Second, the view that grief involves ultimately resigning one's attachment to the deceased is, despite its popularity in some cultures, misleading. A growing literature on 'continuing bonds' suggests that grief processes have no clear endpoint, and that relationships with the deceased are renegotiated and sustained rather than abandoned (e.g., Klass et al. 1996). These 'continuing bonds' are said to be healthy and ubiquitous, rather than occasional and pathological (e.g., Silverman/Klass 1996, 3). We should be wary of making generalizations about what grief processes involve, as there is considerable variation. Differences are attributable to a range of factors, including the circumstances of the death, the nature of the bereavement (e.g., a spouse, sibling, or child), one's inherited and acquired dispositions and

vulnerabilities, the effect upon one's financial situation, and the availability of social support. There are also important cultural differences.[3] Even so, it is plausible to maintain that grief, in general, is not an emotional *state* of varying intensity and duration, but a multifaceted process, one that does not conclude with simply 'letting go.' For those who have experienced multiple bereavements, relations with the dead can be a salient aspect of daily life, perhaps more salient for some than relations with the living.

In what follows, I describe some features that are common to many experiences of intense grief. In so doing, I draw upon several published autobiographical accounts. That approach is not without its problems. The accounts I consider are all written by professional authors, who may be more inclined than others to express and interpret their experiences through narrative, and to go about this in particular ways: "Writing is what I have, and it's how I make sense of experience" (Humphreys 2013, 24). So they may not be representative of grief experiences more generally. To complicate matters, it may not be possible to separate an experience of grief from the narratives that convey it, as it is arguable that grieving processes are partly *constituted* by changing narratives that shape and re-shape experience (Goldie 2011). I concede that grief is expressed—and most likely experienced—in many different ways. Furthermore, it is often remarked that grief is hard to express in words and hard for others to comprehend. Hence, the relevant phenomenology cannot simply be 'read off' first-person descriptions; we have to interpret them. Consequently, what I say here is both tentative and partial, a preliminary attempt to open up an area of philosophical enquiry. Even so, the level of description I adopt here is fairly abstract and therefore accommodates considerable variety.

I first consider why the world as a whole often seems profoundly different following bereavement. I interpret this in terms of the effect upon habitual routines, projects, pastimes, and commitments, the intelligibility of which depended upon the deceased. The bereaved person often alternates between retention and loss of habitual ways of experiencing the shared world. There are also more localized experiences of presence (including experiences of relating to and interacting with the deceased) and of absence.[4] I conclude by turning to another aspect of grief, which we might call a 'second-person experience of death.' If my characterization of this is right, it involves a distinctive and seldom recognized kind of second-person relation.

2 PRESENCE AND ABSENCE

Simple descriptions and definitions of grief are easy to come by. For example, Wilkinson (2000, 290) states that "someone is grieving only if the emotional response to a real or perceived loss (usually, though not necessarily, of another person) involves some degree of distress or suffering." This might suggest that grief *follows* recognition of loss, whereas one could

instead maintain (as I will) that grief is partly *constitutive* of that recognition. Whichever the case, grief looks like an intentional state directed at something specific—one grieves over 'the death of S' in a way that is analogous to regretting that *p* or feeling happy about *q*. However, it is important to acknowledge that grief also involves a non-localized way of experiencing and relating to the social world, something that is inextricable from the more localized appreciation that a particular individual has died. There is an all-enveloping shift in how the world is experienced and how one relates to it. Whybrow offers this account:

> When it strikes, the raw intensity of the feeling comes as a surprise. Life is rolled on its head, and we find ourselves off balance. Routine patterns and familiar assumptions are called into question. Social attachments of love and friendship that gave life meaning and purpose are fundamentally changed. Inevitably we are confronted with the challenge of finding for ourselves a new fit with the world, for that which was once a stable and accustomed part of one's life routine has been irretrievably lost. The external world has changed and with it the inner world of personal meaning.
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> (Whybrow 1997, 2)

Why would the 'external world' appear changed? This aspect of grief can be understood in terms of an effect upon projects, pastimes, commitments, habitual activities, and expectations that explicitly or implicitly implicate the deceased in some way. In any situation, what strikes us as practically meaningful and salient, 'to be done,' 'to be avoided,' 'worth doing,' 'exciting,' or 'disappointing,' reflects projects and wider concerns that are—to varying degrees—idiosyncratic.[5] How something *matters* to us surely shapes how we experience it (regardless of whether or not 'ways of mattering' are admitted as contents of more specifically *perceptual* experience). A hammer *looks* different, depending on whether one has been searching for it in the context of a DIY project or one is being chased by a hammer-wielding attacker. And, if nothing mattered in quite the same way, the world as a whole would look different.

How things matter to us is dependent upon our relations with other people, often specific individuals. For instance, when one acts purposively in relation to a goal-directed project, a particular person, such as a spouse, might be implicated in a range of ways: "I do it because you asked me to"; "I do it for you"; "I am doing it because you care"; "We do it together to achieve something that matters to us both"; "I am helping you to do something"; "You are there to fall back on if I fail." Even when a project does not concern the other person in such ways, there may remain a sense that "I will come home to you when it is finished" and "I will be able to tell you about it." Indeed, the telling can be anticipated as an end in itself, and thus serve to motivate one's activities: "As for doing what I liked: for me,

this usually meant doing things with her. Insofar as I liked doing things by myself, it was partly for the pleasure of telling her about them afterwards" (Barnes 2013, 80f).

Bereavement thus undermines, to varying degrees, a previously taken-for-granted sense of what matters and how it matters. Joyce Carol Oates describes this in terms of coming to inhabit a world of "things," where "these *things* retain but the faintest glimmer of their original identity and meaning as in a dead and desiccated husk of something once organic there might be discerned a glimmer or its original identity and meaning" (2011, 63). The world ceases to offer what it once did and, as what things offer is integral to how they look, the world as a whole is somehow different, lacking. C.S. Lewis (1961, 12) describes this sense of absence as follows: "It is not local at all. [. . .] The act of living is different through and through. Her absence is like the sky, spread over everything." As Julian Barnes (2013, 81) writes, "I miss her in every action, and in every inaction."[6]

Hence, the deceased is not just a person *within* the experienced world, but also an intelligibility condition *for* a world that one once took as given. It follows that a singular experience of 'loss' is both specifically focused and—at the same time—all-enveloping. The world as a whole lacks an elaborate system of practical meanings that were previously experienced as integral to it. The bereaved person therefore feels disconnected from it, somehow dislodged: "There is a sort of invisible blanket between the world and me" (Lewis 1961, 5). This is why many people say that part of them has died too. The sense of being rooted in a meaningful world depends not just upon an isolated self and its projects, but also upon relations with particular others:

> Death feels a bit like a vanished city, like wandering through a landscape I used to recognize but that has now been radically altered. It was a mistake to think that life was solid ground under my feet, and that every day I would be able to step back down onto the same earth. To have you gone—you, who went clear to the bottom of my world—has thrown everything off balance, has left me wandering like a ghost in my own life.
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> (Humphreys 2013, 58)

However, it is not simply that one comes to believe that S is dead, at which point all activities instantaneously lose their meaning. Certain activities may be relatively well insulated from the bereavement. Oates (2011, 172) describes how she was able to retreat into her professional duties and temporarily re-immerse herself in the world through her teaching, an aspect of her life that had always been set apart from her relationship with her husband. And, where activities are not insulated, there can be an ongoing alternation between retention and loss of practical meaning. It is commonplace to 'know that *p*' in a propositional way while continually 'forgetting that

p' when habitually engaging with the world. For example, one might reorganize one's office, know where everything is, and yet continue to look for things in their former locations. Something like this occurs in grief, but the experience is much wider ranging. The interplay between habitual expectations and the realization that the world no longer offers any possibility of their being fulfilled amounts to an experience of negation, of continually confronting situations from which something is 'missing.'

One form that retention of practical meaning can take is what Joan Didion calls 'magical thinking.' Although one might explicitly assent to the belief that S has died, one continues to think and act in ways that conflict with it. One conceives of the loss as temporary and reversible, preserving—on some occasions and to some extent—the world from a collapse of practical meaning: "Bringing him back' had been through those months my hidden focus, a magic trick"; "I realized that since the last morning of 2003, the morning after he died, I had been trying to reverse time, to run the film backward" (Didion 2005, 44, 183f.). So it is an over-simplification to maintain that one either 'believes that S has died' or 'believes that S has not died.' To fully comprehend that someone has died is not merely a matter of explicitly acknowledging the irreversible absence of a particular entity from one's world, given that a sense of the person's being there is partly constituted by a wider context of experience, thought, and activity. Where part of a system of practical meanings endures consistently or sporadically, despite its dependence upon the deceased, one might be said to not quite 'believe' it. It doesn't seem 'real'; the world endures, and yet it cannot endure. It would be equally wrong, however, to say that one does not believe it. As Parkes (1996, 65ff.) notes, remarks such as "I can't believe it's true" are commonplace amongst the bereaved, but disbelief is "seldom complete." Hence, in using the term 'belief' to refer to the different degrees and kinds of comprehension at play here, we cannot think of it as a simple propositional attitude of the form 'R believes that *p*', where *p* is 'S has died'.

Goldie (2011, 131) suggests that grief has a narrative structure that resembles free indirect speech, a literary device exploiting the difference between internal and external perspectives on a situation: "In grief, you might well remember the last time you saw the person you loved, not knowing, as you do now, that it was to be the last time. And this knowledge will infect the way you remember it." Hence, the external perspective serves to re-shape the internal perspective. In the light of this view, slipping in and out of a world that presupposes the deceased can be construed in terms of a gradual process of revision and reconciliation of perspectives. This need not involve coming to fully inhabit a world that is no longer shaped in any way by S. Things may continue to be experienced as mattering in the ways they do in the light of how one once related to S and, indeed, how one continues to think about and relate to S (Klass et al. 1996).

The changed world of grief is also a different way of relating to the living, which can involve varying degrees of estrangement from particular

individuals and from people in general. A sense of estrangement might be mitigated or exacerbated by how they respond. For example, Aleksandar Hemon (2013, 202) states that "one of the most common platitudes we heard was that 'words failed,' " but adds that "[i]t was not true that there was no way of describing our experience." What failed, he says, were platitudes and clichés that had little bearing on the situation. Sometimes, grief involves an all-encompassing loss of 'trust' in the personal and impersonal world. A sense of safety and continuity that once shaped all of one's experiences and activities is gone; one inhabits a world where the incomprehensible is possible, contingency reigns, and other people offer no possibility of support or consolation (Stolorow 2011). Whether and how this develops depends not just on the nature of the bereavement and one's reaction to it, but on subsequent relations with others. More generally, whether others share in one's grief, understand it, fail to understand it, listen, pretend to listen, offer what is perceived as genuine support, retain an emotional distance, or withdraw altogether further contributes to how the social world appears. The world not only seems different because S has gone, but because others seem different too, and they do indeed act differently.

Along with non-localized changes in one's world, there are more localized and concrete experiences of presence and absence. A system of habitual, practical expectations that implicate S, one that is to some extent retained, includes the expectation of encountering S in specific situations or locations, such as when one enters a certain room or engages in an activity that used to involve S. When these expectations are negated by the absence of S, the experience is comparable in certain respects to Sartre's (1943/1989) well-known description of waiting to meet Pierre in a café when Pierre fails to arrive. Pierre's absence is experienced in a localized way, when someone else enters and is encountered as 'not Pierre.' It is experienced in a more diffuse way too—how the café appears is shaped by the expectation of meeting Pierre; it is a background to an absent foreground. And, when that background endures, Pierre's absence is present, as when one sees a picture frame without a picture. A grieving process likewise includes frequent realizations that 'S is not here' and, occasionally, 'this is not S.' Some of these may be fleeting, and others more enduring, but they are not restricted to any one place or time. And, as one cannot simply go and sit somewhere else, incessant experiences of absence become an inescapable rather than contingent aspect of one's world.

The sense of absence is often associated with searching behaviors (Parkes 1996, chap. 4). One needs and seeks the deceased, in a way that is again to be construed in terms of habitual, practical anticipation more so than propositional attitudes of the form 'I desire to see S' and 'I believe there to be some probability that S will appear': "I could not count the times during the average day when something would come up that I needed to tell him. This impulse did not end with his death. What ended was the possibility of response" (Didion 2005, 194). However, not all localized experienced of the deceased—whether or not they are preceded by searching—involve

absence. Many bereaved people also report experiences of continuing presence. 'Sensed presence' experiences are most frequent; one feels that S is actually here, now, in a way that is not attributable to perception in a particular sensory modality. But more specific auditory, visual, tactual, and olfactory experiences are not uncommon. For example, Rees (1971) conducted a study involving 227 widows and 66 widowers in Wales, where around half admitted having 'hallucinations' or 'illusions' of the deceased spouse. Of the participants, 39 percent reported a sense of presence, 14 percent visual experiences, 13.3 percent voices, and 2.7 percent tactual experiences. In some cases, these had occurred for many years, and the majority of participants (but not all) found them comforting and helpful. These findings are consistent with subsequent studies (e.g., Bennett & Bennett 2000). That such experiences persist indefinitely are often welcomed, and can constitute a feeling of continuing to relate to the deceased that lends further support to the view that grief need not and often does not culminate in loss of attachment.[7]

We should be wary of using the term 'hallucination' here. The content of these experiences is not wholly clear and could vary considerably. Some may not conform to established definitions of 'hallucination,' according to which a hallucination resembles a veridical perception but arises in the absence of an appropriate stimulus.[8] The term 'hallucination' also conflicts with many people's self-interpretations. It can be added that self-interpretation has a potential role to play a role in shaping, re-shaping, and even eliciting the relevant experiences. Furthermore, there is a fine line to be drawn between perceptual or quasi-perceptual experiences of presence and other ways in which one might experience or think of S as enduring or even as 'here, now.' S might be construed as continuing to reside in the past, or in some other realm. Also, as well as feeling that 'part of me has gone,' many have a sense that S 'endures as part of me' in the guise of commitments that are taken on, values that are adopted, ways of acting, and what one finds salient and significant.

Hence, grief involves a dynamic and evolving interplay between experiences of localized and non-localized presence and absence, rather than the simple recognition that S was present but became absent at time *t*: "The paradox of grief: if I have survived what is now four years of her absence, it is because I have had four years of her presence" (Barnes 2013, 100, 103). The sense of 'loss' is to be understood in terms of this interplay; it is integral to the grieving process rather than a form of recognition that precedes and elicits grief.

3 SECOND-PERSON EXPERIENCE OF DEATH

One might think that the possibility of maintaining a second-person relationship with S is only preserved when one continues to experience or think

of him as present in some way, and that full acknowledgement of S's absence implies the impossibility of relating to him. But, interestingly, some narratives of grief suggest otherwise. In her book, *Time Lived, Without Its Flow*, Denise Riley describes a profound transformation of her world that persisted for three years after the death of her adult son. She focuses on an experience of time as bereft of 'flow.' It is not that 'time for everyone' stopped flowing. What Riley describes is a sense of having been removed from the time of others, from a place where time still flows: it is a "sensation of having been lifted clean out of habitual time"; the "sensation of living outside time" (2012, 10, 45). This can be interpreted (in part, at least) in terms of something I described earlier: nothing matters anymore, and so one no longer experiences significant transitions from one moment to the next. Things still change, but nothing meaningful happens. Barnes (2013, 84) offers the complementary remark, writing, "Grief reconfigures time, its length, its texture, its function: one day means no more than the next, so why have they been picked out and given separate names?"

The experience could be construed as one of recognizing S to be gone, and—in the process—recognizing the loss of all those practical meanings that implicated S. But, although this has a role to play, it is not what Riley seeks to convey. She does not say that things ceased to matter due to loss of a second-person bond with the deceased. Rather, she attributes her disconnection from the social world and from shared time to an enduring second-person relation with her son, of a kind that acknowledges his no longer being part of the world. This relation also amounts to a comprehensive disengagement from the world of the living, a kind of participation in death: "I tried always to be there for him, solidly. And I shall continue to be. (The logic of this conviction: in order to be there, I too have died)" (Riley 2012, 21).

Sustained concern for someone who is still alive can equally constitute a sense of dislodgement from the social world. For example, Hemon describes the experience of driving to the hospital to visit his terminally ill baby daughter:

> It took me about fifteen minutes to get to the hospital, through traffic that existed in an entirely different space-time, where people did not rush crossing the streets and no infant life was in danger, where everything turned away quite leisurely from the disaster [. . .] I had an intensely physical sensation of being inside an aquarium: I could see outside, the people outside could see me inside (if they somehow chose to pay attention), but we lived and breathed in entirely different environments. Isabel's illness and our experience had little connection to, and even less impact on, the world outside. (2013, 190, 201ff.)

However, what Riley describes also includes something else: a sense of relating to someone *as dead*. The second-person connection endures after

the death, in a way that does not depend upon a sense of continuing presence. The combination of recognizing her son's irrevocable absence from the social world, combined with retention of a second-person connection, amounts to a sense of her own separation from that world: "My new ability to live in the present is a joining-in of that timelessness of being dead. [. . .] You already share the 'timeless time' of the dead child. As if you'd died too, or had lost the greater part of your own life" (Riley 2012, 23, 38).

We might construe this as a 'second-person experience of death.' I am thinking here of an approach to empathy adopted by Edith Stein (1917/1989) and others, according to which we are able *experience* the mental lives of others. There is, Stein admits, a substantial difference between 'second-person' and 'first-person' experience. But this is not to imply that the former is a poor approximation of the latter. Instead, they are two qualitatively different ways of accessing experience.[9] We experience the mental lives of others in their observed behavior and, when we do so, we also have a more general sense of encountering a distinct locus of experience (Ratcliffe 2015, chap. 8). I suggest—somewhat tentatively—that we can extend such an approach to at least some grief experiences. One not only recognizes the absence of a person from one's world; one also experiences, in a second-person way, the loss of intelligibility of *that person's* world. Indeed, unless we acknowledge something like this, we risk construing grief as more self-absorbed than it often is, as a matter of what is lost from *my* world. What is needed is an account of its other-directedness, of its being concerned with what has happened *to her*, as well as what has happened *to me* and to a relationship that was valuable *to me*. The recognition that grief involves a continuing second-person relationship with the deceased, one that incorporates recognition of her death, gives us that.

Other accounts also convey this aspect of experience, although not quite so explicitly. For example, Helen Humphreys's *True Story: On the Life and Death of My Brother* addresses him in the second-person throughout, sometimes referring to the time 'after you died.' She relates to him, reaches out to him, while at the same time acknowledging his death. The distinction between retaining a second-person relation and recognizing its impossibility is not always clear. Consider the following passage:

> I know that I can no longer reach her.
>
> I know that, should I try to reach her—should I take her hand as if she were again sitting next to me in the upstairs cabin on the evening Pan Am from Honolulu to LAX, should I lull her to sleep against my shoulder, should I sing her the song about Daddy gone to get the rabbit skin to wrap his baby bunny in—she will fade from my touch.
>
> (Didion 2011, 187f.)

Even so, I think this is plausibly interpreted in terms of a kind of second-person experience that recognizes absence (and with it the impossibility of

reciprocity), rather than in terms of an absence of second-person experience. And let us reflect further on this 'fading from one's touch.' Interestingly, Riley's account draws on the more specific theme of touch and reversibility in Merleau-Ponty's writings (e.g., Merleau-Ponty 1945/1962, 1968). In brief, when one of your hands touches the other, the touching hand is the subject of perception, the perceiver, and the touched hand an object of perception. However, the relationship is reversible, a point that also applies to the interpersonal case. As one takes the hand of another person, one's own hand is the perceiver, and hers the perceived. Yet, as in the intrapersonal case, the relationship switches, and one acquires a sense of the other hand—and the other person—as a distinct locus of experience.[10] Riley suggests that something like this can arise when relating to the dead:

> Whatever's the name for this transfer of affect? It's rather like that blurring of physical edges that happens between lovers: you become the other one, you can feel as if through their skin. [. . .] You're fused with the dead, as if to animate them. They draw you across to their side, while you incorporate them on your side. (Riley 2012, 39f.)

Dubose (1997) similarly applies Merleau-Ponty's discussion of reversibility to the phenomenology of grief: "The chiasmic structure of self and other is drowned in the reversibility of *dis*-appearance. In numbness and shock, one's lived body has died *with* the lost loved one. A *reversibility occurs between the dis-appearance of the other and the dis-appearance of myself*" (373). So, what we have here is a more specific—although admittedly contentious—account of what a second-person experience of death involves. And, even if the account is rejected, narratives of grief at least suggest that an enduring second-person connection is not exclusively reliant upon experiencing or thinking of the other person as still present or as residing elsewhere.[11] Riley states that the absence of 'flow' she describes is specific to parental grief, and far from unusual among bereaved parents. However, less pronounced or qualitatively different second-person experiences of absence may well characterize grief more generally. Hence, remarks such as 'I died with her' and 'part of me has died' can be used to refer to importantly different aspects of grief: a second-person experience of death that dislodges one from the world, and a diminishment of one's world due to someone's absence from it.

4 CONCLUSION

I have briefly described how the phenomenology of grief involves alternation between localized and non-localized experiences of presence and absence. Grief is a variable and changeable way of relating to the dead, the living, and the social world.[12] I have also proposed, more tentatively, that there is

such a thing as a second-person experience of death. Relations with the dead therefore constitute an important aspect of interpersonal and social experience, and any philosophical account of social cognition that seeks to be comprehensive should accommodate them. This is not so evident when we concern ourselves exclusively with belief-desire psychology. But it becomes apparent once a more inclusive approach to social cognition is adopted, one that is attentive to the roles of the shared social world, interpersonal relations and interactions, and the nature of second-person experience.

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NOTES

1 However, see Ratcliffe (2007) for a detailed critique of the view that belief-desire psychology is central to interpersonal understanding.
2 One might therefore wonder how we are to distinguish 'grief' from 'mourning.' The distinction is no doubt untidy. However, in the case of mourning, there is greater emphasis on rituals and on other culturally established public displays.
3 See, for example, Parkes et al. (1997) for discussions of cultural differences in expressions and experiences of grief.
4 I do not address the role of 'feeling' in grief here, but see Ratcliffe (2015) for a more generally applicable account of how world experience and a sense of relating to other people are inextricable from bodily feeling.
5 This is not to imply the significance things have for us is *wholly* symptomatic of personal-level concerns. For instance, many of the social norms and roles that regulate activity apply to people in general: 'one' walks on the pavement rather than the road, and 'one' pays the cashier in a shop, rather than the security guard, regardless of who 'one' is. These shared norms and roles also contribute to the sense of how a situation is significant.
6 Carse (1981, 5) describes acute grief as a "cosmic crisis," remarking on how the meaningfulness of the world depends upon relations with specific others; when someone dies, "we live in a universe that makes no sense."
7 It has also been suggested that there is cultural variation, with rates of experienced presence amongst bereaved spouses being as high as 90 percent in some cultures (Keen/Murray/Payne 2013).
8 As Frith (1992, 68) puts it, "hallucinations are usually defined as perceptions that occur in the absence of any appropriate stimulus."
9 See also Zahavi (2007) for a recent defense of this kind of approach. Zahavi draws on the work of Husserl, Scheler, and Wittgenstein, amongst others.
10 See, for example, Stawarska (2006) for a discussion of Merleau-Ponty on reversibility and intersubjectivity.
11 An interesting issue for further enquiry is that of whether and to what extent explicit beliefs about life after death serve to insulate a person from or otherwise shape such experiences.

12 One might wonder whether and to what extent my various remarks are specific to grief. For example, there are ongoing issues regarding whether and how grief is to be distinguished from depression (e.g., Lamb/Pies/Zisook 2010; Wakefield/First 2012). Although experiences of depression and grief are both heterogeneous and no doubt overlap in many cases, a key difference is that all forms of depression involve a sense of being cut off from second-person connection, whereas grief involves its retention (Pies 2008, 2013; Lamb & Pies & Zisook 2010). Even where grief and depression might seem very similar, it is important to distinguish between an estrangement from the world attributable to a lack of second-person connection and one that stems from maintaining a kind of second-person connection. Grief involves the retention—and, in 'uncomplicated grief' at least, the renegotiation—of interpersonal relationships. See Ratcliffe (2015) for further discussion.

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