Chapter 8
Bringing Home the Dead: Photographs, Family Imaginaries and Moral Remains

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This chapter is based on interviews and home visits with households participating in a project on loss, memory and material culture.[1] Of one hundred individuals and households accessed through door-to-door recruitment on a lengthy South London street, it was not surprising to find that almost half of those people had experienced a bereavement of a close relative, partner or friend in the last ten years. The bereaved ranged in age from young people in their twenties to elderly residents in their eighties and formed a relatively heterogeneous group with diverse ethnic origins and class background though white English, middle class home owners and renters predominated. It was evident from our conversations and their homes that displaying photographs of deceased members of their intimate social circle was important to the bereaved. Specifically, 34 households displayed photographs of parents and children who had passed away. While parent–child relationships were privileged, those more frequently pictured also included grandparents, siblings and to a lesser extent partners.

Unlike studies of bereavement which have accessed participants through counseling or self-help groups, this fieldwork found people in their homes and established working relationships with them over an 18 month period. This included my own residence on the street in a graduate house share for several months. As a result of the method of recruitment, this research into bereavement examined the way the absence of the deceased was felt at different points in the life course, beyond the immediacy of initial grief. Only two participants experienced a close bereavement during fieldwork and six experienced bereavements within the previous year, yet in all cases it was essential to work sensitively with participants as time elapsed was not necessarily a guide to its emotional resonance or feelings of loss and anger. What I will argue is that most participants experienced an urge to display some photographs of deceased relatives in their homes, and I will show that this feeling

[1] The fieldwork was conducted in collaboration with Professor Daniel Miller (See Miller 2008). It includes PhD material gathered independently between 2003 and 2007 (Parrott 2009).

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M. Bille et al. (eds.), *An Anthropology of Absence: Materializations of Transcendence and Loss*, 131
DOI 10.1007/978-1-4419-5529-6_8, © Springer Science+Business Media, LLC 2010

could develop in response to specific events and situations, other than the initial experience of bereavement. These are not static displays that define the remembrance of the deceased as a one to one relationship of looking between mourner and picture of the deceased, in the present and of the past, but dynamic assemblages, objects cognizant of obligations, judgments, love and respect, that mediate relationships between the living.

This chapter subscribes to the view that it is not only the content of any one image that matters but their integration into domestic space. I will show that it is important to analyze what such photographs do, as part of the material culture of the household and its effects. Thus, it could be the absence of photographs in domestic space, which was felt or noticed at particular times, as much as the absence of the person from their lives. These doubly articulated absences impose themselves upon the viewer. But it is not only inclusions and exclusions but the selection, framing and arrangement of pictures that matters. This draws one into an exploration of the judgments and obligations as well as the comfort and longing brought by the portrayal of the faces of dead "loved ones." I will suggest that through their relationship to photographic objects, people deal with the moral remains of the deceased and shape their family imaginaries in complex ways.

An extensive literature on popular photography considers the family as an ideological and historical construct and the mutual relationship this construct has with photography (Wells 1997). According to this literature, taking and posing for a photograph is a performance, part of the myth-making structures that stage ideal (photographic) families as happy, unified and leisured (e.g., Gillis 1996; Slater 1983). This repetitive aspect of family photography was confirmed to an extent in my own work, including the observation that pictures of parents and children are more common than those of the extended family in the postwar era (e.g., Sontag 1977; Wells 1997).

However, although the subject matter was narrow, it was also possible to observe a cultural and historical mélange of classed and familial genealogies of style. In part, this was because of the mix of residents encountered on the street, but it also draws attention to the way participants often had old photographs on display. This resulted in a range of hues, styles, and even surface additions in the case of hand-tinted Jamaican and Cypriot studio portraiture of the fifties that helped viewers organize and relate to these decorations. Studies of non-Western photographic portraiture have explored the social significance of these surface aesthetics as well as their arrangements more thoroughly (e.g., Pinney 1997; Buckley 2001), but few have engaged with the temporal aesthetics of Western popular photography in the same way (see Samuel 1994), or their additions and framing (Drazin and Frohlich 2007). Already, with a view to family photography as a decorative and ritual art (Batchen 2004), one can suggest that there is more to family photography than conformity to narrow ideals.

Some authors have emphasized how illness and death, as well as divorce, are cut out of these conventional family narratives, from displays and from the archetypal biographical object, the family photograph album (Stewart 1984; Slater 1983; Spence and Holland 1991). Yet, this is also somewhat of a simplification. In fieldwork, it became clear that people did not stop taking photographs in anticipation of a person's

death. Rather, the process of anticipatory mourning often prompted them to take more photographs not less. Several informants had photographs they had taken of the family stood around the hospital bed, marking these moments of togetherness. Those who had lost loved ones to long degenerative illnesses had whole albums of photographs of this time in their lives. This tells us as much about the practice of photography as death and dying. What value or status would the act of ceasing to take any further photographs give to their relationship with that person? The rituals of family life go on but because photographs are about remembering in the future, every act of photographing the dying articulates their anticipated absence.

These albums remained painful to view. One elderly mother, Ruby, showed me photographs of her adult daughter who had died after suffering from multiple sclerosis. These included photographs taken with family and friends on her last birthday and others taken in her home. The sequential arrangement could not help but show her deteriorating condition. While this album was kept with all the others in Ruby's living room cabinet, she told me she did not like to look at these photographs often. Our viewing of the album prompted Ruby to give a narrative of her daughters' death, of the final phone call from her daughters' ex-husband, how Ruby had stayed by her side lifting water to her lips and her ongoing anguish at being out of the room at the very last. The viewing of these photographs, despite or even because of the pictured smiles, involved conflicting emotions and the telling of unpictured moments and histories.

It is certainly the case that more unblemished and nostalgic images are selected for central display in the home[2]. These portraits stand in relation to painful images, remembered scenes, and narratives of illness and death. Thus, an important role for these unblemished photographs is that of reinstating a desired and comforting image of the person (Parrott 2007). One of the goals of this chapter is to demonstrate the complex integration of these seemingly non-confrontational images within domestic space.

The literature on death and photography went some way towards elevating the mundane family photograph by examining the intense emotional charge involved in viewing particular photographs, the now classic forerunner being Barthes' (1981) *Camera Lucida*. In this essay, his grief over his mother's death and response to a photograph of his mother as a young girl standing with her brother in the winter garden becomes a central part of his theory of the "punctum" of photography. This refers to an appreciation of the effects of a photograph that pierce the viewer beyond meaning. According to Rose (2004) in a study of English mothers with photographs of their young children, this experience lies in the corporeality of these photographs, and the bodily proximities involved in acts of seeing (2004: 560).

[2] I only found one exception to this rule. In a participating home, a grandmother had recently put photographs of her ill and premature grand-twins on display. This was when one of the twins who she still had guardianship of was around ten years old. She liked to have them because they showed "how far they had come." These photos were displayed as part of a narrative of progress over time. Of course, photographs of those who are dying do not fulfil this criterion.

Put another way, these photographs present their referents but do so through conversions of the materiality of faces, bodies, clothing, objects and places. Framed photographs, which continue to decorate domestic spaces, are held in hands, located in spaces. Part of the problem with much of the literature on family photography or death and photography, including Barthes' (1981), is the isolation of photographs from domestic practices (Rose 2005), though there are notable exceptions (e.g. Drazin & Frohlich 2007, Edwards 1999, Halle 1993). This links to a recent and increasing body of work on "the importance of the material and sensory in the communicative power of photographs" (Edwards 2005: 27). This chapter situates its analysis within this tradition, extending its insights to death and the display of photographs within the home.

One of the characteristic attributes of domestic photograph practice is the time investment involved in realising the value of photographs. This was often the reason that participants gave for "not getting around to doing the photographs" by which they meant ordering, sorting, framing, sending photographs to others and making albums. It also takes time to sit and look at photographs, alone or with others. But an appreciation of this time investment draws attention to the way doing the photographs can become a way of doing mourning. Remembering involves investing in producing a presence for the deceased.

For example, Mrs. Stone, a mother in her sixties put considerable effort into collecting photographs that included her daughter from other members of the family and making copies of them. Her daughter had died suddenly and unexpectedly from an infection connected with a routine operation. This activity extended years beyond the event of her daughter's death. In six homes, including Mrs. Stone's, special albums were planned and made that sequenced the life of the deceased that were available to show to others. Time was spent just looking at photographs. Julie, an English housewife, kept her photograph albums beneath her sitting room coffee table. She liked to sit on her own looking through different albums of "happy times" that included photographs of her deceased father. In six homes, including Mrs. Stone's, special albums were planned and made that sequenced the life of the deceased and were available to show to others.

Other activities included sending photographs to relatives and to others known to the deceased. This wider distribution happened most frequently around the time of the funeral. I observed how the parents and close friend of a young man who died in an accident emailed a portrait photograph, a close-up of his face, to an extensive circle of people. Another woman, Beryl, posted prints of her mother's portrait to their relatives in Jamaica who could not attend the funeral. These photographs provided a focus for contemplation, the reproduction of the images establishing a form of corporeal proximity shared between the photograph and mourners (See Rose 2005; Seremetakis 1991). This evidenced the work of those close relatives who bore most of the responsibility for doing mourning. Importantly, it situated them as the producers of the presence of the deceased and stimulators of appropriate remembering among an affective community.

Members of this extended circle of mourners were not expected to keep these photographs permanently on display. This practice defined the homes of those

closely related to the deceased. Some relatives inherited photographs from the deceased. I found that many of these photographs were kept in their original frames, providing a good example of the way particular photographs may have biographies as objects (Edwards and Hart 2004). These photographs do not simply stand for memory in the sense of the photographic technique as imprint or metaphor (e.g. Forty 1999). Rather, remembering involved embodied memories of domestic spaces and narratives that could not be read from the content of the picture.

One portrait of my own grandmother, who died six years ago now, shows her in her twenties with waved shoulder length brown hair, wearing a yellow silk blouse. The picture is black and white. It used to be on her bedroom dressing table in the last two houses she lived in, and I looked at it many times, standing next to her, when I used to go and stay. She described the yellow silk blouse; I used to tell her she looked like a film star. I knew she liked to hear this then, and I smile when I see this desirable image in its new place on the window ledge at the house of my uncle, her youngest son. These photographs link chains of familial memory among close relatives. However, over time these biographies may be forgotten. Thus, "ancestor" portraits, of long dead relatives, that were also inherited and hung in some participating homes are very different objects of family imagining.

Looking at photographs in this way, as part of domestic practices, provides an alternative perspective on the maintenance and production of the presence of the deceased. It is not so much about the portrayal of the singular individual, the deceased, but about their integration within photographic practice. So far we have seen how this involves investment in doing things with photographs and memories of the things that were done with photographs, which combine to shape the feeling of the presence of the deceased in the home.

This perspective also helps to explain why the pictures of the dead within the domestic interior are dominated by images of deceased parents and children, where they have predeceased their parents, followed by siblings and grandparents. Parent–child relationships are central to family photography. Practices of taking, storing, giving and receiving photographs establish and maintain the identities of parent and child over a lifetime. For example, when taking photographs of babies and young children, parents think about storing them for the future. When adult children had left home, I found that it was common for parents to give old photographs to them, including "their" Baby albums.

From the beginning, by giving the relationship a history one commits to an anticipated future. This is one of the ways that people materialize the idea that "the lifelong nature of relationships with one's family of origin mark them as distinctive and different from all others" (Finch 1989: 241) into existence. It also pre-empts parents' anticipation of their own death and thus their future absence in their children's lives. The endings that are being described in this chapter are therefore part of this story. Photographs are used so frequently in life to objectify relationships between parents, children and grandparents. It is not surprising that they are a source of mementos in response to death. Displaying photographs is to do with parenting, with being children and being part of families (Rose 2005; Parrott 2009).

If we consider parents who participated in the study who had lost their children, these losses were overwhelmingly defined by lasting trauma. While the initial shock of grief might fade, the sense of loss endures for a lifetime, for it is this expectation of a lifetime relationship that is lost. The presence of other siblings or grandchildren was not necessarily an ameliorating force as children were considered precious and unique. Nothing could replace the loss of this particular child, whether this was among mothers who had lost young or adult children. By no particular design, I interviewed more mothers than fathers.

Ruby, the elderly participant who had lost her adult daughter to multiple sclerosis, had many photographs on display in her home, which showed all the members of her large family, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Collage styles allowed her to place many pictures and people together. However, the dominant subject of the framed single portrait photographs in both the kitchen and the sitting room was her deceased daughter. This set her daughter apart. Specifically, these photographs allowed her to continue mothering and be seen to mother in her absence. This did not simply involve hanging photographs on the walls, but in her case included materializing her continued attention to these photographs. Figure 8.1 shows how the frame of the photograph had become the focus for elaboration with a paper angel and angel pin, prayer cards and poems. Some of these prayers included those that her daughter had sent to Ruby, which she had later found when going through her letters. Batchen (2004) has shown that the sensory and symbolic enhancement of photographic frames is an important constituent in the experience of photography. This particular framing was central to the way Ruby recalled the religiosity of her daughter.

Fig. 8.1 Photo framed with angels and prayer cards

It seemed as if Ruby idealized this daughter in her relation to her other children. But it was not a straightforward idealism; it was part of a narrative where she acknowledged what she perceived in hindsight to be her failings as a mother. This was her failure to appreciate her daughter's goodness and daughterly affection during her life. Ruby would describe the little surprising discoveries she made after her daughters' death, of letters her daughter had sent containing newspaper cuttings and prayers that Ruby had not taken the time to read, of gifts she had given Ruby and also the letters of thanks she was sent by people her daughter had helped. Thus, photographs were part of this larger relationship to mementos and revelations, where their display provided one way of showing and viewing her delayed devotion.

If we compared Ruby's home to Lavinia's, we would count far fewer photographs of the young daughter Lavinia had lost. Here, the one portrait of her daughter produced a particularly, materially located confrontation with the experience of loss. This school portrait was hung on the sitting room wall, and it was a poignant example of the biography of a photograph. Lavinia had lost her daughter in a house fire. The council flat itself had been gutted, though they still lived in the same block, and it transpired that the photograph she had on display was part of a bundle of things that her daughter's school had given the family. These papers and photograph were absences that figured greater absences. The interview itself was stilted and short for it was even more difficult to ask and to talk about mementos of the deceased than usual.

Photograph displays help to maintain the preciousness of children over a lifetime. Being a respectful, caring child also often involves attention to photographs of parents. This helps to explain the sense of obligation to remember one's parents and the frequent display of their photographs. Some participants put up a photograph of their parents even when they otherwise displayed very few or no photographs throughout the house. Other homes placed these pictures within groups of other framed photographs. These pictures formed communities of living and deceased through the proximity of pictured and present bodies. Homes are the place to display "togetherness", in such a way that actual experiences of absence and separation may disturb but do not break its cohesion (Rose 2003:5).

My study corroborates others' observations that houses are not homes unless they bear witness to peoples' sociability and connectedness. As studies of the material culture of Industrial societies have established, the accumulation of photographs, other decorations and particularly gifts, establish domestic space as a site for the production and display of relatedness between the household and others (Chevalier 2002, Drazin and Frohlich 2007, Parrott 2009, Rose 2003). It was therefore the absence of photographs that could impose itself upon the viewer rather than or as much as the absence of the people the photographs depicted. There is a moral dimension to these displays; a moral home is one that remembers others and photographs make this intention to remember explicit (Drazin and Frohlich 2007). This helps explain the sense of obligation to display photographs.

Three participants who had lost either parents or siblings had recently bought their first houses. In these instances, it was possible to observe the way each made a space for the dead in their home. The formation of a new independent household, with display space of its own for which they were responsible, was an

Fig. 8.2 Cupboard with memorial photographs and flowers

important prompt for the creation of memorials. Hannah's brother had died the previous year after a long illness and she wanted to put up a photograph of him. The space that seemed appropriate for a photograph was what seemed to be a rather generic pine cupboard in the sitting room, shown in Fig. 8.2. In fact, this cupboard was a piece of her old home brought to form the new; it was taken from her parents' house and had formerly stood in her brother's room. Hannah links a vivid memory of her brother to the tactile experience of leaning against the cupboard when she was a child,

> I mean one of my earliest memories was lying next to that cupboard, watching my brother play on his computer, and he went downstairs and came back with this big spider in his hands, which I didn't realize, and put it on the pillow, next to me, and then first thing I knew about it was when it crawled onto my cheek and I screamed blue murder, my mum came running up the stairs and it was me with a dead spider cos I'd gone like that [*smacks cheek*], and him laughing at me…and that memory - the cupboard is very much in that.

Hannah selected a photograph of her brother that showed him before he looked ill. Both objects together produce a feeling of the presence of the deceased, which also allows for their appropriate remembrance in this new home. The cupboard drew the photographs to it, and the photographs complemented the bodily memories associated with the cupboards' solidity. She also put up a photograph of herself, her brother and her grandmother who had also passed away. The lamp, flowers and green houseplant were placed behind, to light and animate the display with living things.

As with all these displays, the whole arrangement is significant. It shifts easily between a genre of furnishing and decoration and personal memory; the two are intertwined (Kwint 1999).

The second participant, Jenny, selected a black and white wedding portrait of her parents to display in her living room on a side table. She and her mother had lost her father two years before. While the photograph brought the presence of her father into the new house, it was in painting and fixing up the house that Jenny felt his absence. This should have been a time where they could have worked together as father and daughter. Few words were used to articulate why she had chosen this photograph, she "liked it." It had come from her parents' house, and it showed them at a symbolic moment of unity. It was having it there that mattered, not the articulation of its significance.

This was in contrast to Ian who had also lost his father several years previously. When Ian bought and moved into his first house, he did not want to put up a photograph of his father in the front room. However, Ian wanted an object that would do the work of a photograph in remembering his father. For example, the memento he chose was placed in the sitting room, like many of the photographs of the deceased (Parrott 2009). He selected a cricket bat that had belonged to his father. This seemed to him to be a more appropriate and personal memorial, "less formal and ostentatious than a full length portrait in the room!" He collected it from his parents' house and by removing it from ordinary use, turned it into a revered and lasting object.

> I remember thinking it would be nice to have that as a memory because it was very him in a way, even though I've hardly ever played cricket in my life…I keep thinking of getting it lacquered or whatever, get it done properly…I know cricket bats are supposed to last forever aren't they?

But Ian also has to create the conditions for its acknowledgment as a memorial by others who visit the house. If a friend notices it and picks it up to swing it, Ian has to gently point out that it is "his dad's." This action creates the required atmosphere around this object through its handling and shares the knowledge of Ian's commitment to remember his father. This example suggests that while photographs are not always the memorial object of choice, they achieve something important in the eyes of others. Ian also had to carefully stage and "frame" the presence of his father in the home in the absence of a photograph.

It is not only when setting up home that the absence of parents and other close family members is felt and the urge to display photographs is acted upon. Perhaps, one of the most significant events to define the change in status of a home is the birth of children. Children create parents and grandparents; they are often a pivot around which extended family relationships are articulated. The display of photographs helps to maintain some aspects of these identities when those people have passed away, just as they do when family members are geographically separated and living in independent households. However, photograph displays can maintain complex family imaginaries through the precise material integration of the pictures of the deceased. This shapes the way their presence is experienced in the home and the continued impact they have in mediating relationships between the living.

Fig. 8.3 Displaying solidarity between generations

Helena and James' house is full of photographs. James' mother died before Helena and James were married three years ago, and she never witnessed the birth of their son. Her photograph is displayed in two important places in the living room of their house, which envision her inclusion within these events. Two wedding photographs were displayed side by side, shown in Fig. 8.3. The recent photograph on the right, taken at Helena and James' wedding was deliberately selected for its replication of the hue and pose of James' parents' wedding photo on the left. Both were framed in silver, honouring their status and reiterating the relationship between parents and son and daughter-in-law. The aesthetics of the arrangement displayed solidarity between generations. This was an imagined solidarity yet one with real effects. It gave James' mother a presence, which placed her in the relationship of mother-in-law to Helena and a part of James' new family home. Helena arranged the display herself after James received the original photograph.

In a second area of shelving in the room, this time dominated by colourful photographs of their young child, another picture of James' mother was included. This sepia photograph portrayed her in a relaxed manner, seated, smiling on the lawn. It was set in a thick, transparent acrylic frame like some of the other framed children's photographs. Again, it is important to understand what the staging and the viewing of these photographs achieve. This display explicitly positioned James' mother as a grandmother to her grandchild. When Helena and James show their son the photographs, they explain and help him learn who she is, though the little boy will never meet her.

In Layne's (2000) study of miscarriage and neo-natal loss in North America, she shows how the personhood of the lost child is established through consumer goods prior to and after the loss. Recognition of their status as parents may be developed through gift-giving on behalf of the lost child to the extended family, for example, giving angel decorations at Christmas. Relationships to goods establish

the humanity of the lost child (Miller and Parrott 2007). This study extends Layne's insights. The example from Helena and James' home highlights the way relationships to photographs and their display not only keep identities from disappearing but are the form through which identities for the deceased and the living are recognized and established through relationships to photographs. This was the case even where James' mother had never known her son's wife and child.

One of the reasons why James has inherited these original photographs of his mother, including their wedding photograph, is that his father remarried and passed them onto him. Specifically, James' father has young children of his own and does not have time for his grandson. In this respect, Helena and James' child was seen to be "missing out" on having grandparents in two ways. Helena and James also felt a greater sense of responsibility to remember James' mother in the decoration of their own home because of the absence of her explicit presence in his father's. Photographs were displayed in such a way as to acknowledge this less than ideal family.

This suggests that Rose's (2005) insights are applicable to the experience of photography in bereavement. She writes, "Photos are felt to fill homes with the presence of those they picture," but their viewing also establishes a space in which the "complications of closeness" are articulated. (2005: 231). While she considers the placement of photographs to a degree, this chapter suggests that it is in the selection, framing and location of photographs that the complications of closeness are articulated.

Complex arrangements may express some of the ambivalent emotions experienced in deciding to display certain photographs. For example, when I visited Margaret in her large council flat, she had displayed portraits of her father and her mother separately at either end of a shelf in the living room with many objects in between. This distance was deliberate and was intended to allow her to honour her mother appropriately. She described how her father had betrayed her mother through a long term affair that he revealed to them only after her death. Her father then lived with his mistress until his own death. Originally, Margaret had only chosen to display a photograph of her mother, but the absence of a commemorative portrait of her father was then continually brought to her attention by the lack. She assuaged her sense of unease and put up a portrait of her father, but by placing it she also preserved some of the resentment and anger that distance implies. While she felt an obligation to display a photograph of her father, this example illustrates how frames and arrangements are selected to grant moral authenticity to displays at different levels of personal knowledge and feeling.

Conflicting emotions were also evident in Rachel's home display. She also found it difficult to permanently display photographs of her father in the house she shared with her husband. She used photographs in a slightly different fashion to Margaret, positioning them within a more temporary arrangement for three weeks around the first anniversary of her fathers' death. Three unframed photographs were arranged around a poem about loss on her desk. The two at the bottom were old black and white photographs with white borders, showing Rachel as a baby held in her fathers' arms and as a toddler feeding the ducks with her father.

Feeding the ducks was a fatherly activity that Rachel remembered him enjoying. As a long-standing alcoholic, he was on many occasions a more than unsatisfactory father. At the top was a colour photograph showing Rachel sitting rigidly in the centre supported by her two brothers with whom she is holding hands at the time of her father's death. Both types of images made the emotional charge of remembrance visible but also helped to make them manageable. It was significant that Rachel set this up in her personal study rather than the living room, not least because the remembrance of their father drew fraught lines of tension between the six siblings. These material choices in whether and how to display photographs were an important part of dealing with grief and obligations. As with Margaret, these displays objectified judgments as well as ideal aspects of relationships and roles.

We have already seen how it sometimes fell to children to pick up the responsibility of maintaining the photographs of a deceased parent when the other parent remarried. Photographs in particular could become an inappropriate presence in homes set up with new partners, where the ideal is one of serial companionate monogamy. It was not the need to make space for the dead that was highlighted but the need to lessen the degree to which the presence of the dead was felt in order to make space for the living. In general, photographs of the faces of ex-partners were an ambivalent subject. They were rarely displayed in the front spaces of the house though they were often kept as old albums or more intimate photographs put away in boxes or attics or more recently, in personal computer files and folders. It was not necessarily that a person wished to forget his/her former partner, but that photograph displays in particular established too great a presence for the deceased, for they portrayed the dead one's face and features within the domestic circle.

Among those who had children with their partner, it was convenient that they were able to pass these photographs on to them. Marjorie and Gregory for example had met on a holiday cruise and when they moved in together, Marjorie who was widowed gave the entire family photograph archive to her daughter. Other objects and practices that may have been a part of their previous relationship however were less problematic. For instance, the memory of an object, such as a piece of furniture, was recalled quietly and implicitly, unknown to others.

Some people did display photographs of their deceased partners. Miriam was in her thirties and had three children, one of whom was the child of her partner who had been killed in a motorbike accident three years before. His photograph stood on top of the television set. When we pointed to it, she talked about how she still visited his grave, but she spoke both with a sense that she ought to stop and a reluctance to do so. She implied that she ought to take down his things if she wanted to think about finding a new partner. But she was also ambivalent about how a new partner would fit into her family and children's lives when the man she had lost had been a father to them all. Like in many of the previous examples, the photograph had become a pivot for mixed and contradictory feelings about relationships.

Miriam implied that she was too young to focus her life on this loss. Of course, there were several widowed elderly participants who did display devotion to the

portraits of their husband or wife. Often, their portrait was one of many photographs of the dead displayed in the home. Martha's photograph of her husband in her front room recalled a previous absence in their lives, which had become articulated with her final separation from him. Centrally displayed on the dresser was the portrait he had taken in his uniform before they both went off to do their respective duties in the Second World War. Yet even among the elderly and devoted, there was uneven remembering, it seemed as if it was inappropriate to display more than one deceased marital partner though each might now be remembered fondly. One participant, Lizzie, only displayed a photograph of her second husband for example though both men were part of her life history taking her from England to Spain and back to England again. What these choices show is that this type of display space must be an integrative relational space of future remembering, of which the boundaries may continuously be redefined.

These domestic photograph displays were also a restricted type of display space, largely devoted to constructing family imaginaries. This study encountered only one home, in which photographs of deceased friends were displayed, belonging to the home of Irish ex-publicans. This seems to concur with observations that domestic photograph display is dominated by the depiction of kin (Halle 1993). Young people's homes did display photographs of friends, but they were less likely to have experienced their loss. Where friends were displayed as part of the close circle of kin, their roles were more likely to be suffused (Pahl and Spencer 2003), such that one might describe them as fictive kin, though, there were too few encounters of the inclusion of deceased close friends to make further observations on this count.

These residents of South London whose photographs and homes I have described formed a relatively class heterogeneous group of British citizens of mixed migrant histories. For example, Ruby and Beryl had been born in Jamaica, while Miriam had been born in London to Chinese and African parents. Margaret and Rachel who were born to parents of English origin had grown up on local council estates, while Hannah and also Ian had moved to London from wealthier parental homes in the Home Counties. What was so clear from this approach was the wide relevance of displaying photographs of deceased members of their intimate circle in their homes. Houses were not homes without memorial objects, or put another way, without love and respect for the dead. But photographs are specific types of memorial objects. It was evident from our conversations that these images that captured faces, features and bodies were felt to bring the presence of the deceased into the home in a specific, transmittable way. Indeed, because of the significance of faces in establishing recognition, some features have been blurred in their reproduction as research images for this chapter.

Some clarification ought to be made with respect to the gendering of photograph work in the home, noted by other authors (Rose 2004, 2005). What I have argued was that most bereaved participants experienced an urge to display some photographs of deceased relatives in their homes. Photographs, however, are important decorative objects as well as memorials. Home decoration and memorialization as a gendered practice was illustrated by my account since it was biased towards the

narratives of women who had taken responsibility for carrying out this work on behalf of the couple or the family. What I have not argued however is that domestic memorial practices or the display of photographs in the home are the prerogative of women, as some authors, including Rose, have tended to assume. For example, many single or non-cohabiting men displayed photographs of deceased parents. Elsewhere, I have explored the gendering of photography in comparison to other types of domestic memorial practice further (Miller and Parrott 2007). As Miller and Parrott argued, flexibility was observed in practice.

What this chapter has shown is how the desire to give the deceased a photographic presence developed in response to specific life events. This included displaying photographs of deceased parents, siblings and grandparents as part of the process of establishing a new independent household. Establishing a home as a young adult nonetheless depends on manifesting links to family within the new space. The desire to make a presence for the deceased could be connected to the event of making a new home, as much as the event of bereavement or the time that had passed since the death. Elsewhere, the desire to make the presence of the deceased a part of the house interior included displaying photographs of parents in response to feeling their absence from the event of marriage and even more so in the event of the birth of grandchildren. Houses and homes are inseparable from such life transitions (Pink 2001). Domestic photograph displays like the feelings of loss they respond to and manifest are not fixed but are the dynamic outcome of changing circumstances.

Similarly, when a participant had experienced the loss of a partner, it was not necessarily the case that their photograph was displayed in the long term. Unlike photographs of deceased parents, children, siblings and grandparents, photographs of deceased partners are more likely to be superseded by new photographs of a current partner, where photography participates in imagining a companionate model of serial monogamy. As this chapter showed, the point at which a photograph "should" be taken down was a problematic moment. For widowed parents who remarried, passing these objects to children, along with the responsibility to memorialize that person, helped to mitigate this transition.

By contrast, parent–child relationships were expected to last the lifetime, and the photographic presence of children maintained this sentiment and obligation even after death. In this respect, photographs among other objects are a significant part of defining this parent–child bond as a lifetime relationship. Elsewhere, I have also shown the importance elderly parents give to the preparation and gift of their children's childhood photograph albums in anticipation of their own death (Parrott 2009).

The positioning and viewing of photographs and the authoring of the boundaries of remembering through display also respond to ambivalent aspects of parent-child relationships. In Helena and James' home, his deceased mother took centre stage as mother-in-law and grandmother through the hues, styles, framing and grouping of photographs, whereas his father's second wife and children played no role in this articulation of generational togetherness. Margaret's unfaithful father's portrait was set apart from her mother's and Rachel's temporary display of poem and unframed

photographs of her father who suffered from alcoholism were arranged in her personal study away from the eyes of visitors. The closeness of family is articulated as conflicting and ambivalent in the precise selections, arrangements and viewing of photographs on display. Staging the presence of the deceased plays a key part in the negotiation of the moral remains of the relationship. Thus, though photographs are involved in the controlled creation of the deceased's presence in the home according to what is felt to be personally and socially appropriate, this does not necessarily mean these things are less affective in the emotional lives of the bereaved.

At first, it may seem as if the hidden photographs and albums of sickness and sadness are involved in more painful and complex processes of remembrance when compared with the unblemished and nostalgic portraits on display. This chapter has sought to show that each takes their place in long-term remembering in the homes of the bereaved. These are not static displays that define the remembrance of the deceased as a one to one relationship of looking between mourner and picture of the deceased, a bridge between the present and the idealized past. These are dynamic assemblages of things and bereaved persons, in spaces that make grief and family imaginaries real. These affective objects, and the absent subjects and pictures they call to mind, are cognizant of obligations, judgments, pain, love, and respect. As dynamic and sometimes contested memorial objects, they continue to mediate relationships between the living in ways that allow the bereaved people to represent their feelings of loss and perpetuate their memories of absent loved ones.

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