

Grief and Pessimism

My tentative theses:

- (1) experiences of G are primarily concerned with lost possibilities and G extends to many kinds of non-bereavement or non-death losses.

Loss of life-possibilities is

- (a) associated with many events, processes, and experiences
- (b) experienced in many ways, according to diverse criteria.

- (2) human life is suffused with an inchoate sense of (actual, unfolding, and potential) losses, a sense we are typically prone to suppress.

- (a) our experience of things, people, relationships, practices, and projects incorporates a tacit sense of the **modes of loss** appropriate to those things.
- (b) the everyday activity of living involves constant tacit actions aimed at avoidance, suppression, or denial of this sense of pervasive possibilities for loss.

- (3) the 'sense of loss' is expressed, however indirectly, in certain kinds of philosophical doctrine, especially kinds of pessimism.

- (a) **Particularism**: P as a response to contingent personal or cultural events which disrupt moral-existential certainties.
- (b) **Perennialism**: P a response to entrenched features of the human condition, including this grief-like sense of loss.