

“I Would Not Do It:” Student Reaction to Facebook Wall Grief Posts

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Abstract

Like most emotions, how and when to express grief is socially constructed; and, as such, can change over time. Social media sites like Facebook may be changing the cultural norms surrounding grief expression by making it more public and prolonged. However, little is known about how non-grieving Facebook “friends” perceive expressions of grief in locations such as general Facebook wall posts. This paper stems from a broader focus study exploring where college students “draw the line” and what they consider being inappropriate posts on Facebook. In five of seven focus groups conducted, students (n=32) mentioned some aspect of grieving on Facebook walls as inappropriate. Using open coding and a constant comparative methodology, findings from these five focus groups suggests that these college students exhibit “tolerated inappropriateness” regarding grief expressions on Facebook walls. Tolerated inappropriateness is the label for when students claim that Facebook is not where they would express grief (inappropriateness), but they also claim that they would not negatively judge those who do (tolerated). However, this “tolerated inappropriateness” only applies when posts did not exhibit “display drama,” using excessively dramatic wording, or “display excessiveness”, were highly repetitive. Both types of posts were seen as a call for attention among the living and were looked upon negatively. However, when confronted with these posts, students overwhelmingly ignore them, while still making negative judgments about the post or person. Using symbolic interactionist theory, implications of the lack of reaction for emerging norms of grief expression are explored.

Keywords: emotion, Facebook, grief, socialization, social media, symbolic interactionism

1. Introduction

1.1. Emotion Socialization

While we all feel emotion, there are cultural rules regarding how emotion should be expressed and in what instances (Goodrum, 2008; Morehouse & Crandall, 2014). As we age, we learn that crying is for the young and children who use crying to express disappointment or frustration may be told “Crying is for babies,” “Big boys / girls don’t cry” or “Act your age”. Even in instances of emotional crisis, traditionally grown-ups are socialized to “keep a stiff upper lip,” to hide red, swollen eyes behind sunglasses, even at funerals, and to refrain from discussing a death in public (Church, 2013; Lingel, 2013). However, this expression of emotion may vary by culture and religion (McIlwain, 2001; Goodrum, 2008). For example, the expectations of grief expression

described above generally fit white, American culture, where grief is traditionally a private affair with controlled emotions (McIlwain, 2001; Mitchell, Stephenson, Cadell, & Macdonald, 2012; Morehouse & Crandall, 2014). Crying undoubtedly occurs at these funerals; however, more dramatic emotional displays such as loud weeping and throwing oneself onto the coffin is generally seen as “disruptive” and may result in a funeral director quietly leading the bereaved away from the funeral ritual so she / he can grieve more privately (McIlwain, 2001). African American funerals, on the other hand, frequently contain noisy, dramatic displays of grief (McIlwain, 2001). These variations in expression suggest that learning when and how to express emotion, including grief, is a social process which symbolic interactionists would argue involves social interaction, the giving and receiving of symbols, and the reflection upon what those symbols mean and how they influence the giver and receiver’s sense of self (Goodrum, 2008).

Adolescence and young adulthood are when young people form their adult identity and behavior. Teenagers and college students are socialized regarding adult emotional expression from a variety of sources – family, friends, and social media to name a few. Peer socialization is especially salient at this time (Erikson, 1968; Williams & Merten, 2009; Brechwald & Prinstein, 2011) and young people’s involvement in social media sites is now well documented (Bazarova, 2012; Birnbaum, 2013; Duggan, Ellison, Lampe, Lenhart, & Madden, 2015). For example, according to Duggan and colleagues (2015), almost 90% of teens and young adults in the United States use Facebook; and some researchers claim that the average number of Facebook friends for college students is approximately 650 people (www.statista.com, 2014).

Adolescents and young adults rely on intimate relationships with peers to help them understand the desired behaviors for their cohort (Harter, Stocker & Robinson, 1996; Brechwald & Prinstein, 2011), obtain emotional support (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007), and establish emotional closeness with their friends (Subrahmanyam, Reich, Waechter, & Espinoza, 2008). Young people need to learn how to culturally grieve just like they need to learn how to express any other emotion; and, as with many other emotional expressions, their peers may be one avenue of grief socialization. What is unclear is whether, and how, Facebook acts as an agent in grief socialization. Furthermore, little research examines the reactions of those who are reading Facebook posts, especially posts that involve grief. Focus groups were conducted to see what college students consider being inappropriate posts for Facebook and how they react when they see these posts. This paper discusses their perceptions and reactions to grief on Facebook.

1.2. Grief in the Internet Age

In American culture, grief expression is highly ritualized and traditionally has a public component for only a fixed amount of time, such as a year of “mourning” (Goodrum, 2008; Carroll & Landry, 2010; Lingel, 2013; Morehouse & Crandall, 2014). Social media sites may be changing this and on-line grieving is increasingly studied (Williams & Merten, 2009; Carroll & Landry, 2010; Mitchell *et al.*, 2012; DeGroot, 2014). Some researchers note that those who are grieving find on-line forums beneficial because they can easily reach a large amount of people who can potentially lend them the support that they need at this time (Roberts, 2004a; Gianatassio & Claire, 2014).

As a result, there is now a recognized difference between physical death (that of the body) and social death (the relationships with the deceased) (Odom, Harper, Sellen, Kirk, & Banks, 2010).

With social media sites like Facebook and MySpace, death stays in the present much longer by facilitating more frequent interaction with the deceased, especially via outlets like Web memorials (Morehouse & Crandall, 2014). Scholars have found that Web memorials provide an important grieving function for the living, regardless of the degree of association with the dead, or the amount of time that has passed since death, by allowing the living to write descriptions of the dead and to share memories (Brubaker & Hayes, 2011; Gibson, 2011; Church, 2013).

Consequently, the time for grieving can be indefinite and the social death prolonged (Morehouse & Crandall, 2014; Odom *et al.*, 2014). Posting about death on social media sites also takes death out of the private sphere and into the public (Mitchell *et al.*, 2012; Marwick & Ellison, 2012). Traditionally, publically asking a friend or acquaintance about their personal loss risked being intrusive; however, now posting expressions of grief on social media sites, which are very public, may normalize the discussion of a person's death, regardless of the level of closeness of other individuals to the deceased. The process by which people from various social contexts such as school, work, and the family are all collapsed into the equal context of "friends" and where the social distances between various connections are lost is called "context collapse" (Marwick & Ellison, 2012; Vitak, Lampe, Gray, & Ellison, 2012). As a result, communal reaction has also become a bit more clichéd and aggregative, where people rely on trite posts such as "Sorry for your loss" or "Rest in peace" (Robinson, 1998; DeGroot, 2014; Morehouse & Crandall, 2014) largely because either they did not have a strong connection to the deceased that facilitated a more substantial comment or because they were just showing solidarity with other mourners.

While there is much literature suggesting that while some who are grieving find solace in Facebook posts (Roberts & Vidal, 2000; Roberts, 2004b; Brubaker, Kivran-Swaine, Taber, & Hayes, 2012; Stokes, 2012) it is unclear how these posts are perceived by others, especially the non-grieving "friends" one has on Facebook. Brandtzæg, Lüders, and Skjetne, (2010) find that people socially reject others who they felt were sharing information that was too private or personally tragic. Therefore, if one expresses too much grief online or posts multiple grieving comments, how do those reading the posts and not grieving react? Do they emotionally support the mourner? Do they form negative opinions of the mourner; and, if so, do they sanction him or her? This is especially relevant to adolescents and young adults who are still trying to determine the norms of their cohort and for whom one misstep in such a public manner as Facebook can have profound personal and social consequences among one's peers (Mesch & Talmud, 2006; Hinduja & Patchin, 2008; Walther, Van Der Heide, Kim, Westerman, & Tong, 2008). Furthermore, due to the "context collapse" common on sites like Facebook, users must work harder to present themselves in a way that appeals to a variety of audience, including during a time of grief (Vitak *et al.*, 2012).

1.3. Symbolic Interactionism, Grief Socialization, and Facebook

From a symbolic interactionist framework, people rely on the symbolic meanings of their interaction with others, especially peers, to learn their group's normative behavior. This involves interpretation of positive and negative symbolic feedback, such as language, gestures, and expressions, from others (Blumer, 1969; Erikson, 1968; James *et al.*, 2010; Goodrum, 2008). Positive feedback from others who are important to an individual will cause behavior to be repeated, negative feedback may cause the individual to re-evaluate his or her interpretation of that symbol and possibly change behavior as a result. The more important the people in the interaction are to each other, the stronger the influence of their symbolic reaction to each other (Blumer, 1969; Erikson, 1968; James *et al.*, 2010). With regards to expressions of grief on Facebook, most studies focus on the motivation or potential benefits of these posts on those grieving (Mitchell *et al.*, 2012; Stokes, 2012). Little research exists regarding non-grieving Facebook "friends'" reactions to these grief postings, especially when they are in a more public venue such as wall posts as opposed to web memorials. According to symbolic interactionism, peer negative sanctions for inappropriate Facebook grief posts will help an adolescent realize when he / she has crossed the normative line for grief expression; positive reactions will reinforce the legitimacy of the grief expressions and, possibly, help the individual through the grieving process.

For those Facebook friends who share in the grief, the communal prolonged mourning may be socially supported, thereby changing the definition of grief expression and giving the impression that the cultural norms of grief are changing (Goodrum, 2008). However, those who do not share in the grief, may be less tolerant of the emerging norm of prolonged grieving and may instead

subscribe to the traditional cultural definitions of grief expression (Karp, 1996; Goodrum, 2008). As a result, they may sanction those who prolong grieving by posting comments about “moving on” or “getting over it”, thereby reinforcing the traditional cultural definitions surrounding grief expression. This paper examines the reactions of the non-grieving individuals who see these posts.

Bazarova (2012) is one of the few researchers who studied people’s reactions to disclosure on Facebook, albeit not in a grief setting. Bazarova found that high intimacy disclosures, of which grief would traditionally be considered, were deemed less appropriate in public settings like a wall post than in more private settings such as personal messaging. Bazarova also found that posting material inappropriately negatively affected the receiver’s view of the discloser. In other words, receivers did not like disclosers who posted intimate issues in public as much as they liked disclosers who reserved these posting to more private venues. As stated previously, the prevalence of Facebook memorials has increased (Brubaker & Hayes, 2011; Vitak *et al.*, 2012; Marwick & Ellison, 2012) and these memorials are analogous to other more private Facebook settings because they are frequently only accessible to family and friends of the deceased, which minimizes the viewing of grief by individuals not affected by the event. However, not everyone makes grief comments in these forums; and, it remains unexplored whether non-grieving individuals view grief posts that are *not* in these specialized, intimate settings negatively. Furthermore, research addressing how receivers sanction individuals who post negatively perceived information on Facebook is surprisingly absent, especially since the reaction of others is an important part of socialization, including emotion socialization.

1.4. Research Questions and Design

The material in this paper stems from a larger focus group study of what college students deem to be inappropriate Facebook wall posts and why that was conducted at a small private liberal arts college in Pennsylvania. Students in focus groups were simply initially asked to describe what behavior they considered to be inappropriate to post or share on Facebook in an effort to see if there was consensus as to where they “drew the line” in Facebook appropriateness and why these found these behaviors to be inappropriate. Once students identified specific behaviors, the other focus group members had an opportunity to share their reactions to the identified behavior and comment as to whether or not they too found it to be inappropriate. After this discussion, students were asked how they reacted to these posts. Therefore, the focus group discussions for that study were organized into two broad research questions.

1. What types of posts on Facebook walls do students feel are inappropriate and why?
2. When students see these inappropriate posts, what do they do?

As a result, the focus groups discussed here were not specifically designed to explore expressions of grief on Facebook. However, in the context of these two research questions posed, all but two focus groups raised the topic of grief expressions on Facebook and discussed their reactions to these posts. It is the material from these five (of the seven total) focus groups that serve as the data for this paper.

2. Methods

2.1. Focus Group Recruitment and Sample Description

Following a pattern established by other researchers of college students (Peluchette & Karl, 2010; Bazarova, 2012), students in the author’s classes for the Spring 2014 semester were offered extra credit to participate in a focus group discussion of what they perceived to be inappropriate Facebook posts. This resulted in seven separate focus groups, each of six to eight students, which individually lasted between 45 – 70 minutes. The five focus groups which raised the issues of

Facebook grief expressions consist of a total of 32 students. It is these students, and their comments, that serve as the data for this paper. The majority of the participants in these five groups currently used Facebook (84.4%, n=27); and, of those users, all but one used Facebook at least once a day. All of the remaining students who were not currently using Facebook (n=5) had previously used Facebook, but had stopped within the last 12-18 months for reasons such as job hunting, thinking it was “stupid”, or a potential conflict with a university paid position (e.g. Resident Assistant). While the number of male and female students in the full study are equal (23 students each), the sub-set of groups which mentioned grief in their discussions were more likely to be male (62.5%, n=20); and, although two students did not answer the question about academic year, the majority of students were juniors or seniors (84.4%, n=27). All students are identified by pseudonyms that only reflect their gender.

2.2. Coding

Using an open coding and constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990), all focus group discussions were recorded, transcribed, and read by the author who utilized open coding to create descriptive labels for every reference to grieving on Facebook made in these focus groups. Recurring references, words, and messages were then organized into first into which of the two research questions they addressed and then into themes within these questions. These themes are discussed in the results below.

3. Results

3.1. Research Question: What Constitutes Inappropriate Expressions of Grief

As stated, when asked an open question about what behavior these students identified as inappropriate for Facebook, grieving on Facebook was one topic that the majority of focused groups independently raised. In fact, even in these five focus groups, only a handful (n=6) of the 32 students felt that grieving on Facebook was unconditionally okay.

Cathy: Like if they are taking about a loss of a relative or something, ...I feel like you need support and you kind of want everyone to know, like that's how you reflect on it.

Andrew: You are bringing something that not everyone may know to light. Let's say someone reads that and they are like “oh, the circumstances are like Michael's grieving, maybe I will leave him alone.” Or like now is not the best time to mess with him about something. In that circumstance you are letting people know that you need them to give you your space or check in on you in a couple of days. Or let you know they are there.

The overwhelming majority of students across these groups felt that grieving on Facebook was generally inappropriate, but not so much so that it seriously offended them. This led to the first identified theme, one that I labeled as “tolerated inappropriateness”. Students who expressed tolerated inappropriateness generally felt that Facebook was not an avenue that they would generally use to express grief (hence the inappropriateness of it), but they also felt that people are “free” to use Facebook to express their emotions (hence the tolerance), even if they felt that such expressions weren't something they would do.

Kim: I don't think it [is] the best choice. So I really don't agree with... it in the first place, but if that's [someone's] avenue of doing it, then I am not going to take it away from them.

Seth: ... It is people's personal opinion and their free will... [If] that's how they wanna grieve and go about it, that's their avenue for doing so... personally ...

that's not how I would go about grieving a loss. I'm probably just going to ignore it and kind of think it is dumb.

However, further discussion revealed that "tolerated inappropriateness" depended on the manner in which the grief posting was made. Students were more tolerant of people who used Facebook as a general death notice or a brief show of solidarity. For example:

Glenn: Like if I was grieving I would deal with that in my own form outside of Facebook. ...[But I might post] just to like kind of get the news out there. People that I know would know that person.

Kurt: I know a kid in high school that died, and then like every year they post ... just a "remember" and stuff.

Two specific themes of inappropriateness emerged and were what led students to raise grief on Facebook walls as inappropriate. These themes related to the manner of posts. The first theme was labeled "display drama" and addresses the language used to express grief. Contrary to the tolerance for a rather short posting in memorandum or for notification, students were less supportive when they felt that the grief posts were dramatic. Posts of "display drama" were those where the individual posting would claim that "life was over" or that "life had no meaning" now that the deceased was gone or posts that treated the deceased's passing as something that was "done to" the living.

Jim: If you post something about grieving some people would be like, I saw, "I cannot believe that my life would be so bad, this is the worst month possible. Why is everything happening to me?" Like they were saying how terrible their life is because the person they love lost and like people lose their loved ones and they are saying how terrible their life is and looking for more attention. Like, I'll be OK.

Barb: Facebook literally says "what do you feel?" ... But when you get into something like where it looks like really seeking attention like "this sucks, I'm never gonna be able to do anything anymore after them.

The majority of these students were white; and, their preference for the non-dramatic display of grief is consistent with the white cultural displays noted by other researchers (McIlwain, 2001; Morehouse & Crandall, 2014). However, it should be noted that both African Americans in these focus groups also expressed a preference for non-dramatic grief expressions.

The, second theme relating to the manner of inappropriate posts was labeled "display excessiveness". Display excessive posts were those where the grieving individual failed to "move on" or "get past" the death after what the student perceived as an appropriate time of mourning. Students found it inappropriate when the death was mostly what the person posted about.

Elaine: There was this girl who I know and she kept posting like all of these things ... there is a time and a place for everything.

Barb: You continuously bring it up until people have to keep liking your status and like talking about it then I feel like that's too much. And there's kind of like a limit.

"A time and a place" or a "limit" to grief suggests that, at least among these students, traditional norms of limiting the time for deep grief is still present (Karp, 1996; Goodrum, 2008; Carroll & Landry, 2010; Morehouse & Crandall, 2014). Therefore, even though social media sites make it easier for death to remain in the present (Stokes, 2012; Moorehouse & Crandall, 2014), those who are not the ones grieving still subscribe to an internal concept of when it is "time to move on." When the expected behavior between the audience, here the non-grievors, and the bereaved did not match, views of the post as inappropriate resulted (Goodrum, 2008; Vitak *et al.*, 2012).

Therefore, while a minority of students in the groups that raised grief postings as an issue were unconditionally okay with expressing grief on-line, the majority were not. The majority exhibited “tolerated inappropriateness,” where they felt that grieving on Facebook was not how they would personally handle loss, but they were not prepared to make negative judgments about individuals who acted differently. However, closer inspection revealed that this tolerance depended on the manner in which the grief post was done. These students felt that Facebook grief posts on walls were okay when they were designed to share notification of a death or were a brief memorial. Students were more likely to feel that posts crossed the line to inappropriateness when the manner of the posts was “dramatic” or “excessive”.

3.2. Research Question: Reasons for These Perceptions

The second part of the Research Question 1 asked, why students felt certain posts were inappropriate and here were used to explain why these students viewed dramatic and excessive posts negatively. One explanatory theme was overwhelmingly evident and was labeled “cry for attention”. Students felt that both dramatic and repetitive grief posts were inappropriate because they were an unnecessary cry for attention among the living.

Gerry: I am going to just go out there and say grieving on Facebook is really annoying because ... I mean I have seen it all the time, yes it sucks, dying is part of life, but “RIP, we loved you so much” post a picture, post all of this shit, and you only wanna do it so everyone you know will “like” it and say “I feel so bad for you.” I mean, it’s still the whole attention thing. I hate say it; I mean it’s about something really serious. But let’s be real. You put the thing in the newspaper. People come to the funeral and the wake. And that’s it. That’s always how it’s been.

Elaine: I think that it’s kind of like “look at me. Feel bad for me” tactic because ... I think if you wanted people to help you to grieve or to grieve with you that you could do it like on a more personal level like call them instead of posting it on Facebook.

Gabe: ...a lot of posts out there call for attention.

To these students “cries for attention” took away from the seriousness of death of the individual; and, instead, made it about pitying the living. The perceived blatant need for pity or attention by the grieving was seen as distasteful or inappropriate among these students.

3.3. Research Question: Sanctioning Actions

Once students identified the Facebook grieving practices they considered to be inappropriate, they were asked what type of sanction they gave to the grieving person to let him or her know that, even in grief, he / she crossed a culturally normative line of emotional expression. All of these students admitted to doing nothing when they saw overly dramatic or repetitive posts. In fact, their responses were so succinct that they “didn’t comment,” “ignored it,” or “didn’t do anything” that there is little to elaborate.

Since the overwhelming response was to ignore dramatic or excessive grief posts, students admit to not providing any feedback that would help the grieving person learn they violated a norm of emotional behavior. If indeed this is the case, this study raises interesting considerations for on-line emotional grief socialization. From the symbolic interactionist view, the lack of negative reaction may be construed by the grieving individual as tacit acceptance or support for the behavior (Erikson, 1968; James *et al.*, 2010) which, in turn, may actually eventually lead to new grieving norms since no negative sanctions to support the old norms are given. This is an avenue for future research.

4. Discussion

With the wide use of social network sites such as Facebook and the essentially limitless amount of time on-line profiles can last, the traditional means of mourning may be changing (Morehouse & Crandall, 2014) from a private focus to a more public one. Adolescence and young adulthood are life stages highly influenced by both the media (including online media sites such as Facebook) and peers; and, the reaction to grief posts may influence the developing online norms for grieving. However, most research on grieving focuses on the bereaved. Little is known about the perspectives of non-grievers. This article stems from a broader study of seven separate focus groups of college students regarding the students' perceptions of inappropriate Facebook posts in general in an attempt to see where students "draw the line" and define a post as completely inappropriate. In five of these focus groups (n=32), students, who were predominantly white, male and upperclassmen, identified some aspect of grieving on Facebook walls, as opposed to memorial walls, as inappropriate. As focus groups allow students to raise issues without leading by the researcher, we do not know if any of the students in the other two focus groups would also identify certain aspects of grief posts as inappropriate if that topic had been raised by someone in their group. We only know that on-line grieving in wall posts, for whatever reason, was not considered inappropriate enough in general for someone to be inspired to raise it in discussion in two of the seven focus groups.

Within the five focus groups discussed here, only a few of these college students expressed that grieving on Facebook was unilaterally acceptable; most of the students subscribed to "tolerated inappropriateness" regarding this behavior. These students claim that on-line declarations of grief was not how they would handle a death (hence the "inappropriateness"), but they did not condemn those who choose to do so (hence the "tolerance"). This "tolerated inappropriateness" supports the highly personalized nature of grieving discussed by Stokes (2012).

However, the findings also suggest that there is a limit to this tolerance for personal expression and that traditional notions of appropriate emotional expression and a timeline for grief still remain (Morehouse & Crandall, 2014; Goodrum, 2008; Carroll & Landy, 2010). Student's view of "tolerated inappropriateness" weakens when they perceive the grief expressions to exhibit "display drama" or "display excessiveness". Students felt that these posts were a cry for attention by the living that somehow overshadowed the death of the individual involved.

Symbolic interactionists argue that there are appropriate symbols and means for expressing emotion, such as grief, that are learned. Students' preference for the more sedate and traditional timeline of grief expression suggest that they still subscribe to the emotional socialization of grief that they have learned from their parents, or other significant others, who did not experience adolescence in the age of social media. However, unlike their parents, these students are increasingly experiencing public displays of emotion that are shared in a large setting with mixed levels of personal relation (Marwick & Ellison, 2012). This emerging norm of acceptable public emotion is evident in the tolerance students showed for public emotional expression that they claim they would not individually exhibit. Therefore, these young adults are living in the middle of two different perspectives of emotional expression; and, therefore, need to navigate emotional symbols with opposing messages.

Symbolic interactionism also recognizes that for socialization, feedback from others is important. If socially undesirable behavior is to be stopped, the person exhibiting that behavior has to learn from others that a specific behavior is unacceptable. The second research question asked these students what they did when they encountered behavior on Facebook that they felt was inappropriate. Overwhelmingly, in the instance of grief expression, these students admitted that they did nothing to let the grieving individual know that his / her behavior, whether it was perceived as overly-dramatic or excessive, was inappropriate. Essentially, the non-grievers did not negatively

sanction the grievors in any way. The absence of negative sanctions may implicitly suggest acceptance of the behavior to the grievors (Erikson, 1968; James *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, from a symbolic interactionist point of view, the non-grievors may inadvertently reinforce public, emotional displays of grief on Facebook behavior as appropriate, even when they felt otherwise, thereby, possibly contributing to the development of new, more tolerant norms for expressions of grief. Therefore, these findings suggest that social media may be contributing to the development of new norms of emotion, in this instance grief, expression that is more public than previously practiced. This is important because little research examines the reactions of those who read Facebook posts; instead, the majority of research focuses on the motivations of those who are doing the posting.

While some interesting observations regarding how those not grieving view their Facebook “friends” expressions of grief on Facebook walls, there are clear limitations to this study that prevent the findings from being generalized to a wider college population. Given that this was a focus group design conducted at one small, private college with a relatively small sample size, these findings cannot be generalized to other schools or to a larger population. The themes, however, do suggest the value in conducting further analysis on a larger, more diverse population of non-grieving individuals. Furthermore, this study addressed wall posts, not web memorial pages. Memorial pages on sites like Facebook hope to bridge grieving from the traditionally private to a more modern, semi-private focus. However, most of these students automatically focused on wall posts. Future research could examine whether students view posts differently if they appear on a wall (a more public forum) or a memorial page (a more private forum that is only available to the deceased Facebook friends at the time of death). The role of the lack of sanctions in the possibility of new grief norms emerging also merits future research.

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