



Death 2.0: Facebook Memorial Pages

Sara Koktan
ENG 696 Capstone

An estimated one in seven people worldwide have a Facebook account, specifically 1.86 billion people as of 2016 (Number, 2017). Facebook ushered in social media users in unforeseen numbers, a phenomenon referred to as Web 2.0. Although social media accounts began with college students, now all ages of individuals and companies have a social media presence in order to network and stay in touch with loved ones, friends and contacts. The massive number of Facebook accounts leads to a burgeoning problem: a person dies but their online identity exists. With time, more and more zombie accounts will exist, and to help solve the problem, Facebook offered memorial pages. Memorial pages have caught the attention of anthropologists, marketers, historians, and psychologists who have begun analyzing the wall posts to discover how these virtual graveyards are shifting norms and customs. Wall posts also offer written records for rhetoricians to interpret, but as social media is relatively new, not much has been studied regarding wall posts, particularly in relation to death. This paper looks at different themes scholars have studied within Facebook memorial pages, and more specifically, how Facebook memorial pages are reshaping the way Western culture communicates about death.

I. Social Media and Rhetoric

Unlike the oral culture of Aristotle's time, modern Westerners not only are literate, they also own personal social media accounts in which they write all the time. Social media and online networks have become such a staple in Western society that companies need marketing departments to take care of their Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts. A student graduating with a degree in Communication would be remiss if their classes did not cover social media aspects, but since one in seven people have at least a Facebook account, it is likely that Communication students already know how to navigate social media. Technical communicators are studying aspect of social media related to pedagogy, global relations, small businesses, and large corporations (Kimme Hea, 2014). Modern rhetoricians have taken to studying the writing on social media accounts – from President Trump's tweets to the Black Lives Matter Movement. Kate Drazner Hoyt studied the affect of social media movement #HandsUpDontShoot, which became popular after African-American Michael Brown was shot by a Caucasian police officer, and the hashtag sparked offline protests around the US (Hoyt, 2016). Newspapers use tweets as quotes instead of interviewing people, showing both the importance and norms of social media as an extension of a person. Social media links friends and associates globally and is now one of the main forms of communication.

One way to explain the interconnectedness and spread of information through social media is Actor Network Theory (ANT). ANT means that "any participant – human *and* non-human – in a network is an *actor* who has equal agency to affect that network. Actors are then brought together...to complete specific tasks or work in response to some broader event" (Potts, 2009, p. 98). This means that a social media account, such as a Facebook page, has just as much agency and authority as any human person in the network because the account spreads information and helps facilitate activities. Social media accounts are not isolated; they are just as connected as a human person is to other people in a network. Liza Potts studied how Londoners used social media accounts during the 2005 London metro terrorist bombings, and through their social media posts,

other people were warned to stay away from the bombed area, loved ones were notified who was safe, and a narrative formed around the event which was passed along from one account to another. Posts from people in ground zero ended up on blogs and in newspapers. More importantly, Potts proved through ANT how social media accounts hold equal weight as a living person.

Along with social media accounts having their own authority and agency, they are also an extension of their human creator's identity. Scholars in the Communication field are studying how online identity is shaped by others in a social media network, as well as the human behind the account. For instance, Stephanie Duguay studied how a person's Facebook profile picture determined whether the person was perceived as gay or not (Duguay, 2016). Other scholars studied why a person puts certain pictures or posts online and what impressions they hope to form with these (Dahiya, 2016). Additionally, since any type of social media account can be created for any person, pet, or object, some scholars have noted that an online identity may not represent the human behind it, especially if someone sets up a fake account (Phillips, 2011, p. 79). However, because some social media accounts like Facebook are shaped by the people in the network who write on a person's wall, to some degree an account's identity is out of the account owner's control. Not having control over identity is especially the case after a person dies and their Facebook account becomes memorialized, because other people's posts shape how the dead person will be remembered (Brubaker, Hayes & Dourish, 2013, p. 158). Because a person's Facebook account holds as much agency as a living person according to ANT, and a person's identity is linked with these accounts even after death, the way Westerners communicate about death has shifted due to these immortalized identities.

II. Death Before Social Media

Before social media, death in a Westernized country came with recognized customs to the people there: a person died, their funeral followed within the next few days, relatives and friends gathered at the funeral home to remember the deceased, and the deceased was buried in the ground. An obituary appeared in the paper, remembering the deceased person with a short bio, which was usually written by a family member. At the funeral, pictures of the deceased would normally be displayed, and varying groups of people would show up to support the living loved ones and perhaps share stories about the deceased. After the funeral, the pictures would go out of sight. It varied whether loved ones talked about the deceased or not in the following years. Grief support groups existed, but a person would have to seek them out and physically attend meetings. Additionally, the living could find support through their religious organization (Stillion & Attig, 2014, p. 234). In studying grief, psychologists coined *continuing bonds theory*, which refers to a relationship continuing between the living and deceased after a person dies. It is widely believed continuing bonds exist rather than the relationship ending abruptly; instead, the relationship alters (Stillion & Attig, 2014, p. 36). Conversely, a living person could also be considered "dead" with what sociologists refer to it as a *social death* (Stillion & Attig, 2014, p. 35). This refers to the deceased person's identity being lost, such as with Alzheimer's or a coma. Although living, their identity and personality have died.

III. Death After Social Media

With the advent of social media, concepts of a *social death* and *continuing bonds* take a new twist when the social media accounts exist partly outside of the living person. Identities are particularly evident with Facebook accounts, which have been around the longest and include pictures, posts, instant messages, and other features that showcase the user's personality. Facebook is the largest social media company globally and was founded in February 2004 by Harvard student Mark Zuckerberg (Koplowitz, 2012). Although Facebook started as a Harvard-only group, it soon expanded to include all the Ivy League colleges, then all American universities, and eventually the general public. In 2009, after many of their users had died, the company created memorial pages (Koplowitz, 2012). Converting a deceased user's account to a memorial page deleted all the account content, and a surviving Facebook friend designated as the memorial page administrator had to upload pictures and new content. There was a space for people who belonged to this group to write on a new wall (automatically all the dead person's Facebook friends belonged to the converted memorial page). This was the track of a private remembrance page, but strangers could create a public memorial page, too. For these second types of pages, anyone could join, and the deceased person's regular Facebook account would not be touched or deleted. Without algorithms to detect who was joining these public pages or what they were posting, swaths of undesirable people entered the public memorial groups. Some of these people were referred to as *grief strangers* because they saw the person's death on T.V. and felt wrapped up in the story. More vicious grief tourists, called trolls, created fake Facebook accounts and harassed the family and grief strangers in these groups. Facebook has since developed more complex algorithms to delete the fake trolling accounts faster.

As of 2017, Facebook modified their memorial pages and have started referring to them as *memorialized accounts*. The deceased person's posts and pictures stay intact, and the word "Remembering" appears under the deceased's picture. The account will not appear in pop-ups asking other people to become friends with this person or remember their birthday (Facebook, 2017). Before a person dies, they can designate their legacy contact, who will get a message through Facebook notifying them that they will have administrative rights to the memorial page after their friend dies. A legacy contact can write a pinned post for the memorial page, update the profile picture and cover photo, as well as respond to new friend requests (Facebook, 2017). They cannot log into the original account, see messages, remove past posts/photos, or remove friends. Alternatively, instead of choosing a legacy contact, a person can opt to have their account deleted upon their death. After the user dies, the legacy contact (or anyone who can prove they are a relative or close friend of the deceased) must upload the death certificate to Facebook headquarters. Then, Facebook staff will convert the deceased user's account to a private memorial page, or delete the account if the user chose that option before they died. However, anyone can still create public memorial pages, and they are still subject to strangers joining.

Evolving Norms

Now that Facebook accounts continue to exist after a person dies, an administrator is necessary to maintain the memorial page. One reason to monitor the page is that online identities and information, which were usually private, are now available for more of the public to view (Irwin, 2015, p. 123). Some administrators likened maintaining a memorial page to how a relative tends a garden or a gravesite (Bell, Bailey & Kennedy, 2015, p. 380). Administrators would have to monitor what was posted, as well as post items themselves if they felt the page was becoming inactive. The etiquette to online mourning is still evolving. Examining the wall posts show that mourning rituals are becoming less formalized since they moved online. However, some behaviors are seen as too eerie. In interviews with students with access to memorial pages, Natalie Pennington (2013) discovered that if the administrator actively controlling the deceased Facebook page posted contents as the deceased (because they had the passwords), it increased grieving for the community and was unnerving (p. 625).

Another evolving norm is the use of wall posts to spread information. Whereas before a short obituary in the paper was static and short, many people communicate through the deceased person's Facebook wall by posting facts about funerals and other relevant details pertaining to the dead person. Additionally, users post information about services years after the death and reference important holidays and anniversaries. The memorial page account remaining "alive" and active parallels Liza Potts study of Actor Network Theory because it has just as much agency to affect something as an actual person in real life. Once a person dies, their account still "lives" and has a voice and power within the Facebook network. Some Facebook account administrators mentioned that they used the memorial pages to post awareness messages about the illness of their deceased to raise money or serve a larger purpose (Frost, 2014, p. 260; Marwick & Ellison, 2012, p. 387). Interviews of family members who tended memorial pages of suicide victims showed that the page administrators posted inspirational messages in hopes of curbing more suicides (Bell et al., 2015, p. 380). Mourners also wrote posts regarding the actual death, anniversaries, and missing the deceased (Castro & Gonzalez, 2012, p. 358).

Evolving Bonds

Now that mourning has entered a sphere of recorded writing via wall posts, psychologists are confirming their continuing bonds theory, which states that relationships between a living and dead person evolve after the death rather than end abruptly. Many scholars have analyzed wall posts, and there is a recurring category of posts directed at the deceased (DeGroot 2, 2014; Rossetto, Lannutti & Strauman, 2015). Examining the rhetoric of wall postings, Kern found that most people posted in the second person in memorial pages. These would include messages like "watch over us from heaven" (Kern, Forman & Gil-Egui, 2013, p. 8). In fact, second person outnumbered first and third person 2:1. They believed people wrote this "as a way to converse with the dead" within Facebook (Kern et al., 2013, p. 8). Furthermore, analyzing wall posts found that bonds with the deceased last years, whereas before there was a notion in Western culture that grieving traditionally subsists after one year (Bouc, Han & Pennington, 2016, p. 642).

Writing messages to the deceased has also opened doors about Western culture's relationship with the spiritual world. Sociologist Melissa Irwin (2015) writes that in Western culture, "individuals lack the cultural framework in which to incorporate the paranormal copresence of the deceased into their lives, unlike in other cultures where the spirit world is embraced and incorporated" (p. 124). She mentions that an emphasis on denying the spirit world has transferred over into people not talking about death at all. But the overwhelming messages to the dead indicate that many users believe in a spiritual world and have a need to talk about the deceased: "many Wall postings address the deceased in the present tense, further confirming the generally nonexplicit notion that posters believe a paranormal copresence exists" (p. 131). Facebook memorial pages are now providing a space to talk about the deceased. Additionally, analysis of rhetoric over time shows that writing to the deceased is a category that persists, even after no one in the group writes to the other group members.

One reason for writing to the deceased was that the past pictures and posts made the deceased still seem alive. Brubaker and Hayes (2013) noted that visiting a Facebook page was like walking into the bedroom of a dead friend: it brought back many memories. Castro and Gonzalez (2012) also concluded that some friends visit a Facebook page much like someone would visit a cemetery, and so the writing may be what a person would say at a gravesite. Mourners can view pictures of their loved one and remember happier times. Calming images have been known to help with grief, a practice common in Western culture for centuries. This digital landscape is just shifting the focus a bit (Church, 2013). A widower noted in an interview, "'We don't have to navigate winding roads and marble headstones to [visit my wife]. Instead, we just click from any device and see her, remember her, leave messages, and smile or cry at what was and what has become'" (Buck, 2013, p. 1). Not only has Facebook become a virtual graveyard, but it is only a convenient click away to seeing pictures and posts, almost like a memoir.

In trying to understand why a person writes to the deceased on their wall, DeGroot (2012) theorized that writing was a way for the living to renegotiate their identity without the deceased in it (p. 204). There were many postings of memories and phrases like "I love you" (p. 205). She also coded a category called "updates," which included the living posting what new things happened in their life, but usually contained a promise that they will never forget the deceased (p. 206). She reasoned this is for the benefit of the living person who fears disrespecting the memory of a loved one by replacing them.

Evolving Group Dynamics

Virtual spaces are shifting group dynamics from what a traditional funeral would normally see. One study looked specifically at presumed power and context collapse within memorial page groups. Context collapse occurs when audiences with different relationships to a Facebook user mesh into one space on an equal level (Marwick & Ellison, 2012, p. 379). For instance, the deceased user's boss, grandmother, and acquaintance could all be the deceased person's Facebook friends, and after death belong to the memorial page. Marwick and Ellison (2012) coined *hierarchy of legitimacy* where

they studied who had the most authority within the memorial pages. Strangers had the least power on the page, whereas a close friend or relative carried a strong ethos, and therefore power within the group. For instance, if a stranger identified themselves as not knowing the deceased and then inserted a comment, it could get negative feedback from the other memorial page members. However, if someone identified themselves as a relative of the deceased, nothing they said was contested. In some cases, they could save or break a stranger's comments with a comment of their own, and what the relative said was held in high regard (Marwick & Ellison, 2012, p. 389). Unlike traditional funerals, people tried to prove they knew the deceased better than other people (p. 393), and several equated the number of "likes" their post received to love for the deceased person (p. 386).

However, in studying Facebook memorial page wall posts and interviewing dozens of people, most researchers found that the memorial pages functioned as a necessary support to all group members. Communication professors Rossetto, Lannutti, and Strauman (2015) claim "Facebook helped [participants in their study] make connections with other mourners and to feel they were not alone in their grief" (p. 984). They reasoned that the wall posts functioned as public diary entries, but other users could read them and see how others were grieving and then express their own feelings (p. 985). An isolated person would benefit the most from an online community, especially if they had no other means of connecting with people for support. This additionally shows how Western cultural norms of "moving on" after a death and not talking about it are shifting. However, Pennington's (2013) interviews unveiled that only 10% of mourners wrote on a wall, mostly because they didn't know the person well or thought grief should be private. Still, none of her participants said they would unfriend the dead, pointing to a tie with this community (p. 620).

Since not everyone has a Facebook account, the conversation on memorial pages is limited to certain demographics. In 2012, a study found that out of 550 Facebook pages, there were three times more memorial pages for Caucasian men than any other category (Kern et al., 2013, p. 6). The researchers believed this may be because other men used memorial pages as a mourning space because it's culturally frowned upon for men to discuss their feelings verbally. Interestingly, the memorial page administrators were equally male and female, and the researchers thought more would be managed by women. Overall, 42.36% of their studied profilers had died sudden deaths, and most were under 25 years old (Kern et al., 2013, p. 7). This may be due to more young people having social media accounts at that time, or perhaps the shock of a sudden death spurred loved ones to create a memorial page instead of closing the profile or leaving the profile alone. These statistics will likely change as more older users get Facebook accounts. A follow-up 2016 study by Kern and Gil-Egui (2016) found that most memorial pages are still for young men who died violently, but now they are more often maintained by women.

The newest and most affected demographic by virtual memorial spaces are teenagers. Mardi Frost (2014) studied counseling in Australian schools and advocates adopting cyber policies to teach students how to handle death when they meet a post-mortem online identity. She says adolescents need "appropriate conventions for creating, joining

or commenting on a Facebook memorial page” if a student in the community dies (p. 261). With visible online memorial pages, this may be the first death an adolescent has experienced, and it will be common to mourn them. Celebrity profiles are especially visible and can traumatize a young person (p. 260). Frost mentions that Facebook memorial pages offer a wonderful landscape for teenagers to share opinions and find a support group regarding the death. Irwin (2015) seconds this by saying Facebook is a “constructive way for the younger generation to both confront and make meaning out of someone’s death, even if they have never met the deceased” (p. 126). Since the younger generation tend to be more vocal online, this support group could be more helpful to their age demographic than an older person. The online space creates a sense of anonymity and could put more people at ease when sharing their feelings rather than face-to-face interactions.

IV. New Features of Death 2.0

Not only have Western culture norms surrounding death shifted due to social media, but a new field called *thanatosensitivity* has emerged. Thanatosensitivity means the “area in which [Human Computer Interaction] researcher, computer systems, death-related issues converge” (Castro & Gonzalez, 2012, p. 355). One area of thanatosensitivity Pennington (2013) studied was whether or not a living person would unfriend a deceased user’s account. Interviews with dozens of college students came to the same conclusion: “you do not defriend someone just because they died” (p. 624). They felt a new bond with the person, even if they were not real friends. Some reasons for this were wanting to see notification updates, and it also might be that the deceased could never add them back as a friend. However, another research group found a person who agonized over unfriending a dead person’s account, and they eventually did unfriend them to avoid the constant memorial page notifications (Brubaker et al., 2013, p. 158).

Some mourners have become addicted to the memorial pages, relying on the writings and emotional support of the group members. Immediately after their loved one died, mourners felt supported and that their deceased loved one was valued. However, when the posts and attention to the page started waning, they said it was traumatic: the “deceased’s postself provides meaning for the mourners through persisting via being remembered” (Bell et al., 2015, p. 383). Mourners addicted to the memorial page claimed that if the memorial page was deleted, it felt like a “second death” (p. 383). Several researchers expressed that many mourners believe the deceased are in a virtual vortex and are still present: “participants described how the continued presence of the deceased person’s Facebook page made that person seem as if he or she was frozen or trapped in a virtual world” (Rossetto et al., 2015, p. 393). This is not the case in traditional burials when a deceased person’s words and photos are displayed for a few hours, normally during a funeral visitation before the burial.

Intrusive Groups

Unlike traditional funerals, Facebook memorial pages (especially public groups) offer a chance for large numbers of complete strangers to join and become members of the

mourning process. DeGroot (2014) coined the term *emotional rubbernecker*s to define a person that joined a Facebook memorial page who did not know the deceased. These emotional rubbernecker>s identified themselves as friends of a deceased's friend. Sometimes they saw a story about the deceased's death on the news and felt compelled to look him or her up. She found that they mostly left positive comments and lent support (DeGroot, 2014, p. 82). She theorized that memorial pages offered them a chance to mourn for their own loved ones who suffered from a similar death, a death which they had not been able to process. Posts left by strangers were more commonly addressed to the memorial page's author or the rest of the group rather than the deceased directly, indicating the emotional rubbernecker's motive of lending support to the living (Brubaker et al., 2013, p. 154).

Possibly the newest and most intrusive groups are trolls. Ethnographer Whitney Phillips (2011) went undercover in the trolling community in 2010/2011 to decipher social norms of the subculture by analyzing their wall posts and then interviewing them after she outed herself as a researcher. She noticed that these trolls were mostly men who felt bored, although some had been diagnosed as clinically antisocial. These trolls set up fake Facebook accounts, joined a public memorial group, and then heckled the dead person and the mourners within the memorial pages. Some trolls she interviewed said that they did this because grief strangers were not really in mourning, because they joined a public memorial page after hearing about the death on the news. The trolls felt like vigilantes calling out these fake mourners. After Facebook would delete these troll accounts, the trolls would recreate them with similar names, so the trolls began to recognize each other. Phillips coined *trollercausts* to describe when hundreds of accounts were deleted and recreated relating to a high profile death.

Fake accounts exist beyond the trolling sphere. Phillips (2011) found that random people could hijack an identity to a high profile death and create memes on porn websites. These memes were some of the items trolls reposted in the memorial page groups. Intrusive online behavior has led to stronger laws in differing countries, which brings up another discussion point: because the online community is accessible the world over, which laws pertain to which individuals? Phillips noticed that a troll in the US would send Facebook memorial page notices to trolls in Australia, Britain, etc., and soon a death would become trans-national (p. 76). Australia became the first nation to take action. In a case where a troll photoshopped a penis onto an old photo of a deceased girl, the troll was charged with child pornography and sentenced to prison. The US does not have these types of laws for the online world, and Phillips further noticed that this made US trolls more relaxed in their behaviors, whereas in Australia the trolls are less frequent but more aggressive because they have the most to lose, and they might as well go all in.

Trolls must be reported to Facebook headquarters by memorial page group members, but the administrator alone has the power to delete the hurtful posts. Cases where the memorial page owners did not monitor "often resulted in pages that were dominated by trolls and comments from participants pleading with the profile owner to take action" (Marwick & Ellison, 2012, p. 391). Facebook has changed its algorithms to catch trolls quicker, but it's important to note that some Facebook friends could fall into the grief

strangers category. They may not know the deceased well or at all, but write on the wall to get attention for themselves. Rossetto et al. (2015) described these as *bandwagon mourners*, who were “often perceived as people trying to gain undeserved attention and sympathy (p. 986). This made friends of the deceased weary of privacy protection and information.

Note that trolls leave negative messages, whereas emotional rubberneckers leave positive messages. DeGroot (2014) mentioned that some grief tourists visit these groups because seeing other people’s pain (known as *mourning sickness*) makes them feel better about their own lives, a concept coined *grief porn* (p. 80). Kern and Gil-Egui (2016) in a 2016 study of hundreds of Facebook memorial page wall posts noted that women carried the most negative and inflammatory sayings, even though they were not trolls. This could be likened to a graveside brawl, yet many times these women are not close to the deceased. It is also similar to road rage, but within a virtual memorial space.

Control

Another hurdle to address is who controls the data of a deceased person. Facebook “limits and shapes the ways the users can interact” and “gives enormous control to the page creator (Marwick & Ellison, 2012, p. 396). When trolls or anyone else posts unsavory responses, the only person who can delete the posts is the memorial page administrator. For public pages, this could be anyone who randomly created the page, and they may not have much invested in it after a while. Conversely, having a survivor update the live (non-memorial page) Facebook account of a dead friend was found unnerving (Pennington, 2013, p. 625). Additionally, since even private Facebook information is easy for the public to see, strangers could steal a deceased person’s information. Marwick and Ellison (2012) categorized Facebook accounts into the following characteristics: persistent (always there, pop-ups), replicable (trolls pose as deceased, anyone can claim they knew the deceased), scalable (potential to be viewed by large audiences), and searchable (easily found by strangers) (p. 396-397). These categories show how keeping information private is tricky.

Segueing into deeper data issues, Facebook headquarters owns all of the deceased person’s information. In *The Information Society*, an international journal, Grant David Bollmer (2013) writes, “in the face of death, online information is revealed not only as a separate [*sic.*] from that of the user, but as controlled and possessed by the network itself” (p. 145). Actually, Facebook owns everyone’s information at all times because in order to create an account, a person must check a box that legally hands over their data to them. However, there were some cases where a parent sued Facebook for access into their deceased child’s account, but the judge ruled that Facebook legally does not need to give that out (Bollmer, 2013). The only way to not have information floating around is for the user to delete it all while they are alive.

Another new feature of Web 2.0 is that the deceased person’s identity is out of the control of the dead person. Their identity will grow and shift as more people post stories (Brubaker et al., 2013, p. 158). However, this means that representation is made by

everyone but the deceased, who also cannot moderate the content. Some loved ones describe these additional stories positively because they learn different facets of the deceased person's life. The stories will stay in writing, meaning no one will forget, and they can be easily returned to, much like a memoir. Nevertheless, group members creating the deceased person's identity "shift control over how a person will be remembered, from a carefully crafted obituary written by a family member and published in a static, broadcast medium, to a free-for-all discussion forum" (Marwick & Ellison, 2012, p. 379). This leaves room for stories that shine a negative light on the dead or their relatives. If the user had thousands of weak friendship ties, the odds of negative postings may increase. If the page administrator is not vigilant, then any negative postings would last forever.

Additionally, control over the grief process is taken away from living Facebook account holders. Death may be depersonalized because an individual may learn about it sandwiched between unrelated memes, photos, and posts (Rossetto et al., 2015, p. 987). Rossetto's team found that pop-up reminders were especially unhelpful in allowing the living to move on (p. 989). Individuals cannot grieve on their own terms because of these daily reminders, and this can lead to maladaptation. Or, by forcing the public to confront the loss constantly, it could make a person "move toward the extremes of confrontation or avoidance" (Rossetto et al., 2015, p. 986). All in all, the natural grief process has been hijacked from individuals by the online forum.

V. Conclusion

As Web 2.0 becomes more established in the lives of Western culture, it has ushered in the new phenomenon of online identities existing in an immortal state after their human counterpart dies. Applying Actor Network Theory means these accounts hold as much agency as a living person within the Facebook network. Viewing the memorial pages as an extension of a person's identity means that a living person must tend the page after a person dies. Although a relatively new field, rhetoricians are starting to study aspects of social media, but they should also focus on memorial pages. Analyzing the rhetoric on these pages could inform Westerners about their shifting cultural traits. Death has become interactive, support groups have formed, and narratives have been written. New questions regarding control of content and intrusive groups have also emerged. As time goes on, Death 2.0 and virtual spaces will probably reach every facet of Western life and a person will need to plan their Facebook memorial page much like they need to plan a will. As a Facebook employee once mentioned at the unveiling of memorial pages, "When someone leaves us, they don't leave our memories or our social networks" (Phillips, 2011, p. 73).

Works Cited

- Bell, J., Bailey, L. & Kennedy, D. (2015). "We do it to keep him alive": Bereaved individuals' experiences of online suicide memorials and continuing bonds. *Mortality* 20 (4): 375-389. doi:10.1080/13576275.2015.2083693
- Bouc, A., Han, S., & Pennington, N. (2016). "Why are they commenting on his page?": Using Facebook profile pages to continue connections with the deceased." *Computers in Human Behavior*, 62, 635-643.
doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.04.027>
- Buck, S. (2013, February 13). How 1 billion people are coping with death and Facebook. Retrieved 21 October 2015, from <http://mashable.com/2013/02/13/facebook-after-death/#mDFYZJHihiqu>
- Bollmer, G. D. (2013). Millions now living will never die: Cultural anxieties about the afterlife of information. *The Information Society*, 29(3), 142-151.
doi:10.1080/01972243.2013.777297
- Brubaker, J. R., Hayes, G. R., & Dourish, P. (2013). Beyond the grave: Facebook as a site for the expansion of death and mourning. *The Information Society*, 29(3), 152-163. doi:10.1080/01972243.2013.777300
- Castro, L. A., & Gonzalez, V. M. (2012). Afterlife presence on Facebook: A preliminary examination of wall posts on the deceased's profiles. *22nd International Conference on Electrical Communications and Computers (CONIELECOMP)*, 2012, 355-360. doi:10.1109/CONIELECOMP.2012.6189938
- Church, S. H. (2013). Digital gravescapes: Digital memorializing on Facebook. *The Information Society*, 29(3), 184-189. doi:10.1080/01972243.2013.777309
- Dahiya, S. (2016). Real vs. ideal self: A study of identity creation and desired images on Facebook. *Journal of Applied Journalism & Media Studies* 5(1), 85-102.
- Degroot, J. M. (2012). Maintaining relational continuity with the deceased on Facebook. *OMEGA - Journal of Death and Dying*, 65(3), 195-212. doi:10.2190/OM.65.3.c
- DeGroot, J. M. (2014). "For whom the bell tolls": Emotional rubbernecking in facebook memorial groups. *Death Studies*, 38(2), 79-84.
doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07481187.2012.725450>
- Duguay, S. (2016). "He has a way gayer Facebook than I do": Investigating sexual identity disclosure and context collapse on a social networking site. *New Media & Society*, 18(6), 891-907.
- "Facebook." *Memorialized Accounts*. Facebook, n.d. Web. 10 Mar. 2017.

- Frost, M. (2014). The grief grapevine: Facebook memorial pages and adolescent bereavement. *Australian Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 24(2), 256-265. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/jgc.2013.30>
- Hoyt, K. (2016). The affect of the hashtag: #HandsUpDontShoot and the body in peril. *Explorations in Media Ecology*, 15(1), 33-54.
- Irwin, M. D. (2015). Mourning 2.0—Continuing bonds between the living and the dead on Facebook. *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying*, 72(2), 119-150. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0030222815574830>
- Kern, R., Forman, A. E., & Gil-Egui, G. (2013). R.I.P.: Remain in perpetuity. Facebook memorial pages. *Telematics and Informatics*, 30(1), 2-10. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2012.03.002>
- Kern, R. L., & Gil-Egui, G. (2016). Women behaving badly: Negative posts on Facebook memorial pages. *Information, Communication & Society*, , 1-15. doi:10.1080/1369118X.2016.1257040
- Kimme Hea, A. C. (2014). Social media in technical communication. *Technical Communication Quarterly*, 23(1), 1-5. doi:10.1080/10572252.2014.850841
- Koplowitz, H. (2012, May). A timeline of Facebook history: From fledgling startup to \$114 billion giant. *International Business Times*. Web. 06 Dec. 2015.
- Marwick, A., & Ellison, N. B. (2012). “There isn't wifi in heaven!” negotiating visibility on Facebook memorial pages. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 56(3), 378-400. doi:10.1080/08838151.2012.705197
- Number of monthly active Facebook users worldwide as of 4th quarter 2016 (in millions). (2017, January). Retrieved March 11, 2017, from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/264810/number-of-monthly-active-facebook-users-worldwide/>
- Pennington, N. (2013). You don't de-friend the dead: An analysis of grief communication by college students through facebook profiles. *Death Studies*, 37(7), 617-635. doi:10.1080/07481187.2012.673536
- Potts, L. (2009). Using actor network theory to trace and improve multimodal communication design. *Technical Communication Quarterly*, 18(3), 281-301. doi:10.1080/10572250902941812
- Phillips, W. (2011). LOLing at tragedy: Facebook trolls, memorial pages and resistance to grief online. *First Monday*, 16(12).

- Rossetto, K. R., Lannutti, P. J., & Strauman, E. C. (2015). Death on Facebook: Examining the roles of social media communication for the bereaved. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 32(7), 974-994.
doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0265407514555272>
- Stillion, J. M. & Attig, T. (2014). *Death, Dying, and Bereavement: Contemporary Perspectives, Institutions, and Practices*. 1st ed. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.