

## E-(ternal) grieving: The digitalization and redefining of death and loss on social media

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><i>Keywords:</i> grieving death sociocultural norm social media</p>	<p>The practice of grieving from a socio-cultural perspective is never an impersonal matter. The attachment to different organized values and habits prevents the individual from determining the attitudes and emotions that must be shown when grieving. This fact raises the question of the place of traditional mourning practices in society amidst the invasion of new technologies, i.e. social media. The study uses qualitative methods to analyze some Instagram content related to mourning the loss of several public figures in Indonesia. In the case studies examined, the contribution of big technology gives us autonomy, but it is only a phantasmagorical one. Ultimately, our identities will continue to control what we do in cyberspace and in the natural world. Social media is only an alternative space for the manifestation of correlated socio-cultural values, including the implementation of norms in mourning. Nevertheless, the freshness offered in the practice of mourning on social media is that people can now immerse themselves in a longer liminal period and preserve the communication and social status of the deceased with the available function of perpetual mourning. The results of the study should stimulate further research on how technology can shape society in the digital age.</p>

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## Introduction

Death is a universal and permanent phenomenon. However, the interweaving of social, cultural, and historical dimensions makes the process of transitioning from life to death unique and complicated within a social group order. Because grief is part of a series of rites of passage for death, the multidimensional aspects of the experience of loss are inevitable (Bonanno, 2001). The involvement of social institutions-family, religious group, ethnic group-creates the urgency of a ritual in the acceptance of a new social status for the deceased and the bereaved. Thus, death cannot be interpreted simply as a natural phase of the soul's release from the physical body.

With solid communal values in the ceremonial interpretation of death and mourning, individual symbolic expressions can still emerge, but only within certain norms. Disappointment, sadness, happiness, serenity, and other types of emotions that can illustrate the ritual process of death have been arranged in this way on behalf of the collective mind. Robert Hertz (1960) and Alfred Radcliffe-Brown (1964) showed that participation in rituals is essential for recognizing social cohesion and building feelings of mutual connectedness among groups. For example, Radcliffe-Brown's research on mourning norms in the Andaman Islands showed the necessity of displaying sad expressions to emphasize social bonds between two or more people (Radcliffe-Brown, 1964:240). Similar rules apply to some groups in Arab society; family members are compelled to weep loudly when someone in the family dies as a symbol of deep grief (Parkes, 1997).

Organized grieving norms controlled by collective consciousness are also emerging in Indonesian society. In the context of the Toraja people, they do not have to go through the liminal phase of grieving rigidly. Family

members have the luxury of processing loss slowly. The idea that someone who has stopped breathing must immediately undergo a funeral ritual does not exist among the Torajan. Conversely, Torajan funerals may be delayed until family members are able to emotionally accept the reality of the deceased's death. If the family is still grieving, the body of the deceased will live with the family for years (Budiman, 2013). On the other hand, the corpse is treated like a living person: cared for, fed, and clothed. The Torajan believe that this tradition could ease the mourning process.

However, we are facing the modern era in which relationships between individuals may no longer be based on mechanical solidarity but on organic ones (Pope & Johnson, 1983). The heterogeneity of characters in modern society makes it difficult for individuals to feel connected to each other. A set of rules and norms that bind the integrity of the community has lost its role because each individual has been able to create his own rules. In a society with an organic pattern of solidarity, the principle of interdependence is no longer stimulated by various rituals, but depends on each person's expertise (Durkheim, 1984). In other words, society becomes more individualized and has more space to create its desired personhood without considering existing rules and norms as barriers.

Although modernity seems to offer a sweet promise of individual freedom, the symbolic emotions in recent death and mourning rituals are still clothed in the effervescence of the group. We tend to maintain relationships with deceased figures, and the norms of mourning have not disappeared, but mutated in a new social space. Cultivated and inherited social solidarity succeeds in repressing what feels genuine to the personal and puts moral pressure on oneself to behave in accordance with the collective and respected

symbols (Durkheim, 1965). This argument is supported by Bloch and Parry's (1982) statement that ritual is a source of social control that encourages the birth of emotional responses for certain groups of people so as to restrict natural individual expression.

Therefore, this article will further examine how the form of reconfiguration of Indonesian society in the interpretation of death rituals, especially when showing the grief experienced by oneself through existing technological features, i.e., Instagram. This transformation challenges the tradition of preserving grief by maintaining a relationship with the "anima" of the deceased through symbolic communication with elements of culture, belief, and community (grave pilgrimage, requiem, *ceng beng*, and *tahlilan*). On the other hand, the presence of mediatization practices in social media also has the potential to preserve conventional mourning traditions and their intrinsic values. In other words, this article will show how Instagram has become a cultural museum that displays a variety of individual emotional fossils that mediate specific values and norms without being limited by the time of visitation.

## Method

This article is based on a qualitative study using discourse analysis, resulting from observations on social media, especially Instagram. Specifically, the aspects observed are forms of cultural expansion and transformation in mourning rituals on social media in relation to conservative norms, using a typical Durkheimian social function as a reference. The first stage began with the collection of data related to previous research to find out the dynamics of changes in behaviors and traditions in the interpretation of death rituals and feelings of grief before and after the presence of social media. In the second stage, the author conducted

a specific investigation on Instagram of celebrities and famous figures in Indonesia who have passed away and the reactions of grief from those around them. The objects that are the focus of the study are not limited to photo content, but also words in the form of captions or comments on Instagram accounts. Furthermore, the analysis stage was conducted by categorizing the types of norms that appear on social media regarding grief by Anna J. M. Wagner (2018): norms of mourning practices, norms of grief content, and norms of reactions to grief content.

The selection of public figures as the focus of the study was based on the consideration that the interest in the life stories of public figures is enormous and has its magnet, making it easier to see new types of mourning habits. After the process of filtering the research subjects, there are nine public figures (Rahmawati Soekarnoputri, Emmeril Kahn, Reza Gunawan, Edelenyi Laura, Vanessa Angel, Dorce Gamalama, Ashraf Sinclair, Ani Yudhoyono, and Nike Ardilla) whose death significantly triggered a new type of grieving in Indonesia, as well as the practice of memorializing the deceased on Instagram by the bereaved. Specifically, the Instagram accounts that were sources of data research included @ataliapr, @edinlaura.things, @deelestari, @fashion.vanessaangel, @ashrafsinclair, @aniyudhoyono, @nikeardilla\_real, and @kumparancom and several YouTube accounts as additional information references (Bung Karno University and Curhat Bang Denny Sumargo channels).

From the aforementioned theoretical framework, the symbols embedded in images and words in Instagram accounts should not be treated and studied as pure social media content, but as a form of communication; as Marshall McLuhan (1964) says, 'the medium is the message'. With its distinctive character in Instagram, it has crucial implications for the contribution of the role of media, among

other institutions in society, in the context of mourning practices in the digital age through the mediatization of different types of social media content that function through the platform's features (Hjarvard, 2008).

## Results and Discussion

### *Grieving as a tradition and collective norm*

The preservation of mourning can be seen as a way of establishing and maintaining an enduring symbolic relationship with the deceased. Romanof and Terenzio (1998) emphasized that aspects of the continuity of this relationship can be preserved and have become a function of the existence of rituals. This attitude is assumed to be an intentional matter. It is supported by various social science evidence that the deceased can never really be separated from the living (Kiong & Schiller, 1993): ancestor worship, mummification, the concept of the spirit soul, and totemism. The willingness of the bereaved to remain in this liminal state can be traced back to prehistoric times, when there was a tradition of constructing special tombs that served to revisit deceased figures (kings, soldiers, traditional leaders, religious leaders) and to maintain previous relationships (Lewis-Williams & Pearce, 2005).

In Indonesia, as explained earlier, the cultural ritual of mourning at the liminal stage is also practiced by the Torajan. In addition, the Berawan people of Borneo have a tradition of letting go of the deaths of members of their tribal group in stages. Even though they know the person is no longer alive, they do not automatically treat them as dead. The bodies are placed in a clay jar in the corner of their slash-and-burn garden until they decompose (O'Boyle, 2014). This process certainly takes a long time for the remains of the bodies to disintegrate. The next stage,

secondary burial, occurs when the dry bones have been collected and placed in a coffin for permanent burial with the ancestors. At this stage, the bereaved ceremonially complete the mourning period by performing rituals and large feasts (Metcalf, 1976).

In addition to being cultural, rituals at the time of death in Indonesia are generally controlled by the influence of religion, which is acculturated with a community group's traditions and local beliefs. In particular, the Javanese are still taught traditional values and communal religious rituals about offering food to ritual participants and metaphorically to the dead and ancestral spirits (called *slametan/tahlilan*). It is usually performed at each transitional life cycle such as birth, marriage, and death (Nasir, 2019). The purpose of this ritual is to seek blessings and achieve a state of well-being in the new chapter of life. There is an argument that the *slametan/tahlilan* is the core of Javanese religious ritual, which is influenced by a number of interrelated Javanese animistic, Hindu, and mystical beliefs (Geertz, 1960). Other findings show that this ritual is syncretic, incorporating Hindu-Javanese norms and Islamic teachings (Hilmy, 1998).

Specifically, in the context of Javanese society's death rituals, the *slametan* is performed in stages beginning on the 1st day of death, 3rd day, 7th day, 40th day, 100th day, 1st year, up to the 1000th day. The meaning of the *slametan* on the third day is to pay respect to the deceased, where it is believed that the soul is still in the house and starts wandering around looking for a way to leave the house. On the seventh day, *slametan* is performed to pay homage to the spirit of the deceased (who begins to leave the house) by reciting the holy phrase of Tahlil (*laa ilaaha illallah*, meaning there is no God truly worthy of worship except Allah) with the hope that God will forgive the sins of the deceased. The 40th day *slametan* is meant to pay homage to the spirit of the deceased who



has begun to leave the courtyard and move toward the grave. The 100th day *slametan* is meant to pay homage to the soul already in the grave, but it is believed that the soul often returns to the family home until the 2nd year *slametan* is performed. The soul is considered to have truly left the family after the 1000-day *slametan* is performed (Layungkuning, 2013:118-19). This ritual also marks the end of the deceased's liminal stage, and his or her absence in the world is considered absolute.

The mourning of the bereaved is strictly and systematically regulated by traditional rituals. Thus, all the survivors are forced to participate in the entire agenda of activities to collectively feel intense emotions so that this sense of solidarity can heal the wounds of the family and close relatives more quickly. However, providing a specific time frame for mourning in the hope that those left behind can begin to accept the objective reality does not necessarily guarantee that the feelings of grief and loss of those left behind will be erased. Alienated individual emotions are only hidden because they are suppressed by rituals that act as a leveling mechanism (Kottak, 2002). Habits or social actions are designed to reduce emotional differences between people and to conform everyone to communal norms.

### ***Social media as an expansion space for grief***

The presence of technology in our lives simplifies our daily work and significantly changes our habits, communication patterns and social life. The most consequential is the presence of social media as an alternative mode of interaction in today's contemporary society, which makes what was previously tightly closed in the private sphere become publicly consumed because of the accessibility and breadth of the platform's dissemination power (Nansen et al., 2017; Walter, 2015). News of death is

becoming part of the general phenomenon, no longer a taboo, experienced in everyday life and mediated daily by social media. This transformation has been detected since the late 1990s with memorial sites in cyberspace, which shows that 'the Internet brings issues of death, dying, and mourning out of the "protective box" in which modern society places them' (Walter et al., 2012: 286).

Social media is one of many examples of how the discourse of grief can be freely discussed in public spaces. How we communicate with someone who has died is influenced by demographic, social, and technological changes in each era (Walter, 2015). For example, at the beginning of the pre-industrial era, news of death spread quickly and mass mourning was possible because of the relatively high likelihood of infant mortality at the time and the communal nature of rural communities with small populations. At the beginning of the 20th century, on the other hand, mass migration due to intensive industrial development resulted in fragmented and strained social relations, and only a few people had the opportunity to experience mourning. Then, in the era of mass culture, where death and grief can be easily disseminated through various media, we can now grieve for someone we do not know, or what has been called parasocial grieving, as in the tragedy of Princess Diana's death. Moreover, in the age of ubiquitous social media, anyone can express grief personally. Moreover, it can also trigger others across space and time to become mourners; in short, mourning is private and public.

The openness of social media provides an opportunity for a complex expansion of mourning, not just an expansion of the arena. Brubaker et al. (2013) classify three types of mourning expansions facilitated by social media presence: temporal expansion (integration of past, present, and future content), spatial expansion (mourning

participants are not geographically bound), and social expansion (presence of other social groups as mourners). However, there is another type of expansion, namely cultural expansion (Wagner, 2018), in which the formation of a cultural melting pot in social media provides different concepts of cultural identity from which to choose for mourning (Hepp, 2010 as cited in Wagner, 2018). It allows cultural norms in the form of customs or mourning rituals of a society to be adapted, modified, or even ignored because they have to conform to the existing rules of social media characteristics. The phenomenon of death during a recent pandemic provides an example of how death rituals cannot be performed in a participatory manner due to the enforced distance. However, feelings of grief are still channeled through alternative spaces of mourning, such as collective prayer on Zoom or closed-door funeral broadcasts on Youtube Live, as shown in Figure 1.

The technological features available in each social media platform allow a person to make mourning more personal, even in the shadow of collective values and norms. Everyone negotiates their unfinished grief by sharing memories with the deceased (in

the form of captions, pictures, videos, and emojis), commemorating the anniversary of someone's death (having an online *tahlilan*), and maintaining communication with the deceased and other people who are still grieving (a message on the deceased's Instagram page). Symbolically, in the final stage of the rite of passage, a person who dies smoothly officially accepts a new status as nonexistent. Moreover, the reality faced by the bereaved is very different. Their transition is more complicated and challenging. Robert Hertz (in P. Metcalf & Huntington, 1979) said that death can trigger social crises, especially the death of people considered important. Processing displacement events through grief makes them potentially attached in a long liminal stage, refusing to accept the status of "ex" even though the partner has already occupied a different world. This ambiguity and paradox is indicative of the social situation of people in the liminal stage (Turner, 1967:97). Social media could accommodate people who consciously choose to be trapped in prolonged liminal states and voluntarily share them with the public.



Figure 1. Zoom recording of the 40th day of the death of Rachmawati Soekarnoputri  
 Source: Youtube (<https://www.youtube.com/live/drY58vIsOJw?feature=share>)

### *Types of grieving norms on social media*

Personal mourning on social media requires people to be involved in a social situation that requires a response or other action to the mourning content. To quote Goffman (1964), a social situation involves a “performer” and a “participant” in which both are aware of their presence together in a performance. These “meeting” spaces are conducted and constrained by the norms of certain social situations. As an extension of social space, certain norms and rules of behavior in the real world will influence how people interact in cyberspace (Chambers, 2013). The implication is that mourning content and expressions of grief on social media will always be controlled by the socio-cultural and religious norms that each person believes in.

Based on the findings of previous studies, Wagner (2018) concluded that there are three types of norms embedded in the practice of grieving on social media: norms of mourning practices, norms of grief content, and norms of response to grief content. In mourning practice norms, social media platforms are usually the arena of

alternatives for grieving. They are believed to be able to provide people with a sense of security while expressing their emotions, as these platforms could trigger the presence of emotional support from others. Similarly, the content commemorating the deceased eldest son of the Governor of West Java, Emmeril Kahn, posted on Instagram by his mother (Atalia Kamil), as shown in Figure 2, attracted a lot of sympathy and spread a lot of responses from others who had experienced a similar loss. Therefore, grieving posts on Instagram can easily connect someone to others with similar experiences (Bailey et al., 2015).

In the context of social media grief content norms, the focus is on the do’s and don’ts of what can be shared with followers and how to grieve appropriately. There are several restrictions on the types of mourning content that can be shared with the wider community. For example, censoring the face of the deceased during the closing ceremony procession in a photo uploaded to Instagram is considered a gesture of respect for those left behind (see Figure 3). However, these norms do not generally apply because a kind of hierarchy among fellow mourners allows



Figure 2. Atalia Kamil’s Personal Post Commemorate His Son and Netizen Comments  
Source: Instagram





Figure 3. Close Friends Take a Group Photo at the Celebrity Edelenyi Laura Funeral

Source: Instagram

those at the top (e.g., family members) to resist mourning norms (Giaxoglou, 2014). Instead of receiving negative comments from the public, Dewi Lestari's Instagram post of a photo of herself and her late husband in a coffin received sympathy from many people because she showed the public the "right" amount of emotion (Jakoby, 2012). Thus, occasionally taking photos with the deceased at funerals can be categorized as an attitude that does not violate the norm. This is because the photograph monumentalizes the transition from life to death (van Gennepe, 1960) and expresses a collective grief linked by social relations among all the bereaved.

The norms for responding to grief content are related to how personal participation demonstrates empathy on social media. Grief is often expressed by someone who has no direct relationship to the deceased because stories of death are widely mediated on social media, especially in the case of Emmeril Kahn's death. Social media accommodates parasocial forms of grief where audiences can express emotions and feelings and share all memories publicly and globally (Quan-Haase, 2016). On the

other hand, people's responses were not only in the form of taking sides with the bereaved, but sometimes charged with religious sentiments. For example, the death of controversial public figure Vanessa Angel received a lot of attention from people because her sudden death (car accident) is considered a "bad death". In Figure 4, a fan expressed his affection for the deceased by helping to "erase" her dosa *jariyah* (shame or sins for disgraceful or immoral acts that continue to be counted even after the person has died), not only by sending prayers, but also by asking people to stop sharing photos of the deceased that show her *aurat* (body parts that cannot be seen according to Islamic law), in the hope that the status of the deceased's death will change to a "good death" or *husnul khatimah* (one of the indicators is having good faith when death comes).

A similar illustration of how the condition of the deceased's body becomes an aspect that underlies one's response to mourning occurs in the case of the death of a transsexual artist, Dorce Gamalama. In an interview on Denny Sumargo's Youtube



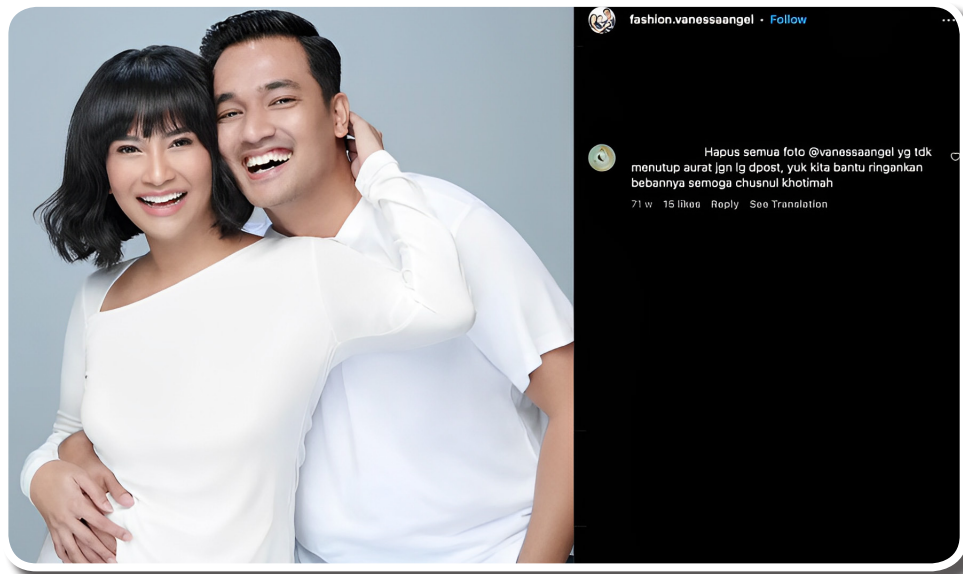


Figure 4. Grief Content from Fans of Vanessa Angel and Netizen Comments  
Source: Instagram

on January 23, 2022, Bunda Dorce (her nickname) expressed her wish to be buried as a woman, along with her statement: “I am a woman. I have female genitalia. Yes... Bathe me in women’s clothes.” Nevertheless, when Bunda Dorce died on February 16, 2022, due to Covid-19, the family unilaterally decided to bury her as a man. Bunda Dorce’s transgender identity was erased along with the loss of her physical body in the world.

The polemical personality of Bunda Dorce provoked a tendentious mourning reaction in cyberspace from some people who were opposed to the transgender counterculture group by mentioning her former (male) identity through the pronouns *Pak* and *Bang*, which are greeting words for older men in Indonesia, when commenting on Instagram, as seen in Figure 5.



Figure 5. Condolences to Celebrity Dorce Gamalama and Netizen Comments  
Source: Instagram

The physical aspect at the moment of death is crucial in determining whether a personal experience is a “good death” or a “bad death”. Cultural elements influence such a categorical perception of death; in classical Greek ethnographic studies, the sacred state of the body is a projection of the smooth state of the individual soul’s transition to a new world (Danforth & Tsiaras, 1982). The form of manifestation of the sacred body in the Greek cosmology of death is the deceased’s hair loosened, the body wrapped in a long dress, and decomposition in the form of dry and white bones. Thus, the concept of sanctity embodied in certain bodily expressions implies an ideal form of death and is also perceived as a “ticket” to a good “final destination”. The implication is that there is an immense obsession with the agenda of purity and holiness through certain bodily gestures of death that also exist in the virtual world. In the case of Vanessa Angel and Bunda Dorce, the body is linked to the value of morality in the form of obedience to religious instructions as an effort to establish a “good death” through the medium of social media, which is classified as a technospiritual practice (Brubaker et al., 2013): disciplining the body of the deceased according to Islamic law by not showing the *aurat* of the woman and returning to the body of the man.

### *Physically dead, virtually alive*

Assessing the phenomenon of death through a sociocultural lens allows us to avoid the trap of simplifying the transition of a person’s life from animate to inanimate. Instead, each transition that human beings experience throughout their lives is always accompanied by other shifts in social status, relationships, and roles. The funeral ritual procession then becomes a bridge between the living and the dead, and a moment to redefine the relationship between each

person at that very moment. However, the cemetery is only a formal separator in the spatial dimension, while the figure of the deceased is still present and inhabits the temporal dimension. The presence of social media allows the “mummification” of memories of the deceased in cyberspace in the form of a digital persona. The idea of a digital afterlife arises from the connectivity that exists in digital media (Meese et al., 2015): individuals can revive the status of husband-wife, fan-celebrity, or child-parent through online activities, even in the form of one-way communication.

Several social media have provided opportunities for online funeral spaces, including Instagram, with the option to transform the deceased’s account into a “memorial account”. Interestingly, this feature is presented not only as an effort to protect the deceased (e.g., privacy), but also as a protection for the bereaved: content from a “memorializing account” will not appear as a reference on other people’s accounts (e.g., in the Explore feature). It is also a way of preventing the revival of feelings of grief, especially for family and close friends. To access this feature, Instagram will ask for solid proof of death as validity. Once verified, the word ‘Remembering’ will appear next to the account name on the profile. Content shared by the deceased, including photos and videos, remains on Instagram and is visible to followers. Another option offered to deceased Instagram users is account deletion, which has more complicated requirements and can only be requested by a representative family by law.

An example of the use of a “memorializing account” on Instagram within the circle of a public figure is the former Indonesian actor Ashraf Sinclair, as shown in Figure 6. Since the “memorializing account” cannot upload new content, the account only appears “alive” at a certain time, for example, during critical events such as birthdays and the

death anniversary of the deceased (Brubaker & Hayes, 2011). On the other hand, there is another case where the Instagram accounts of the deceased have been reactivated because the family has taken them over. In such a case, social media no longer functions as a virtual diary or simply as a refresher of memories about the deceased, but also as a mediator of the emotional levels of grief that the bereaved experience periodically from time to time. Former Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) left his personal Instagram account and took over

Ani Yudhoyono’s account shortly after his wife’s death. The “emotional performance” portrayed in the Instagram account is full of personal grief, starting from the initial stage when he still had difficulty accepting the reality of his wife’s death (Figure 7), until gradually the grief is no longer manifested “raw” but repackaged with his paintings and songs (Figure 8). Thus, social media has the ability to ameliorate some of the pain, anguish, and rupture caused by the death of a loved one (Huberman, 2017:98).



Figure 6. Netizen Comments Remembering Celebrity Ashraf Sinclair on His Memorializing Account Instagram  
Source: Instagram



Figure 7. SBY’s Post in The Early Days of His Wife’s Death  
Source: Instagram



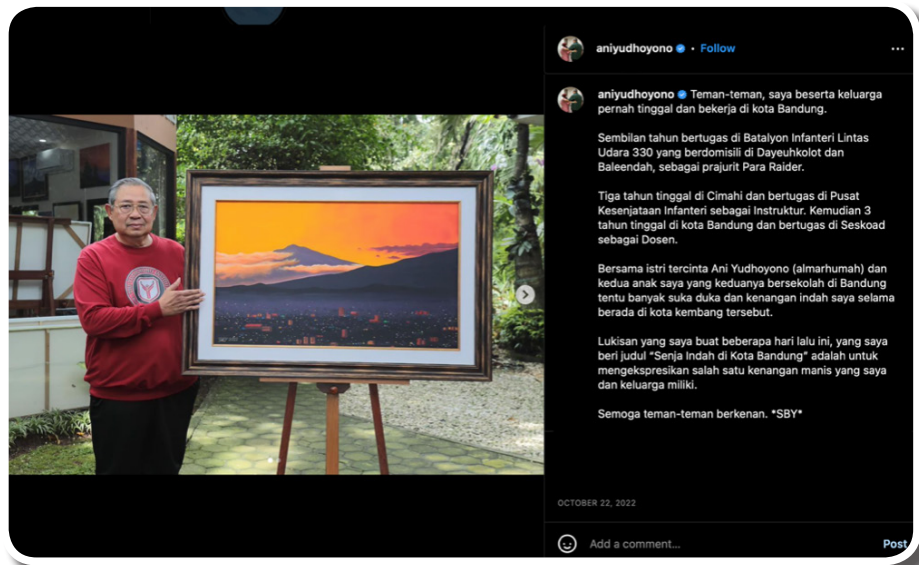


Figure 8. SBY's Post After Three Years of His Wife's Death  
Source: Instagram



Figure 9. Fans Celebrate Nike Ardilla's Birthday on Instagram  
Source: Instagram

Another case study in social media practices is the design of accounts for the deceased to “reanimate the dead” or a digital afterlife through content relics from the past (achievements, experiences, events). Instagram was only introduced to the public in 2010, so only certain generations are savvy enough to take advantage of the presence of social media. However, these facts do not exclude the possibility of its use by those

who died long before 2010, especially with the help of other people in today's time and world. Specifically, the Instagram account of the famous singer Nike Ardilla, created by her fans, can be categorized as a form of parasocial separation (Cohen, 2003); each person who idolizes a celebrity constructs a parasocial relationship to collectively express parasocial loss (Sanderson & Hope Cheong, 2010), see Figure 9. With 14



thousand followers, Nike Ardilla's sense of loss is regularly reproduced through various content and comments, mainly about her life achievements and other content about her journey as a young multi-talented public figure. Parasocial grief involves an emotional investment that is no less large and strong than the feeling of losing a close person or actual social contact (Wong & Patlamazoglou, 2022).

## Conclusion

The emergence of a new form of transitional grieving space encourages the transfer of individuals physically and emotionally along with other "baggage" attached to the individual's identity in the form of behaviors, habits, and inherent norms. The cultural expansion that occurs in the practice of grieving in cyberspace is then applied contextually, with little room for negotiation, so that rules and sanctions cannot be strictly enforced as in the practice of a particular cultural group. This occurs and is supported by the nature of social media, where real-world boundaries become invisible when people are in the virtual world. However, some norms are difficult to negotiate in social media, especially those related to religious norms. The dogma of this faith is not considered a consensus on technospiritual practices, so there is a potential for conflict when a wide audience access grieving content. The friction between traditional and modern, and public and private will continue to occur and be manufactured in cyberspace, challenging the existence of norms and obscuring social conventions, including those related to grieving practices. With this phenomenon, social media becomes a digital artifact to maintain social cohesion between the living and the dead.

On the other hand, new mourning practices in cyberspace offer new expressions of grief where the intensity of endless grief can be normalized even though it was considered taboo in conventional socio-cultural norms. It shows that media technology is seen as an alternative way to break away from social and cultural norms by reconfiguring the norms within the social media community. Sharing emotions is one of the triggers for resetting and negotiating norms, which is seen as a cathartic form of mourning and justified by the public. Another novelty offered on the basis of this study comes from the side of the deceased, who are biologically no longer active in the social environment, but with the new means of communication they are forced to be "kept alive" and play an active social role through a digital persona. It negates the traditional idea of death, in which the deceased is automatically reduced from his previous roles and social life. The world of cyberreality, with various networked platforms around it, increases the 'possibility of conceiving the dead as co-present with the living' (Lim, 2013: 399). The struggle to "reanimate" a deceased figure is carried out through the continuous and excessive reinvention of memories associated with the deceased, through the functions of Instagram. The effect is that the liminal period can be "extended" indefinitely. Portraits of the deceased are now mediated and reactivated in the cyber world through Instagram technology.

## Declaration of Ownership

This article is my original work.

## Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest to declare in this article.

## Ethical Clearance

This study was conducted with the utmost ethical considerations, as all data collected and analyzed strictly adhered to the appropriate academic frameworks and standards. As such, no ethical concerns were identified in the study.

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