iGrieve: Social Media, Parasocial Mourning and the Death of Steve Jobs

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ABSTRACT

When Steve Jobs, CEO of Apple, died of pancreatic cancer in 2011, people from around the world utilized social media platforms to express their condolences. This study examined the comments on Steve Jobs' Public Figure Facebook page in response to his death. The purpose is to discover the extent to which online postings expressing grief about death reflect the traditional forms of eulogy. To do this, I used Kunkel and Dennis' integrative framework to conduct a rhetorical analysis on comments left on Steve Jobs' public figure Facebook page. Because of the mediated nature of these expressions of grief, parasocial interaction theory and hyperpersonal theory were used to look at how social media brought individuals together who would have otherwise been isolated in their grief and how their interaction with each other contributed to Jobs' collective memory. Hyperpersonal theory has been used to explain mediated communication between individuals, but this study suggests its existence within a parasocial relationship and that it has become a natural part of our culture and communication process. This study found that individuals not only felt a strong connection with Steve Jobs, but also instinctively expressed their grief in a way that reflected the traditional forms of eulogies. Mediated communication may promote new practices within the grieving process as more people interact through technology as a normal part of everyday life.

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Chapter One: Introduction

The death of Apple CEO, Steve Jobs, on October 5, 2011, attracted the attention of the world. The media and world leaders paid tribute to his life and accomplishments through mass media, but the voice of the people was captured through social media. Social media has created a new place and practice for human communication and interaction. These virtual environments have evolved far beyond simple interaction between friends and have come to include a place where individuals can gather to mourn the passing of an individual and pay tribute to the deceased. Garnering almost celebrity-like attention from the media, world leaders, and the public, Jobs was recognized for his vision and genius. Thus, Jobs' death provides an attractive context for research in online grieving. This paper focuses on messages sent through social media in response to this tragic event.

Online communication has become a transformational means of interpersonal communication and interaction over the past several years. New media technologies have expanded the connection people have with each other around the world (Williams, 2007) and have opened up new ways of connecting those who share a common affection for a specific person of renown. Social media also makes it possible for individuals to feel like they are communicating directly with a celebrity by following the celebrity's posts or tweets and by leaving comments on their fan pages (Sanderson & Cheong, 2010). These new communication technologies have naturally opened up virtual environments where people can connect with others who also mourn the passing of the individual, and create fond memories of the deceased (Williams & Merten, 2009).

Much of the research investigating virtual grieving deals with mourning for individuals with established relationships. However, social media could be seen as a valuable resource for

those who are "parasocially grieving" (Sanderson & Cheong, 2010, p. 329). Horton and Wohl (1965) developed the theory of parasocial interaction to describe how individuals developed a one-sided relationship with media personae through media itself. Only recently has this theory been applied to social media (Sanderson & Cheong, 2010). Given the popularity of social media, it seems apparent that the passing of a celebrity causes these sites to become mediums where grief can be expressed with others who share a parasocial interaction.

Jamieson (1978) suggests that the human need for expression associated with the death of a loved one can be so compelling that a response is almost created out of necessity. Whether physical or virtual, the need to respond functions to bring comfort to the survivors as they adapt their relationship to the deceased and acknowledge that life will go on in spite of their loss. That expression, known as a eulogy, is one of the unique rhetorical occasions that almost everyone will participate in at some point in his/her life and can be found in every culture of the world. However, bereavement is no longer bound to a place. The advancement of technology and social media helps facilitate an adaptation of eulogy to a virtual reality where individuals can participate in the grieving process regardless of their geographical location.

As its own rhetorical genre, the eulogy finds its place in the form of epideictic rhetoric, also known as ceremonial rhetoric, and is used to praise. A eulogy is set apart from other forms of rhetoric by two characteristics. "It is meant to honor (praise) the subject and to be heard by an audience who shares in the admiration of the subject" (Peterson, 1983, p. 174). Social media sites create opportunities for mourners to construct epideictic messages in the form of eulogies as they construct fond memories associated with the passing of a person with whom they may have had a parasocial relationship. The death of a celebrity, or person of renown, creates the context from which to speak, and social media constructs a venue for an audience to share its respect for

the deceased.

When Apple founder Steve Jobs passed away from cancer, many of his fans as well as leaders from within the technology field expressed condolences. Bill Gates, the founder of Microsoft, issued this statement,

> The world rarely sees someone who has had the profound impact Steve has had, the effects of which will be felt for many generations to come. For those of us lucky enough to get to work with him, it's been an insanely great honor. I will miss Steve immensely. (Gates, 2011)

Jobs was such an iconic man that he transformed not only the tech-world, but through the creation of his products influenced almost every other part of Western society as well. It is hard to escape Jobs' influence, even if an individual is not a Mac fan or has never picked up an iPhone. Rarely has a single individual dominated a major company and industry like Jobs; his fingerprints are everywhere and his influence went far beyond the famous iMacs. In the last 20 years, Jobs reformed the music business through the iPod and iTunes, the cellphone through the iPhone, and entertainment through the iPad.

Steve Jobs was considered the "first crossover technology star, turning Silicon Valley renown to Main Street recognition" (Sullivan, 2011). Jobs was a remarkable innovator and communicator in the technology field. It was not a surprise that his popularity drew a large number of people to online media sites to express their grief and offer condolences. Expressing bereavement through social media may indicate that new practices are emerging wherein people create content that eulogizes a celebrity.

Background

As an entrepreneur, Steve Jobs had successfully created one of the best-known and wealthiest technology companies in the United States. Apple was born on April 1, 1976, in the home of Ronald Wayne, who within days of signing the agreement wanted out (Isaascson, 2011, p. 65). The hallmark of Apple products is simplicity and intuitiveness and Jobs' push to achieve this was evident in his early computers (Isaacson, 2011, p. 73). In 1980, when he and his partners decided to take Apple public, it became one of the "most oversubscribed initial public offerings since Ford Motors in 1956" (Isaacson, 2011, p. 104). This was the beginning of incredible growth for the company. As the growth continued, Steve Jobs hired John Scully, president of Pepsi-Cola, to become the president of Apple. While the relationship started off well enough, it was not long before they began to disagree and a power struggle ensued. In May of 1985, Steve Jobs was forced out of the company. Scully, and later Michael Spindler, oversaw several product disasters and the continuous decline of the company. Everywhere in the media, the anticipation of a bankrupt Apple was being raised (Hormby, 2006). Apple's market share had fallen to 4% in 1996 from a high of 16% in the late 1980s and its stock price had fallen from $70 in 1991 to just $14 a share (Isaacson, 2011). In 1996, under great duress of not being able to produce the software needed for their operating system, Apple purchased Steve Jobs' software company, NeXT, offering Jobs "reentry into the company he had founded" (Isaacson, 2011, p. 305). Apple's purchase of NeXT also included the title of interim CEO for Steve Jobs. He immediately began to restructure the company and brought the product line into the strict simplicity by discontinuing many of the computer models Apple had been producing, and focusing on only four models. His design and engineering tastes brought back the clean computer aesthetics on which he had envisioned and built Apple from the beginning.

With this return to basics, Apple began to see incredible growth. By 2002, Apple

released iTunes, along with the first version of the iPod, successfully revolutionizing the way

people listened to and interacted with media. In January 2007, Jobs launched the first iPhone,

with his now famous introduction:

> Every once in a while a revolutionary product comes along that changes everything.
>
> Today we're introducing three revolutionary products of this class. The first one is a
>
> widescreen iPod with touch controls. The second is a revolutionary mobile phone. And
>
> the third is a breakthrough Internet communication device. These are not three separate
>
> devices, this is one device and we are calling it iPhone. (Isaacson, 2011, p. 474)

The iPhone revolutionized the cell phone industry in the same way the iPod transformed the

music industry. By the end of 2010, the iPhone accounted for over half of the global cell phone

market (Isaacson, 2011, p. 474). Apple launched its iPad in 2010, and "by some measures the

iPad became the most successful consumer product ever launched in history" (Isaacson, 2011, p.

498).

In a relatively short period of time, under Jobs' leadership, Apple began to dominate

industries that barely knew it existed a few years earlier. At the time of Jobs' death on October

5, 2011, Apple was the second most valuable company in the world and shortly thereafter it

became the most valuable company (Nasdaq, n.d.). Jobs had the instincts to predict and create

products that would drive future technology, and a charisma that resonated with the public.

Part of the allure Steve Jobs created for Apple products was his ability to keep an Apple

product a secret until its launch, and the world came to expect great things out of these keynote

addresses. This lack of transparency became known as Apple's culture of silence (Stone &

Vance, 2009). While this lack of openness worked well for their product launches, it had

opposite effects when, in 2004, it was revealed that Jobs had received a successful surgery to remove a cancerous tumor. The media immediately began to call for more openness and felt that Apple had been unprofessional in their late disclosure of Jobs' health and his ability to lead the company (Hiltzik, 2009). In 2008 at the iPhone launch, the media was stunned at how thin and exhausted Steve Jobs appeared and began to speculate on the return of his cancer. Apple assured them it was a common cold, but Jobs announced in an internal Apple memo that "issues are more complicated than I originally thought" (Apple, 2009), and took a six month leave of absence. The media, shareholders, and Wall Street reacted swiftly and unfavorably to this lack of disclosure by Apple and Steve Jobs. Apple shares fell more than 50% as rumors began that Jobs' cancer had returned. Many in the media called it par for the course (Hiltzik, 2009) for a company that had been vague and uncommunicative about the condition of Jobs' health from the beginning.

Steve Jobs' leadership style was also a focus of the media. He was very much an authoritarian and charismatic leader. There was no doubt that Apple was Jobs' company, pursuing his vision, and making his products. Jobs controlled every aspect of the business in his pursuit of excellence. Jobs was a passionate advocate for his vision and exceptionally successful when communicating this to his shareholders, the public, and employees. He intuitively understood the power of cultural influence in sustaining the strategic capabilities implicit in his vision of creating great products (Katzenbach, 2012).

Steve Jobs and the Apple brand are embedded in American culture. Through his charismatic leadership, Jobs built an extensive parasocial following. He offered consumers much more than a computer or a phone; he offered his public an experience. He changed the way people listened to and interacted with media, the way they communicated with each other,

and even the way they engaged their communication devices. In this way, he took part in creating the story of their lives.

Considering the influence Steve Jobs employed in the world at large, his death was a powerful invitation for the public to respond and it was appropriate for the public to grieve and eulogize in his memory. Given his prominence and the number of people who offered their condolences online, this study is an opportunity to develop a specific understanding of the way people posted online messages within the first two weeks following his death. To understand these messages a rhetorical analysis will be utilized. Social media was flooded with posts immediately following Jobs' death. Allaboutfacebook.com reported, "In the 24 hours after Jobs' death was made public, there were some 143,000 status updates devoted to the Apple icon, at a rate of 1.6 per second" (Cohen, 2011). Wired Magazine (2011) noted that twitter recorded ten thousand tweets per second. In contrast, the death of Michael Jackson, two years earlier, generated just under five hundred per second (Biba, 2011).

This paper examines how bereaved individuals used social media to eulogize the death of Steve Jobs. The literature review examines the origins and theories relevant to this study. Starting with epideictic rhetoric as a broad base of study, the review will narrow to focus on eulogies and collective memory. The second part of the literature review will examine parasocial interaction, the hyperpersonal theory, and social media.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Epideictic rhetoric

To understand the most traditional role of praise, the genre of epideictic rhetoric must be considered. Aristotle, one of the most famous ancient Greek philosophers, endeavored to gather a sense of the common good. He taught that all men should work toward achieving the common good of the state, and its citizens should administer that government. In order to achieve that good, citizens must be able to speak, defend themselves, and use reasoning as a means of influence.

For Aristotle, rhetoric is the art of effective communication, which can be defined as the ability to connect with an audience and thereby exercise influence over them. Aristotle identified three types of rhetoric: forensic, deliberative, and epideictic (Aristotle, trans. McKeon, 1941). Epideictic rhetoric, known as ceremonial rhetoric, is used to praise people, objects, deeds, or ideals that are important for a particular audience. Aristotle developed the term epideictic to categorize speeches and writings aimed at praise rather than at persuasion. However, epideictic rhetoric still seeks to influence. Epideictic rhetoric offers the opportunity for a rhetor to lead his or her audience to new beliefs and ideas, and to spur them on to unrealized progress. It functions to build consensus and to foster cooperative efforts, especially in environments where the rhetor's words express shared values. It is through these types of speeches that Aristotle claimed that epideictic rhetoric is closely related to the occasion and the moment that mark a performance (Aristotle, trans. McKeon, 1941, p. 1359).

For Aristotle, epideictic spoke to the present situation rather than the past or the future (Aristotle, trans. McKeon, 1941, p. 1357); therefore, epideictic is a matter of praising the common values of an audience in the present moment and on a given occasion (Danisch, 2006).

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) contended "that epideictic rhetoric addresses the unquestioned values of an audience, and thus it is practiced as a method of education aimed at displaying, amplifying, and enhancing the values that bind an audience together in the present" (p. 49). Other researchers (Vickers, 1988; Ochs, 1993) also contributed to the contemporary understanding of epideictic that outlines and develops the practical and civic function of this type of rhetoric. Both Vickers (1988) and Ochs (1993) argued that epideictic rhetoric is a form of symbolic action whereby civic and social cohesion is produced and audiences are bound together by common values.

Because epideictic is tied to specific types of occasions, different requirements and expectations exist for both the speaker and audience based on those occasions. Epideictic rhetoric is utilized in everything from presidential speeches and public apologies to commencement addresses and eulogies. Kenneth Burke noted that, it could also be extended to take in theoretical, literary, and even visionary texts as long as they do not aim to persuade (1951). For example, Blakely (2011) extended epideictic to include technology and media print. She argued that the "effect of the ads' epideictic rhetoric is intensified by the high degree of identification people demonstrate for magazines in which the ads appear" (p. 685). Villadsen (2008) proposed that epideictic rhetoric could offer a "theoretical frame for conceptualizing the interplay of speaker, subject, and context in official apologies" (p. 42). Epideictic is also quite frequently used in eulogies and commemorative texts, such as the first memorial service held in New York City for 9-11 victims. Of this event Vivian (2006) wrote, "On such pivotal epideictic occasions, citizens participate in officially sponsored symbolic rituals through which they derive order and purpose from seemingly senseless tragedy" (p. 2). Indeed, the function of epideictic is one of identity transformation by creating and sharing community through praise.

Eulogy

The form of epideictic discourse that most people, at some point in their life, will have a

chance to present is the eulogy, also known as a ceremonial or consolation speech. The loss of a

loved one, a friend, or an "extraordinary citizen" (Kent, 2007, p. 6) is one situation that invites an

appropriate response (Kunkel & Dennis, 2003, p. 2). This response is born out of the context of

death and the need to commemorate. Jamison (1981) suggested that the basic human need

associated with eulogies comes as a result of instinctive adaptations to the rhetorical situation,

and requires no formal training to know what response is necessary. Ochs (1993) suggested that

"it is almost mandatory to celebrate, to commemorate, to honor, to dedicate, to mourn" (p. 32)

the life of the deceased. There are some occasions that require a rhetorical response. As one

responds to death through eulogy, he/she also responds to the particular expectations of the

audience. Jamieson (1978) noted that eulogies were:

> created as a response to the death of loved ones. Eulogist rhetoric has traditionally
>
> affirmed the reality of death, eased the confrontation with one's own mortality,
>
> psychologically transformed the relationship between the bereaved and the deceased, and
>
> refashioned relationships of members of the community in the absence of the deceased.
>
> (p. 40)

Historically, the importance of eulogies began to be developed by the ancient Greeks.

Historian, Thucydides; Sophists, Gorgias and Lysias; and Philosophers, Plato and Aristotle all

discussed the importance of "funeral speech or commemoration of those who had fallen in battle

for their country" (Ziolkowski, 1981) and the glorification of Athens.

Although eulogies are more varied than their rhetoric counterparts, historian Ziolkowski

(1981) suggested that funeral ceremonies evolved from the formal commendation for the dead

found in classical Greek *encomium* (high praise). However, Aristotle made a distinction between praise and *encomium*. For Aristotle, praise "is an utterance making manifest the greatness of a virtue . . . while encomium concerns the man's actual deeds" (Aristotle, trans. McKeon, 1941, p. 1357). Aristotle's distinction was that "we bestow encomium upon men after they have achieved something," and, " . . . we should praise a man even if he has not done something" (Aristotle, trans. McKeon, 1941, p.1357). *Encomium* then was reserved for extraordinary citizens who accomplished great achievements (mostly in war). Perhaps the most famous encomium speech of this time was written by sophist Gorgias, entitled, "Encomium on Helen." Gorgias used praise for Helen of Troy to help excuse her of the blame she faced for leaving Greece and going to Troy (Gorgias, ed. Bizzell & Herzberg, p. 40).

The structure of eulogies from this time period consisted of four distinct parts: the *Prooemium, Epainos, Paramythia,* and Epilogue. In the *Prooemium,* or introduction, which was generally short, the speaker would express approval of the funeral custom and attempt to gain the sympathy of the audience while briefly praising the individual being eulogized. During the *Epainos*, or section of "praise proper" (Ziolkowski, 1981), the speaker would praise at length the deceased, focusing on his ("his" is used in this context because the eulogy was reserved for those who had died in battle) family, life, accomplishments and the glorification of Athens. Third, *Paramythia* conveyed comfort and encouragement to those still living. The Epilogue, or conclusion, was the final consolation where the speaker would indicate that he had done his part in the tradition, and the audience was directed to depart (Ziolkowski, 1981). Later, as eulogies were introduced into the Latin culture, the Romans adopted much of the Greek consolation discourse genre and embraced many of its essential features (McGuire, 1953).

Traditionally, Greco-Roman eulogies were reserved for the extraordinary individual who

had lost his life in the service of the state, while at the same time glorifying the state. Today, the

eulogy is part of ceremonial discourse occasions existing in almost every culture around the

world. Both culture and religious traditions have initiated enormous diversity of the

contemporary eulogistic practice (Kent, 2007). Although modifications and new elements give

each culture or religion its specific practices, traces of Greek and Latin tradition still exist within

western contemporary eulogies (Kent, 2007). For example, the structure of the Greek oratory

still has a controlling effect on today's eulogistic practices. Jamieson (1978) acknowledged both

facts; that cultural constraints are what shape eulogies today, and that the proper responses are

fundamentally the result of intrinsic adaptations to rhetorical situations. Enculturation, whether

cultural, religious, or situational, allows the individual to learn the proper response. In other

words, a eulogy is understood through culture while at the same time rooted in classical rhetoric.

Over time, as eulogies became more commonplace, scholars (Campbell & Jamieson,

1978; Hart, 1990; & Peterson, 1983) generally assumed eulogies for extraordinary people to be

representative of the genre of common eulogies. Kent (1997), however, in an effort to explain

the contemporary, everyday eulogy, suggested that this might not necessarily be the case for

everyday citizens. An everyday citizen is a person whose deeds are not widely know within that

culture. Although the work of scholars suggested that certain theoretical aspects of the eulogy,

such as honoring the dead and praise, still exist, Kent's (2007) research of clergy and eulogizers

found no principal interest in the provision of praise and an unexpectedly small amount of

interest in honoring the deceased. Honoring the deceased seems to be built into the funeral

oratory as a whole, but Kent (2007) suggested instead, that the eulogy itself has a heightened

focus on religious rhetoric, calling on faith and religion to help the audience cope with its grief.

Religion applies immense influence on the structure of ordinary eulogies with a focus on work,

family, love and God. Contemporary eulogies place an "emphasis on the survivors ongoing

responsibility to the community or their faith rather than on how the deceased should be

emulated" (Kent, 2007, p. 9). Nevertheless, with these differences, researchers, including Kent,

still maintain that those who have experienced loss must be in agreement concerning the need for

the eulogy and its functionality.

In this research, scholars generally agreed on the function of the eulogy. While some

scholars (Carpenter & Seltzer, 1971) felt that the eulogy was "predetermined by the life of the

eulogized," and that it was more stylistic than rhetorical, most scholars agreed that eulogies serve

a valid rhetorical purpose. Peterson (1983) suggested:

> A eulogy has two distinctive characteristics which set it apart from most other forms of
>
> public address: First, it is meant to be delivered at a ceremonial occasion to honor the
>
> subject; and, second, it is designed to be heard by an audience that already shares the
>
> speaker's respect, affection or admiration for the person being honored. The speaker's
>
> task then is to heighten the auditor's feelings of regard, love, or appreciation. (p.174)

Jamieson and Campbell (1982) offered five reasons for a eulogy: (1) To "acknowledge

the death," (2) to "transform the relationship between the living and the dead from present to

past," (3) to "ease the mourners terror at confronting their own mortality," (4) to "console them

by arguing that the deceased lives on," and (5) to "re-knit the community" (p. 147). Other

scholars supported this early functionary description of the eulogy. Foss (1983) concluded that

"eulogies function to reify death for the shocked audience, to reduce personal fears of mortality

by reference to an afterlife, to allow the audience to reorient themselves to the deceased, and to

reassure the audience that the community will continue in spite of their loss" (p. 187). It is

important to note the consistency in scholarly research of what eulogies should do. The eulogy

is structured to celebrate, mourn, commemorate, honor and dedicate (Ochs, 1993). It is the

rhetoric that addresses the need for personal consolation, while also paying tribute to what has

been lost.

The eulogy also functions as an effective method for providing the significance, comfort,

and consolation by which to cope with a changed reality caused by death (Neimeyer, 2002).

Lazarus (1991) suggested that coping behavior could be effectively divided into two categories:

problem-focused coping, which expresses the problem that is causing the stress, and emotional-

focused coping, which deals with the emotion that is surrounding the stress. Both problem-

focused and emotion-focused coping can be facilitated through eulogy by dealing with the

emotions surrounding the immediate stress (Lazarus, 1993).

Adrianne Kunkel and Michael Dennis (2003) developed an integrated framework calling

on the epideictic rhetoric of eulogies as well as the coping strategies of grief consolation to

critically examine eulogies. This framework will be used to examine social media's response to

the death of Steve Jobs, and consists of the following: (1) establishing credibility, (2) praise for

the deceased, (3) self-disclosure of emotion, (4) problem-focused coping: suggestions for action,

(5) emotion-focused coping, (6) affirmation of vivid past relationship, and (7) continuation of

interactive bonds.

Establishing credibility occurs when the eulogizer acknowledges his/her relationship to

the deceased (Kunkel & Dennis, 2003). Praise for the deceased is recognized through honoring

his/her values and actions (Kunkel & Dennis, 2003). Self-disclosure of emotion is represented

by the eulogizer's attempt at easing his/her own grief by putting his/her personal emotion into

language (Kunkel & Dennis, 2003). To aid the audience's discernment regarding action

appropriate to the demise of loved ones, problem-focused coping: suggestions for action suggests

the adoption of the deceased's goals, projects, or values (Kunkel & Dennis, 2003). Emotion-focused coping: positive reappraisal often helps to construct a ''bigger picture," or a different perspective from which their audience may develop a more acceptable evaluation of the event (Kunkel & Dennis, 2003). Through affirmation of vivid past relationships, eulogizers remind the audience that the deceased lived physically; to internalize their memories, and maintain the relationships they shared (Kunkel & Dennis, 2003). Finally, continuation of interactive bonds is used when the eulogizer addresses the deceased directly or refers to them in the present tense (Kunkel & Dennis, 2003). Instead of shifting the relationship to one of memory, the eulogizer attempts to recognize the value of keeping the relationship with the deceased in the present.

Beyond the actual function of eulogies, consideration must be given to the effect media has had on the participation and expression of eulogy. The emergence of radio and television has drawn public figures into a different kind of performance and has allowed public participation in events that are normally reserved for the elite (extraordinary) person. Those persons are usually political leaders or a person of renown (Princess Diana, Martin Luther King Jr., Michael Jackson, or Steve Jobs). The modern mass media, as Horton and Wohl (1965) have noted, fosters a sense of "intimacy at a distance." Television also plays an important role in that a traumatic event is often replayed over and over, intensifying the public's sense of the tragedy in the face of disastrous events (Campbell & Jamison, 2008). These deaths become a collective experience because it is through the media that the public is engaged and remembers (Campbell & Jamieson, 2008). It then becomes the responsibility of the rhetor, whether it is the leader of the country or another person with the appropriate relationship to the deceased, to help make sense of the deaths and the events and to offer consolation (Campbell & Jamieson, 2008). In studying the public reactions to the death of Princess Diana, Montgomery (1999) noted that the

"sincerity value of speech – looms larger than before" (p. 5). He argued that popular thought of sincerity belonging to the private and being absent from the public sphere is inconsistent with his findings that in the "aftermath of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, sincerity seems to have become the main touchstone against which the behavior of public figures was judged" (Montgomery, 1999, P. 27).

Although television and radio may give the public a greater sense of participation, at a distance, the newspaper editorial at least gave the public a mediated voice. Goldzwig and Sullivan (1995) suggested, in researching post-assassination editorials, that editorial pages gave "engaged audiences opportunities to name the grief process, celebrate the character of the deceased leader, use the event as interpreted for communal reparation and healing, and consider policy initiatives" (p. 141). These four categories of eulogies offered in print media are similar to those mentioned by Jamieson and Campbell (1982) as to the function of a eulogy. Goldzwig and Sullivan also observed that the "post-assassination newspaper editorial eulogy embodies and enacts a public space for the ritual reenactment of public values" and is the perfect site to "celebrate the public culture including its typical modes of authority and governance" (p. 142). This celebration of public values and governance is rooted in Aristotle's epideictic rhetoric of glorification of the state and it's common good. For Aristotle, balance and order for the public good comes when people are connected through the pursuit of virtue that allows human society to function.

As new social patterns emerge with technology, the public response to death has changed as well. The Internet has ushered in a new identification with others, or collective experience, that traditional media could not. This collective experience is often due to the "social vulnerability or anger felt by unexpected death" (de Vries & Rutherford, 2004, p. 8).

Traditionally, memorials consisted of symbolic reminders (letters, flowers, or pictures) brought

to the site of the death or a site associated with the deceased. DeVries and Rutherford (2004)

argued that by participating in this symbolic rhetoric, the public has created "a role for

themselves as mourners and extended the boundaries of who is allowed to participate in the

mourning process" (p. 8). Examples of these spontaneous memorials include tributes to Princess

Diana, Michael Jackson, Steve Jobs, and the victims of the terrorist attacks of September 11,

2001.

In this same context, individuals have embraced the Internet in seeking new ways to

express grief, commemorate the deceased, and create or find community. Sites known as web

memorials provide a place of bereavement with few restrictions. Roberts and Vidal (2000) noted

that web memorials adhere to Kollar's (1989) four steps of effective post-death rituals. The four

steps consist of entering a special time and place, engaging in a symbolic core act, allowing time

to absorb what has occurred, and taking leave. Kollar's steps closely mirror the categories of

eulogies previously mentioned in this paper. Memorializing on the Internet is a new

phenomenon that allows for private mourning in a public space. It is within this context people

find identification and community through a collective experience while using elements of

traditional eulogy rituals.

Although websites dedicated to death and mourning offer significant ties to traditional

rhetoric, social media offers none of the expected time and place of mourning. Social media is

an instrument of spontaneous and immediate communication that allows for a more social and

collaborative interaction through the media. In one sense, social media can be described as a

"virtual meeting place" (Chandler & Munday). Like websites, social media offers a sense of

community and connectedness. There are a host of social media platforms that make it possible

for people to express grief and condolences to the deceased. Sanderson and Cheong (2007), in a

study on collective bereavement and religious discourse within the context of social media,

found that "social media is facilitating traditional grieving stages as well as enacting social

change in contexts that are themselves part of a wider reformulation of the relation between the

public and the private" (p. 337). The Internet seems to offer collective coping mechanisms and

practices that mirror traditional rituals which enable public expressions to be built into the

structure of everyday life. Despite the context, research seems to support Jamieson's (1978)

argument that a person's response to death is fundamentally the result of intrinsic adaptations to

rhetorical situations.

Collective memory

Bereavement also takes place in the context of collective memory. Eulogistic rhetoric

can also be the shared narrative of how a group remembers the deceased. Collective

bereavement and its public expression play a significant role in how the deceased is

memorialized, and in creating the group's identity as narrative practices and traditions are

formed to give its participants a sense of community (Weiss, 1997).

Collective memory is the combination of information in the form of stories, artifacts,

symbols, traditions, and images that form the ties that bind people together and give them a sense

of identification. Whatever the methods through which memory is expressed, it collectively

functions to align the present to the past and the past to the present (Hudson, 2012). A group that

creates memory may be as small as an interconnected family unit whose members are all known,

or as large as countries where the memory is based in nationalism. The Internet has created a

new context for collective memory that enables group members to participate in narratives

beyond the scope of physical boundaries, and to rally around topics of interest and iconic public

figures.

Regardless of the size and nature of the group, the group constructs and maintains an

identity that unites its members. There is always a context of meaning in the construction of

collective memory, which is shared and passed on, that connects the members to the past and

brings focus to their future (Weis, 1997). Identity is created through social constructs of

remembering the past through texts that include, but are not limited to, monuments, museums,

rituals, speeches and media. Maurice Halbwachs (1995), the first sociologist to use the term

collective memory, together with his research is considered the foundational framework for the

study of social memory. He suggested that all individual memory is constructed within social

structures and institutions, through which we have interaction and exchange ideas in the form of

memories. Through various methods of communication, an individual creates a memory, but it

is socially mediated in that it is related to the group and linked to the past.

Most often, people who share collective memories also share cultural identities. Perhaps

the most discussed or researched area of collective memory concerns the place of

commemoration in the construction of cultural identity (Brown, 2009; Dickinson, 1997; Prosise,

1998; & Wilson, 2005). The focus of commemoration is on the kinds of events that become

collectively remembered in various groups and how these events are given broader significance

in the identity of the group through commemoration. By commemorating failures and

achievements, collective memory plays an essential role because of its importance to the identity

of the group (Wilson, 2005). As a symbolic construction, these cultural texts shape the view of

the past as well as direct our views of a shared future.

A popular method of commemorating the past is through memorials and museums. The

public perceives them to be one of the most trust worthy sources of knowledge connecting them

to the past. Like most contexts of memory, the artifacts are understood to be "real and thus

reliable markers of the past" (Dickinson, Ott, & Aoki, 2005, p. 89). While the artifacts are

markers of the past, the question persists: Are they the most reliable? Rhetorical scholars

(Brown, 2010; Dickenson, 1997; & Prosisie, 1998) acknowledged that most forms of collective

memory have an inherent problem in that they are mediated. Brown (2010) noted that serious

questions arise as to "who or what is invested with the power to determine a given version of the

past" (p. 19). Mediated power can cause significant problems. The choice to include or exclude

specific artifacts has the potential to create "gaps and inconsistencies" (Prosise, 1998, p. 320).

These choices also present the possibility of erasing elements of the past, creating the "capacity

not to remember" (Prosise, 1998, p. 321). Collective memory, then, is as much about

remembering as it is about forgetting.

Prosise (1998) suggested that memorials of the past do not necessarily interpret

themselves and that there will always be tension between the past and its collective

representations. Because of the tensions created by a mediated power and the diversity of

memory associated with the event, Brown (2010) noted that any comprehensive understanding of

collective memory "requires a principle of counter-memory" (p. 19). Each historical event can

have diverse memories attached to it. The construction of one memory may alienate or erase the

other memories attached to the event, thus collective memory is never neutral. Counter-memory

practices seek to disrupt or extend memory in ways that were unintended by the mediators

(Brown, 2010).

Who will be remembered and how they will be remembered has always been a subject of

commemoration. In a response to the AIDS epidemic, the creators of the AIDS Memorial Quilt

dictated both the "who" and "how" aspects of collective memory. Lewis and Fraser (1996), in

their study of the AIDS Quilt, noted that there is often a conflict between the official

commemorations and the vernacular. The vernacular (language of the domestic people) is often

seen as counter-memory to the official (political) commemoration, and emerges from the reality

of firsthand experiences (Lewis & Fraser, 1996). First, the quilt was seen as a memorial for

those who had lost loved ones to the AIDS epidemic. It became a point of collective grieving

"without glossing over the nature of their deaths and the seriousness of AIDS" (Lewis & Fraser,

1996, p. 434). Second, the quilt became a memorial that resisted the official memory as it

applied to the AIDS epidemic. It sought to retell or rewrite public perception as people

encountered it personally. The AIDS quilt, in a sense, provided an outlet of unmediated

collective memory. In the context of AIDS related loss and grieving, it became a political

statement and a memorial for the vernacular culture to help America redefine its collective

memory.

The Internet has transformed the way collective memory is stored, and has allowed

people to seek out texts that have shaped them and that would otherwise be forgotten in their

objective histories. It also allows interested public the ability to contribute to the collective

memory of people or events in ways that were not possible before. The conditions for using the

Internet for archiving and remembrance have gone through an evolution of sorts. The early

Internet archival system was known as Web 1.0. Later, as the Internet developed in its ability for

interactivity, it became known as Web 2.0.

The first phase of the Internet, Web 1.0, saw information disseminated in one direction,

"from the data owner to the data user" (Hudson, 2012, p. 291). Information was stored online

and accessed by users interested in the information offered by a specific website. Websites

developed as online museums to commemorate the past were constructed like traditional

archives, such as a museum or gallery exhibit, in that a person or small group of people mediates them, making them examples of one-way communication. As stated previously, any discussion of collective memory needs to address the question of who has the power to influence what we see.

Web 2.0 began when users started to contribute to the Internet directly themselves, creating two-way communication. There are countless types of platforms in which users can engage and contribute. Facebook, as will be described later, offers its users multiple ways to interact with friends. Some websites have target groups who interact with each other, such as dating or gaming websites. Still, other websites offer a different type of function. Well-known websites, including Anscestry.com and Wikipedia, allow users to contribute to the knowledge base. The interactive nature of user-generated content (UGC) allows users access to the website to upload media or text, as well as the ability to cross edit each other's media and text. "Interactivity is almost synonymous with agency here, as a user directs his or her own experience within the site" (Hudson, 2012, p. 292). The collaborative nature of UGC allows for an online community of information-sharers that may not have any official authority on a subject. UGC can also increase collaboration between groups of people and expose people to a more diverse, and thus rich collection of memory. In this way, collective memory is democratized for a vast number of participants because traditional editors no longer mediate it, and content is not filtered through institutional outlets. This online social component has the ability to become a prominent outlet and archival system for collective memory; this means that there is a responsibility on cultural organizations and media to provide a space for "communal remembering" (Hudson, 2012, p. 292).

Collective memory in social networking sites (SNS) is an active process and becomes dynamic as images posted by others might become a seed of memory, especially if there was a connection to the event. The advantage of the SNS is that they promote immediate feedback (Zimmerman, 2009). This adaptation to commemoration is possible by a continuous dialogue about the events or people that represent the memory. There is discussion among scholars (Garde-Hansen, 2009) that SNS may not contribute to collective memory as much as it "enslaves it within the . . . abiding ideologies through its public sphere and commercial activities" (p. 136). However, Zimmermann (2009), Hudson (2012), and others agree that SNS are acceptable places for archiving personal memory that adds to the discussion of collective memory. SNSs allow the user to become both a producer and a consumer at the same time; thereby, creating a way to maintain and preserve personal memory that adds to the collective remembrance (Zimmermann, 2009).

An important aspect in this regard is shown in the way users participate in the collective grieving process after the death of iconic people. SNSs become powerful tools for people to share their grief and memories for people they do not actually know. Without the need to pass through the traditional mediators of memory, these archives, in the form of posts and comments, can add legitimacy to the collective experience and still promote a stable and inclusive collective memory.

Parasocial interaction and social media

Researchers' interest in the way people respond to media personae has a long history (in media terms at least) as media figures are clearly capable of eliciting strong affections and reactions from media users. Parasocial Interaction (PSI) refers to how media users relate to, develop, and maintain relationships with media personalities. Horton and Wohl (1956), in their

original research, explored the idea that audiences develop bonds of familiarity over time as they continue to watch media personalities. These bonds resemble interpersonal relationships, but differ because they are one-sided and mediated. For instance, it is an unequal relationship in which a large group of people (the audience) is more informed about one person (the celebrity) who, in turn, has little or no knowledge of the audience except in abstract terms (Giles, 2002). While Horton and Wohl's (1956) research focused on television, they noted that strong connections started with radio personalities, who at the time began to use an interpersonal tone and rhythm, thus blurring the line between performers and audience. This feeling of interpersonal communication allowed the audience to connect more fully with the characters of the show.

As media developed, so did the research on parasocial interaction. Auter and Palmgreen (2000) moved beyond simply developing bounds of intimacy to include interest in a favorite character, such as caring about the character and predicting what to expect from the character. They also measured group identification with favorite characters or how similar the character is to one's social group. Consequently, parasocial interaction has moved from a limited emphasis to include elements of the viewer's behavior, both individually and collectively. Motivations to engage in parasocial relationships can include admiring talent, hero worship, and romance (Stever, 2009, p.18). Researchers have noted that television viewers form parasocial relationships with newscasters (Rubin, Perse, & Powell, 1985), soap opera characters (Perse & Rubin, 1989), television performers (R. Rubin & McHugh, 1987), and athletes (Kassing & Sanderson, 2009). Researchers have also observed that children and adolescents readily identify with television characters (Hoffner, 1996).

As these parasocial relationships develop, research (Kassing & Sanderson, 2009) has shown that while remaining one-sided functionally, they develop and produce outcomes similar to actual social relationships. However, to the extent to which this relationship is based on information, the audience is largely dependent on the media for a glimpse into the life of the celebrity. This means that this social interaction is a perceived interaction. The media provides the audience with means for association and identification with the celebrity.

Burke (1950) defined identification as a sharing of substance. He claimed that to persuade, "a rhetorician must believe that he or she shares the interests of the other" (p.180). Although Burke's focus was on the speaker's identification with the audience, Cohan (2003) suggested that parasocial identification comes from the audience and is a relationship with media personalities that has strong psychological roots that can lead to many possible functions. He suggested that it could serve as a survival mechanism, a way to experience social values, or as a way to gain alternate perspective. Cohan (2001) also argued that identification is linked to empathy rather than sympathy as the audience responds emotionally to the character's dilemma. This vicarious media experience signals that people are involved with the content, and that they acknowledge a similarity with the character. Through identification and vicarious similarities, the public is influenced by the media personae.

Researchers (Cohan & Perse, 2003; Kassing & Sanderson, 2009) recognized the influence celebrities/athletes have on fans, which leads them to imitate practices or purchase products used or supported by the celebrity. Imitation or modeling is recognized as a key correlation between the audience and the celebrity. Media has an effect on viewers in that there is an expectation that viewers will model the actions they see others do on television (Kassing & Sanders, 2009). For example, people want to dress like Taylor Swift, develop a jump shot like

Kobe Bryant, or get involved with charitable organizations supported by Bill Gates. They also

suggest that because of these pseudo-interpersonal relationships, the acceptance of health

messages or educational programming promoted by their favorite celebrity increases the

likelihood of modeling. Thus, media exposure promotes fan identification with celebrities,

which in turn affects fan attitudes and behavior in meaningful ways.

Traditionally, audience members viewed and developed parasocial interaction with media

characters on television, listened to them on the radio, or read about them in print. Outside of

chance encounters and asking for an autograph, fans were unable to directly communicate their

parasocial interaction to celebrities. Where newspaper editorials were one of the few places that

gave people a limited public place of expression, the Internet now supplants mass media in

asking for a place of discourse. The Internet provides fans with additional access to media

figures. Specifically, social media expands this interaction and gives the individual the ability to

communicate and share information as if the relationship were real.

Social media is the product of an ever expanding and accelerating human interaction.

Individuals are no longer tied to particular parts of the country or the world, nor are they bound

by time constants. It is increasingly difficult to avoid the encroachment of technology and

culture into our lives. The term social media is used to describe Internet-based technologies that

turn media communication into an interactive dialogue. Social media is an instrument of

communication that allows for a more social, collaborative, interactive, and responsive

individual interaction through the media and in a sense; social media can be described as a

"virtual meeting place" (Chandler & Munday). Therefore, the Internet allows individuals to

connect and interact with others who have developed the same parasocial interaction. Fans

create and interact through websites and social media pages dedicated to a celebrity. These

"virtual communities are the quintessential example of the kind of imagined community" (Williams, 2007) where fans create a collective interaction with the celebrity.

The development of social media is so new that studies have only just begun to look at the possibilities this new media has to offer. Most studies focus on the "potential of the new digital and networking media" (Lazaroiu, 2011, p. 92) for journalism, marketing, and business. Other studies are concerned that more "empirical data needs to be assembled to critically reflect on the promises of social media" (Verdegem, 2011, p. 38). However, the Internet and social media have also expanded the possibilities of people with whom individuals can now have a parasocial relationship. Prior to the Internet, parasocial relationships focused on celebrities or other media personalities seen through television. Distance was still an effect in that, while individuals could feel they identified with and understood the celebrity, they still maintained their social setting (Giles, 2002). Klimmt, Hefner and Vorderer (2007) noted that social media offers interactivity that "overrides the distance between media users and media characters" (p. 10). Social media disregards the presumed physical distance and allows for immediate communication that widens into virtual interactive forums.

Online parasocial interaction is only now beginning to be studied. Kassing and Sanderson (2009), Giles (2002), and others have focused on this new media as it applies to parasocial interaction. Until the advent of social media, parasocial interaction had been virtually an isolated relationship. It could only be displayed while watching television, reading celebrity magazines, or sharing a common interest with others. Today, however, social media provides the audience with the ability to communicate their admiration directly to the media personality by posting on sites such as Facebook, Twitter, or celebrity maintained blogs. These platforms also allow celebrities to interact in real time with their fans. While this is still a pseudo

interaction because the celebrity's response is to the masses, these unfiltered outlets provide points of connection and identification for fans unavailable in more traditional forms of media (Brown et al., 2003). By offering fans and celebrities opportunities to engage one another in real time, social media has advanced parasocial interaction to a level not previously possible through traditional media outlets, and it also promotes the idea that the public can relate to them as though they were friends (Brown et al., 2003).

The Internet now allows individuals to develop parasocial relationships with personalities who would not normally appear to be celebrities. Movie stars, athletes and even animated characters have been the traditional focus of parasocial interaction. However, ordinary people can gain celebrity status when their YouTube video goes viral. Business owners and CEOs also have the possibility of creating a fan base. Steve Jobs is one such CEO who gained notoriety through the interactive products he produced. This paper proposes that many people are connected with technology pioneer, Steve Jobs, through the technology he helped create in a way that was not possible before. The parasocial response to his death through social media was an overwhelming salute to the following he had created.

The loss of a parasocial relationship has been an area of interest to researchers when studying parasocial interactions. Most often this occurs with the death of the celebrity. In a recent research project, Sanderson and Cheong (2010) conducted a study specifically focused on social media parasocial interaction after the death of Michael Jackson. They studied the ways fans used social media to communicate their "grief and interact with other fans who also are mourning for the loss of a parasocial partner" (Sanderson & Cheong, 2010, p. 329). They suggested that online social media practices "significantly aided people as they worked to accept Jackson's death and seemed to be a valuable outlet for grieving for a parasocial loss" (Sanderson

& Cheong, 2010, p. 327). They also argued that social media opened up new ways to "actively communicate their parasocial interaction directly to celebrities as well as others who share their personal attachment" (Sanderson & Cheong, 2011, p. 329). Similar to collective memorials left in places of interest, the Internet and social media have become convenient outlets from which the public can draw strength as they struggle daily to cope with the death of a parasocial relationship.

Though most parasocial interaction literature has focused on television and film, new technologies have called for a closer look at such online interactions. The interconnection of parasocial interaction and eulogies creates a rich framework in which to study the messages communicated after the death of a media personality. A qualitative approach will be used to conduct a rhetorical analysis to discover the themes people communicated in the immediate aftermath of Steve Jobs' death. This discourse about a public figure works to amplify the celebrity's public profile across multiple digital platforms. It also shows an understanding of the importance people place on PSI because of the connection it brings by participating in the relationship.

Scholars have amassed an enormous amount of research on epideictic rhetoric as it applies to eulogies. Eulogistic focus has included the changing of cultures, the effects of religion, the differences of eulogies for extraordinary citizens and ordinary people, and the effects of media. The initiation of the Internet, specifically social media, has brought new and dynamic research opportunities to those studying eulogies. Research is only now beginning to focus on this emerging communication phenomenon of death in social media.

Hyperpersonal communication

When a relationship is developed through computer-mediated communication (CMC) that exceeds the face-to-face relationship, that relationship is said to be hyperpersonal (Walther, 1996). Walther identified three types of relationships that take place online. Impersonal communication simply takes care of business. Interpersonal communication is more socially oriented (Turner, Grube, & Meyers, 2001). Hyperpersonal interpersonal communication usually happens between people who may not have a face-to-face relationship. CMC allows a person's social circle to expand by cultivating relationships with people they have never physically met. Thus, the Internet becomes a medium for developing multiple types of interpersonal relationships. However, the lack of visual cues in CMC leads individuals to ask more intimate questions allowing the relationship to develop intimacy much quicker than they would in a face-to-face relationship. According to Walther (1996), hyperpersonal communication occurs when:

> Users experience commonality and are self-aware, physically separated, and communicating via a limited-cues channel that allows them to selectively still present and edit; to construct and reciprocate representations of their partners and relations without the interference of environmental reality. (p. 33)

Based upon the partial information presented, users create an idealized persona of their friend. The sender filters his/her cues, so that he/she only sends socially desired information. Because the communication is asynchronous, partners can edit comments or correct any mistakes they made. This makes the communication stream almost perfect and feedback then reinforces this process. Hyperpersonal communication explains why people can create very deep and personal relationships with others online, without ever meeting (Walther, 1996). Thus, online relationships can develop into hyperpersonal relationships that are extremely personal and can be

more appealing than experiences in similar face-to-face relationships.

Hyperpersonal draws on the immediacy of social media. People are able to know bits and pieces of each other's lives through constant surveillance of each post and comment. Facebook not only becomes a way for us to communicate, but also a "source of entertainment in which we can get a glimpse of everyone's life" (Trottier, 2012, p. 413). SMSs are not only an avenue for communication; they have become a part of the message as people interact with the sites themselves. They have changed the way people communicate in that private information has become more public through self-disclosure and self-presentation.

Cell phones and laptops seem tethered to individuals, making them a natural part of modern communication. Software allows apps to push notifications to the phone so the individual can stay current with their friend's updates while enhancing his/her social presence and self-presentation. Turkle (2008) noted that "Today, the near-ubiquity of handheld and palm-size computing and cellular technologies that enable voice communication, text messaging, e-mail, and Web access have made connectivity commonplace" (p. 10). The encroachment of technological devices, the preference to communicate through them, and the willingness to let them interrupt our physical relationships shows a priority of online communication over face-to-face.

The commonplace of being connected to technology enhances the hyperpersonal relationship over the face-to-face relationship in that individuals are in constant technological proxemics with each other more than they spend time face-to-face. These interactions and expectations increase the hyperpersonal communication and produce overly intimate relationship with the other individual. As these interactions continue, similarities between the two individuals are exaggerated while the differences are minimized and the relationship develops an

intense sense of commonality. Naturally, the cell phone becomes the friend you never leave home without because to lose it means to lose (if only temporarily) the relationship with the other individual.

While Walther's focus is on close relationships, Taylor and Barton (2011) suggested that hyperpersonal relationships can also be applied to other forms of human relations, "including celebrity-fan relationships" (71). In the truest sense of the model, hyperpersonal is two-way communication, but CMC can give fans a sense of closeness to a celebrity in which they self-present themselves by sending messages through SMS to the celebrity's Facebook fan page or Twitter account. In the sense that individuals do live in close proximity to technology, they can be notified when their parasocial partner tweets or updates his/her Facebook status.

Research has yet to apply the hyperpersonal model to parasocial relationships; neither is it the focus of this paper to extend this model, but to point out the possibilities of it existing because SMS permeates our space.

Parasocial interaction and Hyperpersonal communication provide attractive theories for understanding how social media has begun to transform the way the public express their grief through posting eulogies online. The popularity of Steve Jobs, his cult-like following, and his connection to the technology used to express grief provides a rich context in which to study the posting of eulogies through parasocial interaction, thus, the following research questions are posed:

RQ 1: How and to what extent do online postings expressing people's grief about the death of Steve Jobs mirror the traditional forms of eulogy?

RQ 2: What new categories of eulogy emerge through online posting that do not mirror traditional forms of eulogy?

Chapter Three: Method

The research questions posed will be answered through a rhetorical analysis of the text because the focus of this research is on the similarity of expression as well as looking for themes that may emerge. In the past, parasocial interaction has been measured by placing research participants into groups using a variety of conditions and administering surveys or questionnaires. These surveys and questionnaires often offer a scenario in which an individual would identify with a celebrity. The strength of the parasocial relationship is then measured by using a measurement scale such as a Likert scale, or an already established scale such as the *Audience-Persona Interaction Scale* (Auter & Palmgreen, 2000). The context of the digital world does not allow for traditional measurements with research participants because of the inaccessibility of those being researched. However, the digital context brings new challenges and opportunities to the study of both parasocial interaction and eulogies, which necessitates a different methodological approach. A rhetorical analysis of the text will allow an examination of the themes that emerge as people utilize social networking sites in their commemorations and how that may affect the public memory of historical figures.

Due to the nature of this research, one of the challenges was selecting data for this study. There were countless websites, blogs, media, and social media platforms that include, or are completely devoted to, coverage of Steve Jobs and his death. Some of these sources, such as news media sites (CNN, FOX, and MSN), ran stories about his death and paid tribute to his accomplishments. Included at the end of most news coverage stories is a place where readers can comment and dialogue about the story. Technology websites (Wired and Computer World) devoted coverage to the death of Steve Jobs, often with the same ability for readers to comment and interact. Bloggers also dedicated time and space in their response to Jobs' death. These

websites and blogs contained immeasurable numbers of postings and comments in response to stories written about him. Websites were also created to honor the memory of Jobs. For example, allaboutstevejobs.com contained material about every part of his life (bio, persona, sayings, pictures and movies), including a blog where the author updated current events in the ongoing Jobs saga and other information connected to Jobs' life. Websites allow for and encourage reader interaction, but are not driven by social interaction, in that they are not inherently relational. Any social interaction is in direct response to the story written by the authors of the website and not developed by the users themselves.

Therefore, social media platforms offered the most promising parasocial data. After assessing several networks, Facebook was selected because it was, by far, the most popular social media platform at that time. At the time of Steve Jobs' death, Facebook had over 800 million "active users" ("Facebook now as," 2011). As of this date, Facebook boasts over 1 billion users (Zuckerberg, 2012). The site's enormous acceptance increased the chances of reaching a wide audience of people who knew the deceased. Facebook allows users to post personal information and exchange messages with others who have been selected as a "friend." As the user posts status updates, pictures, or videos on their "wall," friends can view and leave comments in response to the post.

Users also have the ability to enhance their self-presentation by joining common-interest groups, which are organized around their workplace or school, social events, advocacy causes, or celebrities. There are dozens of Facebook groups and pages devoted to Steve Jobs. Users have created these groups and pages worldwide with a fan base ranging from as little as 1,000 people per page to over 5.5 million on Jobs' public figure page. Researching Facebook was made possible by its timeline design that saves comments and postings from the inception of the page.

Facebook was also selected for the diversity of interests represented by its users. Other popular social media platforms, such as LinkedIn and Pinterest, accommodate a far narrower audience or a more specific purpose. LinkedIn is a professional networking platform connecting people in all types of vocations around the world. Pinterest, a photo-sharing platform, allows users to create and manage theme-based image collections such as events, interests, hobbies, and more. Although there are a variety of themes within the framework of the platform, its users are limited to sharing images or media. It is acknowledged that users of both of these platforms have paid tribute to Steve Jobs and his death; however, researching their websites would not reflect an accurate portrayal of the overall reaction to his death.

Facebook was also chosen because of the amount of time (1 ½ years) that had passed since Job's death. The accessibility to past postings and comments in social media can be problematic. For instance, Twitter, the second most popular social media network ("Top 10 Social Networking Sites," 2012), could not be researched because of the inaccessibility to tweets made that far in the past. Twitter is a micro-blogging service that allows users to post and read text-based messages, known as "tweets," of up to 140 characters. As mentioned previously, Wired Magazine (2011) reported that there were over 10,000 tweets per second immediately following the news of Jobs' death. While Twitter did have an enormous response to his death, research through this platform, at this time, was not logistically possible. Because of sheer volume of information online, this research does not claim to represent the extent of grieving enacted online after Jobs' death; it does, however, seek to understand how people were responding to his death through social media.

Research of social media sites is in its infancy because of the newness of the technology. While it is imperative to study human interaction occurring in these settings, one of the

challenges facing Internet research is the issue of privacy (Walther, 2002). "The Code of Federal

Regulations (CFR) Title 45, Part 46, Protection of Human Subjects protects communication

privacy in personal spaces such as a physician's office or an attorney's office" (Walther, 2002, p.

207). He argued that communication in public settings is not protected and that collecting data

from publicly available sources qualifies for a human subjects exemption. Therefore, Walther

(2002) argued "any person who uses publicly available communication systems on the Internet

must be aware that these systems are, at their foundation and by definition, mechanisms for the

storage, transmission, and retrieval of comments" (p. 207). Based on Walther's research, this

study suggests that publicly available Internet archives should be treated similar to news stories

or any other public information.

        Because of the instancy of social media, data was only collected for the two weeks

following Jobs' death. The first week was from October 5 to October 11, 2011, and the second

week was from October 12 to October 18, 2011. Because of the enormous potential of postings

about Steve Jobs during these days, only 50 posts from each day were examined. During the

second week, however, Facebook comments dropped sharply, leaving less than 50 comments,

making it necessary to classify only those comments that were available.

        To determine how eulogies are created online, a rhetorical analysis was conducted on the

comments posted on Facebook. As comments were analyzed, the emerging themes were

identified and placed into a category using Adrianne Kunkel and Michael Dennis' (2003)

Integrative Framework. The categories consist of the following: (1) establishing credibility, (2)

praise for the deceased, (3) self-disclosure of emotion, (4) problem-focused coping: suggestions

for action, (5) emotion-focused coping: positive reappraisal, (6) affirmation of vivid past

relationship, and (7) continuation of interactive bonds. The last three categories have sub-

categories for additional clarification. Emotion-focused coping sub-categories are as follows: (a) positive reappraisal: reference to the afterlife, (b) positive reappraisal: appreciation of the time spent with the deceased, (c) positive reappraisal: appreciation of lessons learned from the deceased, and (d) positive reappraisal: appreciation of the deceased's good life. Category 6, affirmation of vivid past relationships, is divided into two sub-categories: (a) notation of flaws, and (b) revelation of private insights and unique relationships. The last category, continuation of interactive bonds, has two sub-categories: (a) addressing the dead, and (b) referring to the deceased in the present tense. This framework was used to determine how grief is manifested within the social media context.

The Facebook comments were initially read and classified by a research assistant and myself. Because of the interpretative nature of this online data analysis, we found that overlap occurred between categories and allowed for the chance that several themes could be evident in a single comment. Each comment was then read and classified into one or more of the seven categories of the framework. If a comment did not appear to fit within the framework, that comment was analyzed along with other uncategorized comments to determine if a new category would emerge.

The researchers also had to determine how to interpret the intent of reoccurring simple messages. Facebook comments tend to be short, one-sentence messages or even one-word comments. A comment may even be as small as an emoticon. An emoticon is a pictorial symbol of a facial expression using punctuation marks, numbers and letters. Emoticons are usually written to express a person's self-disclosure of emotion. In addition to the use of emoticons, Facebook users would often use words to express their grief by creating words that would identify with Steve Jobs and Apple. For example, placing a small "i" in front of a word mimics

the trademark branding of Apple. iTunes, iPhone and iPad are all names of Apple products and

by placing a small i in front of a word, the user is expressing some kind of identification with

Steve Jobs. Whether the comment was a single word, an emoticon, or a creative expression, the

researchers needed to interpret the intent of the comment. In comments where the same theme

was expressed more than once it was classified as a continuation of the original theme. After the

initial process of categorizing was completed, several reassessments were done to gain

confidence in the interpretation and assigned categories. This continued until the observation

failed to add new interpretation to the results.

Establishing credibility

The first element of the integrated framework is a reminder of the validity of the

eulogizer's credibility to speak for the deceased. By establishing credibility, the eulogizer

acknowledges his/her relationship to the deceased, and thus the right to serve in the privileged

function of eulogizer. Earl Spencer (1997) established credibility in his eulogy of his sister,

Princess Dianna when he stated, "I stand before you today, the representative of a family in grief,

in a country in mourning before a world in shock." Even in bereavement, speakers evidently feel

the need to qualify their relationship with the deceased through established connections.

Praise for the deceased

Praise for the deceased is often recognized as a vital part of the eulogy. Praise for the

deceased shows an appreciation for who the person was, the accomplishments or ethics of the

person, and the values he/she held dear. Mona Simpson's (2011) eulogy for her brother, Steve

Jobs, exemplified his work ethic when she said, "Steve worked at what he loved. He worked

really hard. Every day." Earl Spencer (1997) praised Princess Dianna's values: "Diana was the

very essence of compassion, of duty, of style, of beauty. All over the world she was a symbol of

selfless humanity . . ." This research chose to note the existence of praise within the comment while striving to recognize the element of praising the deceased by honoring his/her values and actions.

Self-disclosure of emotions

As indicated above, eulogizers may find relief of their own emotional state by voicing their feelings about the distressful experience. The ability and willingness of a eulogizer to share his/her grief experiences becomes therapeutic as he/she copes with intense feelings of loss. Earl Spencer (1997) self-disclosed his emotions when he noted, "Only now you are gone do we truly appreciate what we are now without and we want you to know that life without you is very, very difficult. We have all despaired at our loss over the past week." By verbalizing personal emotions, eulogizers seem to make an attempt to alleviate their grief and draw a connection with others who may be experiencing the same emotional state.

Problem-focused coping: Suggestions for action

Problem-focused coping puts attention on action. The eulogizer may provide either explicit or implicit directions for action in an attempt to aid themselves and the audience in the discernment of actions as far as adopting the deceased's goals or values. It may even be in the form of what the eulogizer vows to do personally to remember the deceased. To illustrate this, Earl Spencer (1997) stated in Dianna's eulogy, "I pledge that we, your blood family, will do all we can to continue the imaginative and loving way in which you were steering these two exceptional young men." This helps to bring about a resoluteness of focus about what to do with the void left by the passing of the deceased.

Emotion-focused coping: Positive reappraisal

Through positive reappraisal, eulogizers often help the audience reconnect and restructure their relationship with the deceased by providing a different perspective that gives a more acceptable understanding of this final event. Positive reappraisal can be expressed in four ways: a reference to the afterlife, an appreciation of the time spent with the deceased, an appreciation of lessons and traits learned from the deceased, and an appreciation of the deceased's good life.

Positive reappraisal: Reference to the afterlife. Religion and the concept of an afterlife are often reflected in the eulogizer's comments. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher referred to the afterlife in her eulogy for President Reagan:

> For we may be sure that the Big Fella Upstairs never forgets those who remember Him. And as the last journey of this faithful pilgrim took him beyond the sunset, and as heaven's morning broke, I like to think - in the words of Bunyan - that 'all the trumpets sounded on the other side' (Thatcher, 2004).

Eulogizers often allude to the fact that the deceased has a favorable standing with a higher power, which puts the death in a positive light for the mourners.

Positive reappraisal: Appreciation of the time spent with the deceased. The recalling of stories and memories can help bring an appreciation of the deceased to the audience. The amount of time spent or a shared experience is related through stories and focuses on what was shared instead of what is now lost. Mona Simpson (2011), eulogizing about the time she met her brother, said, "We took a long walk . . .I don't remember much of what we said that first day, only that he felt like someone I'd pick to be a friend." Another example from the Simpson eulogy is, "And every time his wife walked into the room, I watched his smile remake itself on

his face" (Simpson, 2011). As eulogizers express gratitude for the amount of personal time spent, or the experiences that were shared, with the deceased, it fosters an appreciation in the audience as it gives a peek into the life of the deceased.

Positive reappraisal: Appreciation of lessons learned from the deceased. Eulogizers will transfer the attention of the audiences' loss through acknowledging the opportunities to learn important lessons and traits from the deceased. Steve's sister expressed the lessons learned by saying, "What I learned from my brother's death was that character is essential: What he was, was how he died." And "Steve was never ironic, never cynical, never pessimistic. I try to learn from that, still" (Simpson, 2011). By placing a positive reappraisal on the circumstances of death, the eulogizer is able to help reconnect the relationship with the deceased.

Positive reappraisal: Appreciation of the deceased's good life. Paying tribute to the deceased's good life is recognition that he/she lived a full life even if the events surrounding the death may have led to a premature ending. Earl Spencer (1997) expressed Dianna's good life in this way, "I would like to end by thanking God for the small mercies He's shown us at this dreadful time; for taking Diana at her most beautiful and radiant and when she had joy in her private life." Speaking about the deceased's good life helps the audience reconsider their beliefs about who was the deceased amid the circumstances surrounding his/her passing.

Affirmation of vivid past relationships

The affirmation of vivid past relationships serves to remind the survivors that the deceased lived physically, and to internalize the memories and relationships they shared. This gives the survivors the ability and willingness to carry on their relationship with the deceased. Two strategies are used to affirm past relationships: notation of flaws, and revelation of private insights and unique relationships.

Affirmation of vivid past relationships: Notation of flaws. By recognizing the human characteristics and flaws, there is a realistic remembrance of the deceased. Bringing back these different memories and insights can lead to a little less reverence placed on the deceased and a chance to appreciate their mortality a little more. Earl Spencer (1997) gave us insight into Princess Dianna's life when he disclosed:

> For all the status, the glamour, the applause, Diana remained throughout a very insecure person at heart, almost childlike in her desire to do good for others so she could release herself from deep feelings of unworthiness of which her eating disorders were merely a symptom.

By reminding the audience of the deceased's mortality and humanness, the eulogizer is able to enhance the grievers' willingness to carry on a relationship with him/her.

Affirmation of vivid past relationships: Revelation of private insights and unique relationships. This differs from the category, time spent with the deceased, in that it goes beyond just knowing the deceased. In an effort to create further depth to the remembrance of the deceased and to share possibly unknown stories, eulogizers will participate in revealing private insights and interactions with the deceased. Margaret Thatcher, (2004), speaking about President Reagan said:

> As Prime Minister, I worked closely with Ronald Reagan for eight of the most important years of all our lives. We talked regularly, both before and after his presidency, and I've had time and cause to reflect on what made him a great President.

These personally unique relationships add value to the representation of the departed.

Continuation of interactive bonds: Addressing the deceased.

Eulogizers often talk directly to the deceased as if they were still living. Princess

Dianna's brother talked directly to her in his eulogy:

> You stand tall enough as a human being of unique qualities not to need to be seen as a
>
> saint. Indeed to sanctify your memory would be to miss out on the very core of your
>
> being, your wonderfully mischievous sense of humor with a laugh that bent you double,
>
> your joy for life transmitted wherever you took your smile, and the sparkle in those
>
> unforgettable eyes, your boundless energy which you could barely contain. (Spencer,
>
> 1997)

Eulogizers are often close to the deceased, and at times take the chance to formally express to the

audience what they want to say to the deceased. Often this comes out of a response of what they

did not have the opportunity to say or could not say while the individual was alive. By initiating

a speech directed to the deceased, the speaker is able to keep the relationship alive.

Continuation of interactive bonds: Referring to the deceased in the present tense.

Eulogizers seek value in the relationship by keeping the deceased in the present. When

utilizing this method, speakers are not speaking to the deceased, but about them as if they were

still alive. From Apple's Remembering Steve Website a fan posted, "A fine visionary, a great

businessman, and a very honorable human being that continues to bring a daily dose of kid-

wonder to my life" (Anonymous, 2011). By talking about them as if they were still alive, the

relationship reestablishes a continuance that was severed with the event of the death.

This analysis includes all comments made concerning Steve Jobs except the few in

languages other than English. Comments that were critical or disrespectful of Steve Jobs and his

work were also included, not because they expressed a eulogy, but because they reflect an

emerging theme within the social media context.

Chapter Four: Results

This section will cover the analysis of the research, and provide examples taken from the text. Facebook comments were analyzed over the course of 2 weeks. Most of the posts were brief, informal, and similar to short face-to-face verbal exchanges. The analysis revealed that the comments posted in response to the death of Steve Jobs were characteristic of the categories within the framework. To identify when the comment was posted, the date of the comment will follow each quote. As will be seen in the following examples, correct grammar and punctuation were not a priority when posting comments. Also, a mixture of texting or social media language was used throughout the comments. In an effort to capture the essence of each comment, great pains have been taken to quote each one exactly as the griever wrote it.

Continuation of interactive bonds: Addressing the deceased

This strategy yielded the most data and yet most of the comments could also be classified in one of the other categories as well. Individuals seemed to talk directly to Steve Jobs as they were expressing their condolences through the other strategies. Therefore, overlapping themes were seen throughout the text. Some illustrations of strategy overlap are as follows. People praised him: "you are genius" (Oct. 11), and "you are a legend" (Oct. 5). Most people utilized self-disclosure of emotion by talking directly to him: "Despite the loss of you we will firm. . ." (Oct. 5), "steve jobs we miss u too much" (Oct. 13), and "why you died" (Oct. 14). People told him what action they would take: "R.I.P im gonna buy the iphone 4s in memory ☹" (Oct. 12). They noted his afterlife: "I wish Lord Buddha keep you well!..." (Oct. 14). They even appreciated the time they were able to spend with him: "I'm so glad I once lived in this era with you" (Oct. 6). People directly voiced their appreciation of the products or traits he shared, "thanks steve…thanks for the talent that you shared" (Oct. 16); and they declared their

appreciation of his good life, "You've changed the way people see the world.." (Oct 8). They

expressed their private insights and unique relationships by talking directly to him: "Rest in

paradise my friend! (Oct. 7), and "i love you from my heart" (Oct 9). As seen in these examples,

other strategies may be the main intent of the expression, but because the eulogizer is speaking

directly to Jobs, it is classified with a dual theme.

The most commonly used expression was the use of "rest in peace" or "RIP." Through a

discussion with the research assistant, it was decided that "RIP" was and is still used to reference

the afterlife, but in this context it seemed to be a phatic expression. Standing alone, it was

concluded that "RIP" would fall into the category of addressing the deceased, because it implied

talking to Jobs and not necessarily making a reference to an afterlife.

With this being the prevalent strategy utilized, and the abundance of overlapping themes,

there is some speculation that the Internet may play a role in keeping the deceased alive because

his virtual identity is still in the present tense and there is a physical disconnection to the

deceased. This will be considered more in depth in the discussion section.

Self-disclosure of emotion

Self-disclosure of emotion was also frequently utilized, and supported the research that

there is a wide range of expression through self-disclosure of grief. People used multiple ways

of putting their grief into language; consideration had to be made for expression through

punctuation as well as the use of SMS language and emoticons. Some examples illustrate

multiple expressions of self-disclosure. Examples of expression through punctuation are: "RIP

Steve…!!!" (Oct. 5), "have lost a great person and a great inspiration!!!!" (7/29), and "THANK

YOU FRO THE WONDERFUL TECHNOLOGY U CREATE AND BRING TO US…RIP Sir

Steve Jobs!!!!" (Oct. 10). The use of SMS language and emoticons were also used frequently

throughout the research to disclose emotions. "Omg!!! The best…" (Oct. 5), "OMG R.I.P. ☹"

(Oct. 5), "im crying .. ☹☹☹☹☹ .." (Oct. 6), and "Sad :s" (Oct. 7) are just a few of the many

ways in which people made use of this type of expression.

The use of Apple's branding trademark of putting a small 'i' in front of the word was

used to disclose emotion. For instance, "iMiss u" (Oct. 5), and "iSad" (Oct. 6) make use of this

technique. Placing an 'i' in front of a word was generally categorized under appreciation of

product, lessons, and traits learned from the deceased; however, when used with a word

describing an emotion, it was classified in self-disclosure of emotion.

Disbelief of Jobs' death was expressed, especially during the first three or four days.

Examples include: "I don't believe his death…… :(((((((((" (Oct. 5), "wahhht? ☹, how he die?"

(Oct. 5), "The world will never be the same again without jobs." (Oct. 5), "☹ life is not fair ☹"

(Oct. 6), "oh noooooooooooooooooooooo" (Oct. 6), and "I don't believe you went…" (Oct. 8).

Some people expressed a personal closeness with Steve Jobs through comments such as, "Yup, I

miss him" (Oct. 5), "R.I.P. ☹ we all miss you, thanks for the inspiration!!!!" (Oct. 6), "Rest in

paradise my friend!" (Oct. 6), and "i miss steve :((" (Oct. 7). However, others went far beyond a

personal connection to self-disclose an intimate relationship: "Oh ma god may he rest in peace

he rescued me 4m bordm n stress by rockn ma world wt he invent I lv hm" (Oct. 5), "i love you

for ever" (Oct. 8), "you were my inspiration ; (" (Oct. 8), and "My Brother Forever…"(Oct. 14).

"I love Steve!" (Oct. 10) was used multiple times throughout the text.

While most people expressed themselves in short phrases or sentences, some people gave

a much more descriptive statement of their feelings: "I had no idea his death would make me feel

as sad as it does, but I think a lot of people are experiencing the same feelings." (Oct. 5), and:

I just couldn't stop myself from weeping and thinking about you from this morning at

9am I got up Taiwan reading this such heartbroken news . . .I hope I'll stop crying and be

brave and try to accept this real soon, and I truly from the bottom of heart wish you rest

in peace. . .thank you for having been in this world, my grant inventor Jobs….We'll miss

you (Oct. 6).

For some, the disclosure was connected to their fear for Apple's future without Steve

Jobs: "oh no poor steve who is going to finish apple who is making iphone 5

noooooooooooooooooo im crying my house is flooding" (Oct. 7), "APPLE is nothing without

him" (Oct. 7), "watz gonna happen nw wid launch of iphone 5…?" (Oct. 8), and "am worry that

the new CEO of APPLE will let JOBS down!!" (Oct. 16).

Due to the brevity of many of the comments, inferences had to be made on what the

eulogizer was trying to express. Many comments had some form of "miss you" in the statement.

This involvement of the word "miss" was seen as an emotion, which led it to be classified as a

self-disclosure of emotion. The eulogizers were stating how they felt about his death, and that

they missed him. The following are some examples: "We will miss u . . ." (Oct. 5), "iMiss u"

(Oct. 5), "we will miss your magic" (Oct. 5), "Goodbye sir, you shall be missed, take a bite outa

that big apple in the sky." (Oct. 6), and ". . . your talents will be missed forever!" (Oct. 8).

Without the social boundaries of time and place, people can express any type of

emotional disclosure. Some individuals showed their displeasure with apple by saying things

such as, "apple is kult" (Oct. 7). Several comments expressed the desire that it had been Justin

Bieber (Oct. 15) instead of Steve Jobs that had died. The connection between Bieber and Jobs is

unknown; however, the popularity of Bieber at the time of Jobs death could account for the

comments.

Praise for the deceased

Praise for the deceased acknowledges the accomplishments, values and actions of the deceased. This was another common strategy in expressing grief and was utilized in different ways. Many times a person would write one or two words such as "Legend" (Oct. 5), "A genius. A visionary" (Oct. 6), "mr beautiful mind !!!!!!!!!!." (Oct. 9), "god" (Oct. 11), and "Evolutionary" (Oct. 15). Other people were more descriptive in their praise: "1997 – The King of Rock 'n' roll Elvis Presley, 2009 – The King of Pop Michael Jackson, 2011 – The King of Technology Steve Jobs. . ." (Oct. 6), "Your impact on the world is plain to see, a man whose qualities will ever be voiced." (Oct. 6), "You are the best of world" (Oct. 7), "once king, always king." (Oct. 8), "God created 3 Apples, 1st is Adam's Apple, 2nd is Newton's Apple and the 3rd is Steve Jobs' Apple. RIP. Mr Steven jobs. You are a genius. God bless You." (Oct. 12), and "The man who were destined to be the one!" (Oct. 14).

Some people became very personal in their praise for Jobs by stating: "you will always be my inspiration STEVE," (Oct. 6), " . . . even when I didn't like Apple, you was an great visionary and a great man." (Oct. 6), "you changed the world, included me" (Oct. 8), "The legendary figure will live in our heart forever" (Oct. 7), and "my god . my hero . my ironman" (Oct. 10). Still others chose to attach his greatness to his products. Some examples are: "He was a mentor, an inventor, wanted to change the world and he succeeded. Macintosh, iMac, iPod, iPhone. . ." (Oct. 6), "you will be missed as your legacy is all that you left behind." (Oct. 6), and "Inspiring life lessons from a man who created one of the most innovative enterprises and 'single-handedly' helped changed the face of technology" (Oct. 11). The data suggests that people felt comfortable expressing praise for Steve Jobs.

Positive reappraisal: Appreciation of lessons and traits learned from the deceased

  At times, the eulogizer acknowledged the opportunity of having learned important lessons and traits from the deceased: "He tells us how to be creative as a human being" (Oct. 5), "A real monthor on how to get things done and never give up." (Oct. 6), "The man who changed the way the world saw technology…" (Oct. 5), and "He has shown that when you have good ideas, Visions and Dreams you can be very successful-just do it!" (Oct. 8).

  This category was expanded to include comments about Jobs' technology and Apple products. The lessons and traits that Jobs portrayed seemed to go hand-in-hand with the innovations he left behind. These comments were included under this category because it was through his products and the technology he developed that people knew him. He was so interconnected with Apple that people thanked him directly for what had been created. The lessons that people learned from Jobs were often connected to his work ethic and products. This connection made it possible to expand this strategy to include appreciation for his products. The following are examples of this type of appreciation: "the tech world will never be the same." (Oct. 6), "you made the best technology ive used the iMac, the MacBook Pro, the Mac Mini, the iPod Touch, and the iPad." (Oct. 5), "I luv all ur gadgetS Stevie….they were crafted to perfection.." (Oct. 9), and "Through my Apple products, a piece of you will always be with me" (Oct. 9).

  People also coined new words to pay tribute based on Apple's iconic "i" followed by a word (iPhone, iPad, iPod). By placing an "i" in front of a word, it was concluded that people were able to show appreciation for the products that are synonymous with Steve Jobs just as people may recite the words of song to pay tribute to a musician. These adaptations were classified as appreciation for products. There were multiple comments that played off of this

idea: "Steve Jobs will always be remembered as the iGod of the Tech World" (Oct. 5), "Now he invent a new product name iGrave" (Oct. 8). "iSad," "iCry," and "iMiss" were all used multiple times in expressing appreciation and indicates a well developed identification with Apple.

Saying "thank you" was also considered an expression of a product, lesson, or trait learned. "Thanks for all the inspiring and exciting ideas with which you tired to help this world." (Oct. 6), "Thanks for everything!" (Oct. 6), "thanks for your work and inspiration, love" (Oct. 7), and "thanks for the future." (Oct. 9) are illustrations of how people used "thank you" to voice their appreciation. Several times people included graphics signifying the Apple logo (Oct. 8), or an Apple product (Oct. 7) as a way to express appreciation of Jobs' products. This group, appreciation of products, lessons, and traits learned, had the most data within the emotion-focused coping category and appreciation of products was the most common expression within the group.

Positive Reappraisal: Appreciation of the deceased's good life

People recognized Jobs' good and full life in a number of ways. Generally people paid tribute by focusing on how they perceived Jobs' life: "What an amazing life and legacy" (Oct. 7), "My respect to the man who dare to think different and brave enough to follow his heart and simply allow his dreams to become a reality." (Oct. 7), "He is an example for those who are not afraid to pursue their dreams" (Oct. 15), and "Steve jobs was the most heroic and selfless human being who has ever walked this earth" (Oct. 18).

They also praised the idea of him changing the world whether it was through his ideas: "The world will never be the same again without jobs" (Oct. 5), "You've changed the way people see the world.." (Oct. 8), or through his products: "you really changed tecnolligey" (Oct. 17), and "What would Steve Jobs ask if he sees Isaac Newton in heaven? Could it be…'Thanks

for your (A)pple'? Both of them have changed the world they once lived in" (Oct. 11). While this was not a prevalent strategy, individuals had no problem expressing their awareness of the effect Jobs' life had on them.

Affirmation of vivid past relationships: Revelation of private insights and unique relationships

This strategy was not used often, but it yielded some valuable data on how people perceived their relationship with Jobs. Some examples include: "he rescued me 4m bordm n stress by rockn ma world wt hc invent i lv hm" (Oct. 5), "you could only fight so long before you fall, you have fought well! R.I.P. and sleep in bliss" (Oct. 5), and "…fortunately his life ended with glory and family love, without too much pain" (Oct. 7). Some individuals went beyond relating a private insight and alluded to a unique relationship: "you changed my life…my great inventor" (Oct. 6), "Rest in paradise my friend! (Oct. 7), "I may always miss him he was my favourite" (Oct. 7), "you were my inspiration;(" (Oct. 8), and "I got to know about him in this year through one of my friends. . .then we became really good friends" (Oct. 11). Others simply stated their love for him: "i love you for ever" (Oct. 8), "i love you from my heart" (Oct. 9), and "I love Steve" (Oct. 10). Traditionally, the nature of this strategy tends be very intimate and it seemed to hold true for online expression as well.

Positive reappraisal: Reference to the afterlife

Another seldom-utilized strategy was the mention of an afterlife. Generally people mentioned the afterlife in a broad sense – such as, "take a bite out of the big apple in the sky" (Oct. 6), "Very often the best are 'called' too early. Heaven will enjoy his company…" (Oct. 7), "now gods will have the honor of his company….." (Oct. 8), "i wonder if they have ipods in heaven" (Oct. 11), "the real god reached heaven…" (Oct. 11), and "WE know where U are,

Steve! BET it's Awesome" (Oct. 15). However, some comments made mention of a specific

God or higher being and brought a religious discourse into the conversation: "God rest you in

peace Steve Jobs." (Oct. 8), "May god give you heaven" (Oct. 8), "May Allah have mercy on his

soul" (Oct. 10), and "I wish Lord Buddha keep you well…" (Oct. 14).

 The original expression of "Rest in Peace" (R.I.P or RIP) may have made reference to the

afterlife at one time, but in this context was found to be a generic expression that should not be

categorized as a reference to the afterlife. As a general practice, "rest in peace" was categorized

as addressing the dead; however, there were instances where context of the comment allowed for

this term to be classified as a reference to the afterlife, such as when the use of soul or heart were

included in the comment. A few examples are: "his sole rest in peace ☺" (Oct. 5), "May his soul

rest in peace…" (Oct. 5), "I truly from the bottom of my heart wish you rest in peace…" (Oct.

6), and "Rest in peace in the "iCloud" Steve Jobs" (Oct. 16). By combining "rest in peace" and

"iCloud" the eulogizer was able to infer an afterlife.

 People also suggested an afterlife by implying that Steve Jobs would continue living in

people or products: "you will always live in me" (Oct. 5), "you'll live eternally on our hearts."

(Oct. 10), and "U will always live in the all the products you develop" (Oct. 5). While there was

not a strong emphasis on using the afterlife as a grief strategy or linking the afterlife to religion,

there is some evidence that people still consider it a viable method of expressing bereavement.

Continuation of Interactive bonds: Referring to the deceased in the present tense

 This strategy is closely related to addressing the deceased. Although addressing the

deceased was the most prevalent strategy identified, referring to the deceased in the present tense

was not commonly used. Some Facebook users did choose to talk about Jobs as if he were still

alive. Some examples are as follows: "I love steve" (Oct. 12), "he is my man" (Oct. 7), "he's

amazing" (Oct. 9), and "people like Steve make the world keep on turning" (Oct. 7). Like other

strategies, these comments can also be classified into one of the other categories as well.

Problem-focused coping: Suggestions for actions

Suggestions for actions indicate that either the audience or the eulogizers do something to

reiterate the deceased's goals and values. This strategy was not used frequently, but was

expressed in three ways. First is the explicit suggestion for action in the continuation of cancer

research, " . . .hope that research and funding may happen in the future to help battle the cancer

you have fought so bravely for such a long time." (Oct. 6). While it is not readily known if Jobs

supported cancer research in any way, the comment directly links his cancer to research and

funding.

The second is a little more implicit and usually referred to the Apple company or its

products: "He will be remembered each time we use an Apple product" (Oct. 6), "Keep Apple

Alive!" (Oct. 6), "an illegitmate child, sent out for adoption, a college drop out………and he

changed the whole world. Stop making excuses and work to bring positive change to the

world!!!" (Oct. 7), and "I hope this generation that has grown up with all of his epic inventions,

appreciates and keeps it alive forever!" (Oct. 18). Although these comments do not address

Jobs' goals or values, there is still a suggestion of some type of action motivated by his agenda.

The third way individuals offered a suggestion for action was in a personal sense. This

was accomplished by stating what they were going to do. All of these personal comments

revolved around buying an Apple product: "I will get a name line with your name on every of

my Apple products" (Oct. 6), "i'll continue to buy apple products as my own way of paying

tributes to you…" (Oct. 6), "R.I.P im gonna buy the iphone 4s in memory ☺" (Oct. 12), and "if it

is the last creation of Steve I have to get the 4s!" (Oct. 14). The comments of how individuals

personally pledge to remember Jobs may not be explicitly tied to his goals and values, but they

may indicate that the action of buying an Apple product keeps those goals and values alive.

Positive reappraisal: Appreciation of time spent with the deceased

This strategy was only used occasionally. However, there were a few attempts to express

appreciation of time spent with the deceased. Although the relationship was parasocial, most

comments made it sound as if they had physically spent time with Steve Jobs: "Thank you for

reminding me to live each day as if it were my last and each day at it's fullest with the cancer

I've had." (Oct. 5), "I'm so glad I once lived in this area with you that I'm honorably able to see

those amazing creations coming down to earth." (Oct. 6), "Because of him I had a respectable

career. Thanks Steve. RIP" (Oct. 10), and "you brought Apple into my life and I thank you for

it." (Oct. 7). One comment was more personal and expressive than the others:

> Actually i only got to know about him in this year through one of my friend, and then is
>
> listened to his sermon at the university of Stanford!,that sermon made a huge impact on
>
> me!then i started explore about him, then we become really good friends (but he never
>
> knw me) i really don't know much about apple products cause ive never use them <im
>
> not a rich person> so its him who changed my life, it was his words!iloveyou so much,
>
> RIP. (Oct. 11).

In gratefulness for the amount of time they got to spend with Jobs, or the experience they lived

because of Jobs, these Facebook users are able to reveal an expressive parasocial relationship.

Establishing credibility

By establishing credibility, the eulogizer acknowledges a relationship or something that

ties them to the deceased. This research found that, when posting on Facebook, only two

attempts at establishing credibility were made. It is interesting that while so many people

commented on Steve Job's death, few felt the need to establish credibility, or there was no

credibility to establish. There was an expectation that people would use their ownership of

Apple products as credibility; however, any mention of owning the product was geared toward

appreciation. Only those who could identify with his battle with cancer, made an attempt to

establish credibility. Both examples, "Thank you for reminding me to live each day as if it were

my last and each day at it's fullest with the cancer I've had" (Oct. 5), and "I feel the pain of your

family as your departure was due to the 'cinderella cancer' which my mother died from"

(Oct. 6), show an attempt to create a connection with Jobs that established a relationship to

which others where not privy.

Affirmation of vivid past relationships: Notation of flaws

This category, like establishing credibility, did not yield much data. Only two attempts

were made suggesting he had shortcomings: "using some of the tech he had no clue how to

develop himself but he understood profoundly how to connect the dots to a new future…Some

say he was helped by many on the technical side…however he was the first to admit this and turn

it into a virtue" (Oct. 6), and "an illegitimate child, sent out for adoption, a college

dropout….and he changed the world" (Oct. 7). Staying consistent with this strategy, both

illustrations used Jobs' limitations to paint a more enduring depiction of him.

Another strategy not represented within the framework was the need to defend the

deceased. Social media allows people to say things over the Internet that they wouldn't say in

person: "Stupid. Blasphemous APPLE!" (Oct. 12), and "apple is kult" (Oct. 7). These types of

comments were classified as self-disclosure of emotion because it represented the emotion of the

commenter. However, these comments made some people feel the need to respond to or defend

Jobs: "Some people are so stupid" (Oct. 10), and "Denis if you are going to be negative you can

leave the memorial page just don't be ugly" (Oct. 15).

The two most common strategies used in the expression of eulogies were self-disclosure

of emotion, and continuation of interactive bonds: addressing the deceased; time may play a role

in how long people will continue to utilize the strategy of addressing the deceased. The

strategies that rely on personal time and a relationship with Jobs were far less represented. Since

the fans had no physical relationship, they may have sensed they could not offer these types of

eulogies. There were also a few comments that were unable to be coded such as, "ok." The

vagueness of such comments did not allow for accurate classification.

Chapter Five: Discussion

This research investigates the use of social media within the relationship of collective mourning and parasocial interaction to discover the extent to which online postings expressing people's grief mirror the traditional forms of eulogy and if new strategies arise. Facebook comments were initially placed into Adrianne Kunkel and Michael Dennis' (2003) framework to determine how and to what extent parasocial grief is manifested within the social media context. It was found that social media allows for a vocalization of individual eulogies and expression of emotions, empowers people by extending the boundaries of the mourning process, provides a connection with others, and contributes to Jobs' collective memory. This study supports recent research (Sanderson & Cheong, 2010; de Vries & Rutherford, 2004) that social media actually facilitates traditional rituals as well as the creation of new post death practices. Memorializing through social media offers meaningful opportunities to publicly express grief and loss while at the same time support the thoughts of others.

Social media provides a friendly, informal setting with a unique ability to publish your own emotions publically. This atmosphere allows for one to personally communicate with people that would not otherwise be in his/her realm of contacts. Social media offers differences in vocabulary, grammar, ideas, and brevity from those found in traditional eulogies. The use of emoticons provides a contrasting atmosphere to that of a face-to-face eulogy with an informal and slightly unprofessional feel.

The first research question asked if online eulogies mirrored those of traditional eulogies. They do in the sense that each category of the framework is represented in the online eulogies with several of the strategies being expanded. They also parallel traditional eulogies in that they allow people a place to disclose their grief, condolences, and emotions in the reality of death.

This study also lends support to Jamieson's (1981) suggestion that the response associated with

eulogies comes as a result of instinctive adaptations in which no formal training is required. As

people joined the conversation about Jobs' death, the framework, as well as the function of

eulogy, remained intact.

   The first discovery found that social media allows for the vocalization of individual

eulogies and expression of emotion through collective grieving. This analysis suggests that

social media was a viable gathering place for those mourning the death of Steve Jobs.

Classifying the comments revealed there was a definite tendency toward the framework

strategies that did not require a physical relationship, and away from those that did.

Continuation of interactive bonds

   The major theme of the research was the sense of the ongoing existence of the deceased.

By referring to the deceased in the present tense or addressing the deceased directly, the

eulogizer attempts to preserve the relationship by continuing the interaction. This was by far the

most prevalent strategy within the framework. de Vries and Rutherford's (2004) research on

memorial websites also found that over half of those grieving wrote a letter to the deceased

rather than about or for the deceased. Silverman and Klass (1996) suggests that letters to the

deceased are an important aspect to the continuation of interactive bonds and that this expression

is unavailable anywhere else. Social media extends this ability by allowing individuals to

express a private eulogy in a public forum by writing directly to the deceased; thus keeping him

alive, not only for themselves but also for the collective group.

   The frequency of this theme was accompanied by the fact that the mourners primarily

used this strategy to lend expression to the other strategies within the framework. By speaking to

Jobs, an abundance of overlapping strategies were created. For instance, instead of praising him

as a genius, Facebook users told him directly, "You are a genius;" or instead of making a

statement of appreciation about Job's good life, they spoke directly to him by proclaiming, "You

changed the way people see the world."

Continuation of interactive bonds is a broad and well-studied coping strategy for the

bereaved; however, within this research the Internet plays a role in keeping the deceased alive

because his virtual identity is still in the present tense and there is a physical disconnection to the

deceased. Through Jobs' Public Figure page, the feeling that Steve Jobs somehow continued to

exist allowed eulogizers to work through the grieving process while continuing a bond that

existed beyond his physical presence and enabled them to feel that he is not completely lost. The

perceived continuity of Jobs' virtual identity therefore not only served as a reminder of the past,

but also allowed his identity to be a living reality in the present.

Self-disclosure of emotion

CMC did not impede the expression of emotion; people were able to disclose their own

grieving as well as participate in the collective remembrance with others. Death is an emotional

experience and research has shown that social media actually becomes a "mediated death"

(Gibson, 2007) experience that enables a person's expression of grief. Being able to join with

others who are feeling the same emotions gives credence to their own feelings of sorrow, and by

"turning to CMC they find an active outlet for their grief" (Sanderson & Cheong, 2010). CMC

offers a resource for users to respond immediately to Jobs' death and/or wait until they had

processed the event and could articulate a more thoughtful response. For example, expressions

in the first couple of days were of disbelief and the feeling of being overwhelmed by the death of

their parasocial partner. While his death was not unexpected, the reality of death in the first

moments can be overpowering. Some individuals were so distraught, they self-disclosed that

they were "crying" or "unable to stop weeping." As time passed and people came to grips with

his death, the expression of emotions changed to that of acceptance as they acknowledged, in

some way, that he would be missed. As CMC advances, the ability to express specific emotions

also improves. The use of punctuation, texting language, emoticons, and Apple's iconic "i"

before a word, are natural and effective ways of expressing the grief felt in a parasocial or

hyperpersonal relationship. The hyperpersonal model draws on the idea that intimate

relationships are constructed online; therefore the ability to communicate emotions online is both

real and understood by the other person.

Praise for the deceased

There is strong support for the notion that people include praise for the deceased as a

normal part of their eulogy. It was definitely one of the largest categories through which an

individual sought expression. Facebook allows people to post simple, one or two word

messages, or to become very descriptive. Voicing their praise of Jobs was a natural outlet of

admiration for a man whom many believed had, "changed the world." CMC encourages short

messages; words like "legendary," "awesome," and "genius" were reoccurring themes

throughout the study. However, since Facebook's format permits users to post longer messages,

individuals can get more personal and expressive in communicating how they perceived Jobs'

greatness.

Appreciation of products, lessons and traits learned from the deceased

This category was extended to reflect peoples' appreciation of Jobs' products along with

the lessons and traits they acknowledged to have learned from him. Parasocial relationships are

mediated in some way and social media has expanded the mediation of parasocial

communication to the point that individuals can follow celebrity postings and tweets in real time

and respond by posting messages on the fan page. They no longer need to rely on traditional

media to sustain the relationship. However, the parasocial relationship with Steve Jobs may be

the first time such a relationship was developed and sustained through a product. It is hard to

escape the influence Jobs had on society as people interacted daily with their iTunes, iPhones,

and iPads. This is the foremost way in which people knew and connected with him. This sense

of connection with his products made it clear that this was a central part of the mourning process

and so it stands to reason that appreciation of Apple products would play a major role in the

formation of eulogies. Mention of his products ran through each category of the framework in

the terms of "changing the world," and "making the best technology." Perhaps the most telling

aspect of people's appreciation of Jobs' products was their expression through the use of Apple's

iconic "i" placed in front of a word. Much like fans will buy songs or quote lyrics of popular

musicians as a way to pay tribute, people used Apple branding to do the same for Jobs.

Expressing emotion through coining words such as iCry, iSad and iMiss you, speaks to the

influence it had on their everyday life.

Appreciation of deceased's good life

Following the traditional framework, recognition was given with respect to Jobs' good

life and was declared in several ways. A natural outflow of expression about Jobs' good life was

again, the connection to his products. The primary way that many people knew Jobs was

through familiarity with his products. However, people did recognize and express that even

though he had died "too soon," he had lived a full life, far beyond what others had, and should be

an example for those who "are not afraid to follow their dreams."

Affirmation of vivid past relationships

The ability to show a vivid representation of the deceased relies on a close relationship. The eulogizer is able to give a more vivid insight into the characteristics of the deceased that may have otherwise been unknown. Only used periodically, this method was not strongly incorporated into online eulogies because it relies heavily on a personal relationship. The first, notation of flaws, was only used twice and mirrored the traditional use, framing those flaws in a positive, more endearing light. For example, "Using some of the tech he had no clue how to developed . . .was helped by legends like Steve Wozniak and Bill Gates. . .he was the first to admit this and turn it into a virtue." Highlighting the fact that Jobs had weaknesses helps to remind others of Jobs' humanity; it reveals and adds to the image others may have of him.

In the second, revelation of private insights and unique relationships, eulogizers revealed what could be construed as a unique relationship. For example, when an individual declared, "thanks for reminding me to live each day as if it were my last . . . with the cancer I've had," or "he rescued me 4m bordm. . .ilv hm," a unique relationship was being revealed. Like physical relationships, parasocial relationships have levels of closeness as well. It is within this category that more intimate parasocial relationships are verbalized. When people use intimate words such as "my friend" and "my dear," closeness is being described. Thus, being able to give a vivid impression of Jobs helps those grieving to internalize their memories and the parasocial relationship they shared.

Reference to an afterlife

The reference to an afterlife comes from religious discourse as a coping device to help ease grief. For most individuals, it was expressed in a broad sense that he was now in heaven. However, in order to keep the connection alive, some eluded that he would "live on in his

products" suggesting that as long as there are Apple products, Steve Jobs would be around. Sanderson and Cheong (2010) suggest that religious discourse is a "common language" (p. 338) used to communicate bereavement; however, when analyzed through this framework, very little was mentioned about the afterlife.

Traditionally, mourners gather around and support what is commonly known about the religious affiliation of the deceased. Little is known about the religious association of Steve Jobs. This makes it difficult for users who either do not know, or do not support his religious affiliation to reference his afterlife. Thus, the worldwide diversity of his fans, and the social constraints of not wanting to offend, leads to infrequent use of general terms about the afterlife. People either did not feel the need for this type of discourse, or the appropriateness to use this forum to suggest an afterlife for the deceased.

Problem-focused coping: Suggestions for actions

This category was not a popular expression, but there are times when death causes a person to feel lost or disjointed without his/her loved one. People, at times, feel that expressing the emotion does not adequately communicate all that they are feeling and so by adopting a specific action they can give better definition to what they feel regarding the loss. Jobs' identity was so intertwined with his products that people's resolve was to either remember him each time they used the product, or to buy a product in memory of him, thereby keeping their connection with Steve Jobs alive.

Appreciation of time spent with the deceased

Time spent with the deceased seems to require a physical relationship, and the lack of people utilizing this category may show an understanding of that. There is a dichotomy in that while most eulogizers understood they had not physically spent time with Jobs, some people

were able to transfer this association to spending time virtually based on their parasocial

relationship with Jobs. These individuals posted intimate comments that made it sound as if they

had personally spent time with Jobs. "Thanks for the lessons you taught me," " I'm so glad I got

to live in this era with you," and "I only got to know about him this year . . . we became really

good friends." These expressions of intimacy show a closer parasocial relationship with Jobs

than the others going through this grieving process. The way an individual spends time with

his/her parasocial partner is through the media; the use of intimate language indicates that quality

time and effort has been spent, utilizing media, to establish this relationship with Jobs.

The hyperpersonal model also proposes that through CMC, people do spend meaningful

virtual time with each other. Therefore, as celebrities communicate with their fans through CMC

and fans respond to these messages, there is a sense of time spent with the celebrity. Effort has

been put forth on either side of the parasocial relationship to communicate with the other. While

the celebrity's communication is not intended to be personal, a fan's parasocial desire to be close

to the celebrity enhances the perception of the relationship. However, research has yet to extend

hyperpersonal communication to a parasocial relationship, but this study does suggest the

possibility of its existence.

Establishing credibility

Very few attempts were made to establish any type of credibility to speak for the

deceased. Facebook eulogizers did not see the need to justify their right to give voice to the

situation. The assumption at the outset of this research was that people would offer their use of

Apple products as a credibility statement linking them to Steve Jobs. However, no such claims

were made; only connections to his cancer were given as an attempt to establish this relationship.

Both times, they spoke of understanding his cancer because they had either dealt with it

themselves or had a close family member pass away from it. It should be noted that these

comments also indicated they also had private insights, such as understanding his and his

family's suffering, because of the link to his illness. This category is arguably low because all

ties and connections to Jobs were one-sided.

 Eulogies expressed through social media differ from traditional eulogies in that

traditional eulogies are longer, more thought out, and contain a majority of the elements within

the given framework. CMC tends to be more concise and to the point, thus no single Facebook

message embodied all of the elements within the framework. The brevity of Facebook

comments only allowed the majority of the messages to include one to three of the categories

within the framework. If the message got longer and thus more expressive, there was a tendency

to include more strategies.

Traditionally, eulogies are moderated by a person and communicated to an audience.

Social media allows the voice of many to construct the eulogy enabling each person to become

both the eulogizer and the audience. The eulogies of social media are not complete within one

comment, but do amass a complete eulogy when combined within a single context, i.e, the death

of Steve Jobs. While Jobs was the center of attention, the use of Apple's products was an

overriding theme interwoven throughout the comments identifying the connection the eulogizers

had with him.

There were very distinct preferences on which strategies were used when writing a

eulogy. There was an overwhelming pull toward self-disclosure of emotion and addressing the

dead, and away from aspects of a eulogy that involved credibility and personal experience.

Death is an emotional experience and the ability to join with others who are feeling the same

emotions gives credence to their own feelings of sorrow. Thus, social media becomes an

attractive outlet for expressing grief. On the other hand, the lack of a physical relationship impeded the ability to express personal experiences. For most, the parasocial relationship with Jobs was social at best. Through their products, people understood what they had been given and what was potentially lost with the death of Jobs, but beyond that only a few could express a more personal experience.

The second finding indicated that social media empowers people by extending the boundaries of the grieving process. The ability to have one's writing seen across the globe empowers eulogizers in a way that is not possible in the traditional funeral eulogy. The spontaneous ability to memorialize feelings and emotions is not only postponed in a traditional setting, but has a time constraint. Without the physical or time constraints to bind them, individuals are free to respond at the time and place of their choosing and as often as they feel the need to participate. By participation, de Vries and Rutherford (2004) suggest "individuals create a role for themselves as mourners and extend the boundaries of who is allowed or expected to participate in the mourning process" (p. 8).

The Internet, especially social media, is a more open place of communication. It allows people to quickly connect with each other and share information instantly with few barriers. Compared to the highly mediated messages of mass media, it frees people to participate in ways they would not otherwise have been allowed or given the opportunity. Therefore, messages created through CMC gave people new opportunities to grieve for Jobs in meaningful ways that were not available in other settings. The ability to gather and grieve through CMC takes the private expression that may get lost in a traditional sense of mourning, such as placing mementos in front of Apple stores, makes it public, and preserves it in a way that may be more enduring and meaningful to them.

As social media expands the boundaries of who can speak, it also has little or no boundaries for monitoring the message. Traditional eulogistic boundaries are broken in the aspect that people have the power to say whatever they want. The social constraints associated with not saying the wrong thing at a funeral are often not found in social media, where individuals are allowed to say things they would never say in person. As people expressed their emotions, some of the comments were derogatory, "Stupid. Blasphemous APPLE." Others were at a level of stupidity, such as "i wish it was that fagit bieber instead." However, it is because of the lack of restriction that so many people can come together for a common purpose, such as grieving the loss of Steve Jobs.

The third aspect determined that social media provides a connection with others that would otherwise be unavailable. This study supports research that suggests, "A sense of community is promoted when there is shared narrative fidelity stemming from a shared frame of reference" (Hastings, Musambria, Hoover, 2007). Some people may not join together with those that differ from them; however, the death of Steve Jobs united people across cultural and ethnic contexts. The context of Jobs' death brought together a community of individuals whose shared experience was their appreciation of Apple products and admiration for Steve Jobs. Jobs' death created a shared focus around which people gathered, and it potentially enabled very personal and intimate communication to take place between strangers. In connecting with others, individuals are able to express their own grief while drawing support from those who share in their loss. In this way, this study points to the importance Aristotle placed on the common good. As individuals express the virtues of the deceased, others are able to identify with those who share their experience of loss.

Identification with others is often due to a shared parasocial affection they have with a

common celebrity. Social media offers fans opportunities to engage one another and it has advanced parasocial interaction to a level not previously possible through traditional media outlets. Consequently, parasocial interaction enables the individual to extend his mourning and grief from a private experience into a more public expression. Social media may promote the sharing of private eulogies for a parasocial partner with strangers, but it also identifies the will and desire for some individuals to document their own bereavement. Both parasocial and hyperpersonal theories deal with mediated relationships; however, the hyperpersonal model has the possibility to take this identification farther.

In the sense that individuals live in close proximity to technology, they can be notified when their parasocial partner tweets or updates their Facebook status; therefore, the private lives of celebrities are very much intertwined in the relationships and conversations of common people, moving them from a parasocial relationship into a "hyperpersonal parasocial" relationship. This study identifies that it was not Jobs' private life that created communal identity, rather it was the medium itself – the technology through which Jobs made parasocial and hyperpersonal relationships easier to establish and maintain. One can imagine how a person felt upon finding out that Steve Jobs, a person who had become a part of their everyday life and had shaped how they interacted with media through iTunes and each other through iPhones, had passed away. Because identity and history were forged through interaction with his products and this mediated culture, deep identifications were built, perhaps unconsciously, over-time. Thus, the death of Jobs had an emotional impact for the fan that cultivated a significant hyperpersonal parasocial relationship because it broke the constancy that had been created.

The last finding illustrates that when individuals construct personal remembrances of Jobs within a social media platform, they contribute to his collective memory. Facebook became

a site of collective mourning, much like physical places of mourning that people created, such as laying flowers and mementos in the entrances of Apple Stores around the world. SMS's provided outlets where individuals could connect with others who understood the implications of Jobs' death and also with those who could collectively construct Jobs' legacy. As people united around the Apple culture and repeated expressions like iGod, and iCry, Jobs' collective memory was extended.

In the process of constructing the eulogy, Jobs' legacy was amplified across the Internet and created a memorial that was bigger than any one person's comment as people from across the world came together. The lack of division among Facebook users provided the mass eulogy that crossed oceans, ethnicities, genders, age groups, etc. The overwhelming response to Jobs' death acted as a catalyst for his legacy in the sense that his name and products were everywhere. By bringing up memories, accomplishments, and lessons learned, people were able to build a strong connection to, and understanding of, Jobs' life. His legacy will forever live in the pages dedicated to him on Facebook and other social media platforms.

This study was limited in time and manpower. The timing of this research being done a year and a half after Jobs' death most likely resulted in the loss of data. Facebook's timeline made for an easy access to the information left behind; however, posts could have been deleted over time. More time may have allowed for a larger sample size. Because only Facebook was used, this research cannot give a full representation of all social media platforms. The intent of the message was not always clear, and inferences had to be made when a comment did not fit into a strategy provided in the framework. Despite these limitations, much has been learned about the way people construct online eulogies.

Future research may examine other platforms and types of users so that a bigger picture can be formed on the construction of eulogies in social media. As CMC develops and more research is applied to mediated eulogies through the lens of parasocial and hyperpersonal theories, perhaps more light can be shed on these emerging rites of passage. Future research may also include extending the hyperpersonal model to reflect the way technology and celebrity/fan relationships are interwoven into our everyday lives, as some of the assumptions made in this research remain to be confirmed.

Online communication has become a transformational means of interpersonal communication and interaction over the past several years. Parasocial interaction and the hyperpersonal model provide attractive theories for understanding how interaction has begun to transform the way people publicly express their collective grief through posting eulogies online. This study sought to determine whether or not expressing bereavement online expanded the possibilities of traditional rites of passage. It was discovered that while the eulogies people constructed online did indeed reflect those voiced in a traditional setting, there were also other meaningful outcomes. By expressing their condolences through social media, traditional boundaries of grieving were extended, community and identity was created by connecting through a shared experience, and contribution was made to Jobs' collective memory. In this way, findings from this study illustrate how messages left in public forums of grief and remembrance add value to the specific life history and existence beyond the traditional forms of eulogies.

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