THE LANGUAGE OF ILLNESS AND DEATH ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Sharing Death Online

Series Editors

Dorthe Refslund Christensen

Aarhus University, Denmark

Kjetil Sandvik

University of Copenhagen, Denmark

Humans face and deal with death and loss through media and technologies at hand. In contemporary culture, online media is perhaps the most important arena for the (re-) interpretations, (re-)mediations, and performances of traditions, practices, and beliefs related to death and dying. While some of these traditions are indeed new and digitally born, others are revitalizations of older death-related practices.

Sharing Death Online is a new book series with the ambition to embrace the fact that death is both a basic human condition that humans share socially and an event in human life that calls people to be intimate and to share their human experiences, both in relation to death and to other basic life conditions such as family, love, loneliness, health, and friends. Death is crisis, endpoint, turning point, and however, at the same time, a source of experimentation, creativity, and transgression.

The series welcomes both analytical case studies and theoretical, analytical contributions from, and across, a great variety of disciplines including (media) sociology, (media) aesthetics, cultural studies, digital design, psychology, (visual) anthropology, design, the history of religion, philosophy, linguistics, art history, and more.

THE LANGUAGE OF ILLNESS AND DEATH ON SOCIAL MEDIA

An Affective Approach

BY

CARSTEN STAGE

Aarhus University, Denmark

TINA THODE HOUGAARD

Aarhus University, Denmark



United Kingdom — North America — Japan India — Malaysia — China Emerald Publishing Limited Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2018

Copyright © 2018 Emerald Publishing Limited

Reprints and permissions service

Contact: permissions@emeraldinsight.com

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without either the prior written permission of the publisher or a licence permitting restricted copying issued in the UK by The Copyright Licensing Agency and in the USA by The Copyright Clearance Center. Any opinions expressed in the chapters are those of the authors. Whilst Emerald makes every effort to ensure the quality and accuracy of its content, Emerald makes no representation implied or otherwise, as to the chapters' suitability and application and disclaims any warranties, express or implied, to their use.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-78769-482-8 (Print) ISBN: 978-1-78769-479-8 (Online) ISBN: 978-1-78769-481-1 (Epub)



ISOQAR certified Management System, awarded to Emerald for adherence to Environmental standard ISO 14001:2004.

Certificate Number 1985 ISO 14001



ACKNOWIFDGMENTS

First and foremost, we would like to thank the bereaved families whose stories are shared in this book and who – during extremely difficult periods in their life – allowed us to research their social media practices. Without this kind of trust and generosity, this book would not have been possible.

We would also like to thank all of those who have offered us valuable feedback on the thoughts and ideas presented in this book. We are grateful to our colleagues at Aarhus University working on affect (or adjacent fields), Britta Timm Knudsen, Camilla Møhring Reestorff, Bodil Marie Stavning Thomsen, Christoffer Kølvraa, and Mads Krogh, for many fruitful conversations and collaborations over the years. We are also grateful to the editors of this series, Dorthe Refslund Christensen and Kjetil Sandvik, for giving us the opportunity to publish our work in this highly relevant context, and to the participants of the DORS conference in 2017 for their comments on an earlier paper that in many ways led to this book. Last but not least, we would like to thank our respective families for patiently allowing us to become absorbed in the writing process resulting in this book.

The book mainly consists of new work, but small, theoretical, and analytical sections have been amended from passages in the journal article "Interjections, phonetics, and the

body" (Hougaard, 2018), and the book *Networked Cancer* (Stage, 2017).

Carsten Stage London, June 2018

Tina Thode Hougaard Aarhus, June 2018

CONTENTS

About the Authors		ix
1.	Introduction	1
2.	Theoretical Framework	9
3.	Forms of Affective Language	43
4.	Rhythms of Affective Language	71
5.	Conclusion	101
References		105
Index		127

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Carsten Stage is Associate Professor in the School of Communication and Culture, Aarhus University, Denmark. His book publications include Networked Cancer: Affect, Narrative and Measurement (Palgrave/Springer, 2017), Global Media, Biopolitics, and Affect: Politicising Bodily Vulnerability (Routledge, 2015, coauthor), and Affective Methodologies: Developing Cultural Research Strategies for the Study of Affect (Palgrave, 2015, coeditor). He is coeditor of Conjunctions: Transdisciplinary Journal of Cultural Participation and co-director of the research programme Cultural Transformations at Aarhus University. His research focuses on illness narratives, affect, social media, and participation.

Tina Thode Hougaard is Associate Professor in the School of Communication and Culture, Aarhus University, Denmark. Her articles include "Emojier, interjektioner og affekt – sorg og medfølelse på Facebook" in Møde om Udforskningen af Dansk Sprog, Vol. 16 (2017, Aarhus Universitet) and "Emojis in the Digital Writings of Young Danes" in Jugendsprachen/Aktuelle Perspektiven Internationaler Forschung/Current Perspectives of International Research. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018, coauthor). She is coeditor of Scandinavian Studies in Language and Møde om Udforskningen af Dansk Sprog. Her research focuses on interaction and use of language in social media.