Disenfranchised grief occurs when the loss is not openly acknowledged, socially sanctioned or publicly shared.

Disenfranchised deaths could be

a. the relationship
   - ex-wife
   - co-worker
   - gay partner
   - school groups
   - heroes
   - political figures
   - step parents
   - inlaws
   - adoptions
   - friends
   - pets

b. the kind of death/loss
   - AIDS
   - suicide
   - leaving a faith community
   - amputation
   - miscarriages
   - divorce (even from bad marriages)
   - reckless behavior
   - POW/MIA
   - war losses with no time to grieve
   - war losses other side
   - abortion
   - hospice and ER workers.

c. the griever
   - babies
   - mentally handicapped
   - women grieving “like men”
   - unmarried partner
   - military leaders
   - murderer’s family
EXPANDED CONCEPT. Disenfranchisement could be…

a. the bereavement itself, your response to the loss (expectation that you perform at work)

b. your mourning process:
   the interpersonal dimension (no funeral for miscarriage; don’t talk about it)
   the intrapersonal dimension (family doesn’t want you to visit the cemetery regularly or feel bad anymore)

c. the outcomes (when are you going to get over it?)

d. your style of grieving (keening)

Books:

Disenfranchised Grief: New Directions, Challenges, and Strategies for Practice, Dr. Kenneth Doka, (2002), Champaign, Ill.: Research Press

Disenfranchised Grief: Recognizing Hidden Sorrow, Dr. Kenneth Doka, (1989) out of print