

Chapter Two

Death and Its Effects

Rhetorical Situations

Rhetorical discourse, the suasive use of symbols, does not simply happen at random. Something must happen or take place or be anticipated that unbalances the homeostasis of the situation in which one lives one's life. In his often cited essay, "The Rhetorical Situation," Lloyd Bitzer terms this "unbalancing" an "exigence."¹ When a state of affairs, marked by urgency, calls for or requires action, real or symbolic, the need for a rhetorical response is created. For example, were a group of urban land developers seeking authorization to buy a tract of woodland, quite likely a group of conservationists would develop arguments and, depending on the perceived degree of threat or loss, stage demonstrations to preserve the woodland. An exigence, for our hypothetical conservationists, brings forth the need for rhetorical acts. Similarly, a person's death causes an exigence creating a need for rhetorical action within a funeral ritual.

Suasive efforts by definition must be addressed, that is, directed at an audience and preferably at an audience with the power to resolve the exigence. Obviously, the dead person cannot be returned to life; the exigence here resides in those directly affected by the death. Their multiple needs are the ones that must be addressed. Audiences, Bitzer's second component of a rhetorical situation, may be more or less affected by a given exigence as well as more or less capable of effecting a desired change. A host of variables enter the audience matrix: material resources, duration of commitment, level of motivation, intensity and salience of competing suasive messages, etc. Still, for a rhetorical act to be recognized as such, an audience must be the recipient of the symbolic messages.

A third element, according to Bitzer, comes into play within each rhetorical situation, namely, constraints. These elements impinge on both those who construct suasive messages and

those to whom the messages, the symbolic behaviors, are addressed. Originators of rhetorical acts may also be restricted in terms of resources and ability, but because rhetorical situations tend to recur across time, prior ways of responding place very real boundaries around suasive agents. By way of illustration, anyone delivering a commencement address is constrained, by virtue of all who have done so in the past and by virtue of audience expectations, to recognize and praise the parents and relatives of the graduates. Similarly, it is unthinkable, because of antecedent symbolic behaviors in the same situation, to hold a Fourth of July parade in the United States without featuring the American flag. The power of constraints is extremely real, seldom disregarded or flaunted, and, if so, with considerable consequences. Participants at funeral rituals, no doubt, have heterogeneous expectations depending primarily on their prior experience in such activity. These homogeneous expectations cover a wide range of activities (i.e., the corpse *will be* displayed; processions *will* take place; only good things *will be* said about the dead person, etc.).

Rhetorical Situations and Death

The death of an individual, while a natural and real event, brings into existence a rhetorical situation replete with its exigences, audiences, and constraints. Within this rhetorical situation symbolic acts engage audiences in an attempt to bring about multiple changes in those directly and indirectly affected by the death. Those closest to the deceased and therefore most likely to be engulfed in personal grief need rhetorical acts that specifically address their psychological states. If one moves concentrically outward from those most affected into the family, community, or social groups of which the deceased was a member, the rhetorical objectives shift and change. Consolation becomes multifaceted. For some, memories must be recalled; for some, reassurances about future relationships must be offered; for some, new beginnings must be created; for all, the prospect of the inevitability of their own death must be confronted and, to the extent possible, made less ominous. Even the entymology of consolation (*cum* = together; *solari* = to comfort) strikes a

disingenuous chord when the multiple social networks of a deceased person are taken into account.

Comforting and alleviating the range of individuals' distress, most certainly, demands a "ritual wrapped in symbolism." Funeral rituals, by definition, can never be successful and certainly not successful in the sense of a lawyer winning a case or a legislator gaining congressional approval of a bill. Funeral rituals, on the contrary, are best not thought of as successful or unsuccessful rhetorical efforts. Consider those most overcome with personal grief. The formal part of most funeral ceremonies lasts a relatively short time, several hours or a few days at most. Intense grief cannot be significantly changed by rhetorical means in that short time. Working through grief requires much time. Yet, would it be accurate to adjudge the ceremony unsuccessful for such persons? Not at all.

Rhetoric has never been, and cannot be, a precise science. That is, the discipline of rhetoric cannot invariably predict that *X* symbolic behaviors will produce *Y* effects on *Z* audience. Rhetoric deals with the contingent, the probable, and what is generally the case.

Better criteria for judging the quality of a funeral ceremony and its symbolic, consolatory behaviors would be appropriateness as perceived by the participants, resistance to innovative change in the ceremony by the community, and a communal sense of rightness or correctness about the rhetorical behaviors used in the ritual. Put in another language frame, the participants in a funeral ritual take part, in varying degrees of activity, both in *creating* and *interpreting* the many symbolic behaviors of the ritual. The merging of speaker/audience, actor/spectator, maker/consumer in a ritual is well expressed by Edmund Leach.

But notice also the contrary aspect of the model. In ordinary culturally defined ritual performance there is no "composer" other than the mythological ancestors. The proceedings follow an ordered pattern which has been established by tradition—"this is our custom." There is usually a "conductor," a master of ceremonies, a chief priest, a central protagonist, whose actions provide the temporal markers for everyone else. But there is no separate audi-

ence of listeners. The performers and the listeners are the same people. We engage in rituals in order to transmit collective messages to ourselves.²

To the extent that the participants believe that a funeral ritual was proper, fitting, suitable, and right, the rhetorical effort can be said to have fulfilled the exigence of the situation.

A more detailed discussion of the components of a rhetorical situation will reveal the complexity that death creates for rhetorical activity.

At a base level one might claim that all human deaths are the same—biological processes of life end and biological processes of decay begin. Humans, however, are more than an interconnected system of biological processes and, depending on a number of variables, an individual's death will create quite different exigences. The death of an old person, all else being equal, is qualitatively different than the death of a young person. Both will occasion bereavement, grief, and mourning, but the symbolic behaviors used in a consolation ceremony will be adjusted and varied somewhat to deal with the difference. In a similar way the cause of an individual's death—natural and expected versus sudden and violent—are factors in the constellation of variables possible to locate in the rhetorical situation of an individual's death. Similarly, the class and social rank of the deceased are key elements. Drawing upon the earlier work of Robert Hertz who established that individuals possess both a "biological being" and a "social being" that is "grafted onto" a person by others in the society, David Stannard makes this observation: "The death of an important individual thus brings with it serious damage to the social fabric, and a natural and spontaneous effort is then made by the society to compensate for the loss. This is particularly evident in the dramatic funerary rites of smaller, more unified societies where, as Robert Blauner has more recently written, 'much work must be done to restore the social system's functioning.'"³ Without doubt, a society's statespersons, warriors, and leaders create greater fissures in the societal fabric and consolatory rituals tend to be modified and enlarged accordingly.⁴

The quantitative size of an affected community clearly seems to be a significant variable. As subsequent chapters will

illustrate, the symbolic behaviors—verbal, action, and object languages—used in funeral rituals dramatically vary in proportion to the number of people in the social group. Consolatory rituals used in a small Archaic Greek polis, for example, greatly differ in scale from those staged at the death of a Roman Emperor. The death of a person recognized as politically necessary and important for the continuance of one's country occasions uncertainties, fears, and psychic disruptions that differ only in degree from those experienced at the death of a cherished family member.

Religious beliefs, too, come into play at a funeral ritual. The existence and nature of an afterlife, if any, as well as the relationships between god(s) and humans are reflected variously in funeral ceremonies. Emile Durkheim recognized that individuals are connected to the symbolic functioning of their society and a society's symbolic forms are accepted just as the sacred in religious rituals.⁵ Extending Durkheim's observation, Eric Rothenbuehler recently concluded that "religious practices, or rites, self-consciously refer to the sacred, protect it, celebrate it, and organize people's attention toward it. Because they bring the individual into contact with the sacred, the religious practices themselves must be set apart in special times and places."⁶ Funeral ceremonies in the Classical Era are conspicuous in their spatial and temporal aspects. The Athenian funeral ritual, for example, took place in the winter; ceremonies for Roman aristocrats were held in the Forum. More of this is discussed in the ensuing chapters.

Grief

Another component in the rhetorical exigence of consolation are those most personally affected by the death. The surviving husband, wife, parent, offspring, or longtime intimate friend experience a range and intensity of emotions that the symbolic behaviors in a consolatory ritual dare not overlook but can only address in part. First and foremost among these emotions is grief, the power of which Catherine Sanders describes in these words: "Grief is so impossibly painful, so akin to panic, that ways must be invented to defend against the emotional onslaught of suffering. There is a fear that if one ever gives in

fully to grief, one would be swept under—as in a huge tidal wave—never to surface to ordinary emotional states again.”⁷ An individual experiencing grief may also be experiencing “anger, guilt, physical complaints and illnesses, despair, and sadness.”⁸ In short, a living organism is influenced by a context of stress which, “if not reversed or compensated for, impairment and damage will result.”⁹ If the psychological stress caused by the experience of grief, personal and collective, is left unattended, consequences of the most dire sort can happen. Suicide, psychotic response, severe depression, loss of health, or a state of total helplessness do occur if grief is unresolved.¹⁰ Grim as these psychopathologies are for an individual, one can quickly recognize the consequences in a social group if such results took place. Social structures would not only be disrupted but destroyed. “The impact of mortality,” Robert Blauner declares, “must be contained.”¹¹ A culture’s single most potent “containment practice” is the funeral ritual with its symbolic behaviors, its rhetoric, of consolation. After the initial stage of shock, disbelief, and denial—a phase that is of relatively short duration—anguish and despair occur. Additionally, depending on the existing cultural permissions and prescriptions, weeping, crying, and lamenting accompany the emotions. George Engel claims,

the wish and need to cry is strong and crying seems to fulfill an important homeostatic function in the work of mourning. In general, crying seems to involve both an acknowledgement of the loss and the regression to a more helpless and childlike status evoked thereby. *In the latter sense crying is a kind of communication.* The grief-stricken person who cries is the recipient of certain kinds of support and help from the group, although this varies greatly in different cultures.¹²

Although the point was made in chapter 1, it bears repeating—the human experience of grief is universal. All humans, regardless of their culture or the century in which they live, experience the emotion of grief and its attendant reactions. The rhetorical situation of a funeral ceremony, in this respect, is the same then as now.

Societal Reactions to Death

Regardless of the culture in question, however, consolatory ceremonies must contain symbolic, suasive behaviors addressed to those living in various states of grief and its attendant manifestations. Typically, the “audience” for a funeral ritual includes more than just the immediate, close survivors. As sociologist Michael Kearl claims, “death’s impact ripples not only across acquaintance networks and space but across time as well.”¹³ Disruption of the equilibrium of social life, unless addressed and remedied, can result in a host of social problems, not the least of which is a debilitating loss of direction and confidence in one’s future. Anxiety about future relationships can escalate to damaging levels unless and until social, communal bonds are reestablished and reassured. By way of illustration one can recall William Manchester’s description of the communal reaction to the news of President John F. Kennedy’s assassination.

An entire nation had been savaged, and the nation realized it; before the end of the afternoon, when 99.8 percent had learned that the elected president had been murdered the country was in the grip of an extraordinary upheaval. Over half the population wept. Four out of five, in the words of the report, felt “the loss of someone very close and dear,” and subsequently nine out of ten suffered “physical discomfort.” The discomfort—deep grief—followed confirmation of the president’s death. In those first, indecisive thirty minutes there was a dissonant medley of response: dread, hope, prayer, rage, and incredulity.¹⁴

The elaborate funeral ritual in which an entire nation participated via television did much to reestablish and reassure the national community. Symbolic behaviors showing the orderly transfer of the presidency were featured. Civil and military participation removed doubts about national unity. The visual unity of the Kennedy family—their perceived ability to confront their personal tragedy—was a message for others, the national participants, to do the same. Societal disruption was repaired.

The intensity of human reaction to Kennedy’s death was

matched in many ways and exceeded in the outpouring of anger after Martin Luther King's assassination. Stephen Oates, one of King's biographers, recounts that on the day following the murder, "riots flared up in 110 cities, and 39 people were killed, most of them Negroes. More than 75,000 federal troops and National Guardsmen patrolled America's streets. The hardest hit was Washington, D.C. where the fires blazed against the sky and 10 people died."¹⁵ Again, a nation, participating via television, took part in the funeral ceremony, a ceremony greatly different from Kennedy's. Whether or not the symbolic behaviors in Martin Luther King's funeral ceremony aided, in any significant way, in restoring social equilibrium remains arguable.¹⁶

Quite obviously, not all deaths evoke such manifestations of grief. One could place these instances at the extreme outer end of a continuum, perhaps, and realize that the social disruption accompanying every death graduates downward to less extreme plateaus. The Kennedy and King examples are offered here as contemporary vantage points from which a reader might better understand the symbolic behaviors used at the State funerals for Patroklos in chapter 3 and for Pertinax (A.D. 193), the Roman Emperor in chapter 5. The point remains, nonetheless, that audiences for whom consolatory symbolic behaviors are addressed include individuals experiencing different degrees of disorientation, uncertainty, and insecurity. In a real sense the audience at a consolatory ceremony experiences contradictory and incompatible urges on the one hand to "push the dead away," and, on the other, to "keep the dead alive." Consolatory ceremonies, then, might be viewed as "dramas of disposal" and, simultaneously, a "redefinition of the status of the departed."¹⁷ Although these two notions, at first glance, seem ambivalent if not outright incompatible, Blauner explains the notion of "status transformation" in this way:

Yet the deceased cannot simply be buried as a dead body: the prospect of total exclusion from the social world would be too anxiety-laden for the living, aware of their own eventual fate. The need to keep the dead alive directs societies to construct rituals that celebrate and ensure a transition to a new social status, that of spirit, a being now believed to participate in a different realm. Thus a

funeral that combines this status transformation with the act of physical disposal is universal to all societies, and has justly been considered one of the crucial *rites de passage*.¹⁸

These functions are secured, in part, through the constraints on the consolatory ritual itself—that is, the third part of the rhetorical situation.

The Consolatory Ritual

While it might seem self-evident, one of the consequences of an individual's death is the need for a funeral rite with its attendant modes for removing and disposing of the physical remains. From a rhetorical perspective, however, "the ceremonies of the dead affirm the values of the living."¹⁹ While each culture has its own set of beliefs about the nature of death and the afterlife, the physical presence of the dead body and the actuality of the grieving community necessitate action, both real and symbolic, to meet the many demands of the situation. Unlike a more usual rhetorical transaction with a persuader, message, and audience, the funeral ceremony has multiple rhetors. That is, a group of individuals—some with greater, some with lesser responsibilities—engage in the production of the consolatory symbolic behaviors. Unfortunately, the identity of the individuals responsible for conducting and staging funeral ceremonies in ancient times is unknown. In some cases the family, a burial group, or, in a few instances, the state governments were in charge of the rituals. Nonetheless, we know that funerals happened and, accordingly, we can rightfully infer that other humans made the ceremonies happen.

Before proceeding to a more thorough discussion of classical funeral ceremonies—their types, functions, and common elements—an important theoretical issue must be addressed. Put into question form: do the individuals, regardless of culture or historic era, who conduct funeral ceremonies *intend* that various consolatory effects in the audiences occur? Put by way of illustration, does a person who places a bouquet of flowers on a bier intend that some participants in a funeral ceremony will interpret the symbolic behavior to mean: nature contains much

that is beautiful and, although we are in the midst of a sorrow-filled funeral, one shall remember that life, too, contains much that is beautiful. The problem of intent has both philosophical and pragmatic dimensions; as such, intent is also central to any rhetorical inquiry.

Philosophically, intent is closely related to questions of causality and moral responsibility. For example, an event happens; someone brings about the event; did that someone intend that the event happen? In the first hypothetical case, a drunk driver kills a pedestrian. Did the driver intend to kill, i.e., possess the silent thought *and* disposition to end the life of another human? In the second case, a philanthropist endows a laser research center that develops a surgical technique responsible for saving the eyesight of thousands of Third World children. Did the philanthropist intend such a result? If so, an affirmative answer is awarded to both of the actors in our hypothetical cases, that is, if we say intent was present in both instances, conceivably and appropriately a gallows might be erected for the driver and a statue for the donor. In these cases the relationship between intent and moral responsibility seems clear. In the first, however, no symbolic behavior was involved; for the second, the philanthropist's large monetary gift can be decoded into the proposition: this person believes science should help people. Conceivably, the decoded proposition, a meaning given to the symbolic behavior by an audience member, could result even if the actual and unknown-to-anyone intent of the giver was to secure an income tax deduction or significantly reduce a spouse's inheritance.

The point of this belabored illustration is that intent of a suasive agent is usually inaccessible to an audience although attributions of intent can be and are made. In any communicative transaction the symbolic behaviors—verbal and other-than-verbal—are accessible to an audience. Interpretations, meanings, and inferences must be drawn on what is present and presented. In the case of a funeral ceremony, laden as they are with cultural caveats and prescriptions, the intent of whoever presents the bouquet of flowers is, for all practical purposes, irrelevant. What matters is the audience's perception of the symbolic behavior and the meaning assigned to the perception.

Does meaning, then, reside only in the “message-audience” matrix? Not at all. Humans both use and assign meanings. In a funeral ceremony, which by its very nature is an unusual, culturally regulated set of procedures each with multiple functions and expected symbolic behaviors, the actual intentions and the attributed intentions of the rhetors do matter. The suasive potentials of the symbolic behaviors both encompass intent and matter greatly. What objectives, then, must these symbolic acts accomplish within the rhetorical situation of a funeral ceremony? What purposes must be served?

In an article, “Death as a Social Practice,” Ernest Campbell recognizes a number of functions funeral ceremonies must serve.

Our common tendency is to perceive grief and funeral practices as oriented toward the past. Someone has departed, and the rites and ceremonies serve the purpose of mourning the dead, reliving the past, reviving treasured memories, honoring the departed who will not return. Certainly this is part of the picture. But a more useful view is to see funeral rites and death attitudes as serving the purpose of assisting the survivors to restructure their relational system. The vital functions of these ceremonies relate really to the future, and not to the past: the restructuring of relationships occasioned by the absence of someone from an established set of relationships.²⁰

This Janus-like characteristic—looking both backward and forward, reviewing the past and previewing the future—remains a significant function of funeral ceremonies. In a certain sense, time changes for a funeral ritual; the past and the future become prominently featured while the present becomes irrelevant. Time stops the former life of the deceased—activities, accomplishments, and relationships need to be addressed, retold, and made alive for the community of participants. The deceased becomes the central figure in the cultural drama and a host of symbolic behaviors are directed toward maintaining this centrality. Clothing, decoration, display, position, and the memorial work rhetorically for the audience to recognize the dead person. Past relationships of the deceased, for example, are reenacted by a hierarchical set of culturally enforced be-

haviors. Those closest to the deceased are located, throughout the ritual, as physically close to the deceased as possible. The surviving father, mother, husband, wife, children, etc., remain in close proximity to the deceased during the wake, the formal ceremony, the various processions and recessions, and the interment. Just as in the deceased's past life relationships ranged from the intimate to the casual, a community in the act of mourning position themselves in such a way as to replicate and reify the most significant aspect of the deceased's former life in the community. Not surprisingly, most of the verbal symbols used in the ritual serve the function of recreating the deceased's past; major portions of a eulogy, for example, or inscriptions on the grave marker both demarcate the individual's prior space in the community, relationships made within the community, and chronological time spent within the group.

Funeral rituals also contain symbolic behaviors that redirect the participants' future. Here, the rhetorical work within a ritual takes on an important, often overlooked, function. In most discursive contexts involving persuasion, audiences recognize that arguments, reasons, and suasive efforts are being directed at them. Admonitions and exhortations to buy, sell, join, contribute, believe, avoid, convict, acquit, or adopt can be countered, modified, or rejected using the available strategies and tactics of argumentative discourse. Confronted with an unwanted persuasive appeal, the ordinary response, for most individuals, is some type of resistance—withdrawal, objection, counter argument, etc. The participants in a funeral ceremony, however, are not subjected to arguments or discursive suasive appeals. Death is a dramatic event calling forth not the forms of reasoned argument but rather dramatic forms of narrative, poetry, and theater. The ordinary response to these forms is acceptance, agreement, internalization, and participation. These forms persuade in the sense that the moral behavior of the characters in a drama offers the participating audience models for believing and acting, for assimilating values, and for living one's life.

The symbolic behaviors in a funeral ritual that affect participants' future lives can best be labeled *epideictic*. In subsequent chapters more detail about epideictic rhetoric will be presented. For now, one need only understand the term to sig-

nify rhetoric that occurs on a special occasion. People create occasions for a multitude of purposes: to celebrate, to commemorate, to honor, to dedicate, to mourn, etc. Each type of special occasion has its own character; its identifying ethos circumscribing and, to a considerable extent, controlling those who participate in the occasion. Birthday celebrations possess an ethos of festive giving; funerals, an ethos of solemn reflection. Immersed in such an ethos, those participating in a funeral ritual become susceptible to the instrumentality of the symbolic behaviors. The funeral ritual provides abundant opportunities for self-reflection—listening, watching, and quietly moving. Confronted with irrefutable evidence of mortality, one is predisposed to project and identify. Hearing the deceased praised can stir a resolve to emulate and imitate. Moving in unison with other participants one is compelled to accept the fact that each person is not only separate and individual but also united in a bond of community. The ritual provides opportunities for social interaction; relationships can be recognized, renewed, and restructured at the typical gathering before the formal ceremony or at the customary funeral meal. The epideictic nature of the ritual clearly functions to influence the future lives of the participants.

Yet another equally important function is the *rite de passage*: for the dead a move to “another, perhaps eternal, system of role relationships”;²¹ for the survivors, a transition to a changed set of relationships. More specifically, funeral ceremonies function to “announce to the community that the bereaved are now in a new and unaccustomed status, and that normal role performance is not to be expected from them for awhile.”²² Funeral ceremonies also function to keep communities intact which is one reason the cultural admonition not to speak ill of the dead retains both currency and strength. Pillorying a flawed life works against reintegrating a communal group.

Funeral ceremonies function to enact the outer boundary of bereavement for a community. Campbell, for example, claims “it is probable also that a rational, secular, efficiency-oriented society produces norms that encourage early termination of a mourning attitude.”²³ In later chapters we will encounter numerous instances in which Greco-Roman speakers and writers

urge an appropriate boundary for expressions of mourning. No social organization, if it is to both continue functioning productively and maintaining itself effectively can afford the debilitating impact of a prolonged bereavement.

Although it may seem paradoxical to state, in a certain sense one can claim that a funeral ceremony does not end with the disposition of the physical remains. The cemetery—taken here in an extended sense to include the place *where* the remains are ultimately located, i.e., tomb, mausoleum, ossuary, etc.—and the symbolic behaviors of consolation that occur therein serve a different set of functions. Of cemeteries in general W. Lloyd Warner observes that “the cemetery reflects many of the community’s basic beliefs about what kind of society it is, what the persons of men are, where each fits or is fitted into the secular world of the living and the spiritual society of the dead.”²⁴ The cemetery does not end in the sense that a formal ceremony ends. Monuments, art work, and location all serve to reunite the living and the dead long after grief, mourning, and bereavement have ended. One might profitably view a funeral ceremony, then, as a sequence or set of movements in which disassociation functions are provided. The dead are separated from the living. Then, an associative function is provided. The living are rebonded, regrouped, and reintegrated. The cemetery, however, offers the synthesis, the reuniting, of the living with the dead who live, not in a physical sense, but in a psychological one of memory. “The cemetery locates the dead in time and space, thus maintaining their reality to those who wish to continue relations with them.”²⁵ As symbolic behaviors the rhetorical impact of cemeteries dare not be dismissed. Grave-stones, sarcophagi, vaults, temples, and mausoleums work rhetorically as memorials, records, repetitions, or continuations for those most affected by the death and also for those unable to participate. The scale and scope of many Greco-Roman funeral monuments (e.g., the “tombs” of Augustine and Hadrian) can be construed as visual messages, grand to be sure, offering an almost impervious command to reunite observers with the deceased.²⁶ The dead remain symbolically alive in cemeteries.

We turn now to a closer analysis of the symbolic behaviors of consolation used in the Classical Era.

NOTES

1. Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1 (1968): 1–14. In his words:

to say that rhetoric is situational means: (1) rhetorical discourse comes into existence as a response to situation, in the same sense that an answer comes into existence in response to a question, or a solution in response to a problem; (2) a speech is given rhetorical significance by the situation, just as a unit of discourse is given significance as answer or as solution by the question or problem; (3) a rhetorical situation must exist as a necessary condition of rhetorical discourse, just as a question must exist as a necessary condition of an answer; (4) many questions go unanswered and many problems remain unsolved; similarly, many rhetorical situations mature and decay without giving birth to rhetorical utterance; (5) a situation is rhetorical insofar as it needs and invites discourse capable of participating with situation and thereby altering its reality; (6) discourse is rhetorical insofar as it functions (or seeks to function) as a fitting response to a situation which needs and invites it. (7) Finally, the situation controls the rhetorical response in the same sense that the question controls the answer and the problem controls the solution. Not the rhetor and not persuasive intent, but the situation is the source and ground of rhetorical activity—and, I should add, of rhetorical criticism. (6–7)

2. Leach, *Culture and Communication*, 45.
3. David E. Stannard, "Introduction," in *Death in America*, ed. David E. Stannard, x (College Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1975). See also Robert Blauner, "Death and Social Structure," *Psychiatry* 29 (1966): 387.
4. Each of the several branches of the Armed Services in the United States, for example, uses their own *Manual for Conducting Military Funerals*. While one can observe a certain semi-fixed set of ritualized and symbolic activities for those at all ranks, the deaths of higher ranking officers tend to be accorded more expansive ceremonies than enlisted individuals. For example, the participants at the funeral of an Airman First Class would not see airplanes in the "missing man" formation at the interment; if the deceased were a colonel, perhaps; if the deceased were a general, without doubt. See for the specifics of the rubrics, AFR 143–1(C5), 31 March 81, ch. 16, "Military Honors and Conduct of Funerals."

Also *The Navy Funeral Manual*, S/N 0500-LP-277-8243, Rev. 1986, with this statement of purpose: "Our nation regards the burying of its military dead as a solemn and sacred obligation. Ancient naval and military customs are the basis for honors at their funerals. The flag covering the casket symbolizes their service in the armed forces of the United States. Taps are played to mark the beginning of the last, long sleep and to express hope and confidence in an ultimate reveille to come. According to ancient belief, the three volleys that are fired were to scare away evil spirits. Today they are fired out of respect for the deceased member's service to his/her country. To signify that at death all persons are equal, the honorary pallbearers are positioned in reserve order of rank" (i).

5. Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, trans. J. W. Swain (New York: The Free Press, 1965).
6. Eric W. Rothenbuehler, "Values and Symbols in Orientations to the Olympics," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 6 (1989): 140-41.
7. Catherine M. Sanders, *Grief: The Mourning After: Dealing With Adult Bereavement* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1989), 9. See also Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, *On Death and Dying* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1969); C. S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1961); Lily Pincus, *Death in the Family* (New York: Pantheon Press, 1974); B. Raphael, *The Anatomy of Bereavement* (London: The Hutchinson Publishing Co., 1984); R. Schulz, *The Psychology of Death, Dying, and Bereavement* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1974); G. M. Vernon, *The Sociology of Death: An Analysis of Death-Related Behavior* (New York: The Ronald Press, 1970).
8. Sanders, *Grief*, 10. In a similar vein, Jackson describes the emotion in this way, "Grief is a complex emotion. It is always personal. It is an extension of the inner life of a grieving individual. It reflects his values and his inner strength and weakness. It is significant behavior at a time when inner stress may be so great that other alternatives for managing life crises become inoperative." Edgar N. Jackson, *The Many Faces of Grief* (Nashville, TN: The Abingdon Press, 1977), 11.
9. George F. Engel, *Psychological Development in Health and Disease* (Philadelphia, PA: W. B. Saunders Co., 1962), 272.
10. Engel, *Psychological Development*, 279ff.
11. Blauner, "Death," 379ff.
12. Engel, *Psychological Development*, 275.
13. Michael C. Kearl, *Endings: A Sociology of Death and Dying* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 67.

14. William Manchester, *The Death of a President: November 20–November 25, 1963* (New York: Harper and Rowe Publishers, 1967), 189.
15. Stephen B. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: The New American Library, 1982), 494.
16. David L. Lewis, *King: A Biography*, 2d ed. (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1978), 391. Lewis' extended account of the mule cart used to transport the body, the untalented singers at Morehouse College, the inept eulogy, and the abortive failure of the anthem, "We Shall Overcome," clearly indicate that the funeral ritual was not appropriate for Mr. Lewis and, quite possibly, for many others.
17. Blauner, "Death," 387.
18. Blauner, "Death," 387.
19. Ernest Q. Campbell, "Death as a Social Practice," in *Perspectives on Death*, ed. Liston O. Mills, 229 (New York: Abingdon Press, 1969).
20. Campbell, "Death," 215.
21. Campbell, "Death," 218.
22. Campbell, "Death," 219.
23. Campbell, "Death," 223.
24. W. Lloyd Warner, *The Living and the Dead* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), 280.
25. Campbell, "Death," 228.
26. The best single source, to my knowledge, on this subject is James Stevens Curl, *A Celebration of Death: An Introduction to Some of the Buildings, Monuments, and Settings of Funerary Architecture in the Western European Tradition*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1980). See J. W. Day, "Rituals in Stone: Early Greek Epigrams and Monuments," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 109 (1989):16–28. Also John Van Sickle, "The Elogia of the Corneli Scipiones and the Origin of Epigram at Rome," *American Journal of Philology* 108 (1987):41–55.