

# Televised death or the cemetery as a guide to social order



The paper "The Cemetery as a Guide to Social Order" is an excellent example of an essay on social science. People express diverse emotions when they hear the word 'cemetery'. Since it is a burial place for the dead, it is normally associated with horror, darkness, obscure, unknown. Thinking about its origin, one can surmise that only when men began to settle down and stay in one place did they probably dig holes and bury the dead. This could, in fact, be attributed to several factors. For one, the dead must be buried in holes because they could not be kept lying around to rot away and smell and attract wild animals. In short, for safety and sanitary reasons. Secondly, religion played an important part believing that some respect has to be shown to those who died. It is in this regard that this essay is written to infer about the social structure, organization, and values of communities surrounding cemeteries. Public and Private Cemeteries

I had the opportunity to visit two (2) different types of cemeteries, a public or local cemetery, and a private cemetery.

Public cemeteries are located within the community, close to residences.

According to the local government for the purpose of burying the dead for local residents who could not afford the luxury of buying private memorial lots.

In a public cemetery, the dead are buried very close to each other. In some designated places, the dead are buried in cubicles placed one on top of the other instead of digging holes in the ground. It is now rather disorganized due to the continuous increase in the number of local residents who opt to bury their dead here. It is not being maintained regularly. The place is almost always deserted and dirty with an abundance of dried leaves and twigs

rotting everywhere. When one passes by a public cemetery, immediately,  
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people would derive the kind of social order the community belongs to - low to middle-income class.

Residents who live close to the cemetery do not shudder from the thought that their houses were built next to it. They perceive the cemetery as a sacred place where their dearly beloved dead relatives were buried.

In contrast, in a private cemetery, the space provided is spacious, confined and secluded from residential houses. Only those who are financially able can afford to buy memorial lots in a private cemetery to bury their dead. All I can see are green, well-manicured lawns with tombstones barely protruding on the ground. The lot spaces allotted is the premise and well organized.

Families of the dead come in every now and then to visit. There is personnel hired by the management of the private cemeteries tasked to maintain the cleanliness and order of the premises daily. There are security officers at the gate and around the premises to ensure that the place is properly maintained, secured and safe from prowlers and intruders.

From this location, it can be deduced that the community is of a higher social structure in terms of economic and social status. Other structures surrounding the cemetery are commercial organizations and business entities rather than residential dwellings. Usually, the deceased persons buried in private cemeteries were famous personalities and people from the high-income group.

## Conclusion

As averred by Warner, the basic elements of social organization as well as conflicts within these elements, the status of age, sex class, and ethnic groupings, the associational life of the community, and the current status of <https://assignbuster.com/televised-death-or-the-cemetery-as-a-guide-to-social-order/>

the cemetery itself can indeed be "read" from the clues provided in the cemetery. This is definitely confirmed from my two visits, from the evolution of the cemetery and the kinds that emerge which exemplify products of social order and stratification. As people began to be educated and be given the opportunity to earn, communities become stratified. In turn, the choice or option for people to bury their dead in a particular type of cemetery is influenced by their social class or level. The higher the level and economic status, the more sophisticated the burial practices that are applied.

Actually, I believe that the same concept had been practiced even as early as the time when Egyptians indulged in lucrative burial practices especially for their kings and queens. Pyramids were specifically built as a royal tomb of ancient Egypt.

Today, cemeteries are still evolving. As population all over the world continue to increase and spaces, where the dead could be buried, continue to decrease, the community continues to adapt and adjust to the demands of the times. Contemporary practices give in to cremation as the most plausible alternative to burial. In this case, aside from the cemetery, columbarium starts to evolve to inter the ashes of cremated remains of the dead. A columbarium is a sepulchral building containing many small niches for cinerary urns. Due to the small space needed to inter the ashes of the dead, columbarium would eventually be more convenient than cemeteries. Still, its structure, by itself, already defines the kind of social class who can accord this burial site.