

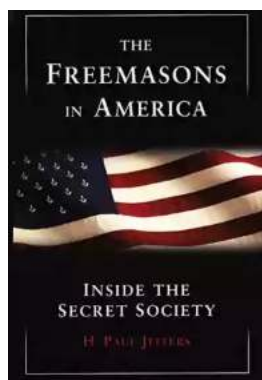
The Freemasons In America: Inside the Secret Society

Hidden behind closed doors and shrouded in mystery, the Freemasons have long captivated the imaginations of people around the world. This ancient fraternity, whose origins trace back centuries, is known for their secretive rituals, symbols, and influential members. In this article, we delve into the world of Freemasonry in America, exploring their history, structure, and the controversies surrounding this elusive society.

The Origins of Freemasonry

Freemasonry as an organized institution emerged in the seventeenth century, but its roots can be traced back to the stonemasons' guilds of the Middle Ages. Originally focused on the craft of building cathedrals and other grand structures, these guilds were societies where the secrets of the trade were passed down from one generation to another.

Over time, these guilds evolved and began accepting members who were not necessarily stonemasons. The focus shifted from the physical craft to the metaphorical building of character and moral values. This transition gave birth to modern-day Freemasonry.



The Freemasons In America:: Inside Secret Society by H. Paul Jeffers(Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 711 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 240 pages
Lending : Enabled



The Freemasons' Influence in America

The influence of Freemasonry in America cannot be overstated. Since the birth of the nation, prominent figures such as George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and John Hancock have been members of this ancient society. Many of the symbols, ideals, and principles that shaped the United States can be traced back to the Masonic beliefs held by these influential leaders.

One of the most enduring symbols associated with Freemasonry is the all-seeing eye atop an unfinished pyramid, featured on the back of the one-dollar bill. This symbol, often referred to as the "Eye of Providence," represents the watchful eye of God overseeing human affairs.

But what goes on within the walls of Masonic lodges across the country? One of the most fascinating aspects of Freemasonry is their ritualistic ceremonies. These elaborate rituals, often filled with symbolism, aim to instill moral lessons and promote personal growth among members.

The Structure of Freemasonry

Freemasonry in America is organized into three major bodies: the Blue Lodge, Scottish Rite, and York Rite. The Blue Lodge, also known as the Craft Lodge, is the foundation of Freemasonry. It comprises three degrees: Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason. These degrees mark a progression in knowledge and are accompanied by specific rituals and obligations.

Once a Freemason attains the Master Mason degree, they can choose to explore other bodies within Freemasonry, such as the Scottish Rite and York Rite. The Scottish Rite offers an additional 29 degrees, each with its own teachings and ceremonies. The York Rite, on the other hand, consists of several appendant bodies, including the Royal Arch and the Knights Templar.

The Controversies and Conspiracy Theories

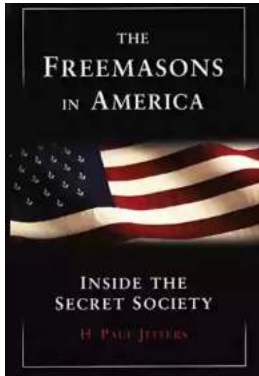
For centuries, Freemasonry has been the subject of numerous conspiracy theories and controversies. Some accuse the society of wielding excessive influence over politics, economics, and other aspects of society. Others claim that Freemasonry is a satanic cult, engaging in occult rituals and worshipping deities other than God.

While the Freemasons maintain that they are a charitable organization focused on self-improvement, these conspiracy theories persist. Their secretive nature and the lack of transparency have fuelled suspicion and speculation throughout history.

Furthermore, the exclusion of women from the society has drawn criticism from those who argue that Freemasonry is outdated and discriminatory. In recent years, some Masonic organizations have embraced coed or female-exclusive branches, while others remain steadfast in their tradition of male-only membership.

As the Freemasons' influence in America continues to spark curiosity and controversy, the secrets of this ancient society remain deeply hidden. From their mysterious rituals to their renowned members, the Freemasons have left an indelible mark on the country's history and culture.

Whether one views them as an exclusive brotherhood that promotes personal growth or a shadowy organization with ulterior motives, the Freemasons will forever remain a captivating subject for those seeking to uncover the hidden truths that lie within.



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What Is Their Secret And What Are They Hiding?

Step inside the secret world of the Masons and discover:

How such pivotal American documents as the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights reflect Masonic principles and influence.

How Freemasons became the world's oldest and largest fraternal organization.

If Freemasons rule the world--or want to.

Why Masonic symbolism appears on American currency.

Why the opposition groups, from conspiracists to the Catholic Church, fear Freemasons.

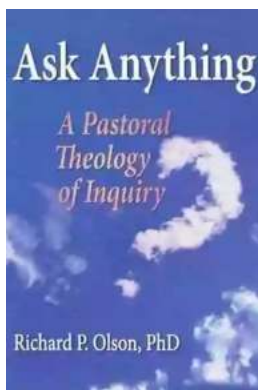
Why Texas has been called "the Masonic Republic."

How to recognize Masonic rings, pins, and other symbols.

From George Washington to Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code*, the Freemasons have influenced the United States in many surprising ways. With nearly half the world's six million Freemasons--some twenty-five U.S. presidents and thirty-five Supreme Court justices among them--America has felt the group's impact more deeply and broadly than any other country.

Using historical anecdotes and incisive analysis, this timely and insightful portrait separates the myths surrounding Freemasonry from the facts, offering a unique insider's view into what American Freemasonry was, is, and will be tomorrow.

H. Paul Jeffers has published more than 50 works of fiction and nonfiction, including *Freemasons: Inside the World's Oldest Secret Society*, biographies of presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Grover Cleveland, New York mayor Fiorello LaGuardia, Diamond Jim Brady, and others. He lives in Manhattan.



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