

Whats it all about ?

Freemasonry the Undiscovered Country.

I read on Stephen Dafoes's site www.lodgeoom.com , in his piece the 'The Restaurant at the end of the Masonic Universe. he writes,

"I really feel that I have been sold a pack of lies," wrote one such young mason recently on an Internet discussion forum.

How sad it is that a young man, who has been a Mason for one year would feel that he has been lied to by an organization that has Truth as one of its three greatest attributes.

"This is not the Masonry I signed up for," he continued in his posting and in so stating arrives at the crux of our problem.

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For some unknown reason, well unknown to me. I have always felt this compulsion to make sure there will be a tomorrow for Freemasonry. To make sure that the new members were given the correct information on Freemasonry that would equip them for their journey into the unknown.

The History of Masonry shows us that many have attempted to use the genuine Masonic structure to promote their own ideology.

My perception of Masonry has always been that it should be the basic tool from which you construct something worthwhile. To be worthwhile it has to be what the individual uncovers by himself for himself on this very odd journey through the Masonic Degrees.

So if we hear *"I have been sold a pack of lies" or "This is not the Masonry I signed up for,"*. We have failed in our basic responsibility to the Initiate, our teachings have not been good enough.

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Freemasonry the Undiscovered Country.

We first see this phrase in **HAMLET**:

To be, or not to be—that is the question:

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer

The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune

Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
And by opposing end them. To die, to sleep—
No more—and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to. 'Tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To die, to sleep—
To sleep—perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub,
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life.
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of th' unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
**The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,**
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?

Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprise of great pitch and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry
And lose the name of action. – Soft you now,
The fair Ophelia! – Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remembered.

To boldly go where no man has gone before, as the tale of Star Trek unfolds and eventually comes to a full length Feature film called '**The Undiscovered Country.**'

Hamlet sees the phrase as the mysteries of Death and Capt. James T. Kirk sees the mystery of days yet to come. The unknown future ?

To look for a better future we must assume there is something wrong with now. Freemasonry rests on the three basic principles 'Brotherly Love' 'Relief' and 'Truth'. so where do these basic principles come from, where was the origin of these binding concepts.

1: These are what are termed the Christian Graces of Faith, Hope and Charity.

2: These are what are termed the four Cardinal Virtues : Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice.

One of the major founding principles of Freemasonry is that it is not a substitute for Religion. As we all know full well topics of Religion and Politics are absolutely forbidden in a mainstream Masonic Lodge.

Now some streams of Freemasonry do not conform to this, what I would call fundamental principle, does that stop them from claiming a Masonic caveat, no it does not it just means it is not a Freemasonry I can have any contact with. There is no exclusion it is just there is no inclusion between us. Is my style of Freemasonry better or more important, well only to

me.

However in recent years there have been more and more claims being made that there is some form of spiritual enlightenment within Freemasonry ? Well is there ? this is the question I have been asking myself.

If there is I have not witnessed it. When I say this in conversation I am made to feel by those who say they have witnessed and experienced special THINGS in a Masonic Lodge, that I am not understanding of it. Which means to me I am not educated enough or not elite enough to be able to take part. in these special feelings.

I have recently had a long conversation with several Masons on the word OCCULT. To me and to all my acquaintances this word symbolises , evil or devil like or devil worship. So when I see the term "Freemasonry is of Occult Origin" it is a term I can not accept. Now other people can use the term but please do not link it to any part of me, My Freemasonry or anything evn slightly close to me.

The word does not frighten me, what concerns me is what the outside world hears when the words

"Freemasonry is of Occult Origin"

There is the argument that the meaning of the word Occult is technically is : This is the explanation from a popular web site that sells Occult products.

OCCULT:

1. Those persons, places, things, ideas and theories that are Secret by Design, relating to, or dealing with supernatural influences, agencies, or phenomena.
2. Beyond the realm of human comprehension; inscrutable; metaphysical.
3. Available only to the initiate; secret.

4. Hidden from view; concealed.

5. Forbidden by convention.

So, we can see where some portion of Freemasonry may well fit. But we can also see, "supernatural influences, agencies, or phenomena." Which even to this uneducated brain contradicts my first and binding oath in Freemasonry,

Q: Do you believe is a supreme being

A: Yes

At the moment of making that confirmation, I accept that the supreme being is the be all and end all of what is and what will be, he is after all, the supreme being.

So in common with Shakespeare and Capt. Kirk I use the phrase "Undiscovered Country" as a symbol in Freemasonry of what the new Initiate will see, what he will hear and what he will eventually experience in Freemasonry.

Freemasonry the undiscovered Country.

Now it is not for us to make up his mind for him. That is his job. It is our responsibility however that he is properly supported on this journey of discovery. We must therefore prevent anyone from hijacking Freemasonry for the evangelising of their own personal views on Religion or any form of Pseudo Religion.

Here the Esoteric Freemason may jump in and express his views, after all Esoterica means 'hidden' or 'known by a few' however there is not normally an initiatic requirement to be Esoteric. You can be an Esoteric Steam Engine enthusiast. Then I suppose you could be an Occult Steam Engine enthusiast.

It must be a foundation stone that whatever the candidate experiences in Masonry is within his mind and in his perception of Freemasonry and the world it lives in. As

Master Masons we have a responsibility to the Candidate to make sure he is not influenced by us his mentors in anything other than Freemasonry.

And from the foundation laid, may they build a superstructure perfect in its parts and honourable to the Builder.

Bill McElligott