Paths to Masonry Today: Social Factors Behind Joining the Craft among Twentieth and Twenty-first Century Canadian Freemasons

J. Scott Kenney
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Abstract

Despite increased academic attention to freemasonry, the predominant historical focus means relatively little attention has been paid to its meaning for contemporary members. In this paper I empirically reverse this focus. Drawing upon qualitative interviews, film footage, and observation of freemasons in two Canadian provinces, I outline six interactional elements that lead up to a person’s decision to become a freemason. These include: (1) predisposing factors in one’s social background; (2) the dramaturgical interplay between secrecy/mystery and curiosity; (3) organized/organizing encounters; (4) attractive/attracting aspects; (5) unattractive factors/hurdles to get over; and (6) strategies employed to overcome such hurdles. While one or another element may be emphasized to a greater or lesser extent in specific cases, they occurred with sufficient regularity to shed light on the significant question of attracting new members to the craft in the opening decades of the twenty-first century.

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References

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By the twenty-first century, the TCC turned to several mechanisms to sustain global accumulation in the face of over-accumulation. One is militarised accumulation; making wars and interventions that unleash cycles of destruction and reconstruction and generate enormous profits for an ever-expanding military-prison-industrial-security-financial complex.