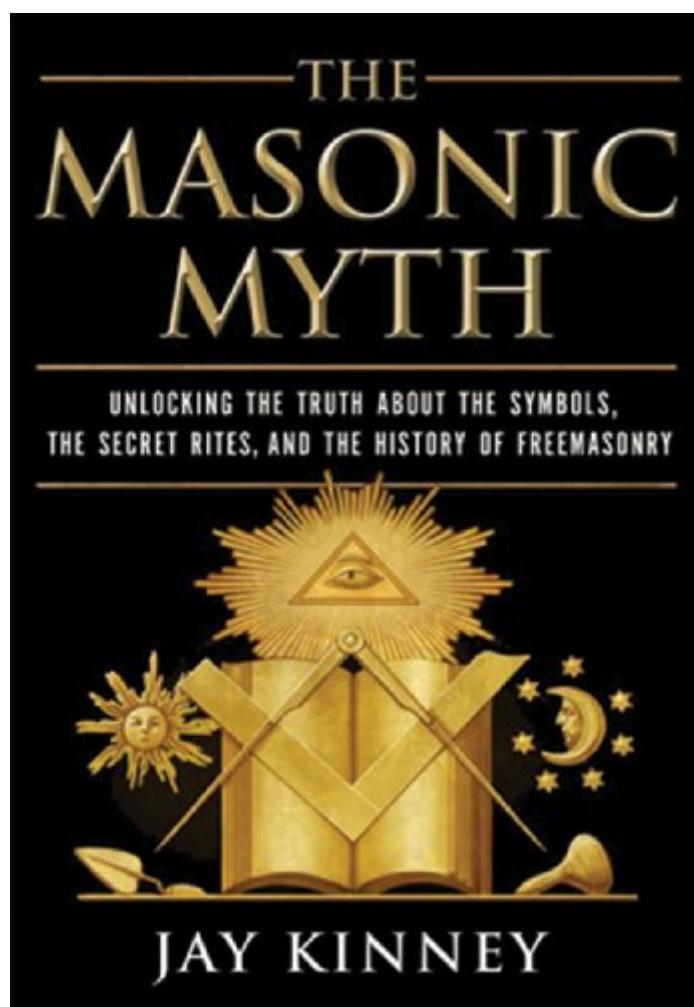


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The Masonic Myth: Unlocking The Truth About The Symbols, The Secret Rites, And The History Of Freemasonry



Synopsis

The Truth Revealed Freemasons have been connected to the all-seeing eye on the dollar bill, the French Revolution, the Knights Templar, and the pyramids of Egypt. They have been rumored to be everything from a cabal of elite power brokers ruling the world to a covert network of occultists and pagans intent on creating a new world order, to a millennia-old brotherhood perpetuating ancient wisdom through esoteric teachings. Their secret symbols, rituals, and organization have remained shrouded for centuries and spawned theory after theory. The Masonic Myth sets the record straight about the Freemasons and reveals a truth that is far more compelling than the myths.

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Customer Reviews

Kinney did a really good job with this book. He clearly stated his goals in the Introduction, setting expectations for the reader. Then he competently met those expectations and, in some cases, exceeded them. Like most people, I had very little idea of what the Masonry was about (before reading this). The relatively few things published about the Masons have generally been of such dubious integrity that a discerning reader must dismiss them as agenda-driven propaganda rather

than serious non-fiction on the subject. Some of the information in the public sphere is very positive. For example, we've all seen the Shriners at the parades and are aware of their good works with Children's Hospitals. Granted, the connection to Masons is weak enough that some of us don't make it but it's still there for the observant to see. As there's no sensationalized agenda for this work, there's no sinister plot or alarmist message to hook the reader. That's one of the "problems" with true nonfiction in general. Of course, there are exceptions--for example, when the work is about a bizarre event, a tragedy, or a famous criminal. Writing a factual book about the Masons is a challenge in itself, for several reasons. Making it interesting is a further challenge, also for several reasons. Kinney handled these challenges well, with a combination of dry wit, logic, and good writing. From his 30 or so pages of notes, we can conclude that his work is also heavily researched. That research is especially valuable, because it wasn't from the outside looking in. He is a practicing Mason, but not just an "ordinary" one. He's the librarian and director of research for the San Francisco Scottish Rite, plus he's heavily connected in other ways.

The Masonic Myth succeeds equally on several different levels, addressing readers new to Freemasonry as well as those who have studied it for years. Kinney combines an insider's mastery of the subject with an outsider's skeptical irreverence, making him a very trustworthy guide through this hall of mirrors. He addresses the concerns of readers with little knowledge of Masonry, Masons with much insider knowledge but little grasp of its historical meaning, and those who think they know a fair amount about Masonry but are confused by unreliable sources where misinformation is rife. Kinney devotes considerable attention to some of the most widely diffused misconceptions that have flourished for centuries. "Things you thought you knew about Masonry that are wrong" are scattered throughout the book and debunked persuasively. As Dan Brown's latest novel brings a new round of speculation about Freemasons' role in American history, the time is ripe for a serious explanation of Masonic myth and reality. The first four chapters are an engagingly written, solidly researched account of the origins of the Craft. This makes the book the best place to start for anyone seeking a reliable and accessible guide to Freemasonry. The middle four chapters provide an informed account of Masonic rites, symbols, and hierarchies. As Kinney leads readers through a labyrinth of degrees and orders, his personal involvement with Masonry brings meaning to what is otherwise a bewildering landscape. Without proselytizing, Kinney conveys an appreciation for the value contemporary Masons find in the brotherhood and its not-so-secret-after-all practices.

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