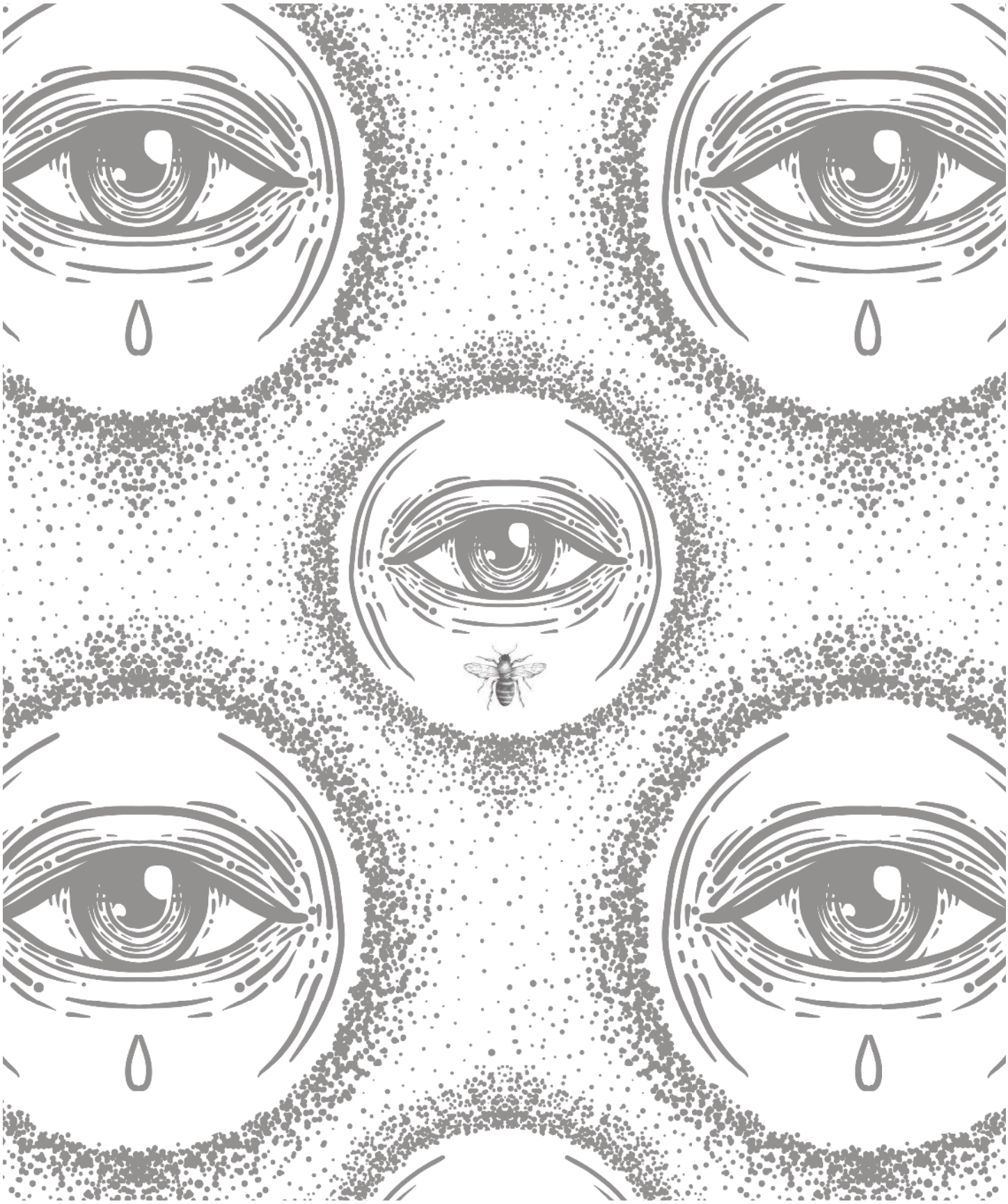
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Messoterica

A frustrated consideration of the usefulness of masonic messotericka and whether or not it is actually just a big stupid distraction from one's actual masonic work and doesn't actually mean anything but you put the unicursal hexagram and skull into a square and compass on a t-shirt and that makes people think maybe you're crazy and, therefore, so are all Freemasons, you feckless wandering dick hole.

by Worshipful Brother Bull Garlington, d.e.o. 5th n.e.

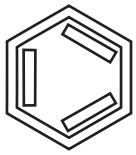
founder of
the greater Chicago astrophysicists & big game hunter's music appreciation society
o ∴ g ∴ buffalo lodge | g.y.d.o.m.k. | s.s.i.m.s.a.
illustrious querellosi ∴ ordo liber avem sugit
assistant cub scout past master
44° obstinatus pes notas
elvis est vivere
מולכ רמוא אל הז
†

When talking to new Masons one often hears of their interest in esoterica. This interest is usually expressed with suggestive facial contortions and vocal modulation by which the interested party wishes to express that their interest in, you know, *esoterica,* is *you know, legit.* Some of these new Masons, and even some well-established brethren, also communicate their interest in esoterica by adorning their possessions, clothing, and sometimes their skin, with elaborate esoteric symbols in a sartorial effort to express, again, that they, you know, *know about this stuff.* Worse, some brethren may actually crack open the internet and research esoterica, a practice that infects their speech, their time management, and their inter-personal relationships as they rabbit-hole themselves into oblivion.

This paper takes exception to the idea of esoterica having any intrinsic value in Freemasonry, other than the esoterica embedded in our ritual and symbols, all of which are entirely practical as they are explained fully in the lectures of each degree. Further, this paper intends to prove that:



Esoteric study is nothing more than an elaborate distraction from actual Masonic work and should be punishable with a small fine.



The kaballah is dumb and nobody cares how you spell it.



Many esoterics are weak minded slightly sociopathic hyper introverted nerds which esoterica takes full advantage of.



And most of all, that you should probably find a better way to use your time (like doing the actual difficult work of a Freemason).

WHAT ARE ESOTERICA?

Esoterica are the vocabulary, symbols, ideas, and various indicia associated with a distinct group of people. The language of TikTok users is esoteric. The lexicon of neurosurgeons is esoteric. For instance, the special vocabulary of a professional magazine editor, their diacritical marks, marginalia, and slang are their esoterica. Esoteric words and symbols are not necessarily about the metaphysical.

Usage of 'esoterica,' however, rarely refers merely to a lexicon one can easily learn, but instead to a vast body of knowledge concealed by symbols and specialized language which one does not have access to. This vast ocean of ideas most employers of 'esoterica' refer to, however, is not well-defined and tends to include everything from ancient Sumerian deity ideation to Illuminati currency design trends.

What use is esoterica?

There are four uses for esoterica.

1. **Organic:** To act as an emergent sub-dialect of one's native language relegated to a specialty occupation or social group whereby members may converse easily about their shared interest. For instance, botanists employ highly specialized esoterica to describe plant morphology, esoterica which merges Latin, Greek, scientific-terms, and specialized words from the individual botanist's native language. While the average gardener may not know what a *variegated trefoil sepal leaf* is, a botanist could easily draw an accurate image from that esoteric description.
2. **Intentional:** To act as a specialized argot allowing ease of conversation among members of a specialized group that cannot be understood by non-members speaking the same native language. By employing an esoteric lexicology, two members may discuss highly private, sensitive, and normally undisclosed knowledge even if they are standing in line at a coffee shop
3. **Indicative:** to act as a shibboleth whereby knowledgeable members may recognize one another by use of their shared esoterica.
4. **Preservation of protected ideas:** In some instances, esoterica may be employed to preserve important ideas across generations of speakers of a native language by embedding them in stories, poetry, inscriptions, sculpture, architecture and various arts.

This last point is well-illustrated in *Les Mysteries des Cathedrales* by Fulcanelli who closely studied Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, France. Notre Dame is a perfect example of this, as its façade and many of its architectural and decorative parts preserve ancient allegories which speak to practicing hermeticists and alchemists:

> *The Cathedral is a work of gothic art, or argot, that is slang. However dictionaries define argot as a language particular to all individuals who have an interest in communicating their thoughts to each other without being understood by those around them. So it is a spoken cabala. The argoters, those who use this language, are hermetic descendants of the argonauts, who climbed the Argo ship, spoke the argot language—our green language[1].*

Fulcanelli was adamant that the argot of the builders of Notre Dame, as preserved in its ornamentation, was also present in the local spoken dialects and further preserved there in the symbols, allegory, and referential slang of common people.

> *Finally, argot is one of the forms derived from the language of birds, mother and dean of all the others, the language of philosophers and diplomats[2].*

And insisted that paying close attention to such esoterica may be instructive:

> *How many wonders, how many unsuspected things would we not discover if we knew how to dissect words, break their bark and free the spirit, the divine light they contain![3]*

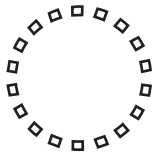
Fulcinelli's treatise is encouragement to treat esoterica not as the end goal of research but as the gate to the knowledge such esoterica refers to. Understanding that a line from a Charlotte Smith sonnet is comprised of ten syllables divided into five pairs of iambic feet arranged in a pentameter may be a way of recognizing the esoteric description of the syntax of her poem. But it does not mean one understands what she meant by "to us, his reasoning creatures, whom he bids / acknowledge and revere his awful hand, / nothing but good[4]." Understanding this line of poetry requires one to pass beyond the indicia of poetic form into the world of 18th century England, to understand a little about what it meant to be an educated woman during a time of European upheaval in a culture ruled by men, and to understand what it means to have the faith of an activist. Which for some people is only slightly less difficult than discerning what a Mason means when he says the wages of a fellowcraft are corn, wine, and oil.

A symbol contains no actionable information. Whether it is a word, an emblem, or a gesture, it communicates no more than its surface value *until* the student applies a great deal of effort to understand the knowledge it refers to. Esoterica is inert until they are charged with meaning by the individual.

But wait a minute, now

The esoteric reader may at this point become garrulous and testy and bring to this paper arguments for the worth of esoterica. For instance, the idea that esoterica direct our attention to the myriad wonders of being alive. This may be true, but no truer than a really well-crafted shoehorn or an onset of gout. They may claim esoterica hides or protects special knowledge vital for being truly human which is a specious and ridiculous claim disproved by the billions of humans which manage, somehow, to live despite not being privy to this special knowledge. It also begs the question: if such specialized and delicate knowledge about being human is being curated by some secret or very

private society, isn't it their moral imperative to reveal this knowledge for the benefit of all mankind? Why not? Is it because they have ascertained that not all humans are ready for the intensity or magnitude of this knowledge? For the responsibility? That's a load of bubbling badger vomit. A sixteen-year-old kid can get a driver's license in America and most do and most of them do just fine piloting three ton machines that move via the precise regulation of exploding gas. The only reason someone curating specious knowledge of human development won't give it up is because it would wreck their business model.



Why do so many idiots get up all fucked up about esoterica?

Esoterica seems to fill a need to belong.

In the most popular explanations of human social and cognitive development, there is a phase wherein a person questions 'it all'. This can happen in adolescence, as teens from 14 to 21 are seeking to develop their own authority and agency over their lives[5]. Or it can happen in one's early adulthood, as both Maslow and Engle indicate in their theories of development, that is when an individual is seeking to establish themselves[6] which may include a kind of cosmology or a belief system. It can happen any time during adult development for a person who has never established a belief system, or comes to question their current beliefs, what Joseph Campbell calls the "ordinary world," the questioning process itself falling into Campbell's category on the heroic cycle of *the call to adventure.* The call to adventure (indeed, the heroic cycle in general) is a handy metaphor for finding meaning in one's life, and for connecting to the broader world outside the confines of one's accepted place. It is a powerful motivation in the early stages of adult development (usually) and tends to lead to movement, rejection of one's normality, and the search for meaning.

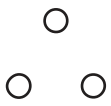
People need their life to have meaning and when they realize that need is unfulfilled, they try to find it. Knowing the meaning of one's life, knowing one's purpose, having a functional belief system, add up to self-esteem and estimable regard, two important universal requirements in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. During the search for meaning, the fulfillment of these needs becomes so urgent, the individual is susceptible to accepting any kind of meaning and any form of regard, even if it is imaginary. These individuals may see an opportunity to establish meaning in their lives by joining an organization or a group or a religion. When they do, they tend to quickly and zealously adopt the emblems and styles of this group, possibly to fulfill the requirements of esteem and delineated by R. Taormina in a paper where they indicated " . . . it is not enough to just belong to an organization, one must

be deemed worthy to belong by exemplifying the group's ideals[7]" This paper does not intend to judge the quality of one's choice in an organization. Cosplay groups, itinerate Renaissance Faires, and the Plumber and Pipefitter's Union No. 803 are fine organizations. However, it is when one joins an imaginary group that problems come up. When one finds oneself in an occult bookstore browsing through books on astral projection or dictionaries of esoteric symbols, they are on the brink of 'joining' a group of people who are both real and imagined. Real, in that they write books and publish articles. Imagined, in that the individual will never meet any of them.

Their experience in that moment as they stare into the perfumed pages of a book about magic by a 19th century occultist, and run their finger along its insanely florid, impenetrable prose, is "this doesn't make any fucking sense. *It must mean something!"* And so, they tote their books to the register, trying not to make eye contact with the clerk who is wildly unimpressed by their choices, and then, in that moment is where they 'join' by buying an amulet with a pentagram on it and from that point forward they are an Esoteric.

And deluded

Although occult societies certainly exist[8], buying their book doesn't make one a member. Joining such a society requires an interview and vetting and a payment of dues. Buying a pentagram necklace just means you've joined the sector of consumers who buy witchy shit and wear a lot of black[9]. Which is fine. You be you, little Unicorn. But the pentagram you're wearing doesn't mean anything and worse, it doesn't do anything. It is useful, in the sense that someone else wearing a pentagram necklace will recognize you and, in the best of worlds, start up a conversation starting with, "hey, cool pentagram," or in the worst of worlds, walk past you and sneer, "hey, cool pentagram."



Esoterica makes people take you seriously

I will pause here to allow the serious reader to catch their breath from their recent fit of uncontrollable laughter. But this is a real motivation which falls into the zone of human development reserved for a sense of belonging and esteem. Of course, it is a futile effort to find esteem since the accoutrements of occultism are meaningless until one is trained in whichever school of thought one's emblems represent. Even then, they don't mean much more than *here is a pentagram.* To people unaware of its significance, it's just witchy shit.



Esoteric emblems are a visible rejection of religion and religious culture

But are they? One of the most respected occult authors in America, Lon Milo Duquette, respected Enochian magician, head of the OTO, and editor of the impressive Encyclopedia of Ceremonial Magic, is a practicing Catholic[10]. Anyone donning esoteric symbols to reject religion are probably not looking far enough down the road of their esoteric practice of choice, as most of them are headed toward some kind of deeply personal work with a deity and possibly within the framework of a known religion. Even a practitioner who successfully eschews religion will find themselves in a mild conundrum when practicing some esoteric work as it is replete with ritual, candles, incense, water, and prayer—just like in church.



Esoteric science points to a hidden world we can access if we just have the key

Which is where, exactly? This motivation for rabbit-holing esoterica comes from the misguided feeling, the self-assuredness, that 'the answer' is outside oneself. Besides being wrong, this idea sets a person up to be manipulated by other misguided people also trying to find 'the key,' who've been searching longer than our pentagrammed exemplar, perhaps even written books about the key or even started their own organizations based on the misguided ideas that set them onto their misguided search for meaning. This particular rabbit-hole is especially pernicious as the exemplar's suspicion of a hidden key is confirmed by countless books, tracts, essays, schools, and Norwegian grindcore bands all claiming that yes, the key is just out of reach, they know where it is, and here are

some clues that will aid you on your quest—for just $12.99.

A reasonable question to ask before plinking down thirteen bucks is, *well, if you know where the key is, why are you still on your quest?* Or even, *why are you still here? Shouldn't you be lounging in paradise right about now?* However, few young esotericks ever ask and as the books employ the same baffling language as Eliphas Levi and Israel Regardie where every sentence seems to circle around the thing they really, really want to say explicitly, but can't, the authors gain instant credibility. Frankly, the harder an occult book is to understand, the more credibility most readers will give it. I'm convinced most magical writing is just some kind of semiotic lipsum lorem that bubbles up out of our pineal gland. To wit:

> *We exist as psionic wave oscillations. The universe is electrified with bioelectricity. We believe, we exist, we are reborn. Where there is stagnation, nature cannot thrive—you must take a stand against pain. We can no longer afford to live with suffering. We are being called to explore the infinite itself as an interface between nature and intuition. Consciousness consists of sonar energy of quantum energy. "Quantum" means a summoning of the endless. Nothing is impossible. Health is the driver of will*[11].

Symbols fall into this rubric of convincing bafflement, though not necessarily by design. Symbols can be useful, as they pack a lot of meaning into an image. We unpack this meaning instantly when we see the symbol—if we already know what it means. You see a stop sign, you hit the brakes. You see skull and crossbones on a bottle of suspicious looking fluid, you don't drink it. In Freemasonry, our most common image is known everywhere to mean *the guy that owns this 4x4 is a Freemason.* The problem with some symbols, even the Square and Compass, is its familiarity. People who aren't members know just enough to talk about the craft for a minute or two, probably in pithy non-sequiturs and raised eyebrows and solemn nods. But only members really understand what the symbol stands for—and then, only members who have worked hard at applying the tenets and charges to their life, members who have done the work of a Mason[12]. For such people, the symbol unfolds into a much broader, more detailed tapestry of experience and carries in a mere glance the meaning of their life.

But that is rare. Even within the boundaries of membership, many Masons continue to view the esoterica of their degree as one-dimensional emblems: an enumeration of definitions instead of touchstones of experience. Which is one of the biggest mistakes about emblems one can make.



Esoteric symbols don't mean anything; they don't do anything; they are inert.

Unless you live them. Once, driving from Barcelona to Madrid, the author found himself transitioning from a pastoral, sunny, pleasant drive on a one-way highway through the foothills of the Pyrenees to a wildly swerving skid on a highway that was suddenly and inexplicably choked with cars coming the other way. As it turns out, some portions of Spanish highways just switch from one-way roads to two-way roads, as indicated by tiny blue signs with white arrows which until that moment had been meaningless wallpaper to the author. Totally esoteric. Now, having lived the situation warned of by those symbols, the reader may be fully confident the author is an expert on their purpose.

The most mundane esoteric symbols are densely packed with meaning and you're unpacking them one by one as you read. Words can be entirely esoteric, and most organizations use operational jargon that doesn't mean diddly squat to an outsider. The phrase *you'll need to use affect labelling for your ADR-scheme using the bi-lateral spectrum approach in a continuum model,* might sound like made-up legal jargon you'd hear in a comedy about made-up legal jargon. But that is a sentence lifted from a legal research paper edited by the author and has a very specific meaning. It is esoteric is the truest sense. You can understand the individual words, but unless you've got a degree in jurisprudence and some experience in human resources, you won't know what they mean *in this usage.* An esoteric symbol bears no meaning until it has been charged by lived experience.



Esoteric study is addictive; it distracts one from healthy inner work

Finally, an effect of the esoteric bottomless pit of research, and related to 5 and 6: the study of esoterica feels very satisfying mostly because it is not at all satisfying. When one becomes obsessed with finding 'the key' to 'hidden wisdom,' every esoteric notch in one's belt is like a hit off a crack pipe. You are wildly satisfied, enraptured—for a little while. Then it wears off and the search resumes. Back to the occult bookstore, to the library, onto Amazon where one picks up another book, another box of candles, another witchy amulet.

But no meaning obtains because meaning comes from sustained, long-term guided effort toward personal transformation. If that sounds a little like psychology, it's because psychological counseling is an effective path to healing and growth. It's no accident that Jung, Regardie, and some other esoteric writers and teachers were psychologists. Psychology often uses symbols to help describe and understand psychological ideas and many of those symbols seem to be universal—which may explain why they show up in esoteric media. Some of these symbols have centuries of consistent meaning behind them. However, for the individual, a symbol doesn't mean jack until they've worked why it matters for them in the context of its use. In psychological counseling, an educated, experienced guide helps an individual learn about themselves by examining their past to find memories of moments of trauma which may be rooted in their unconscious and may be affecting the decisions they make in the present. A psychologist may work with a patient for years to come to an understanding about themselves, to see incidents in their past clearly and from the perspective of a safe distance, and to untangle the effects of those incidents to discover relief and perhaps new capacities for a healthy emotional life. The psychologist might know exactly which important lesson an individual must learn from the first visit—they are experienced in this. But they will not tell this to their patient because the patient *must do the work themselves.* The work, the effort, is the lesson.

In an esoteric order, an individual works with an experienced, educated teacher to learn about themselves in a way that leads to a greater understanding of themselves leading them to relief[13], and to discover new capacities for being. But even though this teacher knows the most likely path for the student, they can't tell them because the effort of discovery must be the student's in order for the results to be valid.

The result, one hopes, of either path, is to guide an individual through the difficult and treacherous journey of healing and self-discovery. This may lead to self-actualization, finding one's ultimate purpose. But only after having done the work.

Obsessions with anything can become a comforting distraction from the work of self-discovery. While developing an ever-expanding index of esoteric symbols and systems, the Esotericist may derive recurring moments of high satisfaction, but they will be brief. They won't stick. However, until the individual learns this, those brief moments feel like satisfaction.

And now to address the yeah buts with so whats

1. **Yeah, but the kabbballlah says**—So what? It's just a data base. It doesn't say anything, and it doesn't have any special powers or capacities that it will transfer to its limitless student body. It is nothing more than a handy way of illustrating the tenets of Jewish mysticism brewed up by a 4th century rabbi who was probably losing his mind trying to explain to his students how the sephiroth were related until he finally said, *look, they're, like, fruit on a tree, right?* And then drew a diagram of the familiar tree of life. Except, no he didn't because the earliest versions looked like this (see right). Although books and websites about the caballuh approach the infinite, none of them seem to have a path for the serious student to find a qualified teacher. It would be so easy, just put a name and an email in the back and boom, there you are at the Jewish theological center converting. Yeah, converting. Because to truly understand and employ the kqbla, you must dissolve into the culture and religion of Judaism. Otherwise, you're a tourist and you are culture hacking and worse, you will not have a committed, knowledgeable, hopefully wise rabbi guiding you through the journey as you learn Hebrew, read the Torah, practice shabbat, sit shiva, and read a LOT of books. Plus, you'll have to listen to the Rabbi and do what he says. When he says that to truly understand Binah you have to clean your neighbor's house, he means you have to actually clean your neighbor's house[14].
2. **Yeah, but the tarot says**—So what? The tarot is a card deck that doesn't say Jimmy Joe Rambo Christ about anything. It's inert paper. It's pretty pictures. It is meaningless until you spend some time in deep meditation, learn the cards like you're a law student, and illustrate your own deck—all under the supervision of a qualified teacher. And here's an idea, the tarot may be a mendacious accident cooked up by an Italian gambler in the 14th century who stole the idea from Maj Jong and Roman parade floats. Maybe; nobody really knows.
3. **Yeah, but the alchemists said**—So what? Were they even real? And if they were, what was alchemy anyway? Was it a mystical tradition whose manuals were written in esoteric symbology to protect the uninitiated? Or were they highly accomplished chemists who were passing along incredibly valuable recipes they made their living with. And yeah, sure, an idiot could do the math wrong and kill themselves drinking some accidental poison from an alembic but was that really the alchemists' motivation? Or did they know how to manufacture mirrors, colored glass, permanent inks, dye stops, and countless simple tinctures for countless simple problems which someone with a headache would pay a fortune for and wanted to protect their income stream?
4. **Yeah, but Freemasons**—So what? Freemasons, like the alchemists, used their ceremonies and secrecy to protect valuable building techniques that took years of apprenticeship to get right. Masons could stake an entire career on these skills, so they protected their value by being very selective about who received that training AND by building one of the world's oldest non-disclosure agreement into their ceremonies.
5. **Yeah, but it's a hidden language**—So what? So is birdsong. That's not mystical, it's just hard to understand a Blue Jay. And besides, what are you gonna say? See above, re: law
6. **Yeah, but astrology teaches us**—So what? Astrology is about farming.

So then why is esoterica part of Freemasonry?

It's not.

Not the way some people may think. Although the craft uses symbols, and though it employs language in its ritual which seems esoteric, these are simply misperceptions of a mysterious occult science, not indication of such.

Until the invention of the printing press in 1430, books were incredibly rare and exceedingly expensive. As the production of printed material increased, so did literacy but even as late as the 18th century, literacy was nowhere near the level people enjoy currently. Which is true all the way back as far back as the reader wishes to go. The first known writing appeared in 3200 B.C.E.[15] but the first printing technology didn't appear[16] until 1440—which is nearly 5,000 years of writing, and therefore reading, being a highly specialized skill. Literacy in English men between 1700 to 1790 was between 35 and 60 percent. Even those men who were literate did not often have the opportunity to practice their skill as books were rare. Four times as many books were printed in 1790 as in 1700[17]. Religious sects like the puritans drove the literacy rate of colonial America as they valued the ability to read. For awhile, literacy in the colonies was higher than in Europe and England[18]. In 1720 Denmark, for instance, four fifths of men could not sign their name, a number which rose to just one tenth by 1800. Literacy in Europe was inconsistent as was its spread[19]. It isn't a wild stretch to imagine that as Speculative Freemasonry grew, it onboarded new members who were either illiterate or were not active readers. Books were scarce. Schools were scarce. Literacy was scarce.

Symbols compress information

Freemasonry employed symbols to store information because its lore was transmitted orally, so until the 19th century, there was little printed ritual available to the average Mason. However, symbols were also a way to protect and preserve knowledge in a highly portable form.

It is hard to remember the details of an essay about the symbology of the Square and Compass, but it's easy, after reading such an essay and after having performed the work of a Mason, to glance at this symbol and know what it means. When instructing a new mason, one could easily refer to the parts of the now ubiquitous logo and give a fairly well-educated impromptu talk.

But what about the quebaughlough? What about the tarot? Half the Masons I talk to won't shut up about the kkabbblahuh and it's like all over their t-shirts and they write papers about it and they have tarot decks and books about Alistair Crowley—Isn't that kind of esoterica part of Freemasonry?

Nope.

Then why are so many masons—smart ones, too—all about the kibbawlaux and tairough and other esoteric symbolism?

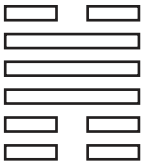
Opinions vary, but the author suspects these individuals are still in the habit of looking outside themselves for metaphysical answers. It is the same reason people want to think the pyramids were built by aliens[20], or that King Solomon's temple[21] was built by demons[22] using stones carved by trained sonic worms[23]. There is comfort in be-

lieving such ideas because it means humans could not accomplish such an act. If humans did build the pyramids or cut the stones for Solomon's front porch, then they are capable of such work which means that the individual sustaining that erroneous belief may no longer think of themselves as merely human, but as very capably human which bears some pressure. It is similar to the comfort of believing in wild conspiracy theories about government. If one's government is secretly run by an occult order of alien reptiles, then nothing one does, politically, nor the execution of their civil duties, matter which relieves them of the responsibility of being a capable citizen.

Conclusion

Esoterica is just specialized language some people believe has secret power because they want the benefits of the knowledge compressed in a symbol without the effort of understanding it. Anyone who claims to understand the secret knowledge hidden within an esoteric symbol only wishes to control any individual who has expressed interest in their ridiculous t-shirt or pentagram necklace; any individual who claims another person has that secret knowledge is already under their control.

People are gullible nitwits.



Endnotes

1 Les Mysteries des Cathdrales, Fulcanelli, 1926 edition, translation, Daniel Bernardo; page 22

2 Les Mysteries des Cathdrales, Fulcanelli, 1926 edition, translation, Daniel Bernardo; page 23

3 ibid

4 From "The Emigrants", Norton Anthology of English Literature, eighth edition, volume d, the Romantic Period, 2006, pp43

5 https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Rudolf_Steiner#Stage_1:_birth_to_age_6_or_7

6 https://drsaraheaton.wordpress.com/2012/08/04/maslows-hierarchy-of-needs/; Trigg, Andrew B. "Deriving the Engel Curve: Pierre Bourdieu and the Social Critique of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs." Review of Social Economy, vol. 62, no. 3, 2004, pp. 393–406. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/29770269. Accessed 13 Dec. 2020.

7 Taormina, R., & Gao, J. (2013). Maslow and the Motivation Hierarchy: Measuring Satisfaction of the Needs. The American Journal of Psychology, 126(2), 155-177. doi:10.5406/amerjpsyc.126.2.0155

8 The author belongs to and has founded several groups, some listed at the beginning of this paper, but perhaps most notably is his membership as Chancellor Emeritus 9=9 of the Red Guard Baptist Youth.*

*Don't look that up. Just trust me.

9 Perhaps I am judging a little.

10 Duquette has referred to the Catholic Church as one of the largest and oldest magical orders.

11 https://sebpearce.com/bullshit/

12 Which, just to make sure I don't fall into Levi-Pike bafflement, the work is to learn how to act, in every moment of your life, with love and to remember that love is the gateway to the divine.

13 This is a broad interpretation and likely to be a wild subjectivity of the author, as both psychology and many mentored, structured programs lead one through change which forces the individual to confront distressing aspects of their person, character, perceived reality, or relationships which may lead to great suffering as one grows.

14 I made this up as an example. I have no idea how the hell a Rabbi teaches the true meaning of binah, but I believe it is exceedingly practical and probably difficult and perhaps inexplicable to the student. It would be a practical lesson derived from the student's experiences, as the Rabbi interprets them, and based on the Rabbi's interpretations of the adjacent teachings, and his own personal brand of mystical wisdom. It won't work on a t-shirt.

15 "THE WORLD'S OLDEST WRITING." Archaeology 69, no. 3 (2016): 26-33. Accessed December 27, 2020. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43825139.

16 In the west. China and other Eastern countries used carved block printing much earlier, though they did not necessarily used moveable type.

17 http://umich.edu/~ece/student_projects/print_culture/literacy.html

18 "A Brief History of Literacy," University of Texas, Arlington, Sept. 9, 2015

19 Munck, Thomas: Literacy, Educational Reform and the Use of Print in Eighteenth-Century Denmark, in: European History Quarterly 34 (2004), pp. 275–303.

20 They were not.

21 Which may not have existed.

22 I mean, really?

23 I'm just gonna refer the reader to Wikipedia because, seriously, why work hard on this? https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solomon%27s_shamir



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