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Jacob Money
jmoney@bgsu.edu

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FREEMASONS: PATRONS OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT ARTS

JAKE MONEY

HONORS PROJECT

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Kara Barr: History, Advisor

David Harold: Political Science, Advisor

For modern audiences, National Treasure the 2004 film starring Nicolas Cage, was their first encounter with the historically secretive group known as the Freemasons. Admittedly, it nurtured my own desire to learn more about history in addition to kick-starting a national wave of interest in this fraternal order. To most people with a trivial interest in the topic, the Masons are a mysterious coalition of past historical figures who conspired together to weave secret symbols into tokens of an early American identity, but this brotherhood did far more than put a pyramid on the back of our currency or commission an obelisk to be built in our nation's capital. They were, and continue to be, a huge multinational organization that today boasts over 5 million members world-wide. While the hay-day of Masonry might be gone, the golden age of The Craft coincided almost directly with the age of Enlightenment. This is no coincidence; both Speculative Freemasonry and the Enlightenment shared a great many things. Ideals such as rationalism, democracy and the pursuit of knowledge were at the core of both movements and individuals such as Benjamin Franklin, Voltaire, Diderot and Mozart were not only among the most prominent Enlighteners but filled the ranks of Masonic Lodges in Europe and America.

While countless indeterminate connections can be drawn between The Craft and the great works of the Enlightenment, what was the tangible impact this discrete order had on the this monumental time period? More specifically, what role did the Masons play in the development, creation and dissemination of the fine arts? The Enlightenment was not simply a time of political and scientific advancement, but was a massively influential period of art, design and playwriting. Rich and middling classes alike flocked to see the performances orchestrated by Mozart and Haydn, thousands of painters were actively creating works of art and the number of theaters in Paris alone increased from 3 to 51 in the 18th century. Just as Freemasons played a role in sociological advancement, their not-so-invisible hand was present in the fine arts as well. This

paper will explore the Mason's influence on the popular culture of the Enlightenment era and determine how Masonic ideology worked its way into paintings, architecture and city planning, plays and opera. Additionally, it will determine the commercial viability of becoming inducted into this organization and examine how the Masons used these platforms to educate the general public, normalize Masonic and Enlightenment values, and enact changes in state policy.

Entire books have been written on the dissection on Masonic symbolism and ideology, but here a more simplified cursory examination of the main tenants and history of Speculative Freemasonry will be offered. Most scholars agree that Masonry in its modern form began in 1717 with the convergence of four lodges in London into the first Grand Lodge of England, however it is believed the order traces its roots back to a union of medieval European stone masons from as early as the 14th century. The tools of this trade remain present in Masonic rituals and imagery: "In many of the Masonic degrees, the vocabulary of architecture – Ionia capitals, trowels, rough and polished ashlar and stones – is used allegorically."¹ Blue lodges, of which the overwhelming majority of Masons remain a part of, also rely on these symbols in their induction rituals. "The first three degrees of masonry parallels the construction work of the builders of King Solomon's Temple, such that each Masonic Lodge as a miniature Temple of Solomon is essentially a "workshop" for building individual character through the figurative use of hand tools and objects associated with stone masonry: the square, compass, ruler, plumb, spade..."² Because the lion's share of Masons plateaued in rank after rising through these levels, these are the ceremonies, values and symbols most members would be familiar with. These

¹ Rich, Paul, and Marie Avila. "The Oddfellow of the Masonic Order." *Material Culture* 36, no. 2 (2004) p. 59.

² Guy L Beck. "Celestial Lodge Above: The Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem as a Religious Symbol in Freemasonry." *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 4, no. 1 (2000) p. 34

initiates went on to exhibit the themes associated with these rituals in their professional lives. “Masonic artists in London discovered the Blue Degrees [Lodges housing the first three and most common degrees of masonry]... placed stress on the orderliness of nature, and associated colors with themes from nature and concepts of morality.”³ Other medieval architectural tools and accessories such as the compass and square, gloves, aprons, and levels are also known to play a prominent role in the imagery associated with The Craft. Themes of death and rebirth, light, verbal discretion, divinity, scientific and moral progression and use of the four cardinal directions are also quite popular among Masonic works. Lastly, Masons put great emphasis on the ancient knowledge associated with past societies such as the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans, and in many ways their rituals, actions, and influence in media were dedicated to emulating these cultures.

By far the most prominent single call back to a symbol by initiated artists and architects is the Temple of King Solomon. This biblical building has a special place both in European and Enlightenment culture as a whole and Freemasonry in particular. “For the international fraternal order known as Freemasonry, the temple that was built within the earthly city of Jerusalem has been appropriated to represent symbolically the progressive moral development of humankind on earth and its fulfillment in a permanent state of perfection.”⁴ 18th century members of this organization especially fancied themselves as the fraternal descendants of ancient architectural orders. They were passionate consumers of mythology literature and required members to adhere to some form of religion. Multiple faiths noted the importance of the temple to the belief in the

³ William R. Weisberger. *Speculative Freemasonry and the Enlightenment: A Study of the Craft in London, Paris, Prague, Vienna and Philadelphia, 2d ed.* McFarland Press. Sept. 17, 2017. p. 56.

⁴ Beck, p. 29.

divine. “The Temple of Solomon was an intellectual playground for those who entertained occult notions... The measurements of the Temple invited mathematical speculations... The prophet Ezekiel’s vision of the temple implied that the building was tied up with the destiny of the world.”⁵ It was also common for Masons or their admirers to use the dimensions of measurement used by the builders of the temple, specifically the cubit. The cubit equates to a measurement of roughly 18 inches. When observing old architectural plans with oddly specific dimensions, a good way to detect a Masonic hand in the designs is to transfer the numbers into cubits. Consequently, there may be a more simple and direct reason for the Temple’s prominence in the Masonic mythos; over 4,000 stone masons were employed by King Solomon and his supposed chief architect Hiram Abiff during the construction of this monumental project. Whatever the rationale behind it, the dimensions and design of the Temple have been attempted to be replicated in everything from stately English manor houses to the city layout of colonial settlements like Savannah, Georgia.

Turning away now from the measurable aspects of Masonic imagery and ideology, the moral values of the order have remained consistent for hundreds of years and aligned closely with those that became increasingly popular in the Enlightenment. In an interview, Andrew Harma, the Worshipful Master of the Blue Lodge located in Hickory Corners Michigan, stressed the importance of a belief in god in one form or another. He further elaborated on the obligations Masons have to assist one another in times of need and asserted that the importance attributed to traditions, especially during induction rituals, has enabled the order to retain a core belief system

⁵ Monod, Paul Kléber. "The Newtonian Magi." In *Solomon's Secret Arts: The Occult in the Age of Enlightenment*, 157-88. Yale University Press, 2013. p. 161.

since its' creation.⁶ Because The Craft's doctrine has remained relatively unchanged, examples of modern Masonic ideologies can be used as a near substitute for their counterparts from the time period. A handbook written by the former Junior Grand Warden of the French National Grand Lodge in the 1970's expressly stated the most important beliefs held by initiates. "The four cardinal virtues of Freemasonry are Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice... It believes that the attainment of these objectives is best accomplished by laying a broad basis of principle upon which men everywhere may agree."⁷ Masons have never been shy about asserting their moral code and values in their work. In a literary and artistic journal published by a Masonic lodge in Vienna during the 18th century, Brother Alois Blumauer wrote: "Masonry is dedicated to the advancement of the arts, sciences and humanity... Dedicated to the advancement of virtue and wisdom, lodge members have probed Nature and attempted to apply her laws for the improvement of the state."⁸

Freemasonry of this time period was characterized by an interesting duality. The order was sometimes relegated to a cult-like status, popularized belief in the divine and encouraged mythological symbolism, but also valued rationalism and sociological advancement. Many members of the Royal Society, the English organization dedicated towards scientific progress, were inducted brothers. Likewise, many philosophes like Diderot and Voltaire were Masons and explored rational, mathematic and scientific explanations for the workings of the universe. "The scientific image of Freemasonry gave it a central place in the Enlightenment ideas of the period. Freemasonry is saturated with key enlightenment concepts such as progress, perfectibility and

⁶ Andrew, Harma. Interview. January 19, 2019.

⁷ William E. Parker *Freemasonry A Way of Life*, French National Grand Lodge, 1974.

⁸ Alois, Blumaer "Vorerinnerung," *Journal fur Freymaurer*, I (1784), Part 1, p. 3-14.

cosmopolitanism.”⁹ As we are about to see, the relationship between the Enlightenment and Freemasonry was quite extensive, so much so that even creators of popular culture from this era included Masonic imagery in their plays, buildings and paintings. The rest of this paper will consider the relevance of examples of Masonic ideological influence in visual art, architecture, and the performing arts.

Painting

Beginning with painting, there is no better individual to consider first than William Hogarth. Hogarth was a popular English artist who lived from 1697 to 1764, the prime age of Enlightenment and Masonry. Many of his works were satirical and provided a unique Masonic critique of 18th century English culture. Additionally, he was commissioned to paint portraits for the likes of John Desaguliers, Martin Folkes, and Dr. Thomas Pellet; all prominent London Freemasons and scientists. Of his two most popular series of engravings and paintings, the compilation “Harlots Progress” is believed to be a direct parallel to the first several degrees of Masonry. “Hogarth broke his Masonic vow of silence delineating several elements of that very ritual [the third degree initiation] within some of his most popular prints of all time... In this scene [*A Harlots Progress*, Scene 6, 1732] Hogarth is actually acting out the Masonic tradition of glove giving.”¹⁰ The tradition alluded to in this quote is that of a ritual in which a Mason bestows a pair of gloves to the lady “he esteems most.” In scene six of the series, an individual who can only be Hogarth himself, as the figure depicted matches his self-portraits perfectly, is

⁹ Andreas, Onnerfors. “Enlightenment Foundations” In *Freemasonry: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. P. 47

¹⁰ Jeremy John Bell. “The Freemason's Harlot: William Hogarth's “Harlot's Progress” in a Masonic Light.” *The British Art Journal* 16, no. 2 (2015): p. 42

offering his gloves to a common prostitute, fitting with Hogarth's Masonic and satirical themes. The references to Masonic rituals goes far beyond this single scene. In the first scene the Harlot's hands are the reversed image of a 1st degree masonic hand gesture and the checkered pattern famously present in many masonic lodge floor tiles is visible above the door of a shop in the background, while in the second scene the Harlots left breast is exposed; Masons take a vow not to disclose secret information lest their heart be torn out through their left breast. The third scene shows the Harlot drinking tea after just satisfying a customer. This is intentional as "several Masonic phrases date back to medieval times and one of the most used is 'from labour to refreshment at high twelve'. In scene 3, the watch held by the harlot reads that it is towards noon. The prostitute has performed her act of *labour* and now has earned a *refreshing* cup of tea."¹¹ Further Masonic imagery such as very specific hand and foot placement is exemplified in scenes four and five as well.

Not all Masonic artists were as on-the-nose with their symbolism as Hogarth. Thomas Cole, an early American painter and credited founder of the Hudson River School style of landscape painting also had imagery related to The Craft in some of his work, most notably the landscape portrait *Oxbow*. This painting showed a panorama of the Connecticut River Valley after a rainstorm. "The painting appropriated the Puritan tradition of identifying geographic locales in the new world with venerated biblical places, in this case the original wilderness/pastoral site for Solomon's Temple... Cole... also drew on the imagery he knew from Freemasonry (he had joined a Masonic Lodge in Ohio early in his career)."¹² Cole became a mason in 1822 and it is obvious he took to heart the value of symbolism when he continued to

¹¹ Bell, p. 46.

¹² David, Bjelajac. "Thomas Cole's Oxbow and the American Zion Divided." *American Art* 20, no. 1 (2006) p. 62.

paint after his induction. “The oxbow form at the center of Cole’s composition suggest the pastoral origins of Solomon’s Temple... Whether referring to a slow moving river bend or the animal yoke, the oxbow form connotes nature tamed and harnessed for human use... Solomon’s Temple was built on an oxen-powered threshing floor.”¹³ This may seem like quite the leap to make in interpreting the image, however it is professionally acknowledged that Hebrew letters can be seen on one of the tree covered hilltops in the background, giving credence to the interpretation above. “Several art historians have also contended that Hebraic letters can be perceived on the low hill that gently rises along the horizon... Upside down from the perspective of the heavenly sphere, the name ‘Shaddai’ or the ‘Almighty’ reveals itself.”¹⁴ Besides the connections to Hebrew scripture and Solomon’s Temple, the stylistic choices of the artwork also suggests an enlightened Masonic statement. The dark storm clouds over the upper left corner of the painting cover the peak of the mountain consumed by wilderness. This contrasts with the blue skies and bright light emanating from the opposite side of the painting, under which can be seen cultivated land, farms and the smoke columns rising from buildings, signifying the superiority of society and progress over untamed nature.

The story of Thomas Cole’s *Oxbow* represents another key facet of Masonic artistic influence that goes beyond simply exemplifying the fraternal orders symbolism in paintings: artistic patronage. As previously noted, advancement of knowledge as it relates to both science and the fine arts was a priority for many brothers. Just because one was not gifted with artistic ability does not prohibit a brother from doing his part to disseminate art to his fellow members and the public. In this instance, the first owner of the *Oxbow* who commissioned the painting,

¹³ Bjelajac, p. 72.

¹⁴ Bjelajac, p. 70.

Charles Talbot, was a prominent New York merchant and suspected Mason. As explained by Mr. Harma in his interview, Masons had an obligation to provide aid, most of the time financial, to distressed brothers. A struggling artist who was a mason could expect fellow members to help him network to connect with potential buyers, or even purchase paintings themselves. It is suggested that the artist and Mason James Thornhill utilized his participation in the order to get commissions from Queen Anne in 1712 to paint frescoes at Hampton Court and Greenwich Palace.¹⁵

Further artistic patronage is exemplified in the life and work of William Shiels, a wealthy Freemason and Charleston South Carolina and socialite during the American Revolution. The first masonic lodge in Charleston was founded in 1734 and was part of the emerging pattern of Masons fostering artistic efforts across the colonies. “Freemasonry in the United States was very widespread and well organized, with social interplay allowing potential patrons and artists to ‘meet on equal terms’ as ‘Brothers.’”¹⁶ After the founding of the United States, Shiels rose in prominence, and relied heavily on his Masonic connections to get by. “Certainly being a freemason must have benefited Shiels greatly in terms of introductions, commissions and philanthropy in times of difficulty.”¹⁷ Joel Robert Poinsett, a Freemason, was the first president of the South Carolina Academy of Fine Arts and none other than Shiels was one of six founding directors. Originally the program focused on aristocratic involvement in the arts of Charleston, but partially due to the efforts of Shiels, the academy opened up more to the general public. For a

¹⁵ Weisberger, p. 82

¹⁶Fiona V Salvesen Murrel. "A Paradise of Riches!: The Contribution of William Shiels (1783-1857) to the Arts in Charleston, 1819-1824." *The British Art Journal* 14, no. 2 (2013) p. 5.

¹⁷ Murrel, p. 5

one-time payment of \$20 any artist could join the academy and present their paintings, sketches and sculptures.

These patronage practices were not limited to the newly born United States. The Lodge of the Nine Sisters, the most prominent Masonic lodge in Paris in the latter half of the 18th century, also perpetuated art sales for fellow masons. Benjamin Franklin actually served as Grand Master of this lodge during his extended stay in France during and after the revolution, and he personally organized several exhibitions of art for the lodge. “The activities of August 16, 1779 revolved around literature and the fine arts. [Jean-Baptiste] Greuze and [Jean-Antoine] Houdon arranged an impressive display for this session. Greuze showed his recent paintings of French villages and his portraits of eminent Frenchmen, and Houdon exhibited his busts of Franklin, La Dixmerie and other lodge members.”¹⁸ Both of the artists mentioned in this excerpt were members of the order and Houdon would later be commissioned to do a full body sculpture of George Washington. In some ways, the devotion of masons to knowledge and scholarship led them to influence art more through patronage than actual symbolism and imagery in paintings. It was wise for painters to join the order, or at least have a knowledge of masonic ideology and symbolism, to get their paintings presented at these exhibits and into the eyes of the public.

One last aside while on the topic of art, applying some of the considerations above one could speculate that the famous Dutch artist Rembrandt Harmenszoon was a Freemason. At face value, this may seem like a dubious claim as Rembrandt died in 1669, significantly before the reorganization of Masonry in 1717 that brought it to the forefront of the Enlightenment. However, Masonry did exist before the foundation of the Grand Lodges of European nations and

¹⁸ Weisberger, p. 93.

there are multiple facets of his work and life that could potentially hint at a Masonic connection. One thing to consider is his signature. “Rembrandt repeatedly added a beautifully rendered letter ‘f’ after signing his name. Scholars have interpreted this to mean ‘fecit’ or ‘made by.’ A master of multiple meanings, Rembrandt may have enjoyed the potential of this letter to also evoke the word ‘frater’ or ‘brother... Albert C. Mackey, in his *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and its Kindred Sciences*, recorded... A Masonic abbreviation is distinguished by three points... in a triangular form following the letter.”¹⁹ Many of Rembrandt’s paintings, especially later in his career, exhibited this ‘f’ along with the three dots. Often times when there was stone in the painting he would place his signature on the stone face. The use of light and darkness were popular themes in his works, and as previously observed light also plays an important role in Masonic rituals. “light is of great importance in Masonic rituals. It represents the divine truth and is believed to be a guiding principle that points the way for one’s life pilgrimage.”²⁰ Rembrandt’s use of light is exemplified in “The Three Trees,” an engraving he finished in 1643 that can be seen on the database of the Toledo Museum of Art.²¹ The image shows a group of three trees standing together on a hill overlooking a stream. The skyline of a town can be seen in the background beneath a rainstorm, and clouds cover most of the top half of the picture, apart from the area around the three trees which seems to radiate light. According to the interview with Mr. Harma, all lodges must have pillars and three lights, oriented in a very specific fashion.²² The connection between this staple of Masonic lodges and the three trees which stand out against the

¹⁹ Zhenya, Gershman. “Rembrandt: Turn of the Key” *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics*. Vol 21, No. 3 (Winter 2014): p. 82.

²⁰ Gershman, p. 84.

²¹ Rembrandt, Harmenszoon. “The Three Trees” engraving, completed 1643.
<http://emuseum.toledomuseum.org/objects/47259>

²² Andrew Harma. Interview. January 19, 2019

darkness of the rest of the image could be interpreted to be a callback to these same pillars and the light of truth and knowledge as revered by members of the order. Masons are greatly concerned with self-improvement and between 1627 and 1631 Rembrandt drew or painted himself in a self-portrait over 20 times, and when renovations were conducted on his home in Leiden the improvements included a new façade with a triangular pediment, “a pediment including an oculus in the center is strongly evocative of Masonic architectural design. The delta triangle, which masons greatly revere, is a symbol of Freemasonry adopted from the Egyptians. Among its many profound meanings, it represents the presence of God as the Great Architect.”²³ Rembrandt was also thought to be deeply religious, and the patronage practices explained earlier could likewise explain how the 9th born son of a miller and baker was discovered by the famous Dutch statesmen Constantijn Huygens and commissioned to paint for the court of The Hague. We may never know whether Rembrandt was an inducted Freemason, but using aspects of Masonry described in this paper, the exciting speculation as to his participation in the society can be conducted intelligently.

The Performing Arts

The next medium utilized by Masons to express their messages to the public was the performing arts; plays and opera. Far and away the most notable Mason involved in these forms of expression was Mozart, and his opera *The Magic Flute* which debuted just months before his death was undoubtedly the most direct reference to Masonry put forth by the great composer. In many ways the opera is indicative of the Mason’s and Enlightener’s interest in live entertainment. “*The Magic Flute*, a product of the late century German enlightenment

²³ Gershman, p. 100.

exemplifies... an attempt to instruct the audience in ethical matters through the vehicle of entertainment.”²⁴ Education is a central theme of the opera and Masonry as well. “Ignaz von Born affirms that the mission of Masonry is to combat ignorance and foolishness. In *The Magic Flute* three boys sing that the “Wise Man” will triumph over superstition... *The Magic Flute* puts forward the thesis that society can be morally regenerated by educating humanity, a common late German Enlightenment theme.”²⁵ When one examines the acts of the opera, it is obvious why so many scholars can make the connections between this work and Freemasonry. In this performance, a prince is tasked with rescuing a princess from a corrupt priest, however both the prince and princess learn of the high moral ideals of the priests’ order and seek to join it, uncovering the lies told to them by the established monarchy. The first scene opens with a biblical motif, the prince fleeing a cunning snake. The piece is set in Egypt, a place we know Masons to revere, and the idea of self-control is prevalent here and in the rituals from the Blue Degrees. The main character of the opera, Tamino, lies and has his mouth locked shut. Before Tamino is accepted into the temple order he wishes to join, he must demonstrate greater discretion. “If only all liars would get such a padlock in front of their mouth! Instead of hatred, slander, black temper, Love and Brotherhood would endure!”²⁶ This tie to verbal discretion is evidenced by the Masons overall secrecy about their goings on and the oaths members take not to disclose the inner workings of their rituals and meetings.

While *The Magic Flute* may be the most well-known example of The Craft’s values expressed in the performing arts, in no way was this trend limited to Mozart or German opera

²⁴ Paul E. Kerry ""Initiates of Isis Now, Come, Enter into the Temple!": Masonic and Enlightenment Thought in "The Magic Flute"." *Brigham Young University Studies* 43, no. 3 (2004): p. 106.

²⁵ Kerry, p. 110

²⁶ “The Magic Flute” – script translation. Stanford University, 16 October, 2005. Tamino p. 28.
<http://opera.stanford.edu/Mozart/Zauberflote/>

alone. Carlo Goldoni was a Venetian playwright famous for his use of humor and dramatization of the newly emerging middle class. He was also suspected of having joined a Masonic Lodge in Bologna and one play of his in particular, *Donne Curiose* is believed to have distinct references to the order. In this performance two wives gossip and speculate as to the goings on of their husbands 'mysterious club' from which they are prohibited to join. Until very recently, there were no popular subsets of Speculative Masonry which allowed women to be inducted or participate in official lodge activities. "The cumulative affect... of the philo-Masonic message of the *Donne Curiose* have induced some of the critics to enroll... Goldoni in the ranks of the Masons... or else because he was under the influence of Masonic friends."²⁷

Still, there are others associated with The Craft who were simultaneously major players in the European performing arts industry. John Heidegger, a confirmed brother, was the owner of the Haymarket Theatre in London and director of the Royal Academy of Music. Jean-Francois Cailhava was a popular French playwright and member of the Nine Sisters Lodge that Benjamin Franklin participated in. "Cailhava... was a playwright and member of the *Academie Francaise*... Masonic dramatists realized that scenes from their plays could be staged during local lodge assemblies."²⁸ This normalized the public's acceptance of Masonry as more of a common social club rather than a secretive international order. Paul Anton II, one of a line of rulers with the title Count of Esterhazy was an Austrian nobleman. He was inducted into the Masons in 1733 and was both a highly active member of the order and responsible for advancing the career of, then little known composer, Joseph Haydn. Tobias Gebler, the writer and Enlightenment served as the Steward of the Austrian Provincial Grand Lodge in Vienna and used

²⁷ Piero Del Negro. "Carlo Goldoni and Venetian Freemasonry." *Italica* 80, no. 2 (2003): p. 169.

²⁸ Weisberger, p. 89.

his plays to perpetuate ideas important to both groups. “[Gebler] referred in his works to Enlightenment ideas. In the Play ‘Der Minister,’ published in 1771, Gebler attacks some administrative officials of the crown for their abusive and corrupt practices.”²⁹ Masons with a skill for writing plays and conducting symphonies and opera wove their way into organizations disseminating the performing arts to audiences across Europe, and used this platform to state the ideals and aims of the order, which often times aligned with those of other non-inducted Enlighteners.

One other example of performances addressing Masons specifically can be seen in the trio of plays written by Catherine the Great, ruler of Russia from 1762 to 1796. She is remembered as a supporter of Russian modernization and participation in the Enlightenment. While Catherine was initially approving of both Masonry and the Enlightenment, seeing both as an avenue to bring Russia into the sphere of influence of more culturally advanced western European nations, she soured on the influence of the Masons. Nikolay Novikov was a writer who was very much representative of the majority of Russian Enlighteners. He enjoyed a close relationship with Catherine the Great who initially supported his efforts to educate the masses and revise the legal code. However, after the French Revolution began, his relationship with Catherine deteriorated, partially because of his participation in Masonry. “Novikov was a prolific writer and editor of several satirical journals; by 1792 he had been arrested and imprisoned by Catherine. Her changing attitude toward him and his literary endeavors was a direct result of his increasing involvement in freemasonry... The trilogy was her means of publicly exposing... the philosophical and social shortcomings of her primary target: Freemasonry.”³⁰ The international

²⁹ Weisberger, p. 124.

³⁰ Lurana D O’Malley. "The Monarch and the Mystic: Catherine the Great's Strategy of Audience Enlightenment in The Siberian Shaman." *The Slavic and East European Journal* 41, no. 2 (1997): p. 226.

reach of the order was seen as a threat to what Catherine perceived to be the already weakening legitimacy of monarchical rule. She could not afford to have an organization with ties to the revolutionaries in France and America weakening her claims to rule, even at the expense of a less vibrant Russian Enlightenment.

When determining how to best discredit The Craft, she turned to theater. In one play, a character depicted as a medicine man from Siberia comes to live with a traditional Russian family and spouts off nonsensical phrases that were intended to be indicative of Novikov and his beliefs. The shaman ends the play barking wildly and supposedly losing his mind. “The comedy *The Siberian Shaman* can be seen as the last installment in the trilogies critique of Novikov and his Masonic circle. The shaman himself is another parody of Novikov... who sponsored a range of inquiry outside the bounds of Catherine the Great's version of the Enlightenment. From Catherine's perspective, his Masonic ideas were just as nonsensical as a dog barking; like the shaman, Novikov was capable of entrancing the people – her people – through his strange ideas.”³¹ Some historians dispute the true meaning of *The Siberian Shaman* and other plays written by Catherine the Great. However, the fact that the ruler of Russia felt threatened by Masonry and sought to combat its ideals by utilizing theater, speaks to the powerful influence plays had on the citizens of Europe and likewise the influence the brotherhood had on the performances of the era. This was a case of the Empress of Russia fighting ideological fire with fire.

³¹ O'Malley, p. 239.

Architecture / City Planning

Turning finally to architecture and city planning, it was common practice for Masons to leave “calling cards” to the craft in their work; Sir John Soane is one example of this. Soane was an affluent architect during the tail end of the English Enlightenment and although he wasn’t inducted into Masonry until 1813, many of his works later in life exhibited uniquely Masonic traits. He rose through the ranks quickly and was eventually commissioned to design the updated London Masonic Hall and other projects for the brotherhood, including a ceremonial ark to be used in lodge rituals. “Soane’s ark bore no resemblance to the conventional biblical ark... It was four feet three inches high... it was triangular with a column at each corner... it was formally similar to the triangular Simeon monument which he built... More significantly, Soane’s ark is close to the curious pedestals, triangular with domed finials, which feature in his Pitt Cenotaph at the National Debt Redemption Office.”³² The fact that Soane copied his blueprints for a Masonic ritual tool in his design for a monument commissioned by the National Debt Redemption Office exemplifies a trend of architects practically screaming for acknowledgement of their participation on the fraternity. Another likely reason architects were so closely tied to Freemasonry is because of the values and rituals learned by initiated members. “Masons... learned about the walls, porches, arches and Doric and Ionic columns in buildings erected in the Augustan style... London Masons revealed interest in classical architecture... Some masonic aristocrats also hired architects to build their London and residential mansions... these mansions... had domes, Doric columns, large porches, gardens, obelisks and villas.”³³

³² David, Watkin. "Freemasonry and Sir John Soane." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 54, no. 4 (1995): p. 407.

³³ Weisberger, p. 56.

It was very popular for Masons, who could afford it, to model their estates and homes after prominent tokens of The Craft. As is no surprise, a major theme visible in these estates is the connection to the Temple of Solomon. Thomas Coke, the Earl of Leicester sporadically attended London Grand Lodge meetings during the mid-18th century and hired William Kent to assist him in building his prominent home: Holkham Hall. “His career [William Kent] as an architectural designer burgeoned in the early 1730’s and especially after his 1735 promotion to Master Mason.”³⁴ Construction on the house began in 1734. While it is acknowledged that Coke’s Masonic fervor was mild to say the least, it was still highly fashionable for well to do socialites to hijack themes from buildings with Masonic and antiquity value when designing projects. “Key dimensions at Holkham simultaneously reflect Freemasonic ideas and that Lord Leicester intended the marble hall, in particular, to be a physical recreation of the Tabernacle of Solomon's Temple.”³⁵ All main entrances of the estate faced south, and the north wall was conspicuously devoid of ornamentation. This conforms to the Masonic practice of consistently designing lodge ritual rooms without seating, and preferably without windows, on the north side of the room. Additionally, the main hall through the primary entrance measures 34.8 feet square, strikingly close to the 34.5 feet that would equate to a dimension of 20 square cubits, the measurement previously noted to be used by the builders of Solomon’s Temple. Further connections to the Temple could be drawn by the unique designs of the columns present both inside and outside the building. Curiously, even buildings with no direct connection to Speculative Freemasonry have been known to emulate these types of designs. For instance, Stirling Castle in Scotland was renovated in 1594 for the baptism of Prince Henry, heir to King

³⁴ Frank, Salmon "'Our Great Master Kent' and the Design of Holkham Hall: A Reassessment." *Architectural History* 56 (2013): p. 71.

³⁵ Salmon, p. 83.

James the VI of Scotland. A new chapel was constructed on the edge of the courtyard for the occasion. "The internal dimensions of the chapel match those given for the Temple in the Bible and the form of the windows has Solomonic associations... the chapel was a conscious attempt to build a 'copy' of the Temple, not only in its dimensions but also in several of its architectural features."³⁶ While no members of the royal family partaking in this baptism had a tangible connection to Masonry, it is interesting that in addition to the similarities between the chapel and Temple of Solomon, the north wall of the renovated building was distinctly bare of windows and seats, and the Kings seat was placed in the northeast corner of the building, the corner always reserved for the foundational corner stone of Masonic Lodges.

By no means were Masonic influences in design limited to stand alone buildings and monuments. Entire parks and even cities were laid out with the attention to detail attributed to the international order. One such example of this is the Monceau Garden in Paris. The sprawling complex today is well inside the city limits of Paris, but at the time of its creation, was located outside the capital. Originally built for Louis-Philippe-Joseph d'Orleans, a wealthy Parisian, Mason and Duke of Chartres, the garden was designed by Louis Carrogis Carmontelle, a well-known writer and painter. Carmontelle was also the coordinator of personal entertainments for d'Orleans, thus whether he was a mason or not, he was familiar with their practices. For some time the garden even acted as a private masonic lodge site in contrast to the primary lodge which was located in bustling downtown Paris. "Monceau it would seem, was fashioned... as an emblem [for masonry]... centered upon a major but often overlooked feature of its design, the

³⁶ Ian Campbell and Mackechnie, Aonghus. "The 'Great Temple of Solomon' at Stirling Castle." *Architectural History* 54 (2011): p. 91.

Geometric Garden.”³⁷ While ancient looking sculptures and monuments such as pyramids, obelisks and a “temple of mars” populate the area, hearkening back to the Egyptian and Roman civilizations revered by the Masons, the key to the Masonic influence in the gardens’ design is the aforementioned geometric garden. The garden split into three parts with different numbers and colors of hexagonal flowerbeds representing the three different administrative chambers of the Grand Lodge in Paris, with a sculpture of Hymen, the antiquated perception of marriage built in the center, thus bringing together the chambers in harmony. “The notion that Freemasonry has provided a key referent for the development of Monceau... is suggested by the fact that that the patron of Monceau, the duc de Chartres, served as Grand Master of the French Freemasons.”³⁸

Although the Duke of Chartres was elected as Grand Master to the Parisian Lodge in 1771, admittedly he was not a heartily devoted mason but rather used the organization to increase his sociability. In many ways, the vote was a social and political move to bring increased legitimacy to the still developing order. This actually makes it more likely, in my opinion, that the garden designed under the Duke’s name should contain references to Freemasonry. The Masons wanted the Duke’s role in the order to be as public as possible, thus it follows that the next major project he funded ought to contain visible endorsements of the values of The Craft.

As previously stated, entire cities have been designed under the influence of Mason proprietors, and this holds true for the city of Savannah Georgia. “Indeed it might be suggested that early eighteenth century reconstructions of Solomon’s Temple in Jerusalem were influential for Oglethorpe’s plan of Savannah. John Senex’s 1725 high aerial view of the Temple complex

³⁷ David, Hays. "Carmontelle's Design for the Jardin De Monceau: A Freemasonic Garden in Late-Eighteenth-Century France." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32, no. 4 (1999): p. 450

³⁸ Hays, p. 449.

shows a grid of courtyards that is not unlike the overall pattern of Savannahs squares.”³⁹ Yes, again the Temple of Solomon is a contributing factor to another form of design. The colony of Georgia was the brainchild of James Oglethorpe, a former soldier and Member of Parliament. It was intended to be a secular utopia, as well as a place for English debtors to make a new life in addition to serving as a military barrier to Spanish territory in Florida. At first glance it appears odd that a secular effort would include a biblical design into the city plan, however “The apparent dichotomy between secular intentions and religious sources can perhaps be reconciled through associations with... the speculative Freemasons.”⁴⁰ There is documentation that will be examined later which prove London Freemasons endorsed the idea of the Georgia settlement.

The evidence of a Masonic hand in the city design can be seen primarily through the dimensions of the three different sizes of avenues directing traffic through the city center. All the roadways were 75, 37.5, or 22.5 feet wide respectively. These odd dimensions, when translated to cubits, come out at a clean 50, 25 and 15 cubits. This is no accident, and the similarities between the city squares and courtyards of Solomon’s Temple mentioned in the quote above further tie the two together. Additional evidence for this relationship can be identified in Oglethorpe’s efforts in founding the first Masonic Lodge in Georgia, aptly named the Solomon’s Lodge, in 1734.

Furthermore, the fact that the city was intended to be a bastion against the Catholic Spanish to the south also implicates the support of the Masons. “Masonic opposition to the Roman Catholic Church and its colonial minions, the Jesuits, found fruit in the other impetus

³⁹ Mark, Reinberger. "Oglethorpe's Plan of Savannah: Urban Design, Speculative Freemasonry, and Enlightenment Charity." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 81, no. 4 (1997): p. 854.

⁴⁰ Reinberger, p. 855.

behind Georgia, that of defending the English Colonies against the Spanish.”⁴¹ Although Masons required adherence to some form of religion to enter their order, very few members were Catholic, mostly due to the animosity which persisted between the two bodies. Eight different Popes have written condemnations of Freemasonry. Masons felt all religions are of equal worth, but the church hated this idea as they were in a perpetual battle with protestant’s for the hearts and minds of the public.

Turning now to other sources, a popular theory advanced by multiple modern day writers is that the design of Washington D.C. was specifically intended to mirror Masonic instruments through the street design. This has been mostly dismissed by scholars as there is little evidence that this was the intention, however one example of a confirmed instance of this practice can be observed no more than one hour away from the campus of Bowling Green State University. The city of Sandusky, Ohio, not only has a Masonic monument at the center of town, but some of the streets which remain from the original grid help to create the image of a compass and square.⁴² City planner Hector Kilbourn implemented the design when development on the preexisting town of Portland was began in 1818. The resulting layout of the modern day city of Sandusky serves a reminder, even closer to home than Savannah Georgia, of the prominence Masons played in American society and how they impacted the design of places and objects we see every day.

⁴¹ Reinberger, p. 862.

⁴²Tom, Jackson. “Authors Freemason fascination puts Sandusky on the map.” *Sandusky Register*. December 2, 2010.

Analysis

Now that the influence of the Masons has been catalogued in each of these extensive fields, what does it all mean? Why does it matter that Mozart worked masonic motifs into his final opera? What is the significance of William Hogarth's 'Easter eggs' in *Harlots Progress*? What, if any, changes occurred due to Savannah Georgia's layout being an attempted copy of the design of Solomon's Temple? What evidence do we have of these art forms enacting tangible change? For one thing, these examples show that it was commercially viable to become an inducted member of the order, or at the minimum display imagery friendly towards The Craft. As discussed when covering Thomas Cole, Freemasons could expect financial help from their brothers when they were economically distressed. For such a hit-or-miss type of career as painting or playwriting, this was extremely beneficial. In many of the examples highlighted previously in this paper, be it Thomas Cole, Joseph Haydn, or William Kent, Freemasons played a direct role in providing these individuals opportunities to get their work onto the market. "For financially strapped itinerants like Cole, Lodge members could be expected to commission paintings, lend money and assistance, and provide helpful personal references."⁴³ Masonic Lodges served as staging areas for the enactment of plays, exhibition of works of art and connected working architects with wealthy landowners seeking designers of above average quality. "London Lodges, in practically all cases, functioned either in coffeehouses or in taverns and depended upon many activities sponsored by these institutions to enhance the appeal of Masonry... lodges served beverages and meals... sponsored concerts, artistic displays and lectures about various topics."⁴⁴ The fact that Catherine the Great chose to rebut masonic ideals

⁴³ Bjelajac, p. 71.

⁴⁴ Weisberger, p. 38

in the form of a play speaks to how wide spread the influence of Masons in the performing arts was, and how wide of an audience this medium reached. One source defines pop culture as: “at its most basic level, popular culture is a collection of ideas, values, actions, goods and services that can be bought and sold to the mainstream masses.”⁴⁵ Popular culture, which is what the paintings, plays and buildings mentioned earlier essentially are, is inherently marketable. Joining any group that provides increased access to markets, or at least being in their good graces by normalizing their culture, is a financially wise decision, which is why many artists became members. Perhaps the best source which exemplifies the lengths Masons were willing to go to support their brothers in need comes from the minutes covering the deliberations of the Grand Lodge in London.

“Then the Deputy Grand Master opened to the Lodge the Affairs of Planting the new Colony of Georgia in America, and having sent an account in print of the nature of such plantation to all the Lodges, and informed the Grand Lodge that the Trustees had to Nathaniel Blackerby, Esq. and to himself commission under their common-seal to collect the charity of this society towards enabling Trustees to send distressed bretheren to Georgia where they may be comfortably provided for.

Proposed that it be strenuously recommended by the Masters and Wardens of regular Lodges to make a generous collection amongst all their members for that purpose.”⁴⁶

The willingness of Masons to fund the creation of a transatlantic colony, militarily vulnerable to attacks by the hostile Spanish, speaks to the level of commitment that persisted in the order to provide financially for members in need. Tapping in to this fiscal loyalty should have been an easy decision for any Enlightenment era artisan.

⁴⁵ “Examining Popular Culture and Society.” ASU Now: Access, Excellence, Impact. July 09, 2018. accessed March 25, 2019.

⁴⁶ The minutes of the Grand Lodge of Freemasons of England, 1723-1739 in *Quatuer Coronatorum Antigrapha Masonic Reprints*, Vol. 10 (London, 1913), 235.

The other measurable influence of the Masonic prevalence in these forms of media was the normalization of the converging ideals of both Freemasons and Enlighteners. “It [Freemasonry] was also the forum for a quasi-democratic male sociability that brought members of the aristocracy and gentry together with representatives of the middling sort. It imparted the values of politeness, civility and religious tolerance. It provided a network of patronage by which artists and high end craftsmen could establish links with potential customers.”⁴⁷ Many of the participants in the salon of Madame Helvetius continued discussions of the arts, rationalism and philosophy at their following Masonic lodge meetings. The championing of democracy was one of the common threads between Masons and Enlightenmenters. “The federalism created by the [U.S.] Constitution reproduces the organization of the Grand Lodge system of Masonic government—the subordinate lodges have control on local affairs under a set of by-laws of their own adoption, while the Grand Lodge manages the general affairs of the order.”⁴⁸ The fledgling examples of democracy in the body of voting on leaders and motions in lodges was solid form of practice for many members who were also part of the bureaucracy of Western Europe and America. “Most recent work acknowledges the effects on their audiences of ideological coercion produced by the thoroughly commercialized sector of popular entertainment...”⁴⁹ The artistic activities sponsored by these lodges also normalized the ideals nearest and dearest to Masons and other Enlightenmenters. The end result of the Enlightenment, and the expansion of Masonry during this time, is even claimed to be the foundation of the United States. “During assemblies and

⁴⁷ Monod, p. 180.

⁴⁸ Madalina, Calance. “Jacobs Ladder: Reason, Liberty and Science. The Contribution of Freemasonry to the Enlightenment.” *Human and Social Studies* 3, no. 2 (2014): 111-36.

⁴⁹ Ulla, Haselstein and Berndt Ostendorf, and Peter Schneck. “Popular Culture: Introduction.” *Amerikastudien / American Studies* 46, no. 3 (2001): 331-38.

banquets of the Nine Sisters, members behaved as masonic enlighteners; they performed scientific experiments, suggested state reform proposals... saw new works of art and sculpture... the lodge succeeded in promoting educational institutions and in supporting groups which favored the cause of the American Revolution.”⁵⁰

If the American, and following French Revolutions were a direct result of the dissemination of Enlightenment ideology to the masses, any group that participated in the popularization of these themes in media deserves some credit for their occurrence. This is exactly what the Masons did in the works of art listed above. “Michel-René Hilliard... during a lodge feast on May 1780... gave a lecture about the contributions of Franklin and Washington to the American Revolution and maintained that these two Masons had activated the principles of the Enlightenment and those of the Craft.”⁵¹ In the same breath that Parisian Masons were encouraging interest in the artistic work of members of the Nine Sisters, they were calling for American independence from England. I believe it is no coincidence that Benjamin Franklin was elected Grand Master of the Lodge in 1779 during his mission to obtain French support for the revolution. He used every tool at his disposal, including his role in the order and their influence on artistic culture, to garner support for the war against Britain.

The role Freemasonry played in the Enlightenment as a whole, and the development of Enlightenment culture through the arts in particular, is quite extensive. Countless painters, sculptors, playwrights, operatic composers and architects were members of this international fraternal body. Together, they championed the ideals that represented a century of socio-political

⁵⁰ Weisberger, p.111

⁵¹ Weisberger, p. 94

advancement, aided the founding of the United States and encouraged state reform throughout Europe. But for all the change they enacted around the world, one thing that did not change, and has not changed since the founding of the first Grand Lodge in London two hundred and two years ago, is that Masons look out for one another. Many of the famous artisans mentioned in this paper would not hold the place they do in history were it not for the helping hand offered by their brothers. Absent the financial and marketable assistance provided by Speculative Freemasonry, we might not have the likes of Haydn, Cole, or potentially Rembrandt. While this assistance may equate to nepotism to some people, and the not-so-subtle encouragement of revolution against established governing bodies might give credence to the claims that Masons operate in dark back rooms to manipulate the international status quo, I do not believe that is the case. At the end of the day, the Masons of the Enlightenment Era were members of an order that fostered creativity, self-development and fraternal love amongst men of varying social classes. They were willing to dig into their pockets to aid brothers in times of crisis, but more than just good Samaritans, this research has shown me that above all, the Freemasons were true patrons of the arts.

Annotated Bibliography

Beck, Guy L. "Celestial Lodge Above: The Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem as a Religious Symbol in Freemasonry." *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 4, no. 1 (2000): 28-51

This journal article dives into the importance of King Solomon's Temple, not just to the mythos of Freemasonry but to Western Society and the Enlightenment as a whole. The emulation of the "perfect" architectural design of the temple was not solely perpetuated by the Masons, nor was it a new trend during this stage of the Enlightenment. However, the Temple of Solomon is one of the most important symbols to the fraternal order and parallels between this structure can be a calling card of a subtle Masonic hand in both architectural and city layout designs.

"For the international fraternal order known as Freemasonry, the temple that was built within the earthly city of Jerusalem has been appropriated to represent symbolically the progressive moral development of humankind on earth and its fulfillment in a permanent state of perfection." – p. 29

Bell, Jeremy John. "The Freemason's Harlot: William Hogarth's "Harlot's Progress" in a Masonic Light." *The British Art Journal* 16, no. 2 (2015): 42-49.

Jeremy John Bell breaks down one of William Hogarth's, an active freemason beginning in the 1720's, most prominent collections of art. In "Harlots Progress," a group of paintings made up of six different scenes, Hogarth depicts masonic imagery related to the 'blue degrees' of Freemasonry. Each of these degrees were among the first three ranks initiated masons could achieve, and Hogarth inserts freemason symbolism, hand gestures, and hints towards the initiation ceremonies in each of these successive scenes.

"Hogarth broke his Masonic vow of silence delineating several elements of that very ritual [the third degree initiation] within some of his most popular prints of all time... In this scene [*A Harlots Progress*, Scene 6, 1732] Hogarth is actually acting out the Masonic tradition of glove giving." – p. 42

Bjelajac, David. "Thomas Cole's Oxbow and the American Zion Divided." *American Art* 20, no. 1 (2006): 60-83.

This article in the *American Art* journal analyzes the *Oxbow*, a painting created by Thomas Cole in the early 1800's. The painting is thought to have distinct Masonic imagery and influence, which becomes all the more plausible when the lives of Cole and the first owner of the painting, Charles N. Talbot, are examined. Cole joined a lodge as a young painter and it is believed that Talbot was an initiated brother as well. There are direct parallels between the setting of the landscape portrait and the location of Solomon's Temple, and a Hebrew inscription is believed to be embedded into the face of a hill in the background.

"The painting appropriated the Puritan tradition of identifying geographic locales in the new world with venerated biblical places, in this case the original wilderness/ pastoral site for Solomon's Temple... [Thomas] Cole... also drew on the imagery he knew from Freemasonry (he had joined a Masonic Lodge in Ohio early in his career)." – p. 62

Blumauer, Alois. "Vorerinnerung," *Journal fur Freymaurer*, I (1784), Part 1, p. 3-14.

Alois Blumauer was a Freemason inducted into the True Harmony Lodge in Vienna, Austria. He was an active Mason, poet, and published a popular academic and literary journal on behalf of his lodge during the 1780's and 1790's. It serves as just one example of how Masons perpetuated higher learning in the arts and sciences not only among their own members but the general public as well.

"Masonry is dedicated to the advancement of the arts, sciences and humanity... Dedicated to the advancement of virtue and wisdom, lodge members have probed Nature and attempted to apply her laws for the improvement of the state."

Calance, Madalina. "Jacobs Ladder: Reason, Liberty and Science. The Contribution of Freemasonry to the Enlightenment." *Human and Social Studies* 3, no. 2 (2014): 111-36.

The published entry by Calance considers the prevalence of Freemasonry to the establishment of the modern world we know today. While she focuses more on the economics, politics and religion permeated by the brotherhood, she does establish the interconnectedness of Freemason ideals and the American Revolution and subsequent new world power. This connection, coupled by the fact that many founding fathers were initiated brothers, makes it impossible to depict many of the events of the era without a nod to the organization that fostered the creation of America.

"The federalism created by the Constitution reproduces the organization of the Grand Lodge system of Masonic government- the subordinate lodges have control on local affairs under a set of by-laws of their own adoption, while the Grand Lodge manages the general affairs of the order." – p. 122

Campbell, Ian and Aonghus, Mackechnie. "The 'Great Temple of Solomon' at Stirling Castle." *Architectural History* 54 (2011): 91-118.

This is a comprehensive analysis of Sterling Castle, a medieval structure built in 16th century Scotland. There have been multiple renovations of the castle, most notably the addition of a chapel, built for the baptism of Prince Henry, heir to the throne of King James the IV of Scotland. While the construction of both the castle and the chapel predates the mainstream activity of the Masons, the Temple of King Solomon was still an influence on the architectural design of the structure. This speaks to its prevalence in European society and possible promotes the idea that Masons tapped into popular mythos when crafting their ideology.

"The internal dimensions of the chapel match those given for the Temple in the Bible and form of the windows has Solomonic associations... the chapel was a conscious attempt to build a 'copy' of the Temple, not only in its dimensions but also in several of its architectural features." – p. 91

Collections – Toledo Museum of Art. Accessed March 22, 2019.

<http://emuseum.toledomuseum.org/collections>

This is the collections page at the Toledo Museum of Art. It is from this source that "The Rakes Progress" by Hogarth and "The Three Trees" by Rembrandt can be viewed. Each of these pieces of art was given a dimensional explanation and brief description of the painting / sketch depicted.

“Examining Popular Culture and Society.” ASU Now: Access, Excellence, Impact. July 09, 2018. accessed March 25, 2019.

This article on the Arizona State pop culture database offers an overall definition of popular culture. It further outlines the impact popular media has on the zeitgeist of a state and draws connections between the topics covered in these forms of media and the underlying desires and fears of a society. This can be applied to the popular media of the Enlightenment as discussed in this paper.

“At its most basic level, popular culture is a collection of ideas, values, actions, goods and services that can be bought and sold to the mainstream masses.”

Gershman, Zhenya. “Rembrandt: Turn of the Key” *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics*. Vol 21, No. 3 (Winter 2014): 79-108.

Gershman makes what some accuse of being a rash claim, but in reality is a well-researched assertion in claiming that the great Dutch artist Rembrandt was likely a member of the Freemasons. She arrives at this conclusion through several avenues of analysis, including his signature, themes of his paintings, use of light and dark contrasts, his tendency to do self-portraits and potential symbolism left during renovations of his home. The most noteworthy of these examples is the artists’ signature, which in many paintings appears on slabs of stone or columns, the connection of which to masonry is obvious. Rembrandt also commonly signs an “f” and three dots in a triangular pattern after his name, which was a typical practice on official masonic documents. If Rembrandt was indeed a Mason, he would be one of the earliest enlightenment artists who was a member of the order.

“Rembrandt repeatedly added a beautifully rendered letter “f” after signing his name. Scholars have interpreted this to mean “fecit” or “made by.” A master of multiple meanings, Rembrandt may have enjoyed the potential of this letter to also evoke the word “frater” or “brother.” – p. 82

Harma, Andrew. Interview. January 19, 2019.

Andrew Harma is the father of a close family friend of mine. He is the worshipful master, which is essentially the president, of the Hickory Corners Blue Masonic Lodge in Barry County Michigan. While I did not record the conversation for direct quotes, I took notes on several questions I asked of him as he gave me a tour of the lodge facilities. He gave me a first-hand look at the main chamber where lodge induction rituals are held and provided insight into some of the question I had concerning Masonic nepotism and basic ideology.

Haselstein, Ulla, Berndt Ostendorf, and Peter Schneck. "Popular Culture: Introduction." *Amerikastudien / American Studies* 46, no. 3 (2001): 331-38.

This article offers some insight into the role popular media has on a society. Specifically, how the general public is susceptible to ideological change due to the perversions of the media they consume. Applied to the popular media of the Enlightenment, i.e. paintings, plays, operas and architecture, it helps explain how the Masonic influence in these forms of art consumed by the European and American public perpetuated both Enlightenment and Masonic ideals.

“most recent work acknowledges the effects on their audiences of ideological coercion produced by the thoroughly commercialized sector of popular entertainment...” – p. 333

Hays, David. "Carmontelle's Design for the Jardin De Monceau: A Freemasonic Garden in Late-Eighteenth-Century France." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32, no. 4 (1999): 447-62.

Hayes provides a unique observational study of the Monceau Garden. Today it is a suburbanized park in the heart of France, but at its construction it was a sprawling private garden belonging to the Duke of Chartres, Louis-Philippe-Joseph d'Orleans. Elected as Grand Master of the French Freemasons in 1771, he commissioned the park to be built and it contained numerous masonic references. It is speculated that the area served as a private retreat for members of the Parisian lodge and its iconic hedges, sculptures and buildings, some of which survive today, harken back to Masonic ideals. Some of these aspects represented the public face of masonry and were understood by visitors, while some had meanings hidden to all but those initiated. It remains today as a reminder of the prevalence of these values during the revolutionary era in France.

“Monceau it would seem, was fashioned... as an emblem [for masonry]... centered upon a major but often overlooked feature of its design, the Geometric Garden.” – p. 450

Jackson, Tom. “Authors Freemason fascination puts Sandusky on the map.” *Sandusky Register*. December 2, 2010.

While no direct quotes are pulled from this article in the *Sandusky Register*, it does cite to Brad Meltzers 2006 book “The Book of Fate” in which he discovers that the layout of Sandusky was designed by a Freemason, Hector Kilbourn. Original sketches of the city plan show that the architectural tools, and Masonic symbols, of a square and compass are visible through the layouts of streets. This connection was verified with current members of Ohio Masonic Lodges.

Kerry, Paul E. ""Initiates of Isis Now, Come, Enter into the Temple!": Masonic and Enlightenment Thought in "The Magic Flute"." *Brigham Young University Studies* 43, no. 3 (2004): 104-36.

Kerry breaks down and analyzes one of the final works by the great Mozart, a known freemason, the opera *The Magic Flute*. In this performance, a prince is tasked with rescuing a princess from a corrupt priest, however both the prince and princess learn of the high moral ideals of the priests order and seek to join it, uncovering the lies of the established monarchy. The opera is rife with Masonic imagery and ideology, such as biblical motifs, the prevalence of ancient Egyptian knowledge, and the practice of restraint and verbal self-control, just to name a few. This establishes that brotherhood messages were not limited to tangible art and architecture. Music, plays and opera exemplified masonic values as well, as shown by one of Mozart’s final works.

“*The Magic Flute*, a product of the late century German enlightenment, exemplifies... an attempt to instruct the audience in ethical matters through the vehicle of entertainment.” – p. 106

Monod, Paul Kléber. "The Newtonian Magi." In *Solomon's Secret Arts: The Occult in the Age of Enlightenment*, 157-88. Yale University Press, 2013.

This book chapter discusses "Newtonians," the disciples of Newton such as his students, readers, and people associated with his work. Newton never took a true stance on the implications of his scientific and philosophical research and efforts, and some of his scholars went on to interpret his efforts as divine in nature. It was popular to apply his rationale to the occult and other fraternal orders, like the Masons, hence the phraseology Newtonian Magi. The chapter deals with everything from Masonic symbolism to the democratic implications of Masonic rationality and the paradoxical support of Newtonian mechanics as well as ancient mythology.

"It [Freemasonry] was also the forum for a quasi-democratic male sociability that brought members of the aristocracy and gentry together with representatives of the middling sort. It imparted the values of politeness, civility and religious tolerance. It provided a network of patronage by which artists and high end craftsmen could establish links with potential customers." – p. 180

Murrell, Fiona V Salvesen. "A Paradise of Riches': The Contribution of William Shiels (1783-1857) to the Arts in Charleston, 1819-1824." *The British Art Journal* 14, no. 2 (2013): 2-13.

Murrell discusses what I believe is a common practice among Freemasons during the Enlightenment period. William Shiels was a wealthy socialite in Charleston during the early post-revolutionary era. He had a hand in perpetuating the development of the arts in the city and was a prominent member of the local Masonic lodge. The key take away from this piece is that it was common for members of the brotherhood would utilize each others skills before pursuing the work of outsiders. This is exemplified in many artists with Masonic ties being commissioned for portraits and public art displays over other artists who were not initiated into the organization.

"Freemasonry in the United States was very widespread and well organized, with social interplay allowing potential patrons and artists to 'meet on equal terms' as 'Brothers.'" – p. 5

Negro, Piero Del. "Carlo Goldoni and Venetian Freemasonry." *Italica* 80, no. 2 (2003): 166-74.

Piero Del Negro introduces the important role of Carlo Goldoni to the Freemasonry movement in Italy during the enlightenment. Goldoni was a very influential playwright and artist in 18th century Italy and exercised a healthy impact on Italian politics and sociability of the time. It is suspected that he himself was a Freemason, or at the very least influenced by his socialite friends in the organization, and his use of the secretive brotherhood in comedic plays went far to normalize them with the general public.

"The abstract of the comedy entrusted in *Memoires*... identifies with Masonry a type of sociability that guarantees "the best pastime in this world." – p. 166

O'Malley, Lurana D. "The Monarch and the Mystic: Catherine the Great's Strategy of Audience Enlightenment in The Siberian Shaman." *The Slavic and East European Journal* 41, no. 2 (1997): 224-42.

This analysis of the final play of a trilogy written by Catherine the Great of Russia centers on the monarchs' distrust of Freemasonry. While Catherine the Great initially worked closely with writer and publisher Nikolay Novikov to popularize enlightenment ideas in Russia, mostly to dispel the belief that her country was more "backwards" than the rest of Europe, she grew to distrust Novikov's heavy involvement in Freemasonry. Although there are innumerable ties between Masonic and Enlightenment ideals, the organizations growing international power was seen as a threat to Catherine's rule. She knew the power of plays and used this platform in an attempt to discredit Freemasonry as a whole. This was marginally effective but proved the prevalence of Masonic ideals in the mainstream of operas and playwrights was a powerful force to compete with.

"From Catherine's perspective, his Masonic ideas were just as nonsensical as a dog barking; like a shaman, Novikov was capable of entrancing the people – her people – through his strange ideas. – p. 239

Onnerfors, Andreas. "Enlightenment Foundations" In *Freemasonry: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Onnerfors' book delves into the "need to know" basics of the ideology and history of Freemasonry. Chapter 4, "Enlightenment Foundations" is of particular importance because it establishes why Freemasonry rose to prominence during this time. One cannot analyze the impact of an ideology on art and architecture if one does not understand why it was positively received in the first place. Onnerfors argues that while the core belief system of Freemasonry had not changed, the new Enlightenment emphasis on rational thought and scientific culture finally brought the ideas of the brotherhood into the mainstream. This provided a base level of acceptance of Freemasonry by academia that many architects and artists acknowledged in their work.

"The scientific image of Freemasonry gave it a central place in the Enlightenment ideas of the period. Freemasonry is saturated with key enlightenment concepts such as progress, perfectibility and cosmopolitanism." – p. 47

Parker, William E. *Freemasonry A Way of Life*, French National Grand Lodge, 1974.

This is more or less a handbook for all inducted Masons living or attending lodges in the state of Michigan. Written by the former Junior Grand Warden of the French National Grand Lodge, this handbook offers an introduction to Masonic history, mythos, values, and basic beliefs. It does not delve too much into the symbolism, as such things are not intended to be discussed aloud outside the lodges. However, it does provide insight into the ideology of the Craft which has remained relatively unchanged since the founding of the first Grand Lodge in London during 1717.

"From the moment a petitioner has been formally accepted... until the ceremonies of admission are complete, every step, word and act is symbolically designed to impart the meaning of Masonry and what is expected of its members."

Reinberger, Mark. "Oglethorpe's Plan of Savannah: Urban Design, Speculative Freemasonry, and Enlightenment Charity." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 81, no. 4 (1997): 839-62.

Reinburger presents evidence of the heavy, if largely unnoticeable, hand the Freemasons played in the construction and layout of the City of Savannah. He both delves into the importance of physical planning and architecture to the Freemasons as a whole, and discusses the London Freemason Lodge's official support of the settlement of Georgia and how it implies their role in the development of the colony. The most interesting aspect of the city Reinburger attributes to the Freemasons is the width of the three sizes of streets which are 75 feet, 37 ½ feet and 22 ½ feet respectively. These seem like odd standards to base city roads off of, however when converted into "cubits" which are the favorite unit of measurement of ancient Hebrews and the builders of Solomon's Temple, the streets are an even 50, 25, and 15 cubits wide.

"Indeed it might be suggested that early 18th Century English reconstructions of Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem were influential in Oglethorpe's plan of Savannah." – p. 854

Rembrandt, Harmenszoon. "The Three Trees" engraving, completed 1643.

<http://emuseum.toledomuseum.org/objects/47259>

This 1643 sketch by Rembrandt depicts a group of three trees on a hill overlooking a stream with fishermen and a city in the background under a rainstorm. Clouds cover most of the upper half of the image but around the tree standing trees the sky is light. The themes of this painting could potentially indicate a Masonic connection. Three pillars with lights are always present in the meeting room of Masonic lodges, representing the pillars of King Solomon's Temple and the light of truth and knowledge. This could be one interpretation of this work of art.

Rich, Paul, and Marie Avila. "The Oddfellow of the Masonic Order." *Material Culture* 36, no. 2 (2004): 56-68.

This paper provides a brief overview of Masonic lodge structure. It focuses on Blue Lodges and their commonality. The first three orders of masons in these blue lodges are wide spread and woven into the societal architecture of post-revolution America and Enlightenment Europe. The lion's share of initiated masons were members of one of these three degrees and the symbolism and rituals associated with these degrees form the background of Masonic ideology.

"While there are differences from place to place, the architecture of the blue lodge, in which the three degrees are given, has in effect, been preserved since the traditions are supposed to be handed down unchanged. A seventeenth or eighteenth century resembles modern lodge rooms." –p. 63

Salmon, Frank. "'Our Great Master Kent' and the Design of Holkham Hall: A Reassessment." *Architectural History* 56 (2013): 63-96.

Frank Salmon provides an architectural dissection of Holkham Hall, the private residence of the Earl of Leicester Thomas Coke. The construction of the grand residence took place between 1734 and 1765 and utilized the architectural know-how of William Kent, an initiated Mason. While Coke himself was also thought to be a mason, although his devotion to the brotherhood is tenuous, the design of his magnificent home has a distinct Masonic flair to it. Whether an initiated member was heartily devoted to the fraternity or not, for those who could afford it, it was fashionable to use the architectural skills of their fellow brothers to add Masonic symbolism to the layout of their homes and businesses.

“Key dimensions at Holkham simultaneously reflect Freemasonic ideas and Lord Leicester intended the marble hall, in particular, to be a physical recreation of the Tabernacle of Solomon's Temple.” – p. 83

“The Magic Flute” – script translation. Stanford University, 16 October, 2005.

<http://opera.stanford.edu/Mozart/Zauberflote/>

Stanford University published this translation of the script of Mozart’s “The Magic Flute” an opera he composed towards the end of his life which is well known for its Masonic themes and symbolism.

“If only all liars would get such a padlock in front of their mouth! Instead of hatred, slander, black temper, Love and Brotherhood would endure!” – Tamino, p. 28

The minutes of the Grand Lodge of Freemasons of England, 1723-1739 in *Quatuer Coronatorum Antigrapha Masonic Reprints*, Vol. 10 (London, 1913), 235.

These are minutes from the Grand Lodge of England, located in London, that were published publicly just before WWI. Other than providing a brief glimpse into the inner workings of the lodge proceedings, they show a strong level of Masonic support for the establishment of the colony of Georgia. Unfortunately, the minute-keeper is unknown, but this is an example of Masons participating in state level planning, as well as looking out for their own, as one of the primary reasons they supported such a colony was to provide economic assistance to their brothers in need financially.

“Then the Deputy Grand Master opened to the Lodge the Affairs of Planting the new Colony of Georgia in America... commission under their common-seal to collect the charity of this society towards enabling Trustees to send distressed bretheren to Georgia where they may be comfortably provided for.” – p.23

Watkin, David. "Freemasonry and Sir John Soane." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 54, no. 4 (1995): 402-17.

This look into the late life of Sir John Soane exemplifies the Masonic tendencies to leave “calling cards” of their beliefs in their commissioned works. John Sloane was a prominent London architect during the tail end of the enlightenment period. Although he was not officially inducted as a Freemason until 1813, many of his later works bear strong ties to his officially commissioned works as a Mason. Most notably, his design of a triangular columned “ark” to be used in important Masonic rituals was mirrored in monuments he built for the English government, the most iconic of which was the Pitt Cenotaph at the National Debt Redemption Office. This was a keen subliminal Masonic message seen by all those who were charged with managing the financial debts of the British Empire.

“Soane’s ark... was formally similar to the triangular Simeon monument which he built... More significantly, Soane’s ark is close to the curious pedestals, triangular with domed finials, which feature in his Pitt Cenotaph at the National Debt Redemption Office.” – p. 407

Weisberger, William R. *Speculative Freemasonry and the Enlightenment: A Study of the Craft in London, Paris, Prague, Vienna and Philadelphia*, 2d ed. McFarland Press. Sept. 17, 2017.

William Weisberger provides a comprehensive look at Speculative Freemasonry in the major centers of the enlightenment. In turn, he goes about investigating the establishment of Freemasonry in each of these cultural centers and examines the role The Craft played in perpetuation Enlightenment ideals.

Specifically, he looks into the cultural and scientific contributions inducted masons made in the fields of mathematics, medical advancements, academic journal publishing, art, sculpture, and the performing arts.

“London Lodges, in practically all cases, functioned either in coffeehouses or in taverns and depended upon many activities sponsored by these institutions to enhance the appeal of Masonry... lodges served beverages and meals... sponsored concerts, artistic displays and lectures about various topics.” – p. 38