



## Who are the Anti-Masons?

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## Who are the Anti-Masons?

Anti-masons (antis) is a term most usually found on the Internet and it is applied to the people who make fanciful and malicious claims about the activities and purpose of Freemasonry. These claims range from the simply unbelievable such as alien intervention on Earth and The New World Order (controlling governments and economies) to the mundane and more believable such as getting off from speeding fines or job preferment. However, they all have a common link, in that by being a Freemason you are part of a conspiracy, somewhere.

Who are they?

Antis are in reality, a sub-category of the people known collectively as conspiracy theorists. In my opinion antis can be generally grouped thus:

Group A) people who know little or nothing about the reality of Freemasonry but truly believe either, what they think they know or what they are accusing Freemasonry of.

Group B) those who know a lot about the beliefs of Group A but little or nothing about Freemasonry. These people tend not to realise that by their actions they are keeping the conspiracy alive in the minds of disinterested parties. They are primarily focussed on making money although indirectly. This group includes newspapers, journalists, authors etc.

Group C) the conspiracy theorists who make use of Group B in publicising their opinions, books and Websites in order to prey on the beliefs of Group A and make money from them. They tend to be full-blown conspiracy theorists not just anti-masons and have enough information about Freemasonry in order to operate.

Group D) those who do know about the reality of Freemasonry but disregard it in order to maliciously get and keep a

conspiracy theory going in the hope of in some way defaming Freemasonry. They are usually not making money their satisfaction comes from the activity itself. This often includes expelled Freemasons.

What tactics do they use?

The claims made by antis usually fall short (but not always) of true slander in that they rarely accuse living individuals but rather employ the “guilt by association” approach combined with an appeal to the lack of knowledge of their audience. In reality their claims are generally just “malicious gossip”, unfortunately despite this, they seem real enough to members of Group A. Some examples:

Group A)

They author a diatribe based around events (usually bad luck) in their or a close friend’s personal life, which clearly shows (to them at least) that they have been the victim of some form of Masonic injustice or ill-treatment. The events are usually the sort of things that happen to normal people, everyday and everywhere: loss of job, death in the family, failed attempt at promotion etc, where it is impossible for Masonic influence to have been involved. If the Freemason tries to balance their opinion of events or even suggest that it may all be down to coincidence, they will accuse him of being part of it all.

Group B)

In their search for publishable material and in order to keep circulation up they will often come across the stories from Group A or the products from Group C. Freemasonry being newsworthy, as it tends not to refute these claims is easy prey and therefore the stories keep appearing with the usual media spin attached. This means that both Group A&C gain more exposure which is damaging to the actual reputation of Freemasonry as there are always people who believe what they read and become part of Group A.

### Group C)

a) They pick an obscure Masonic character (a favourite is Albert Pike, see note) make up a claim about them and then extrapolate it to all Freemasons. The majority of Freemasons as well as Group A have never heard of the character. Therefore, the Freemason finds it difficult to argue his corner, while at the same time the Group A individual feels that they have been vindicated in their belief. Even when the correct information is found and presented the anti will claim that it is all lies.

b) They can and do work Freemasonry into an extant conspiracy theory such as the New World Order or UFO phenomena. It is impossible to sensibly argue against involvement in something that doesn't exist, other than to employ the "reductio ad absurdum" method in other words to carry the argument to its logical conclusion thereby reducing it to the absurdity that it really is. However, the anti will come back with another claim quickly all you can hope is that some Group A individuals witnessed the exchange.

### Group D)

Individuals in this group are arguably the worst, as they usually have some personal reason for wanting to harm Freemasonry and it is not always money. They will usually tell a tale of how their Masonic membership enabled them to do great things and how it encouraged them to be corrupt. The really "out there" Group D individual will also spread tales of devil worship, world domination, false religion, etc which are hard to disprove as their claim is based upon their prior membership and they can usually bend a snippet of the ritual to support their claim. When challenged they will claim that the Freemason has not progressed sufficiently into the TRUE or SECRET Masonic ranks etc. Some of these people have actually caused Freemasons to waver with these claims, however, a sufficient awareness of the appendant bodies that are (and used to be)

practised is all that is needed to deflate this particular approach.

What to watch for?

Coincidence tends to play a big part in the claims of individuals in Group A. They will often recite very mundane events whilst attempting to make them appear almost mystical as well as asserting that they are the fault of their chosen target. The behavioural scientist, BF Skinner found during his laboratory experiments that “the Human mind often seeks relationships between events and often finds them even when they are not there”. Bold statements and/or rumours do not equal reality, however if they are passed on and not disproved enough they will and do gain the status of “urban legends”. Many people believe in urban legends because, to coin a phrase “there’s no smoke without fire”.

Antis in Groups C and D often rely on their audience’s lack of knowledge to make their claims appear truthful. Emotive words and false analogies as well as metaphors are all commonly used to provoke emotion in the anti’s audience in order to prevent the intervention of reason. These and the “fallacy of negation” often appear in the same attacks, the anti will try to discredit what a Freemason says in the hope that the audience will be led to believe their point of view. These as well as “after the fact” reasoning are common tactics amongst Group C antis. After the fact means taking old elements of the history of their target and use it to try to prove their modern day theory.

Antis rarely seem to understand that they bear the “burden of proof” for their claim and that the target of their claim is not actually required to disprove it. Antis also tend to display problem-solving difficulties in that they will form their theory and seek only information that proves it. If you supply information that clearly disproves it they will just not accept it.

Note:

General Albert Pike, 1809-1891

American lawyer, author and soldier. After the American Civil War he devoted his life to advancing the cause of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. From 1859 he was Sovereign Grand Commander (33°) of the AASR Southern Jurisdiction, USA. He wrote a book "Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Rite of Freemasonry" in 1871 for distribution to all 32° masons within the Southern Jurisdiction. This book is still misquoted by anti-masons today as the basis of their theories. Unfortunately they are unaware and are unwilling to accept that the majority of Freemasons outside of that jurisdiction have never heard of him.