

**FREEMASONRY: MEN'S LIVED EXPERIENCE OF THEIR
MEMBERSHIP OF A MALE-ONLY SOCIETY**

by

SANDRA BROWNRIGG

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own, unaided work and that recognition has been given to the sources used. It has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

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Sandra Brownrigg

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Date

ABSTRACT

This study explores the themes of the experience of belonging to a male-only society, namely Freemasonry, by allowing members of the Freemasons to tell their stories of their experience of belonging to Freemasonry. The epistemological framework was that of phenomenology, using a qualitative research design. The study involved a series of in-depth individual interviews. Their stories provide alternative ways of perceiving men's experience of belonging to a male-only society, focusing on the Freemasons. Several common themes were also identified in the participants' interviews. The researcher found that the history of the Freemasons plays a large role in the member's justification for female exclusion. Gender, as well as the members need to belong to a male-only society, gave the researcher some insight into their experience of belonging to a male-only society. The themes that were articulated in the study may be helpful in trying to understand the experiences of belonging to a male-only society.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie studie ondersoek die temas wat verband hou met die ervaring om deel van 'n "mans-eksklusiewe" vereniging, meer spesifiek, Vrymesselaars, te wees. Lede van die Vrymesselaars vertel hul eie verhale van ervarings en belewenisse as Vrymesselaars. 'n Kwalitatiewe navorsingsontwerp, binne die epistemologiese raamwerk, Fenomenologie, word gebruik vir hierdie studie. Hierdie studie bestaan uit 'n reeks van in-diepte, individuele gesprekke. Hierdie verhale bied 'n alternatiewe blik op die ervarings en belewenisse van mans wat aan hierdie mans-eksklusiewe vereniging behoort, en die fokus word spesifiek op die Vrymesselaars gerig. Verskeie algemene temas is uit hierdie deelnemers aan die navorsing se onderhoude geïdentifiseer. Die temas wat uit hierdie navorsing voortspuit kan bydra tot beter insig aangaande die ervaring om aan so 'n vereniging te behoort.

Keywords: Freemasons, Freemasonry, male-only, female exclusion, phenomenology, hermeneutics, brotherhood, rituals, exclusivity,

Table of Contents	Page
<u>Chapter 1 General introduction</u>	
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Research Problem	1
1.3 Justification, Aims and Objectives	1
1.4 Overview of the Chapter	4
1.5 Summary	5
<u>Chapter 2 Historical Background of the Freemasons</u>	
2.1 Introduction	6
2.2 Theories of the Origin of Freemasonry	6
2.3 The Degrees of Freemasonry	9
2.3.1 First Degree Freemasonry	9
2.3.2 Second Degree Freemasonry	9
2.3.3 Third Degree Freemasonry	10
2.3.4 Other Side Degrees of Freemasonry	10
2.4 Symbolism in Freemasonry Relating to Tolerance and Harmony	11
2.5 Females in Freemasonry	13
2.6 Reasons for Female Exclusion	16
2.7 Freemasonry in South Africa	21
2.8 Summary	23
<u>Chapter 3 Sex and Gender: Is There a Difference?</u>	
3.1 Introduction	25
3.2 Definitions of Gender and Sex	25
3.3 Male Identity	29

3.3.1	Previous Approaches to Conceptualizing Male Identity	30
3.3.1.1	Psychoanalysis	30
3.3.1.2	Role Theory	30
3.3.1.3	The Social Relations Theory	31
3.3.1.4	The Social Constructionist Model	32
3.4	Masculine Crisis Theory and Critique	33
3.5	The Changing Role of Women in Society	36
3.5.1	Women Around the World	36
3.5.2	Women in South Africa	37
3.6	Summary	39

Chapter 4 Exploring phenomenology

4.1	Introduction	41
4.2	Epistemology	42
4.3	Positivism and Empiricism	43
4.4	Post-Positivism and Post-Modernism	45
4.5	What is Phenomenology?	46
4.5.1	The Philosophy of Phenomenology	48
4.5.1.1	Franz Brentano	48
4.5.1.2	Edmund Husserl	49
4.5.2	Schools of Phenomenology	50
4.5.3	What are the Aims of Phenomenology?	51
4.5.4	Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Psychology	52
4.6	Is Phenomenology a Viable Approach?	53
4.7	Limitations of Phenomenological Research	55
4.8	Using Phenomenology in Psychological Research	57
4.9	Summary	58

Chapter 5 Methodology

5.1	Introduction	59
5.2	Research Question	59
5.3	Design	59
5.4	Validity and Reliability in Phenomenological Research	62
5.5	Participants	65
5.6	Procedure	66
5.7	Method of Data Collection	66
5.8	Bracketing	69
5.9	Data Analysis and Interpretation	70
5.10	Putting Hermeneutics in Perspective	71
5.11	Hermeneutics in Data Analysis	71
5.12	Ethical Considerations	73
5.13	Summary	74

Chapter 6 Discussion and Results

6.1	Introduction	75
6.2	Bob's Interview	75
	6.2.1 Background	75
	6.2.2 Interview Setting and My Impressions	76
6.3	Patrick's Interview	77
	6.3.1 Background	77
	6.3.2 Interview Setting and My Impressions	77
6.4	Richard's Interview	77
	6.4.1 Background	77
	6.2.2 Interview Setting and My Impressions	78
6.5	Paul's Interview	78
	6.5.1 Background	78
	6.5.2 Interview setting and My Impressions	78

6.6	Themes Emerging from Freemasonry Membership	79
6.6.1	Family History	79
6.6.2	Modernism vs. Traditionalism	81
6.6.3	Social Interactions vs. Formal Rituals	84
6.6.4	Brotherhood	87
6.6.5	Morality and Decency	89
6.6.6	Sense of Purpose in Life	92
6.7	Themes Emerging from the Male-only Component	93
6.7.1	Social Desirability vs. Need for Male Exclusiveness	94
6.7.2	Traditionalism as a Justification	96
6.7.3	Gender as a Justification	98
6.8	Summary	100

Chapter 7 Comparative Analysis

7.1	Introduction	103
7.2	Themes Regarding the Participants' Experience of Belonging to the Freemasons	104
7.3	Themes Regarding the Participants' Experience of the Male-only Component of Freemasonry	107
7.4	Summary	110

Chapter 8 Conclusion

8.1	Introduction	111
8.2	Strengths of the Study	111
8.3	Limitations of the Study	112
8.4	Recommendations for Further Research	114
8.5	Conclusion	115

<u>References</u>	116
Appendix A Structured Questions and Open-ended Questions	128
Appendix B Participant Information Leaflet and Informed Consent	129
Appendix C Bob’s Interview	133
Appendix D Richard’s Interview	147
Appendix E Patrick’s Interview	171
Appendix F Paul’s Interview	189

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of the current study is to attempt to obtain an in-depth understanding of men's lived experience of being a member of a male-only society, namely the Freemasons. In this chapter the researcher will explain the aims and objectives of the study and thereby try to give an understanding of the importance of researching a subject like this one. The researcher will also give an overview of all the chapters that will follow in this dissertation.

1.2 Research Problem

Over many centuries there have been societies that have primarily, if not exclusively, been male-only. In contemporary society, where freedom of association is of great importance, there are still world-wide movements like Freemasonry that do not permit free association because of a person's gender. The researcher will explore the experiences of the participants of belonging to a male-only society.

1.3 Justification, Aim and Objectives

Since the end of World War II, Freemasonry has once more become the object of exceedingly violent opposition (Lennhoff, 1978). Before the War the campaign against Freemasonry seemed to come mainly from the Roman Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Church banned the Freemasons in 1918 and since then a number of other groups have joined the move to ban Freemasonry. In Hungary, Masonic work was prohibited by the state; Mussolini destroyed the very

foundations of the Italian Lodges by means of the Fascist law against Freemasonry; a campaign of suppressing Freemasonry was also launched in Germany and in France (Lennhoff, 1978).

The founders of the Freemasons have said that what they tried to instil in their followers was, in the main, a book of moral charges. This idea that was bequeathed to the followers was laid down in the *Antient Charges* of 1723. This *Antient Charges* is the fundamental Masonic code; it is the ancient idea of how individuals should live their lives. In Lennhoff (1978, p.8), the following quote is taken from the *Antient Charges*:

A Mason is obliged by his tenure to obey the moral law; and if he rightly understands the art he will never be a stupid atheist nor an irreligious libertine. He, of all men, should understand that God seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh at the outward appearance, but God looketh at the heart. A Mason is therefore, particularly bound never to act against the dictates of his conscience.

The reason for the proposed study is highlighted by Rich (1997b), who states that the history of “secret and ritualistic organisations have never received the attention in international and cultural studies that the subject deserves” (p. 142). Considering how widespread such groups are, involving all kinds of people and many countries, social scientists should give more attention to this aspect of popular and international culture. In today’s society, where females are taking over more male-orientated roles (Schmidt, 1997), it is important to try to understand the importance of these societies and groups for the male population. The researcher’s aim is to understand and describe the men’s lived experiences of belonging to a male-only society, namely the Freemasons.

In today's society there have been a number of changes over the last decade. South Africa has its first woman vice-president, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, who was appointed in 2005.

Freemasonry has been, and to a great extent still is, the domain of white males. Traditionally the only time that other racial groups came into contact with Freemasonry was during conflict and colonisation. It was during times like this that they were invited to join the Freemasons. South Africa, during the apartheid era, was one of the places that could not have inter-racial meetings. It is because of this that Freemasonry is still today dominated by white males. Owing to apartheid in South Africa, the Freemasons were unable to maintain their own ethos of brotherly love and care, which, as they say, is open to all. Our modern society is attempting to right the situations of the past and has made moves to overcome the racial issues of the past, thereby correcting the racial imbalance. Unfortunately it appears that the idea of women being excluded from the Freemasons will still be prevalent. If the Freemasons, which is a male-dominated domain, were open to women with equal status and equal share, this step would bring about significant change in the Order.

Freemasonry has intrigued society for many centuries. Some investigators have persecuted the Craft, whilst others have sung the praises of Freemasonry. The researcher's aim is not to judge Freemasonry but rather to understand the experiences of the participating Freemasons. The researcher feels that with all these contradicting ideas regarding Freemasonry, it would be beneficial to understand the members' individual experiences concerning involvement in the Freemasons.

1.4 Overview of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into eight chapters, namely: Introduction, Literature Review, the Paradigmatic Point of Departure, Methodology, Analysis of the Interviews, a Comparative Analysis and Conclusion. The literature review chapters make up two chapters. The first of the two literature review chapters, Chapter 2, looked at the origin of the Freemasons and various theories surrounding female exclusion from various institutions.

Chapter 3 deals with the discussion around gender and sex. Different definitions of gender and sex and theories about how gender is developed is discussed. The chapter also gives some explanations of how the male identity develops, is maintained, and possibly can change.

Chapter 4 discusses phenomenology, the underlying philosophy, its uses in psychology, the viability of phenomenology as a research method and the reasons that the researcher chose phenomenology as the research paradigm.

The methodology chapter, Chapter 5, describes the design of the study, the procedures followed, and the aims and objectives of the present study. The steps that the researcher followed will be highlighted, with emphasis put on the method of data collection, the method used in the data analysis phase, namely hermeneutics, and the ethical considerations that need to be taken into account.

The results phase and interpretation of the data is conducted in Chapter 6, according to the hermeneutic analysis circle. The researcher used verbatim quotes from the interviews to support the themes that emerge.

In Chapter 7 the researcher linked the literature that is available, and the themes that emerged from the participants' individual interviews, in a comparative analysis.

Chapter 8 serves to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the study. The researcher also offers her recommendations for future research.

1.5 Summary

In this chapter the researcher explained her reasons for researching the experience of men belonging to a male-only society, with a focus on the Freemasons. There is a great deal of literature regarding Freemasonry, but there seems to be very little on the experiences of individuals who belong to such an organisation. In a society that is rapidly changing and where an organisation such as the Freemasons is still operational, it is important to attempt to understand what the members gain from having membership of these types of organisations.

In the rest of the dissertation the researcher will further explain Freemasonry and issues surrounding sex and gender. She will attempt to achieve the aims and objectives that she has put forward for this research. The researcher will, through the interviews with the participants, and listening to their stories, attempt to gain an understanding of their lived experience of being a member of a male-only society, namely the Freemasons.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE FREEMASONS

2.1 Introduction

Freemasonry is an organisation that is surrounded by mythology and intrigue. Even though Freemasonry has been surrounded by secrecy, and individuals found it very difficult to find any information about the Freemasons, all this changed in the last century with more books being written about Freemasonry in the last century (Carmichael, 2003). The rituals, which used to be hidden in a shroud of secrecy, are now freely available in any library or Internet site.

In this chapter the researcher will attempt to give a comprehensive history of Freemasonry and its origins. This may be a difficult task as there are many different theories about how Freemasonry developed, but an overview of many of the theories will be discussed. A look into the history of women in Freemasonry as well as the different theories surrounding why women are excluded from certain societies will be discussed.

2.2 Theories on the Origins of Freemasonry

Freemasonry has been practised since the turn of the 18th Century. For many the line is simple: "Freemasonry is only as old as its publicly recorded history which was first seen in the 17th Century and everything purporting to predate those records is whimsical nonsense" (Knight & Lomas, 1996, p.19). There is said to be widespread evidence that the Order materialized slowly over more than 300

years before the establishment of the United Grand Lodge of England, which occurred in 1717 (Knight & Lomas, 1996).

Empirical evidence supporting the history of Freemasonry prior to the 18th Century is hard to find. Theories vary widely from the plausible to the sensational.

Freemasonry “is a very old, secular fraternal society which requires the belief in a supreme being as its principal foundation” (MacNulty, 1991, p.6). Because the organisation that is called Freemasonry is and was a secret society before the mid-seventeenth Century, official histories were never published. There are three theories put forward about Freemasonry before it “went public” (Knight & Lomas, 1996).

The first theory states that Freemasonry was created as a result of the happenings at Solomon’s Temple. There can be no subject of greater interest to Freemasons than the Temple of Solomon, King of Israel, Supreme Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Jerusalem. During the building of Solomon's Temple, thousands of masons and stonecutters were employed in order to complete the Temple. According to Freemasons, their history began with the architect of Solomon's Temple, Hiram Abiff. As the candidate progresses through the ceremonies, he learns that at the building of King Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem, the skilled Masons were divided into two classes, Apprentices and Fellows. These two classes were presided over by three Grand Masters, King Solomon, Hiram King of Tyre, and Hiram Abiff. These three Grand Masters shared certain secrets known only to them. However, these secrets were lost by the murder of Hiram Abiff. Hiram Abiff was murdered as a result of his refusal to divulge these secrets. Because of the loss of the secrets, certain substituted secrets were adopted. The implication in the ritual is that Freemasonry was

already established in Solomon's time and has continued as an unchanged system since then.

The ritual, however, as the candidate quickly realizes, is not literal or historical truth, but a dramatic allegory by means of which the principles and tenets of the Craft are handed down.

The second theory states that it is a development of medieval stonemasons' guilds, in which "operative masonic skills with stone were translated into what Masons call speculative Masonic skills of moral improvement" (Knight & Lomas, 1996, p. 20). Most historians agree that Freemasonry, in its current form, probably developed as an adjunct to medieval stonemasons through the ages leading up to the operative stonemasons' guilds. Just how or when the transition took place from Operative Guild Free-Stone Masonry to speculative intellectual Freemasonry (using stonemasons' tools, clothing and customs as allegorical aids to teach their precepts) is not clear, although Scottish Lodge Kilwinning's records show non-operatives being admitted by at least 1672, and some Lodges in England were entirely non-operative by the time of Elias Ashmole in 1646.

What was so special about stonemasons? They possessed great skill to create the castles, cathedrals and palaces, and the necessary sculpted works and ornaments demanded by their masters. Such skill must have seemed almost magical to the vast illiterate masses. The Masons were clearly the elite of the labour force, had secret customs and marks, and would have attracted some of the brightest uneducated recruits. However, given the complexity and the emphasis on morality of the various Masonic rituals and teachings, this simple explanation of Freemasonry seems inadequate. To obtain a deeper historical appreciation, one could consider the various ancient and medieval legends with an open mind and then decide for oneself which details are a better fit.

The final theory of the origin of Freemasonry is that it originated directly from the Temple of Solomon (Knights Templar) and the Order of the Poor Fellow Soldiers

of Christ. As can be seen, to trace the exact origins of Freemasonry is a difficult task, but what is known is that it has been in operation since at least the 1700s and has always been a predominately male-only society or organisation (Carnes, 1989).

2.3 The Degrees of Freemasonry

Each Degree within the Freemasons has its own principal teaching. This principal teaching is central to the development of the individual both as a Mason and an individual in society. In order for the candidate to understand this principal teaching, he is taken through a series of lessons.

The structures within the Freemasons are so diverse and complex that it would be difficult in this dissertation to reflect all the branches and institutions. However, by taking a look at the lower Degrees some insight can be obtained into how the society is ordered. There are three Degrees in Freemasonry which are known as the “Entered Apprentice”, “Fellow Craft” and “Master Mason”.

2.3.1 First Degree Freemasonry

Within each Degree, God is indeed central to the “working”. In the First Degree the candidate hopes to obtain the privileges of Freemasonry “by the help of God”. A prayer is said for the candidate. In this prayer the candidate is requested to dedicate his life to God’s service, praying that God will share with him His divine wisdom. By sharing this wisdom, the candidate will be loyal to his brethren and do all things to the glory of God. Part of this lesson is founded on the biblical teachings of faith, hope and charity, with the focus being on charity (Emulation Ritual-Revised Edition, 2001).

2.3.2 Second Degree Freemasonry

During the Second Degree the candidate enters the Lodge and again recites certain parts of the First Degree ritual that he has done previously. The candidate has to know his words, which need to be recited, by memory.

The development of memory is central to a Freemason's work in Lodge meetings. It was central to education in the 17th and 18th Centuries, and was encouraged in the royal courts. This is seen as the first real stage of the candidate's process of becoming a Mason. The development of the candidate's memory will become central to his involvement in Freemasonry as well as throughout his Masonic life. Again, his hope of obtaining this second Degree is "by the help of God". After this statement the candidate will go on to give passwords and to address other Masonic symbols, all related to the ethics of his way of life and the principle of love for others (Emulation Ritual-Revised Edition, 2001).

2.3.3 Third Degree Freemasonry (Ceremony of Raising)

The Third Degree is said to be the final stage in the completion of the Freemason's journey. Again the help of God is called upon and the candidate is required to answer certain questions. Because there is a part of the ceremony that relates to the death of Hiram Abiff, it is claimed by some that the Third Degree teaches a man how to die. In this Third Degree ceremony there is indeed a resurrection from death to a new life with God (Emulation Ritual-Revised Edition, 2001).

2.3.4 Other Side Degrees in Freemasonry

Although there are recognized side Degrees, they are said not to limit the development of the new Mason who, having completed the Third Degree, will be raised to the level of Master Mason. The Degrees that an individual can follow once having completed the first three Degrees include such Degrees as Royal Arch (The Complete Workings of Royal Arch Degree, 1957). Other Degrees include the Secret Monitor (which emphasizes the concepts of brotherly love and servanthood which are expressed in the biblical characters of David and Daniel), the mystical Degrees of the "Knights Templar" (also known as The Order of Christ), a degree still only "conferred on those who recognize the Messianic

character of Jesus Christ and the Cryptic Rite” (Wilkinson, 1977, p.5), which is based on the building of King Solomon’s Temple.

The Temple is intimately bound up with the ritual and traditions of Craft and Royal Arch Masonry, as well as the Degrees of Mark Masonry, Royal and Select Masters, and part of the Allied group of Freemasons. The Temple of Solomon is described in terms of having three storeys (Ground floor, Middle chamber and the Holy of Holies) and when someone is within it they can be in the presence of Divinity. The Masonic Candidate is introduced to this three-storey temple through participating in the ceremonies of the Lodge. During the ceremonies the candidate moves through the three Degrees. The Entered Apprentice Degree is figuratively held in the Ground floor of Solomon’s Temple. The Second Degree is figuratively held in the middle chamber of Solomon’s Temple and the Third Degree is held in the Holy of Holies level. (MacNulty, 1991).

2.4 Symbolism in Freemasonry Relating to Tolerance and Harmony

Freedom, justice, equality and fraternity are four of the cardinal principles of Freemasonry (Levitt, 2001). Freemasonry is said to free the individual from bigotry and fear, by bringing individuals into closer contact with the world created by The Great Architect of the Entire Universe for all of God’s creation. According to Anderson (1738), Freemasonry is the central meeting place for all humanity, a place for personal understanding and development, where a deep sense of love for The Divine Creator is fostered. Freemasonry encourages diversity, but demands that the individuals have love and compassion for their fellow individuals. Freemasonry is characterized by elaborate ritualistic ceremonies that are filled with symbolism. Freemasonry is described as “a loosely associated group of large contemporary organisations occupying conspicuous premises, prominent in society, operating charities, hospitals and medical research facilities, claiming members of all races and social strata” (MacNulty, 1991, p. 38).

Freemasonry, or speculative Freemasonry, as previously stated, is said to have developed in the early Masons' Guilds, and has been defined as an organized system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols:

From the very beginning of his Masonic career, the Freemason is exhorted to live by the principles of brotherly love, Relief (Charity or Philanthropy), and Truth; to practise the four cardinal virtues of Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice; or to have as his distinguished characteristics, the qualities of Virtue, Honour and Mercy. As he proceeds through the ceremonies of the three Craft Degrees, the Mason is first impressed with the need to maintain his faith in God and his hope in salvation, and to epitomize charity in his dealings with his fellow men. He is taught the importance of understanding God's creation by unlocking the hidden mysteries of Science and Nature through the study of the seven liberal arts and sciences; Grammar, Rhetoric, Logic, Arithmetic, Geometry, Music and Astronomy. Finally he is enjoined to maintain his honour at all times and display stoic fortitude in the face of death, placing his faith in the certainty of immortality. All these principles, qualities and ideals are presented to him in symbolic form in the visible ornamentation of the Lodge, in the pictorial diagrams for each degree (Hamill & Gilbert, 1998, p. 57).

This is the basis of Freemasonry. The allegory is to be found in the organized systems and activities of builders within the old guilds of practising masons, and it is the tools of this trade (rule, plum-line, spirit level and other tools), which are still used today to teach modern principles in Freemasonry.

A good deal of the symbolism in Freemasonry is based on an ethic established for humanity. The rule, plum-line, spirit level, square and compass are all implements which are to be related to an individual's life, presented by the

Freemasons in an allegorical role. During the ceremonies that are carried out during the different Degrees, the candidates are introduced to the various tools of the Masons. When the tools are being “given” to the candidates, another Mason will be stating that “as most Freemasons are not operative masons, we apply these tools to our Morals” (Anderson, 1738). These allegories of the tools are to guide and instruct the Mason to maintain a good life, to be kind to others (not just fellow Masons), and to give of his time and resources to others.

The constitutions of Freemasonry are based on tolerance of individuals from differing ethnic and religious backgrounds. One Masonic scholar, the late Colin Dyer, developed a theory on the foundation of Freemasonry:

The context of Dyer’s argument is the religious and political turmoil of the seventeenth Century; the period was one of growing intolerance in both politics and religion. No forum existed where men of different views could meet in harmony. Opinions became polarized and divisions over matters of belief were so acute that families, friendships and eventually society itself were torn apart by the English Civil War in 1642. Despite this there were still men who believed passionately in tolerance and the free exchange of views. They saw the need for an organisation in which men of widely differing opinions and beliefs could meet together in harmony and work to promote the ideal of tolerance in a troubled and fragmented world (Hamill & Gilbert, 1998, p. 24).

This is the basis of the finding of a fraternal Order that would not tolerate division based on religious and political bigotry, while continuing to remain rooted in their belief in God and the total commitment to their own loyalty to the three principles of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

2.5 Females in Freemasonry

When in the past the enemies of Freemasonry were spoken about, women were often included amongst them. The reasons for the antagonistic attitude towards

the Brotherhood is not too difficult to find: In the first place, women were only too readily inclined to see in Freemasonry all the evils attributed to it by the Church and, in the second place, Freemasonry has from the very beginning always been a society for men, and women have, on principle, been barred from admission (Lennhoff, 1978). In the *Antient Charges*, females were expressively barred from admission to the society. Another way in which females are explicitly barred from the Craft is through the laws by which a Lodge is recognized by the United Grand Lodge of England. In the Basic Principles for Grand Lodge Recognition, which was accepted by Grand Lodge on 4 September, 1929, a Lodge will only be recognized if “the membership of the Grand Lodge and individual Lodges shall be composed exclusively of men, and that each Grand Lodge shall have no Masonic intercourse of any kind with mixed Lodges or bodies which admit women to membership” (United Grand Lodge of England Year Book, 2004-5). Because of this rule regarding Lodge recognition, no Lodge would want to allow women to join because it would lose its legitimacy in the eyes of the Grand Lodge. This would then mean that the male individuals belonging to that specific Lodge that allowed women to join would be belonging to an illegitimate society.

According to Carnes (1989), fraternal ritual evolved in response to men’s need to break away from a Victorian society in which they were overwhelmed by the domestic power of women. Carnes states that this can be seen in the rituals that the initiates go through. A number of the rituals are surrounded by themes of disengagement from the mother. Carnes writes of the initiatory rituals:

The implicit meanings of the symbols suggest that many men were deeply troubled by the gender bifurcations of the Victorian society, which deprived them of a religious experience with which they could identify and a family environment in which they could freely express nurturing and paternal emotions (1989, p. 149).

Carnes believes that men react to the tensions they experience around gender by creating exclusive male societies in which they perform cathartic rituals that symbolically distance them from ties to their mothers, and thereby reclaim a distant father in her place. Carnes (1989) also argues that the fraternal rituals that are performed help the young man's troubled passage to manhood by providing solace and psychological guidance. Other fraternal scholars have claimed that the rituals that men partake in fulfil a "universal need among men" (Carnes, 1989, p. 98). However, it is important to note that it is not explained if this finding was due to masculine physiological endowment or to a particular psychological disposition.

Freemasonry has been known as a predominantly, if not totally, male-only society. The generally held opinion is that Freemasonry is an "adamantly male institution" (Rich, 1997, p. 105). It claims to make no distinctions between race, social status, religion, age or income level. There does, however, seem to be evidence in the literature to show that women were actively involved in the very beginnings of Masonry (Rich, 1997). Rich discusses a record which states that in 1408 newly initiated Masons swore to obey the Master or the Dame of the Lodge. There have also been other recorded instances of female Masons. These have been female quasi-Masons. The rituals and symbols were very different from those of the fraternal Freemasonry groups. Even though there were female Freemasonry lodges, they had to be overseen by a male Grand Master (Carnes, 1989; MacNulty, 1991).

The acceptance of female Masons seemed to change in the 18th Century. Female Masons were either made members by accident or they were made members in order to protect the Lodges' secrets (Rich, 1997). One report, dated 6 January, 1770, tells of the landlady of a tavern where Freemasons were known to meet, who drilled two holes in a wall in order to spy on the meetings. The landlady discovered the secrets and the rituals of the Lodge, and was made a

member of that particular Lodge in order to prevent her from revealing those secrets and rituals (*Ancient Wisdom and Secret Sects*, 1989).

The Queen of Sheba was another woman who was allowed to join a Freemasonry Lodge. In German cathedrals there are many effigies of her on the pillars, and since this occurred at the same time as King Solomon, it can be no accident. The Guild honoured her as a person belonging to the legendary figures connected to the building of the Temple, but it adhered rigidly to its principles as regards other women (Carmichael, 2003).

Because of this exclusion from the Brotherhood many women started to oppose the Freemasons. In Lennhoff (1978, p. 337), there is a quote from an essay that was written in 1785 by Wieland, that states, “The hearts of Freemasons are certainly open to women, but the Lodges are closed to them.”

Over the centuries there have been many attempts to establish women in Freemasonry, but seeing that it has always been a fraternal organisation, it has been difficult to introduce women into the Order (Carmichael, 2003). In South Africa there are a couple of female Lodges, one being the Eastern Star, but these female Lodges are not officially recognized by traditional Freemasonry. The Eastern Star Lodge has been active in Johannesburg, South Africa, for many years. However, for many women who show an interest in Masonry, this women’s Lodge is seen as a patronizing form of Masonry which is designed to pacify women who have a desire to become involved in the Freemasons (Carmichael, 2003). In South Africa women are encouraged to support Freemasonry, but only through their efforts and support of the various charity functions, their partners, and the daily activities of the various Lodges.

2.6 Reasons for Female Exclusion

The exclusion of women from organisations has come under great scrutiny in recent years. As was mentioned in the “landlady case” it is reasoned by some

Masons that women should not be allowed to join as once they know the secrets of the Lodge, they may want to sell those secrets for financial gain. It was therefore important at that time, and in some way still today, to exclude women because it is thought they will not be able to maintain the secrets of the Order (Carmichael, 2003). When looking at the reason for exclusion of females from male-only Freemasonry Lodges it is important to note that on close examination of the Constitutions of the Antient Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons under the United Grand Lodge of England (1999), there is not one rule that states that females are not allowed to join male-only Lodges. However, in practice, females are excluded because of the rituals that are performed. During the rituals that are practised during the first degree, the Entered Apprentice Degree, the initiate is required to expose his naked left breast, and a compass is placed upon it (Emulation Ritual – Revised Edition, 2001). By getting the left breast exposed, the brethren are able to distinguish between a naked female breast and that of a male.

On examination of the literature, there do seem to be certain theories about why women are excluded from male-only societies. One reason that has been put forward by Freemasons is that since women were presumably predisposed to goodness and domesticity, they could not belong to a society in which the lower, worse male gender is involved. This idea was termed “True Womanhood”. True Womanhood is defined as a “constellation of values that counter-posed the purity of woman to the baseness of man” (Carnes, 1989, p. 82). Individuals from fraternal societies accepting the idea of True Womanhood allowed them to exclude women from the lodges.

Welch (1982) gives three general explanations to account for women being excluded from full participation in various community and religious roles. The three general explanations that are put forward are (1) aversion, (2) resource and (3) differentiated social spheres.

The aversion explanation puts forward that “fear of women has been recognized as a potent psychological force shaping societal restrictions on female freedom” (Welch, 1982, p. 81). This initial fear of women is said to begin with the idea that women have a nearly universal monopoly of roles as primary caregivers and socialization agents for children (Horney, 1932). A mother exercises almost total control over material and psychosocial resources that children require. Owing to this constant attention, the child’s dependence on the mother will be very high. The mother, however, is the person who needs to supply the child with limit-setting on the satisfaction of the child’s needs. The mother will then become the object of displeasure for the child, who is highly dependent on her. The ambivalence in the child creates anxiety. This anxiety is more prevalent in male children because it entails “...admitting fear of a different sort of being (i.e. a woman)” (Chodorow, 1971, p. 184). This fear is said to erode the male’s self-regard. Men then begin to develop a variety of coping mechanisms in order to control these feelings of fear.

The resource theory is probably one of the most widely cited explanations of women’s low status and relative lack of social opportunities (Welch, 1982). This type of explanation contends that “any marginal group’s power to resist discrimination and inferiorization depends on the share of societal resources it produces and controls” (Welch, 1982, p. 82). Groups that are able to marshal these valued resources are seen as being better able to secure privileged positions. Women, in industrial societies, are said to seldom control key resources. It is argued that it is this “chronic resource deprivation that operates to exclude women” (Welch, 1982, p. 82).

The final explanation relates to differentiated social spheres. Community norms designate private and public spheres, and identify the former sector as the arena where women exercise their power (Thompson, 2003). These norms typically serve to validate certain symbolic or psychosocial resources women possess that are considered well suited to the demands of child-rearing. However, outside the

private, domestic sphere, these resources are no longer seen as being valued. Therefore the women's base of authority and power, the home, is devalued.

A psychoanalytic theory that offers an insight into the conscious motivations and ceremonial practices in the Freemasons is that the themes and symbols of fraternal rituals are often laden with gender and interfamilial associations. A Freudian explanation that is put forward is that the father attempts to discourage oedipal attachments of the son. Before the initiate (or son) can become a man (like his father), the master (father) tortures him with the threat of castration. The son is then frightened by this display of paternal anger, and the initiate ceases to identify with the mother and begins to identify with the father. An opposed psychoanalytic theory argues that puberty rites are attempts by men to break a female monopoly on reproductive powers. The Masonic initiate receives his wound upon his breast and after "dying" he emerges from his grave (a new womb) and receives a new life (rebirth through the agency of men) (Carnes, 1989).

It is within the context of social stratification that gender-based inequality occurs (Richardson, 1984). Most theorists and researchers, regardless of their ideological stance on issues of gender equality, agree that male dominance is a fundamental and universal feature of social life. Richardson (1984) tries to understand why gender-based stratification is so omnipresent. The author proposes that the explanation falls into two schools of thought: the biogenetic and the bio-cultural.

The biogenetic school of biological deterministic thinking has gained a strong and ascending grasp on many individuals, including some feminists. Biogenetic explanations try to explain the happenings in the social environment through explanations from a biological aspect. These explanations are based on the idea that "social behavior is biologically caused and genetically based" (Richardson, 1984, p.175). Humans are the way they are because of their genetic makeup.

Consequently, biogeneticists argue that behaviours of men and women are rooted in the sexual determination found in all species. Change cannot be expected to occur in something that is biologically given and evolutionarily necessary. It can therefore be said the gender inequality and the natural superiority of the male are both inevitable and necessary for the survival of the fittest.

The bio-culturalists argue that “inequality exists due to a complex interplay of biological, technical and sociological factors” (Richardson, 1984, p. 185). Richardson states that the degree of male dominance, cross-culturally, and the sexual division of labour varies among societies, and in some societies women do perform major public roles. Because of this, bio-culturalists rather ask the questions: “What are the social arrangements between the sexes in a particular society?” or “How is a particular society organized so that males and females have differential access to the distribution of scarce goods and services?” This biocultural theory has similar aspects to the resource theory that has been proposed by Welch (1982).

Freemasonry puts a great emphasis on morality. Freemasonry’s morality is described as resting on the fulcrums of virtue and charity (Lipson, 1977). Grund (cited in Lipson, 1977) states that morality seems to be the great lever of society; the difficulty only consists in finding the fulcrums. Freemasonry has become a moral science that endeavours to teach and enforce the observance of piety and benevolence. However, as has been stated before, the Masons only dispense its benefits and communicate its knowledge of morality to a self-selected group. Freemasons see themselves as the gender that needs to be taught how to be moral individuals and it is through Freemasonry meetings that they learn how to become moral individuals. Because the female gender is already moral individuals they need not learn these virtues and therefore need not attend Freemasonry meetings. This is related to the concept of *True Womanhood* which was discussed earlier in this chapter.

The Freemasons' exclusion of women became increasingly important in proportion to the narrowing and refining roles of middle- and upper-class women as the standard-bearers of morality (Lipson, 1977). A good deal of the literature that was available to the Freemasons in the early 18th Century pointed to women being the custodians of social morality, and they were urged to save the world, meaning the family.

2.7 Freemasonry in South Africa

In Western Europe, the 18th Century became the Age of Enlightenment. This period was exemplified by two main characteristics, a tremendous belief that, given time, science could solve all problems and secondly, an emphasis on the importance of the individual. As stated before, in 1717 Freemasonry, which had been functioning on a national level, but without any effective organisation, established a centralized controlling body. This controlling body was called the Grand Lodge of England (Butterfield, 1978). The English constitution was accepted by many Continental groups, and thus the Grand Lodge of England became the centre of a very influential international movement. One scholar has claimed that "the Masonry of the 18th Century inherited the tradition of scientific research and the diffusion of knowledge" (Hans, 1955 p.180).

A new Grand Lodge, entitled the Grand East of the Netherlands (G.E.N), soon established two Lodges within the territories of the Dutch Empire, the first being the Lodge Solomon in Bengal in 1759 and the second the Lodge La Choise at Batavia in 1762. Undoubtedly, at this time, many Masons were arriving in the Cape either as crew members or as passengers on sailing ships. On 24 April, 1772, the captain of a ship sailing to the East Indies, Abraham van der Weidje, dropped anchor at the Cape. He had with him an authority, to establish a South African Lodge, from the Grand Master of the G.E.N. Van der Weidje occupied his position as the Master of the Lodge on 2 May, 1772, when he summoned a meeting of the Masons who were resident at the Cape. On this date, which is of

great historical importance for South African Masons, the Lodge De Goede Hoop was founded, with Abraham Chiron as Grand Master. A few days later the new Founder Members of the Lodge petitioned Van der Weidje for authorization to initiate and raise certain Brethren (Butterfield, 1978).

During the first nine years of the Lodge's existence it initiated 140 members, passed 122 and raised 84. From these numbers it can be seen that the Lodge was extremely active. Unfortunately, in 1781, with the war with England, almost all trade with the Netherlands was eliminated. Owing to this, the brethren decided to go into recess, as most of their members were seafaring men. Brother Chiron returned to Holland with his Charter, and there he surrendered it to the authorities at the Grand Lodge. The Brethren who were left in the Cape never lost their enthusiasm for the Craft, and eight years after Chiron left, they resumed their meetings (Butterfield, 1978).

On 11 June, 1795, nine British warships with troops anchored in Simons Bay. It was around this time that the British invasion of the Cape began, and lasted for seven years (Butterfield, 1978). Many members of the Lodge De Goede Hoop still met throughout this period, with various high-ranking British seamen also joining in the meetings.

It appears that it was from this first Lodge, which was recognized by the Grand Lodge of England, that Freemasonry later spread throughout South Africa. When one glances through the Directory of Lodges and Chapters (2003), it becomes clear just how many Lodges are operational both in South Africa and world-wide.

Freemasonry has been linked to many Christian communities. Most evidence for this is found in the rituals of the English, Scottish, Irish and Dutch Freemasons. Freemasons were also at the forefront in encouraging peaceful resolutions in the post-war situations in South Africa. The Grand Lodge of South Africa was

instrumental in the effort to unite many people in South Africa who had been ostracized after the Boer War (1899-1902) and the growing conflicts that led to the First World War. One way that the Freemasons attempted to make contact with people who were previously seen as the enemy, was to permit them to join fellow Masons at Lodge meetings (Gould, 1935). This had a great influence on the vastly changing community in South Africa, as many prominent businessmen belonged to various Lodges, and trusting relationships were being repaired through their Masonic links.

During 1965 there were concerns raised in South Africa regarding secret organisations, including the Freemasons. It was felt by various groups that Freemasonry was antagonistic towards established church organisations, and that the Freemasons were actively involved in the politics of the time. An investigation into Freemasonry at the time found that Freemasons were interested in the upliftment of society. The report found that true Freemasonry was only concerned with man and his spiritual and moral upliftment (Carmichael, 2003).

2.8 Summary

Reactions from society to Freemasonry have been evident for at least the last 300 years. As Freemasons are said to teach and practise tolerance, it is important to remember that that does not mean that all Masons are tolerant. Masons are only human, and relate to other individuals in a human way. The environment of Freemasonry encourages forgiveness and an environment where individuals are embraced and not judged, but rather are nurtured into future fellowship with others. Freemasonry is an organisation that has its foundation in rituals and symbolism. It is governed by many rules and regulations that attempt to teach individuals how to live and develop as an individual.

It is evident that Freemasonry touches on a wide spectrum of issues and has a foundation for further development, both within its own structures and collectively

within society as a whole. With the number of Freemasonry Lodges in South Africa being in the thousands, perhaps the ethos of the Freemasons will assist South Africa to heal from the hurts of the apartheid era.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

SEX AND GENDER: IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the different ideas surrounding the definitions of sex and gender will be discussed. Different theories will be looked at in order to try to establish why sex and gender differences are still so prolific. Many different theories regarding male identity will also be discussed. Through this discussion the researcher hopes to explore a greater understanding about how the male identity is formed and continues over time, and whether it has changed over time. Another important aspect of male identity is the possible role it plays in the exclusion of women from various societies and organisations.

The researcher will also explore the changing roles of women in society, and how those roles have changed over the centuries. This chapter will focus on both a national and international level of how women have gained independence and emancipation in various areas.

3.2 Definitions of Gender and Sex

How gender is represented, conceptualised and researched in the field of psychology has far-reaching effects on our understanding of personality and psychopathology (Cosgrove, 2000). Ideas surrounding sex and gender have been taken for granted regardless of our own gender, ethnicity or family background. For example, an adult member of our society sees the population as composed of two and only two sexes, male and female.

Since the 1960s, English-speaking feminists have routinely distinguished between “sex” as a biological and “gender” as a social construction or cultural category (Moi, 2005). Feminism is a form of “politics directed at changing existing power relations between women and men in society” (Augustine, 2002, p. 26). Feminists aim to highlight the inequalities in society and through highlighting these discrepancies, hope to change them.

Flax (cited in Jordaan, 1996), states that the single most important result of feminist theories and practices is that the existence of gender has been problematized. In today’s society, gender appears to be a powerful force in the order of many societies. In order to understand gender as a social construction, it is important to note that gender is not seen as an “expression of innate qualities in people, as essential being or as specific biological traits, but rather as a cultural dynamic formed, recreated and renewed in interaction as an inseparable part of the reproduction of the social order” (Hojgaard, 1997, p. 245).

Lotto and Maluso (cited in Hamilton, 1998, p.4), define sex and gender in the following way:

Whereas sex denotes a limited set of innate structural and physiological characteristics related to reproduction and divides animal species into male and female, gender is specific to humans and connotes all complex attributes ascribed by cultures to human males and females respectively.

Sex roles have been described as specific behaviours pertaining to one’s biological make-up from birth. Gender roles, on the other hand, are not biological, but social constructions (Meth, Pasick, Gordon, Allen, Feldman & Gordon, 1990).

Richardson (1984, p. 5) defines sex as “the biological aspects of a person such as the chromosomal, anatomical, hormonal and physiological structure” and the author defines gender as “psychological, social and cultural components.” Unlike the sex of an individual, a person’s gender is not assigned, but rather achieved. People learn what behaviours and attitudes they should have according to their label as male or female. Further, when a male acts according to culturally condoned gender-appropriate ways, he is seen as being masculine, and a female who acts according to female gender-appropriate ways is viewed as being feminine.

The reality construction model is an alternative to the biological and developmental view of gender. This model argues that gender is what “I” claim to be at this particular time. Therefore every social situation can be seen as a way to work on one’s identity. This model suggests that an individual’s identity is therefore never a finished product, but rather that gender has to be achieved. Gender is therefore not static. Gender can always be redefined and renegotiated (Brittan, 1989).

Gender is widely recognized to be an important empirical factor (or variable) in understanding human behaviour (Stewart & McDermott, 2004). Psychologists have found gender to be a powerful conceptual tool in at least three ways:

- (1) in sorting individuals into male and female and exploring ways in which differences in behaviour, performance and characteristics are associated in different ways;
- (2) in understanding how gender might relate to individual differences among men and among women; and
- (3) understanding how gender structures social institutions within which men and women operate (Stewart & McDermott, 2004, p. 522).

The cultural construction of gender involves definitions of what it means to be masculine and feminine. These definitions may also vary cross-culturally. In the

United States, masculinity has a powerful biological connotation, whereas in the Sambia culture in New Guinea it is constructed in the context of ritual. Like many other societies in New Guinea, the Sambia are characterized by a high degree of social segregation and sexual antagonism between men and women. This segregation is said to be reinforced through certain rituals that are performed by the men. During these rituals, the young boys become men. Through the rituals the boys are detached from the world of women. They are part of the women's world until the age of seven, and then they are taught, through the rituals, to both fear and devalue the women of whom they were once part (Carmicheal,2003).

Gender is often described in terms of masculine and feminine qualities. West and Zimmerman (1987, p. 126), define gender as "involving a complex of socially guided perceptual, interactional and micro-political activities that cast particular pursuits as expressions of masculine and feminine natures." Gender is seen as a product of social interaction, as an "activity of managing situated conduct in the light of normative conceptions of attitudes and activities appropriate for one's sex category" (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 127). If this definition is used, the conception of masculinity and femininity becomes deeply rooted symbolic ideas that are seen as opposites. In affirming the one, the other is denied (Hojgaard, 1997).

Gender is a fundamental category of differentiation in virtually every culture. A person is male or female, masculine or feminine. Gender is understood within the context of a specific culture, and that culture brings about gender roles. In a specific culture a wide range of practices obtain meaning and are interpreted in terms of masculinity or femininity, and are endowed with masculine or feminine connotations.

3.3 Male Identity

The definitions of identity have changed over time, and have gradually moved away from the individualistic view of identity as fixed and autonomous towards a more relational view of identity as dynamic and being formed in relationships. Reber and Reber (2001, p. 338) offer a more traditional definition of identity and state that it constitutes “[a] person’s essential, continuous self, the internal, subjective concept of oneself as an individual.”

According to this traditional view, the self is regarded as relatively coherent and consistent across time and context, and as bounded and autonomous (Cushman, cited in Lyddon & Weill, 1997). To establish an identity therefore means to become a unique individual with identifiable traits and consistent characteristics. However, as general thinking began to shift, more emphasis was accorded to the context in which human behaviour occurs, including focusing on how identities are embedded in cultural and social discourses (Artus, 2003). Gergen (1991, p. 139) offers the following alternative to the earlier definition of identity:

One’s identity is continuously emergent, re-formed, and redirected as one moves through the sea of ever-changing relationships.

As this study will demonstrate, the shift in the conceptualizations of identity to include social relations, cultural context, and social discourses has major implications for the development of the male identity and how it is conceptualised.

Gender inequality has its roots in the historical construction of sexual difference. It is important to have a clear understanding of the construction of the male gender identity when trying to understand how men feel about female emancipation. The male gender identity is enmeshed in a network of emotional and political processes. This experience of its substantiality is what gives various alternative accounts of gendered subjectivity their power (Brittan, 1989).

3.3.1 Previous Approaches to Conceptualizing Male Identity

The societies that men inhabit are constantly reproducing understandings of masculinity. Harris (1995) suggests that the construction of masculinity is natural and inevitable. On close examination of the literature surrounding male identity, a number of different approaches to understanding maleness are found. Gorski (1998) lists three approaches to understanding how the male identity is formed, maintained and changed.

3.3.1.1 Psychoanalysis

Freud (in Gorski, 1998), who is known as the founder of psychoanalysis, believed that little difference exists between the psyches of boys and girls during the first few years of early life. At around the ages of three to six the child's psychosexual energy is focused on the parent of the opposite sex. This focus on the parent of the opposite sex develops, in the male, a strong pull towards his "first love" (his mother) whilst simultaneously pulling away from his "imagined rival" (his father). This stage was called by Freud the "Oedipus complex". He maintained that it is through resolving this struggle that the male develops an inflated superego, and learns to repress his feminine side, in fear of his father. The passing of the Oedipus complex would mark the beginning of the development of the boy's masculine identity.

3.3.1.2 Role theory

Psychoanalytic theories about the development of the male identity have been criticized for failing to recognise the contribution of the social and cultural variables in the formation of the male identity. The role theory explanation of the development of the male identity is based on the assumption that all behaviour is determined by socially prescribed roles. David and Brannon (in Gorski, 1998) broadly define "role" as any pattern of behaviours which a given individual in a given situation is both (1) expected and (2) encouraged and/or trained to perform. The male identity is said to develop through men learning to perform

these roles. Male's are taught not to display feminine qualities, which at times can be very difficult, as the males do identify with their mothers. At some point the male needs to fight the urge to continue identifying with his mother and to begin to perform a masculine role. These authors assert that the stigma attached to femininity can be observed in every aspect of personality and life. The terror of being a "sissy", at an age when the child can hardly understand the meaning of the accusation, let alone ignore it, apparently leaves a deep wound on the psyche of many males. This wound is said to remain with the male through his life as a reminder to stay away from anything that is associated with femininity.

3.3.1.3 The Social Relations Perspective

The social relations perspective on the development of the male identity is based on the idea that the male identity emerges from the men's positioning within social structures (Edley & Weherell, in Gorski, 1998). The social relations perspective, which was greatly influenced by the feminist movement, addresses the way in which cultural institutions (school, church, family, work, and peer groups) and cultural identifiers (race, class, gender and sexual orientation) affect the development of the individual's identity.

Edley and Weherell therefore argue that if men are aggressive, oppressive, unemotional and competitive, it is because of their positioning in society's structures. Tolson, (in Groski, 1998), suggests that school adds another dimension of encouraging competition. Academic and other competitive fields serve to measure "masculine competence". School introduces the boys to the concept of hierarchy, and in working through these hierarchical structures, boys adopt masculine values such as competitiveness, personal ambition and emotional restraint.

3.3.1.4 The Social Constructionist Model

The social constructionist perspective regarding the construction of gender argues that the meaning of masculinity is neither trans-historical nor culturally universal, but rather varies from culture to culture and within any one culture over time. Males in South Africa become “men” in the 20th and 21st Centuries in a way that is very different from men in Ghana or South America. The men from different cultures also vary within their cultures over time. The “real men” of 17th Century France wore lots of rouge and white powder on their faces. They also wore frilly lace shirts and high-heeled patent-leather shoes. This idea of what defined masculinity in 17th Century France is very different from the way masculinity is defined in France in the 20th Century. The men of 20th Century France wore no make-up and they were usually dressed in expensive suits (Brettell & Sargent, 1997; Kimmel & Messner, 1998).

The social constructionist model is therefore a perspective that emphasizes the social construction of gender, and is therefore both historical and comparative. Researchers who work from a constructionist point of departure explore the way in which the meanings of gender vary from culture to culture, and how the meanings of gender change within a culture over time. Masculinity can be constructed differently according to class, culture, race, ethnicity and age. It is also important to understand that each of these axes of masculinity is modified by the others. To ignore this important fact is to run the risk of collapsing all masculinities into one hegemonic version. If this were to occur, there would be a risk of positing one version of masculinity as normative, and making all other masculinities problematic (Kimmel & Messner, 1998).

Although these earlier studies of men and masculinity have focused on the apparently universal norms of masculinity, recent work, which is generally from a postmodern perspective, has attempted to demonstrate how different the worlds of men are. Men’s lives differ in many ways, and understanding these variations

leads to a greater understanding of men's experience (Kimmel & Messner, 1998).

3.4 Masculine Crisis Theory and Critique

The masculine crisis theory was founded on the observation that both men and women deviate from the master gender stereotypes of their society (Augustine, 2002). This theory seems to indicate that gender identity is therefore very fragile and tentative, especially in the case of men.

According to both Badinter and Kimmel (in Lemon, 1991), there have been two "crises in masculinity" periods in history. The first crisis occurred in France and England during the 17th and 18th centuries, while the second crisis is said to have occurred in Europe and the United States at the end of the 19th Century and the beginning of the 20th Century. These crises of masculinity are said to have occurred in societies where individuals started to radically question or redefine the meaning of "masculinity". The questioning of the definitions of masculinity is said to have occurred in countries where there have been great ideological, economic or social upheavals. These upheavals have precipitated changes in social values, including the creation of greater freedom for women.

The "male sex identity role" is a concept, highlighted by Pleck (in Lemon, 1991, p. 131), which focuses on the crisis of masculinity prevalent in Western industrial societies. The assumption is that this crisis was brought on by the erosion of male power in the workplace and at home. In the past, men knew who they were and what they had to be. The roles of the men were clearly specified and identified; the roles of women were also clearly defined and understood. In today's society this sense of certainty of sex roles and their sense of place in the world is being challenged by women on all levels. This argument explains the male gender crisis in terms of psychological processes. These psychological processes are said to have begun in the period of early or primary socialization.

The particular psychological identity, social role, place in the labour force, and sense of self that a man possesses will define whether or not he is masculine (Brod, 1987). In industrial societies “real men” describe themselves in three ways:

1. They earn money in the public labour force and they support their families through this work and money.
2. They should have formal power over the women and children in those families.
3. Real men are heterosexual.

Lemon (1991) lists a number of factors as contributing to the development of the contemporary crisis of masculinity. This list includes: the women’s movement and the rise of feminism; the declining emotional and physical health of men(as a result of the stress they are exposed to in contemporary society); the communication revolution and the rise of popular culture, and the gay liberation movement which is increasing the visibility of homosexuality.

The masculine crisis theory has also been criticized by Lemon (1991). One criticism of the masculine crisis theory is that it is founded upon the assumptions of sex role theory. The sex role theory argues a form of social determination which excuses men for their actions. Men are excused for their actions because the problems of masculinity are ascribed to society and the male sex role itself. It is, however, important to remember that the sex role theory cannot adequately account for the fundamental reality of social power.

Most studies on men and masculinity tend to see masculinity as an ideal that can be defined and identified. However, the notion of masculinity is a myth, since there are many divergent conceptions of masculinity (Brittan, 1989). Another

criticism that is lodged against the crisis of masculinity theory is that it assumes that all men have a sense of collective identity. The theory also assumes that there is one monolithic essence that constitutes “masculinity”. By assuming this, men are over-categorised, and it is assumed that all men have the same interests, same identities and same class positions. This is clearly not possible. By assuming that all men have the same identities, this theory assumes that all men are therefore in a crisis of masculinity. Brittan (1989, p.184) suggests that “incorrigible propositions of gender remain the cornerstone on which society policy is built in all industrial societies”. Brittan suggests that instead of men going through a crisis of masculinity, they are rather going through a “legitimation crisis”. This legitimation crisis theory proposes that male authority has to be defended and rationalized. Patriarchal ideology and masculinity have therefore been stabilized, but masculinity is subject to change (Lemon, 1991). Since patriarchal ideology is stable and masculinity is not, what does remain stable is masculine ideology or “masculinism” (Brittan, 1989). “Masculinity” therefore refers to those aspects of men’s behaviour that fluctuate over time, such as fashion trends and popular fads, and “masculinism” refers to the ideology that justifies and naturalizes male domination and patriarchy. Masculinism is therefore more resistant to change than masculinity.

Lemon (1991) proposes that the traditional roles of men are now in question. The “crisis” that is spoken about in the masculinity crisis theory is nothing more than men realizing that women have started to make inroads into areas of masculine control. Brittan (1989) believes that the most important factor that has caused the alleged “crisis” is the belief that women are not only taking dominant roles in the labour market, but are also fast moving into positions of real power in society. Through this moving into positions of real power the legitimacy of hegemonic masculinity and patriarchal power is questioned.

The crisis that Lemon talks about is basically a shifting of power between the sexes. The so-called “crisis of masculinity” represents a time of renegotiating

assumptions and a redistribution of power in human relations in response to these changes.

3.5 The Changing Role of Women in Society

Women are beginning to carve out a new identity on social, political and cultural grounds. Even though women seem to be shifting their roles and the demand for equality on all levels, men seem to be doing very little in creating or shifting a new identity for them. From the literature review that will follow, it will be shown that men are not usually socialized to share power with women. This is especially true if the male has been brought up in a patriarchal society. It is as if males' sense of identity is constructed in opposition to women. In the following section the researcher will attempt to show the role that women have played in challenging the dominant sexist and racist norms in South African society.

3.5.1 Women Around the World

One way to measure how the roles of women have changed in the world is to look at when women around the world obtained voting rights. Individuals being allowed to vote means that they have a say in the running of that specific country. Allowing individuals and specifically women to vote, shows that they no longer need to have power only in the private (home) spheres of life and they can now move into a more powerful space in the public arena. The following dates when women started to gain more rights in certain countries were downloaded from the Internet

(www.womenshistory.about.com/od/suffrage/a/intl_timeline.htm):

- 1895 South Australian women get certain voting rights
- 1899 Western Australian women get certain voting rights
- 1901 Australian women receive voting rights with various restrictions
- 1915 Denmark and Iceland women receive voting rights
- 1918 The United Kingdom gives women (age 30) full voting rights. Men only have to be 21 to vote

- 1920 19th Amendment to the constitution granting women the right to vote in the United States of America
- 1929 Women found to be a “person” in Canada and are therefore able to be members of the State
- 1952 Covenant on Political Rights of women enacted by the United Nations, calling for women’s rights to vote and the right to stand for elections
- 1957 Zimbabwean women receive the right to vote.
- 1994 Black women gain voting rights in South Africa.

From the above dates it can be seen that only in the last 100 years have women been allowed to vote and there was an increase in their decision making abilities.

3.5.2 Women in South Africa

South African women have long struggled for human rights. However, these early battles for human rights were mainly fought by, and for, the white women in South Africa. Black women, who were angered by being discriminated against and victimized by the pass laws, banded together and eventually formed the African National Congress (ANC) Women’s League in 1943. However, at that time, the ANC Women’s League was more concerned with fighting racism than fighting for women’s rights. In May 1990, the ANC addressed the issue of the emancipation of women in South Africa in its Statement of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress. In this Statement the ANC said, “The experience of other societies has shown that the emancipation of women is not a by-product of a struggle for democracy, national liberation or socialism. It has to be addressed in its own right within our organisation, the mass democratic movement, and in society as a whole” (Park, Fedler & Dangor, 2000).

Sewpaul (1994) states that there has always been discontent among black women in South Africa. Black women in South Africa not only had to deal with sexism and racism, but they were also at the lowest level of the economic strata. A true redress of women’s poverty can only be achieved with women actively

participating in social, political and economic engineering, and by women commanding some power and control over land and wealth. The shifts that have occurred on a national and international level have paved the way for reforms and new laws which better address the situation of South African women. These ideological shifts have enabled feminists to challenge the rules of South African law and African customary law, as well as the male hierarchy responsible for them. It can therefore be said that in South Africa, the law has been the instrument used by women to achieve change (Van Blerk, 1998). Women in government have also assisted in bringing about amendments to the law and new legislation in South Africa. Some of these laws include:

1. Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Discrimination Act (2000)
2. The Maintenance Act (1998)
3. The Employment Equity Act (1998)
4. The Recognition of Customary Marriages Act (1998) (in operation since November 2000)
5. Termination of Pregnancy Act (1996)
6. The Domestic Violence Act (passed November 1998) (in operation since December 1999)

The birth of the Commission for Gender Equality, which applies to both men and women, has helped to bring about the promotion and protection of gender equality in South Africa. Another Act which is said to be gender-neutral is the Maintenance Act. The Constitutional guarantee of gender equality has been the strongest and possibly the most vital tool in the fight against male dominance, and the realisation of economic, social and political redress of females in all spheres concerned (<http://www.info.gov.za>).

Commission chairperson Joyce Piliso-Seroke has fought for the liberation of women for most of her 69 years. In 1976, she was jailed at the old Women's Jail in Braamfontein, Johannesburg. South Africa still has a long way to go in

becoming gender-sensitive, Piliso-Seroke says, adding that the Commission is particularly determined to restore the pride and dignity of poor rural women and improve their access to information about their basic human rights.

Another of the Commission's key objectives, she says, is to take the promotion of women's rights into South Africa's echelons of power: the chambers of local, provincial and national government. "We must challenge discrimination in governance and see where the power of decision-making lies, particularly in local government where there are so few female councillors."

Gender equality starts at home, says Piliso-Seroke.

It's how we as parents promote gender equality that matters. I'm calling on mothers, fathers and siblings to teach each other how to value girls and women, and to recognise them as human beings. In some instances we have given up on men, but we know we can reach young people to make a difference (<http://www.info.gov.za/gazette/notices/2000/21517>).

In government workplaces women are cementing their positions of influence, including the Department of Justice, as well as South Africa electing its first female vice-president, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka in June 2005. This is a huge step in what has always been seen as a male-only dominated position. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka is the first female vice-president to be appointed on the African continent (<http://www.info.gov.za/gazette/notices/2000/21517>).

3.6 Summary

There are many different ways of defining sex and gender. In the following chapters the researcher will be referring to sex and gender according to the definition that has been offered by Richardson. When the researcher refers to "sex", this will mean the biological aspects of a person such as the chromosomal, anatomical, hormonal and physiological structure, and "gender" will be used

when referring to the psychological, social and cultural components. Unlike the sex of an individual, a person's gender is not assigned, but rather is achieved. People learn what behaviours and attitudes they should have according to their label as male or female. Further, when males act according to culturally condoned gender appropriate ways, they are seen as being "male".

The overview of the theories pertaining to the development of the male identity attempts to provide a backdrop against which to view male-only societies, in this case, the Freemasons. The role of females in society has slowly changed in respect to their involvement in more public spheres. They have become more included, and their rights have become more equal. It is therefore interesting to note that the Freemasons still exclude women, even though societal trends seem to move towards the integration of genders.

CHAPTER 4

ADOPTING A THEORETICAL STANDPOINT

EXPLORING PHENOMENOLOGY

The phenomenologist views human behaviour as a product of how people interpret their world. The task of the phenomenologist, and for us, the qualitative methodologists, is to capture this process of interpretation. In order to grasp the meanings of a person's behaviour, the phenomenologist attempts to see things from that person's point of view" (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975, pp. 13-14).

4.1 Introduction

The development of qualitative methodologies and approaches such as phenomenology and hermeneutics has played a vital role in cultural studies in developing grounded analysis. This includes analysis of the complex ways in which people come to understand identity and culture as dynamic social processes, as well as connecting the acted experience of collective and individual people to wider structures of power (Carrington, 1998). In the 20th Century, this approach to questioning certainty through application of reason came under attack by postmodernists, pragmatists and philosophical hermeneutics. This challenge holds that nothing is certain, that all knowledge production is relative to the frame of reference.

In this chapter the researcher intends to describe the postmodernist paradigmatic point of departure as well as the philosophical underpinnings of the

phenomenological research design. A distinction will also be made between *pure phenomenology* and *phenomenological psychology*, and an exploration into why phenomenology is a viable approach to research will be undertaken.

4.2 Epistemology

When trying to understand what an *epistemology* is, it is important to understand that when one intends to do any research there needs to be a clear understanding of how the researcher will view the knowledge under investigation. Because research aims to study knowledge, and knowledge is what allows us to understand the world we live in, it is important to establish how we view knowledge. There are many different ways to understand and view knowledge.

According to Reber & Reber (2001, p. 257) *epistemology* can be defined as “the branch of philosophy that is concerned with the origins, nature, methods and limits of human knowledge”. Hergenhahn (2005, p. 24) defines it as “the study of the nature of knowledge”. Epistemology can therefore be described as the branch of philosophy that studies knowledge. It attempts to answer the basic question: What distinguishes true (adequate) knowledge from false (inadequate) knowledge? This can be translated into issues of scientific methodology, namely: How can one develop theories or models that are better than competing theories? The first theories of knowledge stressed its absolute, permanent character, whereas later theories put the emphasis on the relativity or situation dependence, its continuous development or evolution, and its active interference with the world and its subjects and objects. It can therefore be said that there was a move from a static, passive view of knowledge towards a more adaptive and active one. Therefore the epistemology that the researcher employs shapes the research, because it decides how researchers view knowledge. An epistemology can therefore be interpreted as that which asks questions about the very nature of knowledge and defines that which is deemed appropriate to study. The epistemology that a researcher employs will shape the research, because it will determine how the researcher will view the knowledge.

A number of changes have occurred within the field of psychology. According to Hergenhahn (2005), three distinct forces have developed. These are: (1) the psycho-analytic approach, (2) the behaviouristic approach and (3) the humanistic approach. The Third Force psychologists, also known as the Humanists, claimed that the other two forces in psychology neglect a number of important human attributes.

The Third Force psychologists believed that by applying the techniques of the natural sciences to the study of humans, the behaviourists likened humans to robots or computers, while the psycho-analysts merely focused on pathology and ways of making the abnormal, normal. The Third Force epistemology was more interested in a model of humans that highlighted the uniqueness and the positive aspects of humans.

The act of knowing human phenomena cannot be investigated without taking into account the human element. This is true of the present study. The researcher therefore aligns herself with the type of model that the Third Force psychologists attempted to provide. The researcher will therefore use the Third Force epistemology as she does not assume determinism in explaining human behaviour, but rather assumes that humans are free and able to choose their own type of existence. Subjective reality is seen as paramount in causing human behaviour, and other causes such as stimuli, drive states, genetics or early experience do not sufficiently explain human behaviour.

4.3 Positivism and Empiricism

The term “Positivism” refers to scientific claims that have been posited on the basis of empirical evidence, as opposed to claims that are based on religious or metaphysical beliefs (Babbie & Mouton, 2002).

As the social sciences developed over the last four centuries, a variety of metascientific positions evolved as well. Some scholars defended the view that the social sciences are comparable to the natural sciences. These scholars (Francis Bacon, 1560-1625; Adam Smith, 1723-1790; Henri Saint Simon, 1760-1825 and Auguste Comte, 1798-1857) believed that the only way to make any progress in the social sciences would be to pursue the same goals as those of the natural sciences (Babbie & Mouton, 2002). However, the positivist view of the human sciences came under great criticism. The anti-positivists emphasized the differences between the human sciences and the natural sciences. They made the point that human nature was and is different to any other entity in the universe.

Auguste Comte developed the main ideas of positivism between 1826 and 1829. The core idea of his book, *Cours de philosophie positive*, is his theory of human and scientific progress. According to Comte, all branches of knowledge pass through successive stages: the theological (fictitious), the metaphysical (or abstract), and the scientific (or positive). In the scientific or positive phase, scientists give up the idea of explaining observable behaviour in terms of underlying causes or entities, and rather concentrate on the direct, observable relations of contiguity and correlation between phenomena. The positive scientists reject the notion that there exists a deeper essence or underlying force that causes things to happen (Neuman, 2000).

Positivist social science is still very widely used in today's society. There are many versions of positivism and it has a long history within the philosophy of science and in research. A broad definition of positivism is that it is the "approach of the natural sciences" (Neuman, 2000, p. 65). In Hergenbahn (2005, p. 116) positivism is defined as "the belief that only those objects or events that can be experienced directly should be the object of scientific enquiry. The positivist actively avoids metaphysical speculation." Positivists see social science as an "...organized method for combining deductive logic with precise empirical

observations of individuals' behaviour in order to discover and confirm a set of probabilistic causal laws that can be used to predict general patterns of human behavior." (Neuman, 2000, p. 66). The positivist idea of science is located in their definition of knowledge, which maintains that only that which is absolutely certain can be counted as knowledge. This would imply that the mere uncertainty about a claim renders it scientifically disproved (Polkinghorne, 1983). This is a very extreme point of view by Polkinghorne since in psychology it is extremely difficult, if not impossible to gain absolute certainty through research.

Gergen (2002, p. 190) describes the researcher's role in research as follows:

Armed with a set of shared assumptions, language of description and explanation and a set of related practices, a world of particulars is established where we can anticipate the development of multiple realities, depending on the person's discipline.

In the present study, different individuals will be interviewed and it is important to understand their experiences or realities of the phenomenon under study.

The positivist way of conducting research, which must conform to the criterion of certainty, is seen to be limiting. The modernistic, linear and reductionist way of explaining phenomena is regarded as insufficient for research and practice in many fields. The positivist science is seen to neglect the importance of human experience. In order to appreciate the true nature of human experience a new research approach needed to develop. This came in the form of post-positivist science. Post-positivist science challenges the notion that knowledge is only accessible by means of unquestionable truths (Polkinghorne, 1983).

4.4 Post-Positivism and Post-Modernism

Individuals who work from a post-positivist paradigm challenge the assumption of a single truth, objectivity and linear causality. The alternative paradigm that has been proposed suggests that there is no one true reality, and that reality is

constructed by the individual to whom the reality belongs. One can deduce from this that an interpretive perspective thus emerged, where truth became a matter of perspective (Polkinghorne, 1983). Post-positivism believes that an individual's reality is tainted with the particular person's beliefs, values and ways of life, and therefore, there can be no one true objectivity. This is because each individual's description is "subjective" and is dependent on the individual making the description. There can therefore be numerous realities, depending on the number of individuals constructing them.

Since psychology's commitment to becoming a natural science, it has attempted to gain precision and systemization by means of either a laboratory setting or one type of quantitative measurement. In doing this, the phenomenon as lived and experienced was either overlooked or severely distorted, because the methods of the natural sciences were invented to deal with phenomena of nature, not of experienced phenomena (Giorgi, 1985, p. 45).

Because of the researcher's epistemological stance, a post-positivist approach is best suited for the present research topic.

4.5 What is Phenomenology?

Richardson (1980) proposes that the term *phenomenology* embraces a broad spectrum of terms, and he suggests that a narrowness of definition is necessary. Phenomenology is defined as "the study of the structure and the variations of structure, of the consciousness to which any thing, event or person appears" (Giorgi, 1975, p. 83). The main idea of phenomenology is expressed in the word *phenomenon*. Heidegger (cited in De Wet 2004) explains that the word *phenomenon* is derived from the word *phaenesthai*, which means to "blaze or flare, to scintillate, to show itself in itself, to appear in totality" (p. 71). A phenomenon is defined as "that which appears or that which is given" (Hergenhahn, 2005, p. 418). Another definition of phenomenon is "anything that can be perceived as an occurrence or fact by the senses" (Collins Dictionary,

1993). The researcher is interested in the meaning a person attributes to his/her experiences of reality, his/her life-world, and his/her relationships.

The subject matter of phenomenology began with consciousness and experience, and later moved on to include the human life-world by Heidegger, and to include human action by Sartre (Kvale, 1996). A *life-world* can be defined as the space occupied by any one person in the external, physical world or environment as well as the internal lived-in world, consisting of emotions and cognitions at any given time, or the content of one's awareness (Hergenhahn, 2005; Thines, 1977). The life-world is the world lived by the person and is not seen as being separate from the person. The life-world is constructed by the unconscious and is independent of scientific interpretations. Therefore the researcher interprets phenomenology as a quest to understand and circumscribe a person's experience, because it is only through this that the true essence of the person can be realised.

The operative, or working word in the phenomenological approach is *describe*, rather than *explain*, as this approach attempts to describe experiences in their purest form, without contaminating them by forcing findings into predetermined categories (Kruger, 1979). Polkinghorne (1989, p. 45), aptly describes what this method attempts to achieve as follows: "Instead of studying the body as an organic object, it studies the experiences people have of their bodies".

An approach that is true to the phenomenological philosophy will echo the motto: "to the things themselves". The "thing" that is referred to here can be interpreted as a phenomenon or anything which one is conscious of. This, according to Husserl, can be many different things including natural objects, affective states, values, and so on. Phenomenology is thus a programme for a systematic investigation of the content of consciousness (Stewart & Mickunas, 1974). Husserl proposed that all experience is intentional (Gergen, 1999). By this he meant that an individual's experience is always directed towards or absorbed by

some object or person in the external environment. Therefore conscious experience is fundamentally relational. Gergen states that on an interpersonal level it implies that: “my existence requires you in order for it to have content; you exist for me only in so far as I bring experience to bear on you” (1999, p. 128).

The only way to describe a person’s experience is through an unbiased attitude of understanding. This can be achieved by the observer projecting himself or herself into the person’s world and standing in their shoes, listening without preconceptions, and giving an unbiased description of the person’s experience. It studies the subject’s perspectives on the world, attempts to describe in detail the content and structure of the subject’s consciousness, to grasp the qualitative diversity of his/her experiences and to explicate their essential meanings. One can thus infer that it is a description of what is being experienced, rather than a description of what is happening. The purpose of the phenomenological approach is to try to understand the individual person in his/her totality.

Phenomenology attempts to get beyond immediately experienced meaning in order to articulate the pre-reflective level of lived meanings and to make the invisible, visible.

4.5.1 The Philosophy of Phenomenology

4.5.1.1 Franz Brentano

Phenomenology started with the work of Franz Brentano (1838-1917). Brentano outlined a programme of descriptive psychology which relied on the concept of intentionality (Warnock, 1970). Brentano questioned what the essential difference was between the objects of empirical psychology and the objects of other kinds of science. The phenomena with which psychologists are concerned are ideas about the act of conceiving ideas. By this is meant that every psychological phenomenon is characterised by intentional existence of an object or a tendency toward an object (Luijpen, 1960).

Brentano maintained that the difference between one kind of phenomenon and another can be perceived by the different quality of the relation of each to its object. These differences can be detected by immediate experience or inner perception (Warnock, 1970). Descriptive psychology is therefore facilitated by inner perception or the examination of the act or experience itself. Thus the contribution made by Brentano is that psychological acts are directed to an object.

4.5.1.2 Edmund Husserl

In the early part of the 20th Century, science and technology were growing rapidly. Edmund Husserl (1859-1939), the acknowledged father of phenomenology, formulized the ideas of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche into a new discipline called *phenomenology* (Schneider & May, 1995). Husserl argued that truth cannot only be obtained through rationality and logic. He believed that it is necessary to examine the essence of everyday conscious experience in order to fully understand the world. He rejected the behaviourist belief that perception results from external stimuli; and his phenomenological philosophy was fundamentally opposed to realism (Hammond, Howart & Keat, 1991). Husserl was one of the first philosophers who strove to create a phenomenological understanding of the world that was outside of traditional beliefs, religious beliefs and modern scientific theories (McLeod, 2000).

Husserl believed that through phenomenology, which he thought could be made scientific, it is possible to be objective in a way that transcends the kind of objectivity yielded by positivism. Husserl believed that positivism is merely empirical, or as he put it, psychological. He regarded it as psychological in that it is based on perceptions gained through the senses and correspondingly, is limited by the senses. Husserl also recognized that perceptions are influenced by expectations, hypotheses, anticipations and frames of reference. Perception in terms of sensory input and such psychological influences is what Husserl referred to as *natural attitude* (Rennie, 1999). He believed that in order to get

beyond the natural attitude, and to perceive reality objectively, the researcher must be aware of such perceptions and put them aside. This is known as *bracketing*.

Husserl approached the pursuit of knowledge with a sharp focus on the description of experience (Polkinghorne, 1989). He felt that too much effort was being put into trying to understand human or psychological phenomena through natural scientific attitudes. Husserl believed that imposing scientific attitudes on human experience reduced or dishonoured that experience. This focus illustrates a move away from principles of scientific measurement of that which can be observed. The language of phenomenology is said to be rather unclear (Cohen & Omery, 1994) and that this is probably the case because phenomenology is both a research method and a philosophy (Wilkes, 1991). However, phenomenology is primarily considered to be a philosophy (Ray, 1994).

4.5.2 Schools of Phenomenology

Three different schools have developed in phenomenology (Cohen & Omery, 1994). The first school is the *eidetic* or descriptive phenomenology, which draws on the work of Husserl.

The second school of phenomenology is *hermeneutics*. The aim of hermeneutics is the “interpretation of phenomena to uncover hidden meanings” (Sodi, 1996). Hermeneutics has been guided by the work of Heidegger. According to Ray (1994), the main difference between Husserlian and Heideggerian approaches is that whereas Husserl advocates bracketing, Heidegger suggests that the presuppositions are not to be eliminated or suspended.

The third school of phenomenology is guided by the Dutch school and is a combination of descriptive and interpretive phenomenology (Cohen & Omery,

1994). The different schools that can be found in Phenomenology is illustrated in the table below:

Table 1 The Schools of Phenomenology

School	Eidetic or descriptive phenomenology	Hermeneutics	Dutch school of phenomenology
Philosophical Guidance	Husserl	Heidegger Gadamer Taylor	Van Manen and others
Other descriptions		Interpretive phenomenology Existential phenomenology Heideggerian hermeneutics (Heidegger) Philosophical hermeneutics (Gadamer)	

4.5.3 What are the Aims of Phenomenology?

The aim of phenomenology is to provide a method whereby the following are obtained (Schneider & May, 1995, p. 59):

1. Human existence can be studied in its natural environment and not in a controlled laboratory setting.

2. The researcher suspends any preconceived ideas about the phenomena being studied. These preconceived notions will reside within the researcher and will need to be considered during the analysis phase.

3. The researcher immerses him/herself in as many aspects of the phenomena as possible.
4. The researcher must attempt to describe the phenomena that are being studied as richly and fully as possible.
5. The researcher must collect and integrate all the descriptions to provide a “saturated” interpretation of the phenomenon.

The strength of a phenomenological approach is that it emphasizes the richness and complexity of an individual’s lived experience. (Cosgrove, 2000). For this reason the researcher has decided to use the phenomenological approach in this study. The researcher wants to obtain an understanding of the participants’ lived experiences of being part of a male-only society, namely the Freemasons.

4.5.4 Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Psychology.

There are two main phenomenological approaches that are said to exist in phenomenology. The first is Husserl’s pure and transcendental phenomenology. *Pure phenomenology* as described by Husserl represents the field of neutral researchers, and is an ancillary to psychology conceived as an empirical science. It deals with the intuitive description and analysis of the essential generality of the following phenomenological experiences: presentation, judgement and knowledge. Pure phenomenology is the exploration of the essential structures of consciousness, focusing on the ego-subject, its act and its content (Spiegelberg, 1960). Pure phenomenology is, however, not limited to psychological phenomena.

Spinelli (1989) observes that the relationship between psychology and phenomenology raised much perturbation for Husserl. Husserl remained sceptical about contemporary psychology. He found a solution for himself; he decided to develop another form of radical psychology. At first he named this

new psychology *rational psychology*, or *eidetic psychology* but eventually he decided to use the term *phenomenological psychology*.

Husserl described the goal of phenomenological psychology as the application of the phenomenological method to psychological enquiry (Spinelli, 1989). Phenomenological psychology may be described as being concerned with the application of phenomenological methods to psychological issues. It is focused on systematically observing and describing conscious experience of the world. Phenomenological psychology is concerned with the issue of personal, subjective experience. It is the study of psychological phenomena in their subjective aspects only, regardless of their embeddedness in the context of a psychological organism. It is a means of exploration, the means to explore the essence of things.

4.6 Is Phenomenology a Viable Approach?

A number of strengths of phenomenology have been identified by Braud and Anderson (1998). These strengths are that (1) phenomenology is said to provide rich and complete descriptions of human experience and meanings; (2) the findings emerge and are not imposed; (3) the techniques that are employed ensure the faithful handling of the data, and (4) bracketing implies minimal researcher influence on the findings.

Sodi (1996) summarised the characteristics that Giorgi (1975) identified as the reasons why phenomenology is a viable approach when studying human phenomena. These characteristics illustrate why phenomenology is the research approach that is best suited for the study of the lived experience of Freemasons.

The characteristics mentioned above are as follows (Sodi, 1996):

1. **Fidelity to the phenomenon as it is lived:** All the subjects' reflections are seen as viable and valuable sources for data analysis. It is also of great

importance that the researcher makes clear his/her explicit perspective, as this may have a bearing on the research situation.

2. **Primacy of the life-world:** In order to capture the participants' lived experiences the researcher will have to go back to the life-world in which the participant is embedded. This should provide the necessary point of departure in terms of the research undertaking. To illustrate this point a quote from Giorgi is used:

By the life-world phenomenologists mean the everyday world as lived by all of us prior to explanations and theoretical interpretations of any kind. Since life-world is the ground for all sciences and systematic knowledge, psychology conceived as a human science must always stay in touch with this inexhaustible source of data (1975, p. 99).

3. **Descriptive approach:** Because phenomenology is so reliant on what is communicated in the form of language, the descriptions will need to be rigorously analysed in order to fully understand the participants' experiences and the human phenomena.

4. **Expression of the situation from the subject's point of view:** Phenomenological research's main concern in a research setting is the participant's viewpoint. If the participants are given the freedom to express themselves and to use the words and examples that they choose, the explanations of the participant's lived experience will be richer.

5. **Situation as unit of research implies a structural approach:** Since phenomenological psychology accepts lived experience as the basic unit of research, it is necessary to take into account the interpersonal context. This means that the act of investigating the lived experience will need to be analysed.

The exchanges between the researcher and the participants must be considered when the data is interpreted.

6. **From the personal to the general:** Giorgi tried to draw a line between traditional experimental psychology and phenomenological psychology in terms of how theoretical concepts are formulated. Phenomenological psychology attempts to formulate concepts only after having contact with the data. Phenomenological psychologists would therefore start with the participants' personal accounts and from this they would develop theoretical ideas.

7. **Searching for meaning:** While the measurement method in scientific research is generally regarded as an important route, phenomenological psychology seeks to directly get to the meaning of the phenomena without necessarily having to go through a measurement process. Giorgi (1975) asserts that:

The value of the phenomenological approach is the direct access it provides to meaning by integrating the qualitative aspects of the phenomenon (pp.101-102).

8. **Engaged researcher:** There has been a great deal of debate surrounding whether or not a researcher should play an active role in the creation of the data, or should treat the data as self-made. Giorgi (1975) has not taken a clear stance on this, but he does believe that phenomenological psychology should treat the results of the scientific inquiry as products of an engaged researcher.

4.7 Limitations of phenomenological research

There have been numerous published studies that have used phenomenological methods, and despite the importance and usefulness of these methods, there are still a number of limitations and problems with the method that need to be

acknowledged. McLeod (2000) puts forward the following examples to explain these limitations:

- Phenomenological reduction and the radical act of *epoche* are disciplines that need to be mastered and are not techniques that can be mastered by using procedural manuals and following a step-by-step guide. The following quote by Husserl cited in Ashworth (1996, p.7) helps to explain the shift in attitude that an aspiring phenomenologist should assume before he or she attempts any explication of knowledge:

The psychologist as such in his enquiry must take and have no position; he must neither concur nor refuse, nor remain in problematic suspense, as if he had some say in the validity of the persons who are his subjects. So long as he has not enquired this position as a serious and consciously established one, he has not arrived at his true subject matter; as soon as he violates it, he has lost his subject matter.

The *epoche* instructs the researcher to “put out of action” any belief that he may have about the independent existence of the world as he sees it. For a researcher to comply with the act of *epoche*, the researcher will need to suspend his/her everyday beliefs and assumptions of the real world and will need to return to the self to find the meaning and nature of things as they appear in their essence. By doing this, the researcher places emphasis on the phenomena and the phenomena within the context that it exists. In the present study the researcher aims to move beyond her knowledge and preconceptions and try to understand men’s experience of belonging to male-only societies, namely the Freemasons. The researcher will aim to obtain this in order to allow her to move toward an intuitive access to the conscious world of being.

- When looking at the literature available in phenomenological psychology, it is noted that there appears to be a lack of cumulative knowledge in certain areas of study. This could be due to the fact that there are a number of “one-off” studies surrounding certain phenomena with no subsequent investigation into the same phenomena.
- The phenomenological method depends on the articulate skills of the participants. If the participants are unable to speak and to articulate the essence of their experience, the researcher will not be able to obtain the necessary information from them and the analysis of the participants’ experience will not be as rich.
- The language that the participants use may be obtuse or simple-minded. The descriptions of their experience may be rather simple and broad, and this could make the analysis of the descriptions very thin.

When the researcher was deciding on which paradigm to base her research, she assessed the strengths and weaknesses of phenomenology individually. She felt that the participants would probably be articulate and have the necessary skills in order to describe their experience. She decided that if the participants used any terminology or phraseology that she did not understand, she would immediately ask for clarification so as not to analyse later something that she did not fully understand.

4.8 Using Phenomenology in Psychological Research

Phenomenological research in psychology aims to explore the participants’ perspectives on their world, attempting to describe in detail the content and structure of the participants’ consciousness, to grasp the qualitative diversity of individuals’ experiences, and to elucidate their essential meanings.

Phenomenology is interested in both clarifying what appears and the manner in which it appears. Phenomenology attempts to go beyond the immediately

experienced meanings in order to articulate the pre-reflective level of lived meanings. When this is done, the invisible becomes visible (Ashworth, 1976; Creswell, 1998; Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003; Huysamen, 2001; Kvale, 1996; Lemon & Taylor, 1997).

4.9 Summary

This chapter attempted to trace the development of the phenomenological philosophy, outlining its basic concepts. A distinction was made between positivism, empiricism and post-positivism. The links between phenomenology and psychology were briefly explored. The researcher established why phenomenology is a viable approach to use in research, and also explained why this paradigm was chosen for the present research. The limitations of phenomenology were discussed as well as reasons why the researcher still felt that it was a viable approach to conducting the present study.

CHAPTER 5

METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the method of selection of participants, data gathering and data analysis, unique to this study and appropriate to its goal will be formulated. This study is intended to be a qualitative design taken from a post-positivist, phenomenological paradigm.

The procedures that were used in the analysis phase will be discussed. The history of hermeneutics will be briefly outlined, and how it will be used as an analysis approach will also be covered. The chapter will explain the steps that will be followed when analyzing data according to the hermeneutic circle.

5.2 Research Aim

The purpose of the current study is to attempt to obtain an in-depth understanding of men's lived experience of being a member of a male-only society, namely the Freemasons.

5.3 Design

This study is intended to be a qualitative design within a post-positivist, phenomenological approach. Phenomenological research explores human experiences as they transpire from the individual's experience or frame of reference (Meyer, Moore & Viljoen, 1989). Phenomenology attempts to understand the perceived world without imposing predetermined ideas on the phenomena (Morley, 2001).

The choice of whether to use a qualitative or a quantitative design is often made for technical or pragmatic reasons. One method is chosen over another because of the type of information that the researcher wants to generate; this approach is better known as a *situational approach*. However, the choice of qualitative or quantitative research is not as simple as it seems. It is more about philosophy of knowledge and how one understands the reality.

Qualitative researchers attempt to study human action from the perspective of the social actors themselves. This is also called by anthropologists the *emic* perspective (Babbie & Mouton, 2002). The primary goal of studies using this approach is defined as describing and understanding, rather than explaining, human behaviour. Qualitative and quantitative research paradigms generally make different assumptions about reality and how reality is observed (Neuman, 2000). Due to this there will also be different research objectives depending on which paradigm is followed. Qualitative research distinguishes itself from quantitative research in terms of the following key features (Babbie & Mouton, 2002):

1. The research will be conducted in the natural setting of the actors being studied.
2. The focus of the research is not on the outcome but rather on the process of the research.
3. The perspective of the actor is emphasized and not the perspective of the researcher. The *insider* or *emic* view is of greatest importance. The emphasis on the insider perspective is especially important when there are differences. Race, culture, beliefs, and so on all introduce potential barriers between the researcher and the actors.

4. The primary aim of the research is to obtain in-depth descriptions and understanding of actions and events.
5. The main concern in this form of research is to understand social action in terms of its specific context (idiographic motive) rather than attempting to generalise to some theoretical population.
6. The process is usually inductive in its approach.
7. The main instrument in this kind of research is the qualitative researcher. The qualitative researcher should attempt to become more than just a participant observer in the natural setting that is being investigated. The researcher should attempt to put him/herself in the shoes of the participants.

Quantitative research is usually identified by trying to obtain an absolute truth; by contrast, qualitative researchers view many aspects of social life as being intrinsically qualitative. Unlike quantitative research, not all qualitative research designs have a rigid or fixed methodological design. Therefore, to account for researcher subjectivity and design fluency, there must be criteria that the study fulfils in order to be regarded as reliable and valid research. Nager (2002) discusses certain characteristics of what a qualitative research design should contain. These include:

1. The researcher should clearly state the purpose of the research before commencing with the research.
2. In qualitative research the roles of the participants and the researcher are far more involved than in quantitative research.

3. In qualitative research, the questions that are asked are generally open-ended and exploratory rather than closed and constricted. By using open-ended questions the researcher will be able to obtain far richer descriptions of lived experiences.
4. In qualitative research the researcher is interested in the in-depth lived experiences of the participants. Therefore the researcher will be working with a smaller participant group.
5. Qualitative researchers believe that instead of “converting ideas or aspects of the social world into general variables to form hypotheses, they rather borrow ideas from people they study or develop new ideas as they examine a specific case in its context or particular natural setting” (Neuman, 2000, p. 145).

5.4 Validity and Reliability in Phenomenological Research

Qualitative research approaches conceptualise reliability and validity differently from quantitative research approaches.

In quantitative research, reliability concerns the consistency of research findings. However in a qualitative study, in each step of the research process, researchers continuously exert an influence in that they always bring in their own subjectivity. The same research undertaken by another researcher, even if it is possible to conduct it in exactly the same manner, will most likely yield different findings due to the other researcher’s own subjectivity. Thus Merrick (1999) proposes that in qualitative research, the aim of replication is thrown out because there is no one ‘truth’ and all knowledge is perceived as constructed. In fact, Merrick (1999) states that not even the same investigator can repeat a study.

Validity in quantitative research refers to the research being conducted and to findings being collected and presented in a truthful and accurate manner (Kvale,

1996). However in qualitative research, validity cannot be established quantitatively and truth or accuracy cannot be scientifically proven. This is particularly so in interpretative research since any interpretation is subject to infinite revision as well as to multiple versions of the same action, not one of which is objectively superior (Gergen, 1988). According to Ricoeur (cited in Moore, 1990), the validity of an interpretation is not a matter of empirical verification and proof, but rather the result of a rational process of argumentation and debate. Gergen (1988) similarly adds that the fundamental basis of any given interpretation is not empirical but rather relies on a network of interdependent and continuously modifiable interpretations. In other words, the interpretation validates itself. The aim is to generate truthful and credible intersubjectivities (Babbie & Mouton, 2002).

According to Ely (1991), reliability and validity in qualitative studies have been replaced by trustworthiness, meaning that the methods used have been carried out fairly and that the products of analyses accurately represent the participants' experiences. Gherardi and Turner (2002) also include the broader concept of authenticity in addition to trustworthiness. Qualitative researchers therefore emphasise '*the plausibility and trustworthiness of a coherent interpretation*' (Katz & Mishler, 2003, p. 36).

Merrick (1999, p. 30) discusses the elements of '*good practice*' that must be present throughout the research process in order to ensure trustworthiness. Various other authors of qualitative research studies, as indicated below, have consensually agreed upon these elements. Such elements include the following:

- **Disclosure of the researcher's orientation** in the study, which refers to the researcher's expectations of the study, preconceptions, values or theoretical allegiance (Stiles, 1993).

- **Intensive and prolonged engagement with the material**, which includes the researcher's relationship with the participants in the study as well as with the material. It is essential that the researcher establish a relationship of trust in which to understand the world from the participants' perspective (Stiles, 1993).
- **Persistent observation** of both the participants' as well as the researcher's own internal processes and awareness of how these processes may be impacting on the research (Stiles, 1993).
- **Triangulation**, which involves the use of multiple methods in the research to achieve convergence and ensure some level of accuracy and trustworthiness (Babbie & Mouton, 2002; Ely, 1991).
- **Discussion** of and working towards **reaching consensus** regarding findings and processes with others, particularly the participants, which will ensure the credibility and accuracy of interpretations (Ely, 1991).

Merrick (1999) further proposes that researchers should engage in an iterative cycle between observation and interpretation or between dialogue/conversation and text, and should also ground interpretations by using individual examples from the data to support identified themes and patterns.

In this study, trustworthiness was achieved by adhering to the above elements, except for triangulation, suggested by Merrick (1999).

Validity and reliability are part of the unfolding process that reveals meanings as they are experienced by individuals (Quail & Peavy, 1994). In phenomenological research, validity depends to a great extent on the power of its descriptions to convince readers of its accuracy (Polkinghorne, 1989).

5.5 Participants

Qualitative and quantitative sampling are approached differently. Qualitative researchers' concern is to find cases that will enhance what other researchers learn about the processes of social life in a specific context (Neuman, 2000).

Within the phenomenological research methodology. There are general considerations that need to be taken into account such as age, race, religion, ethnic and cultural factors and that the individual has to have experienced the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

This study was exploratory and descriptive, and because access to willing Freemasonry participants was restricted, a purposive non-probability sampling technique was used. An implication of this is that the researcher was not able to determine the exact size of the sample beforehand. The researcher did, however, start with four participants, and if there was a necessity to obtain more participants, that would have occurred. The researcher, however, felt that after interpreting the four interviews the data had reached a point of satisfactory saturation and the research aims had been achieved.

The participants' ages varied as the researcher chose members that had different lengths of membership into the Freemasons and that had held different Degrees. The age bracket was between 32 and 53. Additional factors that were used as inclusion factors were the individuals' gender (all participants were male), and all participants were active Freemasons. This was a fundamental criterion for participation in the study as it was vital that all the participants had an experience with the phenomenon under investigation.

The second criterion concerns the participants' abilities to give detailed accounts of their experiences. Van Kaam (cited in Nager, 2002) proposed the following six criteria for participants to take part in a phenomenological study:

1. a capacity to express themselves with relative ease.

2. The capacity to sense and express their inner feelings and emotions without shame or inhibition.
3. The ability to sense and to express the organic (real) experiences that accompany these feelings.
4. Have experienced the phenomenon / situation under investigation at a relatively recent date.
5. Take a spontaneous interest in their experience.

5.6 Procedure

To achieve the main research objective of the study, the researcher approached members of different Freemasonry Lodges. Field research commenced on 26 December 2005 and was completed on 5 January 2006.

A total of four active Freemasons were approached and the objective of the study was explained to them. The chosen Freemasons were known to the researcher in a social regard before the study commenced. They were informed that participation was totally voluntary and that all information that was obtained would only be used for research purposes and all personal information would remain confidential. Informed consent was obtained from all the participants, and dates were arranged for the interview process to begin.

5.7 Method of Data Collection

The purpose of the data collection phase is to collect descriptions from the participants regarding the experience under investigation. Evidence from phenomenological research is derived from first-person reports of life experience.

In the Duquesne method of phenomenological research in psychology, there is a directive to ask people to talk about or describe their experience, rather than asking them to interpret their experience or to communicate how they understand their experience. This is because, as a researcher, one tries to get to the structure of the experience (Kelly, 1996). In other words, the researcher wants the participants to give a sense of the form or structure of the experience rather than to communicate an understanding of the experience.

The basic individual interview is one of the most frequently used methods of collecting data in a qualitative approach (Babbie & Mouton, 2002). The phenomenological interview involves an informal, interactive process and utilises open-ended comments and questions. The way that it differs from other interviews is that it is an open interview, which allows participants to speak about themselves. The researcher gives the participants questions or prompts which do not have a predetermined hypothesis. The qualitative research design is characterised by being “flexible, iterative and continuous rather than prepared in advance and locked in stone” (Babbie & Mouton, 2002, p. 289).

A qualitative interview is an interaction between the interviewer and a participant in which the interviewer has a general plan of enquiry rather than a specific set of questions that must be asked in a particular order and with particular words. The research interview seeks through questioning to obtain knowledge of the participant’s world (Kvale, 1996). The focus of the qualitative research interview is the life-world or *Lebenswelt* of the interviewee and his/her relation to it. As stated before, the interview is descriptive, aiming to obtain as many nuanced uninterrupted descriptions from the different qualitative aspects of the interviewee’s life-world as possible.

Because qualitative research interviewing is so much like having a normal conversation, it is important for the researcher to remember that the interview process is not a normal everyday conversation. In a qualitative interview the

researcher needs to listen very carefully, and to allow the other person to speak more than the researcher does. Lofland and Lofland (1995, pp. 56-57) suggest that researchers adopt the role of the “socially acceptable incompetent” when conducting interviews. Lofland and Lofland were trying say that as a researcher one needs to offer oneself as someone who does not understand the situation you find yourself in. By doing this, the researcher is asking the participants to help him/her grasp even the most basic and obvious aspects of the action being studied.

Kvale (1996, pp. 3-5) describes the interviewing process in terms of two metaphors, which describe the interviewer as a miner or as a traveller. By describing the interviewer as a miner, Kvale assumes that the participant possesses certain information that the interviewer needs to “dig out”. The traveller metaphor describes the interviewer as someone who wanders through the landscape and enters into conversations with the people that he/she encounters.

The researcher started the data collection procedure by conducting an open-ended interview with each participant. The interview was conducted in two phases, first a set of structured questions, and second a set of open-ended questions. (For the structured questions see Appendix A.) Depending on the information that was obtained, the researcher asked various probing questions in order to obtain the participant’s full experience. Probes are one useful way to get answers in greater depth without biasing later answers. In order to facilitate this, the researcher will need to have very good listening skills as well as to be more interested in listening. The researcher will use phrases such as “How is that?” “In what ways?” and “Can you tell me more about that?”

The interviews were recorded by a transcriber and were later transcribed verbatim. Only after this did the researcher begin to interpret the interviews.

In the present study, the following open-ended questions were asked:

1. Please describe your experience of belonging to the Freemasons.
2. What meaning do you attach to the male-only component of belonging to the Freemasons?

5.8 Bracketing

Suspending one's preconceptions to allow the phenomenon to come directly into view is much easier said than done. Having been involved with a family that has been involved in Freemasonry for a number of years at different levels, I realised that I have many implicit presuppositions about the participants in the study. I realised that because of this I needed to think about these presuppositions in order to avoid leading the participants during the interview stage. I needed to let the experiences emerge naturally, rather than leading the answers in a specific way. It was also very important that I was aware of my presuppositions during the data analysis phase (Ashworth, 1976). I did not want my ideas about the participants and Freemasonry to bias the analysis in a direction that fitted my ideas, but rather that the analysis remained loyal to the descriptions given by the various Freemasons. During the interviews as well as in the analysis phase I would have to put aside or bracket the following areas that I had previous knowledge of:

- My previous reading of the theory surrounding Freemasonry
- My own opinions on what the members of the Freemasons obtain from having membership
- My previous knowledge of other Freemasonry members
- My tendency to view life from a more feministic viewpoint
- My theories about why a man may belong to a male-only society
- My ideas about what a male-only society is all about.

I attempted to remain aware of my assumptions throughout the interviewing phase and data analysis phase so as not to lead the research in a specific way. I also found it very useful to discuss my analysis with my supervisor in order to establish if I had analysed the participants' experiences in a way that was true to themselves. Although bracketing cannot be total by any means, the declaration of biases, which clearly were operating during the research process, amounts to an attempt to explicate the subjective. In doing this the researcher lets the participants into his/her subjectivity and in this sense objectifies it. Because the focus of inquiry in qualitative research is on an external entity, by making the researcher's subjective feeling external, it is taken care of in the research process.

5.9 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Hermeneutics came into prominence during the Reformation. It seems rather apt that hermeneutics developed during this period, as it was at that time that the interpretation of religious texts became very prevalent. Friedrich Schleiermacher combined faith and idealism, and maintained that it is possible to divine the "spirit" of a given text (Rennie, 1999). Later Wilhelm Dilthey came to believe that it is possible to approach the hermeneutical study of history empirically and objectively. He did, however, say that this was not positivistically possible, as positivism precludes the study of meaning.

Consistent with the post-modern paradigm on the social construction of reality through language, hermeneutics is the study of the interpretation of texts, and makes possible knowledge outside the realm of an objective empirical-analytical approach (Rennie, 1998; Terwee, 1990.). Hermeneutics' history is said to stem from the exegesis of religious and judicial texts and it is said to have first developed as a way of understanding religious messages, and today it is used as a technique for trying to understand human behaviour (Meichebaum, 1988). The rationale is that "...the social world is made up of individuals who speak and act in meaningful ways; these individuals create the social world which gives them

their identity and being, and their creations can only be understood through a process of interpretation” (Moore, 1990, p. 111).

5.10 Putting Hermeneutics in Perspective

Hermeneutics is defined as “an approach that was originally used to study a written text both in detail and as a whole to enable people to see the deeper meanings contained within it” (Neuman, 2000, p. 511). In interpretive social science the hermeneutic approach was expanded to be a method to develop a deeper understanding of events in the social world. *Hermeneutics* also refers to the practice of interpreting the meaning of text (Rennie, 1999). It is also said to have close connections with rhetoric, because hermeneutics has no hard and fast rules. Because there are no hard and fast rules, hermeneutics is a matter of understanding.

5.11 Hermeneutics in Data analysis

The analysis procedure that will be followed during the interpretation will follow the framework provided by Kvale (1996), which he names *hermeneutical canons of interpretation*. The interpretation of the texts is characterised by a *hermeneutical circle*. The texts are then understood by taking the meanings of the texts on a global scale in order to understand the meanings of the separate parts. Seven canons are described, and these seven canons were followed during the interpretation.

The first canon involves the back-and-forth process between the parts and the whole, namely, the hermeneutical circle. The researcher analysed the transcriptions of initial interviews by focusing on the details given, as well as standing back and viewing each participant’s story as a whole. The researcher simultaneously engaged in this process until major themes and patterns emerged.

The second canon involves interpretation of the major themes arrived at from the first canon. The researcher described in her own words how she came to understand the prominent themes.

The third canon is the testing of the interpretations against the text. The interpretations of the themes from each individual were compared to each story as a whole in order to establish shared meanings.

The fourth canon involves autonomy of the text, which means that each theme and pattern elicited must be understandable on its own without having to refer to the biography of the participants. The researcher again closely examined each theme identified in each story to establish its autonomous meaning.

The fifth canon concerns the knowledge about the theme of the text. The researcher immersed herself in the literature and research relevant to male-only societies and female exclusion, in order to develop a frame of reference against which to make interpretations.

The sixth canon relates to the interpreter's presuppositions. The researcher took into account her own story and experience and reflected on how this might have influenced the data analysis and themes detected. The researcher's presuppositions were made explicit and she was aware of the effects of these on the research findings.

The final canon, the seventh, involves the idea that every understanding is a better understanding in that each one offers a different and innovative perspective that adds to the previous understanding. The researcher therefore examined the themes elicited to ensure that they were creative and added value to the previous understandings of male-only societies.

5.12 Ethical Considerations

This study attempted to maintain the necessary ethical standards by establishing clear agreements with the research participants, recognising the necessity of confidentiality and informed consent, and developing procedures for ensuring full disclosure of the nature, purpose and requirements of the research study. In order to protect the participants' rights, the following safeguards were employed (Creswell, 1994).

- The research topic and objectives was clearly articulated to all the participants in order to secure that they are understood by all.
- Informed consent was obtained from all the participants.
- All the transcriptions, interpretations and reports were made available to all the participants if they wish to see them.
- The researcher considered the rights and protection of all the participants when any decisions were made regarding the research.
- Confidentiality was of utmost importance to the researcher.

Any information that the researcher felt was private was disguised to protect the identity of the relevant participants. Confidentiality was maintained relevant to how the data was to be used, unless the participant is fully informed and agrees to its use. Because the interviews were open-ended, any misconceptions that possibly arose were clarified as they occurred. The research respondents were also given the time to review, confirm or disagree with the analysis of their experiences.

5.13 Summary

The theoretical paradigm that was adhered to in this study is the phenomenological paradigm (as discussed in Chapter 4). The researcher attempted to ascertain the uses of phenomenology as a research method through trying to gain an understanding of its methodological assumptions, as well as how validity and reliability are achieved in qualitative research. The research procedure in terms of selection of participants, data collection, method of analysis and ethical considerations was then outlined. The following chapter will present the individual analysis of each of the participants' interviews and experiences.

CHAPTER 6

RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter is based on the transcribed interviews conducted with the participants. Each participant's demographic background will be sketched, followed by a description of the interview setting and the researcher's impressions. Subsequently the themes that emerged from each interview will be discussed. Finally, the researcher's reflections of her participation in the process will be included.

The themes identified and discussed were arrived at by the researcher as a result of in-depth analysis of the interviews that were conducted with the participants. It is important that even though the researcher did try to bracket her own assumptions, her own lens coloured the way she interpreted the participants' experiences.

6.2 Bob's Interview

6.2.1 Background

Bob is a 53-year-old male who joined the Freemasons in November, 1990. He has been an actively participating member of the Freemasons since November, 1990. Bob explained that several members of his family were members of the Freemasons. He did, however, mention that none of these family members were Masons in South Africa; they became members in Scotland and are still currently active members. Bob was married but recently got divorced.

Bob was raised on the west coast of Scotland, where Freemasonry is extensive, and joining the Freemasons is almost expected to happen. In August, 1981, Bob left Scotland at the age of 29, and he said that he did not get around to joining the Freemasons before he left. It was only after arriving in South Africa that he joined a South African Freemasonry Lodge. Bob had been a member of a Freemasonry Lodge since his initiation, but he went on to say that he had been a member of Nights Templar, Marc, Royal Arch and Rose Croix, but was no longer an active member in these Side Degrees. Bob held all the positions that a Craft Mason can hold. These included all the positions that are held in all the different Degrees, as discussed in Chapter 2.

6.2.2 The Interview Setting and My Impressions

The interview with Bob took place in his office. The interview was conducted during the December holidays and the office was not very busy. The office environment was relaxed and private. As this was the first interview that I had conducted, I was rather nervous. The transcriber who was assisting me had met me at the office and had set up all the necessary equipment in Bob's office.

Bob was dressed casually but professionally. He was friendly and open, which made the atmosphere much more relaxed than I had expected, and this put me at ease. He spoke calmly with a pronounced Scottish accent and I sometimes found it difficult to understand him. This may have been due to my nervousness. He also made several jokes throughout the interview and laughed at times, which showed me that he was relaxed, which therefore relaxed me. Bob was enthusiastic about the research process and eager to participate. He tried hard not to be defensive and did not appear to be holding back. He volunteered information freely, and he truly seemed to enjoy the research process.

6.3 Patrick's interview

6.3.1 Background

Patrick is a 53-year-old divorced Irish male who joined the Freemasons in 1997. He has been an actively participating member in numerous Lodges. None of his family, to his knowledge, have been members of any Freemasonry Lodge.

6.3.2 The Interview Setting and My Impressions

The interview with Patrick took place in his home. Both the transcriber and I were greeted very warmly and I was put at ease straight away. We conducted the interview at his dining-room table in a very relaxed atmosphere.

Patrick was casually dressed. He spoke calmly and jovially, with a pronounced Irish accent, and I sometimes found it difficult to understand him. Patrick made many jokes throughout the interview and often spoke to the transcriber directly. It seemed that in the beginning he was rather nervous, as he asked me to prompt him. It appeared that he was enthusiastic about the interview process and wanted to give me enough information, as he would often look at me and ask if I wanted more information. As the interview progressed Patrick seemed to become more relaxed and the interview started to flow without much prompting. Patrick used everyday rather than formal language to describe his experiences. He was very animated during the interview and was willing to divulge information.

6.4 Richard's interview

6.4.1 Background

Richard is a 52-year-old married South African man who joined the Freemasons in 1992 at the age of 39. He has been an actively participating member since he joined. Richard has a long history of family members who have been part of the Freemasons. His family's membership of the Freemasons reaches back to 1910 with his grandfather's installation. He did, however, mention that his father was not a Freemason and that he was the only family member who was not a Freemason.

6.4.2 The Interview Setting and My impressions

The interview with Richard took place in the study of his home. The researcher and the transcriber were greeted very warmly and the interview was conducted in a relaxed fashion. The transcriber met me at his home and did not participate in the interview other than to record.

Richard was dressed casually and seemed very relaxed and willing to start the interview. It appeared that he was enthusiastic about the interview process and was willing to give any literature or assistance with the research project. Throughout the interview he spoke with great willingness and warmth about his membership in the Freemasons. After the interview he lent me numerous books and readings about Freemasonry and even offered to take me to a Lodge Temple so that I could see what a Temple looks like.

6.5 Paul's interview

6.5.1 Background

Paul is a 31-year-old married male who joined the Freemasons in August, 2004. He was 30 years old at the time. He is currently an active member and has been so since his initiation. Paul's father is also an actively participating member of the Freemasons.

6.5.2 The Interview Setting and My impressions

The interview with Paul was conducted in the study at my home, as Paul had felt it would be more convenient for him to come to the house. No other person was in the house apart from the interviewee, the transcriber and myself. I think that I was probably more professional during this interview as I felt I had to be because we were at my home and I needed to make the interview more legitimate.

Paul was dressed very casually and was very friendly and willing to participate in the research. He laughed during the interview. I had a sense that he also wanted to give enough information about the Freemasons to fully assist with the research. In addition, I felt that there was no hesitation or defensiveness about the questions that were asked and the manner in which the answers were given.

6.6 Themes emerging from Freemasonry membership

The following themes were found from the interviews conducted.

6.6.1 Family History

Richard, Bob and Paul have a long history of family members in the Order. It seems that this long history of family membership played a role in their initial interest in the Freemasons. It appears that if a strong familial history is present, the attraction toward the Freemasons is stronger, and this may be one of the primary reasons for joining.

Richard illustrated this point when he stated:

...it's been in our family for many, many years, so I suppose on that basis there's been an acceptance that it's good, in other words I wouldn't have thought my family would have stuck with it if somewhere along the line somebody said "well, it wasn't a good thing to belong to"...Well I was exposed to it quite young...

Paul also spoke about how his family's Freemasonry history had influenced his knowledge and exposure to the Order, even though he was initially uninterested in becoming a member. The following comment illustrates Paul's views:

I was somewhat jaundiced towards the Masons for many years, obviously as a youngster growing up my father was very involved, I think maybe that's why I would always be a little bit hesitant to get as involved as he

was, because he didn't spend that much time with his kids growing up... a lot of guys who had fathers who are Masons join as soon as they can...I wasn't that keen being a mason...I must be honest, till probably three or four years ago, I started thinking, what is the old man with his little brief case running off to these meetings ...

The importance of what the family thinks about Freemasonry also seems to influence the individual's choice in becoming a member. Richard explains the influence of his family in the following excerpt:

I always put a lot of, what do you call it, placed a lot of importance or emphasis on what my dad said because he was a wise old man anyway, so if he said it was a great and everything and if I had the opportunity to join them, then maybe I should.

Richard also iterated the point of the importance of family membership when he explained that his father, who was not a member, had broken the chain of family membership that had existed for more than a hundred years. These are the words that he used to describe his feelings:

...he never bothered to join, so he's the one (indistinct) in the woodpile...that's actually broken the Tanner [pseudonym] chain...

Because of this family history of belonging to Freemasonry, Bob and Richard had had exposure to the Order, and this may have given them some knowledge about it which may have eventually been the driving force to join Freemasonry.

Pat, on the other hand, had no family members belonging to the Freemasons but he had met a person who belonged to the Freemasons and through that he became “nosy” into what the Order was all about. This is illustrated in the following quote:

Nosiness...Well it seemed to be so special and I wanted to know...I wanted to find out for myself.

The above quotes and experiences point to the possible importance of familial history within the Masons, but they also highlight the fact that it is not the only driving force when joining the Masons. The importance of the social circle is also seen in the fact that when there is no familial history in the Order, friends could also have influenced a person in joining. There seem to be other factors that also play a part. “Nosiness” and being inquisitive also seem to be driving forces. By mixing with people who already belong to the Freemasons, a spark of interest is created. Because only certain secrets can be discussed with a non-member, they may feel drawn to finding out the unknown secrets and this can only be achieved through joining the Order.

6.6.2 Modernism vs. Traditionalism

According to the history of the Freemasons it has been operational since the 18th Century. Many changes have occurred between then and the 21st Century, but it is interesting that the Order is still operating with the same rules, rituals and symbols. The Order therefore does not seem to have adapted to the changing times, or perhaps it does not need to. Bob said:

It's historic, it's based on working Masons...and the secrecy comes about by their method of recognizing each other...We are obviously inoperative Masons but that's where the secrecy comes from...

Richard referred to the same traditionalism that has continued throughout the centuries in the following comment:

Well the rules and regulations that govern Freemasonry have been the same for many years, if you go back through the old little books...the

language is pretty much the same and the ceremonies are pretty much the same.

Clearly the world as we know it today is quite different from the world in the 18th Century. Back in the 18th Century, a night at the Lodge was seen as a night of entertainment (Carnes, 1989). However, today's society is filled with many immediate gratifying options, and it is perhaps more difficult now to choose between Freemasonry and fast-paced gratification as a means of entertainment. Patrick shows this conflict in the following excerpt:

The world is changing... the tenets of life, even the 10 commandments are being thrown out of normal day-to-day life...most youngsters are not interested in those old...they are deemed to be old-fashioned now...do I meet you for a drink at the pub,...or get tucked into the telly with a take away or do I go to lodge – a hard call, sometimes you want to be lazy...

Bob further illustrated the discrepancy between traditionalism and modernism in the following statement:

It was a lot more old fashioned in terms of the ritual than I had expected...the English used is very old fashioned in its ceremonies...it (Freemasonry) has to compete these days against all other types of entertainment that it didn't have to – cinemas didn't exist...now it's competing with TV, computers, computer games, restaurants, pubs – those things just didn't exist...in the early days of Masonry, it was an evening of entertainment...

Even though Bob stated that Freemasonry was an old-fashioned society he did admit that he perceived it as changing with the times in terms of increasing transparency and altering society's perception of the Order. Because of society's sometimes negative perceptions of the Freemasons, the Order has been under

pressure to become less secretive, and it is easier today to obtain information about Freemasonry via various technologies. Perhaps the secrecy of the Freemasons has caused society to perceive it in a negative light, as illustrated in Bob's comment:

I think that (secrecy) was a mistake, and I think it was a mistake to hide your light under a bushel as I mentioned because in South Africa, whereas it wouldn't apply in my country of birth in Scotland, there is a suspicion amongst some religious groups where they have some sort of conception that Masonry is something other than it is and I think a lot of the secrecy around Masonry has not done any good.

In the following excerpt the push and pull between traditionalism and modernism was highlighted by Bob:

Masonry is evolving. As I say it is certainly not a modern society but it is opening in terms of ...you can go to the library and buy...or take out a Masonic ritual book...I think people might find it too old-fashioned...it's a very old-fashioned order and I don't know if its continuance is guaranteed well into the future – it is a declining order, I think it will remain a declining order unless it modernizes in some way.

From the above quotes it appears that men may join the Freemasons because of its “old-fashioned” component, but this component may also be the very reason for the declining numbers in the Freemasons. It may be inhibiting people from joining because they do not understand the “old-fashioned component” and have many other options of entertainment. The one aspect that is so unique to the Order is the one aspect that could be the end of the Order.

Most participants agreed that in order for Freemasonry to continue, certain changes need to take place, although these were not clearly specified. Richard

commented on why he believed that the ways of the Order had not changed and that the traditionalism might be an attraction to some prospective members:

Maybe they're looking for some stability in a very unstable world, you know, maybe they see all the mess the whole place is in you know –crime is skyrocketing, morality plummeting...

However, other participants believed that although change is necessary, the Order's fundamental values and rituals should remain. In the following statement, Paul illustrates this contradiction:

...I think I'm a great traditionalist, I think it does need a bit of revamping; I think it definitely needs a bit of young blood...

In the 18th Century secrecy played a big role in the Craft. However, in today's society certain aspects of secrecy seem to have fallen away to allow for more openness. It appears that the participants place great importance on not allowing all the secrets to be revealed, and that this secrecy brings about an element of uniqueness to the individuals. All of the participants emphasized that the Freemasons may be an "old-fashioned" institution and in order to survive in today's society, they will have to modernize in some way.

6.6.3 Social Interactions vs. Formal Rituals

The participants often spoke about the formal and informal nature of Freemasonry. The evenings at Lodges are distinctly separated into two different parts. There is the ritualistic, formal section and the more social dinner after the actual meeting. Bob highlighted this in the following comment:

At evenings at Lodges is basically split into two parts – the first part is the lodge meeting and that is the ritual side of it and the second part is a

dinner....I must admit it is very sociable and very enjoyable. The ritual, much more old-fashioned than I expected.

The distinct separation between formal and social aspects of the Lodge meetings was also illustrated in the following comments by Patrick:

It's nice festive boards, which is also supper, just a nice evening out...Much like the pub; however, if we're just in a Craft meeting, some further meetings, a little more formal...

Richard emphasized the formal rituals by saying:

I like the pomp and ceremony of it and the pageantry in it...Well it's like dressing up you know, I mean I was in the army for a long time as well...and I liked uniforms and I like badges, I mean I was in the Cubs years ago...

From these quotes it seems that membership of the Freemasons offers similar themes but with a different emphasis. Bob and Patrick seemed to enjoy the social aspect of Freemasonry more, as is seen in Bob's comments:

...some Masons really enjoy the formality...Others enjoy the festive board which is the dinner afterwards...I actually prefer the social side to Masonry more than the ritual side of it.

Richard, on the other hand, placed more importance on the ritual side. His mention of uniforms seemed to indicate that he felt more comfortable in a setting with more structure. This point is further emphasized by the next comment made by Richard:

It's also a very rigid organisation – so I like the discipline in it.

The formal side of the ceremony also seemed to create sense of specialness. By learning certain secret words and rituals, the initiate feels privileged to know something that someone else, who is not in Freemasonry, does not know. This is highlighted in Patrick's comment regarding his experience of Freemasonry:

Special, very special. Then you learn a bit more , then you get your fellow Craft...and it's lovely to know in my degrees, there's certain grips – handshakes, ...there are certain words and signs that we know which are wonderful.

The social side of Freemasonry seems to give a sense of togetherness and belonging – a place to meet and let down your facade. This is illustrated in Bob's comment:

I think the biggest thing I get from it is camaraderie. As I said earlier, when you meet people in business, they wear a mask – there's a wall and you only get to know them, in Masonry that mask is removed – the wall is sort of taken down and you meet people of various social standings, basically on level playing fields.

Paul also placed an emphasis on the social aspect of Freemasonry and the importance that it holds for him. He highlighted how the social side of Freemasonry strengthens the bonds of friendship and brotherhood. The following statement from Paul illustrates this:

...you want to pop off to a Lodge meeting and have a nice dinner and a few pots afterwards with the boys, I think that's great, I really think that it is quite "lekker", it just gives you something to do...

By looking at this quote it appeared that the social interaction is on an intimate and trusting level. It seemed that they let go of their fears of being judged and discriminated against. This is further illustrated by the following excerpt from Patrick:

I've met a whole (indistinct) of friends in Freemasonry that I wouldn't have done going to our usual haunts in the pub or my social circle.

The theme of social interaction vs. formal ritual emphasizes the need for a space where men can meet, in both informal and formal settings, in order to fulfil various needs such as a sense of belonging, familiarity, consistency, fun and a sense of uniqueness.

6.6.4 Brotherhood

The theme of brotherhood is another theme that came through in all the participants' interviews. All of the participants' experiences of the Freemasons had a very strong sense of brotherhood, fraternity and camaraderie. They all spoke about this theme with a great sense of belonging, togetherness and friendship.

Bob explained the feelings of brotherhood in the following statement:

I think the biggest thing I get from it is camaraderie.

Both Bob and Richard emphasized the cornerstones of Freemasonry as:

Brotherly love, relief, and truth.

The theme of brotherhood also came through strongly in Patrick's comments:

The brotherhood. I made a lot of friends – good friends...it's a little one step further maybe with Freemasons – we know the grips, we know the signs, we know all the rituals and it's just nice that we all know...looking after your brother –your fellow man and that doesn't mean brotherhood men only, it's looking after them, us, them.

From the interviews, it seemed clear that brotherly love does not only include fellow Freemasons but also incorporates the families and loved ones of various members. There is a sense of responsibility towards one another's family and their well-being. The Freemasons appear to be able to depend on one another in both good and bad times. This sense of responsibility towards other members' families was illustrated by Richard in the following excerpt:

I am not going to go behind [a member's] back and try have an affair with [his] or another mason's wife, and his daughter and his child you have to protect them, that's part of your obligation in the Third Degree – you have to protect and look after another Mason's family.

Paul highlights the mutual support that is expected between fellow members and how members rely on one another in the following statement:

...if there is ever a need or you find yourself in a predicament there's always a phone call away, one of your fellow Masons who will always come to help you out.

Clearly, the theme of brotherhood plays an important role in Freemasonry. Brotherhood encompasses the individual members as well as their families and friends. Being a Freemason therefore means being supportive to fellow Masons and responsible for the well-being of their loved ones.

6.6.5 Morality and Decency

The theme of morality and decency is a theme that came up very often. It seems to be a big part of the ethos of the Freemasons. All the participants mentioned the importance of leading a good and moral life. Patrick also likened it to the Ten Commandments and said that the ethos of the Freemasons is similar to a list of commandments that need to be adhered to. This is illustrated in the quote:

...just say the ten commandments, if we could run with those in life, it would be pretty good...It's very archaic, but they've got some wonderful expressions of how to run your life...The most rewarding thing is what Freemasonry teach, which is me as an individual, on how to run my life.

Paul made the point about the importance of morality and decency very clear in his interview. He also commented that there is no need to be a Christian but that a belief in a higher Being is of utmost importance. The following excerpts from Paul's interview show how he viewed the theme of morality and decency:

...so you've got to adhere to strict morals and ethics...but you are taught and obviously reminded that ethics and good, strict morals and the normal sort of love thy neighbor like you love yourself...you've got to have high morals and everything...to keep yourself on the straight and narrow...

Richard made this point clear in the following statement:

The rules and regulations pertaining to being a Freemason and how you conduct yourself and that there's a strict moral emphasis...so the whole emphasis is on moral perfection...you want to be an upstanding person of society.

Richard continued:

Well morality I suppose defines the difference between good and evil and that you would have a sense of order in society....it gives you a sense that you are on the straight and narrow.

Even in social interactions moral decency is emphasized. Social interactions are moderated by the formal teachings and principles and therefore Freemasons live what they learn, and the social dinner of the meetings acts as their practise-ground. Bob made this point in his comment:

The telling of jokes at dinner is quite common, but they can't be off colour that would be totally frowned on if there were jokes of a sexual nature or whatever...In Masonry you have to have a belief in God, it's all about morality...the plays are actually based on living a good life, being decent, being law-abiding, God-fearing... I've always known it to be an organisation that is all about morality and charity...

Charity is also a very big aspect of Freemasonry. All the participants mentioned the amount of money that had been donated to various charities over the years. It appears that donating to various charities and giving back to society contribute to the morality and decency of the fraternity. This charity component was highlighted in the following excerpt from Patrick's interview:

...I do like and applaud all of us at the end of the this year [2005] when we give those monies out to charity....it is very rewarding to spend all day at a golf day...and we've raised 500 000 in a day ...and we can hand over some good (indistinct) for well deserving cases.

Bob also commented on the importance of charity in Freemasonry in the following statements:

I've always had the belief that it was a decent organisation. I know it's an organisation that one of its aims is to collect monies for charities...Masonry collects from its members, there's a collection at the end of every Masonic meeting...it's in the order of 7 million over 7 years, a substantial contribution to charity...

Richard commented on the theme of charity in relation to the different organisations to which the Masons give, and the amount of money that has been donated.

So the charity is quite a big thing – you give to charity and then you live by a strict moral code which is laid down in the ritual books...in my year (as Master of the Lodge) we raised R15 000 ...and last year they gave another million...

In Paul's interview he showed just how important charity was for him in the following comment:

...I think it's about R15 million or something they've given to non-Mason charities...so I think it is one of the main...that's the sort of main ethos one gets from belonging to...you're giving something back to the community as well as getting something out for yourself which is quite rewarding.

From the above quotes the importance of morality and decency is highlighted. It seemed that the individuals placed a great emphasis on these aspects because it gave the Order a sense of legitimacy, importance, and social standing. Perhaps in some way this act of giving refutes the notion that the Freemasons are different to societal and religious perceptions of the Order. By following the “right path” and doing what is “moral” the Freemasons are in actual fact contributing to society even if it is known as a “society with secrets”.

6.6.6 Sense of Purpose in Life

Along with the theme of morality and decency, the theme of a sense of purpose in life is a thread that was seen in all the participants' experiences of the Freemasons. All the participants had a sense that the Freemasons offered them something in their lives that made their life better and more worthwhile. Being in the Freemasons seemed to inspire them to grow both in the ranks in Freemasonry and in self-actualization.

In the following comment, Patrick highlighted how meeting inspiring individuals fuelled his desire to achieve new heights:

...there's some nice people that you want to aspire to...it's lovely to meet the so-called hierarchy of some gentlemen that we may or may not want or wish to aspire to

Paul discussed how Freemasonry offers a sense of purpose which assists members to become more confident in themselves as persons and allows them to reach their potential as individuals. The following statement illustrates Paul's views:

...I mean it gives me another sense of purpose to go to a meeting, as opposed to sit on the sideline and just watch. What it does for other people that are maybe in society and also in public, a bit shy and a little bit more reserved, it gives them confidence to stand up in public, it gives the confidence in the workplace, it gives them confidence at home...it's maybe a self-actualization thing sometimes, as opposed to wanting to be egotistical in front of other people, it's just you want to perform well for yourself and for your mates...

The sense of purpose in life was also incorporated in the previous theme of morality and decency. All the participants spoke about how giving back to society offered them a sense of purpose as well as a sense of performing one's moral duties. Richard stressed how this sense of purpose could be passed down to his son. In the following excerpt, he discussed how his involvement in Freemasonry would hopefully influence his son's sense of purpose in life:

...but particularly the boys that at some point in the year, they can give at least one day away to charity...at least they get the sense that there is more to life than just making and grabbing money...

All the participants mentioned, although not all explicitly, that Freemasonry fostered a need to aspire to a higher level as human beings, and that belonging to a society such as Freemasonry facilitated their journey of personal growth. What came through strongly was their need for intrinsic growth rather than materialistic achievements. Being a better and moral person was more important than social standing or financial wealth.

6.7 Themes Emerging from the Male-Only Component of Freemasonry

A second open-ended prompt was put to the participants. This question tried to explore their experience of the male-only component of Freemasonry. Some of the experiences seemed to show indifference towards the exclusion and inclusion of females. During the analysis of the interviews, the ambivalence and hesitation in explaining the male-only component was prevalent in all participants. All the participants emphasized the importance of the male-only component but seemed to struggle to provide a comprehensive explanation for this. It is also interesting to note that in the previous section, regarding their experience of Freemasonry, similar themes were found for all the participants. However in this section, regarding female exclusion in Freemasonry, participants were in agreement in relation to women being excluded from the Order but differed in their explanation regarding why they believed it should be so.

6.7.1 Social desirability vs. The Need for Male Exclusiveness

All the participants emphasized that the male-only component is a very important aspect of Freemasonry. It also seems that they believed that the Order should remain a male-only society. However, most of the participants felt the need to respond in a socially desirable or politically correct manner by stating in one way or another that they were not prejudiced against women.

When Patrick was asked about how his experience would change should females be allowed to join the Freemasons, his response was firm and resolute. He seemed to be more willing than the others to give his sincere feelings regarding his experience and seemed less concerned with societal acceptance. This is illustrated in the following statement:

I wouldn't dig it because then I could go anywhere.

Paul began by defending his stance about female exclusion and seemed to want to remain politically correct by stating that he had no prejudice against women. Yet he could not offer a firm reason for excluding women except that it had been so for hundreds of years and therefore should not change. This is highlighted in the following comment:

I don't attach any sexist connotation to it at all; I just believe it's one of those things...it's just a male fraternity, it's just something that men have done for hundreds of years and they'll continue to do that...

The following statement by Richard indicates that he also found it important that women not be included in Freemasonry. Even though a reason was not given, it remained a fundamental principle of Freemasonry that is at the heart of the experience of a Freemason:

...in English Freemasonry there's no place for women, it's just...that's how it is.

The theme of the need for male exclusiveness was also found in Bob's interview, although he stated it rather tentatively in that he explained it in terms of what he had been told rather than his own personal views. This externalization of his reasoning could possibly be seen as his attempt to be socially acceptable and providing a justification for the exclusion of women. The following excerpt illustrates this:

The way it was put to me is that it is a male-only society...

Paul seemed to exhibit an ambivalent attitude when describing his experience of male exclusiveness. Even though he tried to acknowledge the societal trend towards gender equality and be socially acceptable in his response, he rebelled against this possible change in society where men and women would be indistinguishable and their interactions would be the same, and therefore monotonous. From Paul's description of society it could be assumed that this could be his experience in Freemasonry should women be included. The following excerpt from Paul's interview highlights his ambivalence:

...it's a case of we just want to be who we want to be, and that's not to say that you can't do that in front of women, but very often, in fact I will de facto say that in my opinion guys around guys are not what they are if there's female company, and that's not to say that society won't one day get to where it's sort of a homogeneous society – that would be a horrible environment to me...

Interestingly, Patrick did not appear to be ambivalent in his response but he did still feel the need to defend himself and to be politically correct by stating that he was not discriminatory against women. However, in Patrick's description of

male and female social gatherings, he appeared to be slightly favourably biased towards male societies. Patrick seemed to place male-only societies on a somewhat higher standing than the female-only counterparts.

Patrick said:

Not being a chauvinist or anything...You you've got your own organisations – probably not as profound as Freemasonry, but I wouldn't for a minute presuppose that I would want to go crash your little club, I don't think I even want to go into your little club, meeting or whatever you get up to...

The theme of male exclusiveness and social desirability were intertwined yet contradictory. All the participants emphasized the male-only component but could not really support their need for this by giving concrete explanations; they answered with evasive responses, trying to justify their stance. The contradiction in the theme can be seen in the way that they had a strong desire to come across as being socially “correct” by emphasizing their non-prejudiced point of view, yet the need to exclude women still came across very strongly. The idea of women joining a male-only society, namely the Freemasons, was almost unthinkable for these participants.

6.7.2 Traditionalism as a Justification

Several participants utilized traditionalism as an explanation for the male-only component of Freemasonry. It seemed that because Freemasonry has historically been a male-only society, most of the participants felt that it should remain so, even if no further explanations were given. Richard approached his answer rather hesitantly, and also felt the need to defend his view in the following comment:

Well I suppose, I mean I don't have any...I don't have a particular sexist view about it, the only thing is that I think traditionally, Stone Masons are

all men, I don't recall ever hearing about women ever being a Stone Mason ... it's just a male thing, it's been a male thing for millions of years...

Paul's experience of the male-only component of Freemasonry also seems to have a traditional aspect. In his comment he referred to the traditional operative Masons and their tasks that required physical strength, and therefore they had to be male. It appears that this has set a standard even in today's society even though the Masons are no longer operative. The following statement by Paul illustrates the above:

...it was stonemasons that built Temples and buildings back in the day -- I mean they were men, and the rituals were designed, performed by men...

Patrick used religion to explain the role of traditionalism in fraternities and paralleled the Freemasons to the experience of the Church. The following excerpt from Patrick's interview shows this:

...it's like now the Catholic Church or even the Anglican Church, women were always there as lay -- now they are asking them to be priests or whatever -- it has caused a lot of shit in religion --I think it will cause much the same in Freemasonry, not on --I couldn't handle a woman priest.

The only participant who did not directly make a reference to traditionalism as a justification for female exclusion was Bob. He did, however, place traditionalism as an important aspect of Freemasonry.

The historical importance of Freemasonry seems to play a big role in the participants' experience of the male-only component. It appears that the very fact that women were not included since the origins of Freemasonry is now a justification for not including women in the Order. It seems that having this

historical rationalization allowed these participants to let themselves off the hook in having to provide a personal explanation.

6.7.3 Gender as a Justification

As expected, gender itself was often used to explain why women were and still are excluded from the Freemasons. Gender stereotypes were employed to emphasize the reason for females' exclusion. The participants all used gender as an explanation, but in different ways. Patrick, for example, highlighted the differences between male and female interactions and the necessity for single-gendered social gatherings. Patrick stated, also defensively, that:

Not being a chauvinist or anything, it's nice – it's nice to have a break – men only and we talk men shit...it's no disrespect to women at all, it is lovely to have a men-only thing and talk men stuff.

Paul also talked about the importance of male-only gatherings, but went one step further in discussing the different roles that men and women have in social settings and daily tasks. He also responded defensively with the following statement:

...even in those days...obviously women were segregated slightly and seen to perform certain functions and men were seen to perform other functions...because I am not sexist at all, I wouldn't understand why women would want to do that, to be honest -- why women would want to be a Mason to start with...it's nice to go somewhere where there are guys only, because there is a different interaction -- guys and girls vs. guys and guys and girls and girls...There is a difference between the sexes, I mean men are sometimes from Mars and women are from Venus, we know this for a fact...

Bob used gender as an explanation, but from a different stance. He discussed it in terms of female jealousy and extra-marital affairs.

...it's mainly married men and when you go to a Masonic meeting, their wives are comfortable with the fact that it is a male-only society...if it were mixed and you had married men going to meetings with mixed genders, that unless the wife was going, that there might be some objection to it.

Richard used the analogy of sport to describe how different genders partake in different activities of social gatherings. Like Paul, he emphasized the physical differences as a reason why men and women belong to different organisations. In the following statement, Richard's views are expressed:

...I mean when I played rugby, I never expected to have a woman scrumming down with me, it just was...like there just wasn't the place for her, I mean I always have that joke about "the woman being the hooker in the side", but you know, I mean, you are not going to get a woman playing rugby against men because men will just unfortunately flatten them...all the women came into the club and had drinks with the guys and there are you know...but never on the rugby field and I suppose it's similar to Freemasonry, it's like when I am in the Lodge -- that's the rugby field, and it's men, you know.

Both Paul and Richard mentioned physical strength as a reason why women were traditionally excluded. Masons in the 18th Century had to work with stone and therefore needed to be physically strong and able to perform their duties. Even in today's society, they still used this as a justification for the exclusion of women. Today it is no longer about physical strength, but it has become a historical legacy that has been passed down. This applies to the rugby analogy mentioned by Richard; it is more about the separateness of the genders and the different activities that apply to each, than actual physical strength.

From the above discussion it is clear that gender is seen as an integral factor for women not being included in the Freemasons. Two main arguments emerged from the interviews. The first was that socially men and women interact differently in single-gendered and mixed-gendered settings. The second argument related to physical strength, which links to traditionalism as well as gender-stereotyped activities.

6.8 Summary

In this chapter the themes that were found were divided into those surrounding the participants' experience of belonging to the Freemasons and those pertaining to the male-only component of Freemasonry.

All but one participant had a family history that appeared to have influenced their decision to join the Freemasons. Even if they did not feel a strong pull towards it in the early part of their lives, it nevertheless exposed them to the Order and its beliefs, and perhaps that fostered an interest in later life. Even with the one participant who did not have this family history, curiosity still played a big part in his motivation to become a Freemason.

The ideas of traditionalism and modernism were often mentioned in the interviews. However, these ideas about Freemasonry were seen as not being compatible, because as much as the participants acknowledged the need for change, in the Order, tradition seemed to be far more important.

In the themes emerging from the participants' experience of belonging to the Freemasons, many made reference to the social vs. formal interactions in Lodge meetings. Some felt that the more formal, ritualistic aspect of Freemasonry played a far more important role in their experience of membership, whilst others preferred the more social and relaxed dinner afterwards. Yet through both the social and the formal facets of meetings, brotherhood was fostered in all the participants. Brotherhood was underlined in all of the other themes emerging

from the experience of belonging to the Freemasons. A sense of belonging and camaraderie were prominent in both the interactions between members and the members and their families. It appeared that the members felt a sense of responsibility towards fellow members and their loved ones.

This sense of duty was also reflected in the theme of morality and decency. All the participants' experiences of the Freemasons centred on being a good and moral individual. It appeared that they felt Freemasonry allowed them to achieve this both from the formal ritualistic perspective and the social fundraising element. Charity seemed to be an important element in fostering the idea of morality and decency. By giving back to society the Masons are allowed to feel that they contribute to the good causes of society, and through this they partially fulfil the fundamental principle of Freemasonry, namely brotherly love, relief and truth.

It seems that, for the participants, through following these principles of Freemasonry they attained a sense of purpose in life, which is the final theme found in this section. The participants achieved this sense of purpose through wanting to aspire to living a moral and decent life. By interacting with members in both a social and formal setting, they would be exposed to these principles and thereby learn from and aspire to follow members who were living these tenets.

With regard to the participants' experiences of the male-only component, the themes that emerged were not common to all the participants. The one theme where commonality between participants was found was in the need for acting in a socially acceptable manner. This was, however, found to be contradictory to their greater need for male exclusivity in Freemasonry. It appeared that none of the participants wanted to come across as being socially prejudiced against women, as this would mean that they were not being politically correct, and therefore were possibly not being moral and decent.

The two main justifications provided by participants for maintaining male exclusivity in Freemasonry revolved around the concepts of traditionalism and gender differences and stereotypes. Traditionalism was used as a justification based on male-only historical origins of Freemasonry. The general consensus amongst these participants appeared to be that “if something works and has always been that way, then why change it?” Gender was used as a justification in terms of how different genders have always had varying and contrasting activities. Because males and females interact differently, separate settings are therefore needed to facilitate and fulfil their dissimilar needs. Physical strength was also raised as a possible reason for exclusion of females, although this was linked to the more traditional or historic legacy of Freemasonry.

From the themes that emerged from the participants’ contributions, their experience of belonging to the Freemasons can be summarised as follows:

Freemasonry is an organisation that fosters a sense of purpose in life through brotherhood, morality and decency, and to preserve these tenets the fundamental principles of Freemasonry, namely brotherly love, relief and truth, need to remain unchanged.

The participants’ experience of the male-only component of the Freemasons can be summarised as follows:

Males and females are different and will always be different, therefore for the experience of Freemasonry not to change, it needs to remain male-only.

CHAPTER 7

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

A DISCUSSION OF THE LITERATURE AND THEMES

7.1 Introduction

This chapter will offer a comparative analysis between the common themes identified in the interviews that were conducted with the four participants, and the literature on the reasons that have been found to possibly explain the reason for excluding women from certain societies. A comparison will also be made between and the literature that has been found about male identity and the themes that were identified.

The themes that were found in regard to the first prompt, "Describe your experience of belonging to the Freemasons" are as follows:

- Family history
- Modernism vs. Traditionalism
- Social interactions vs. Formal Rituals
- Brotherhood
- Morality and Decency
- Sense of Purpose in Life

Additional themes that emerged from the second question, "What meaning do you attach to the male-only component of Freemasonry?" were the following:

- Social desirability vs. The Need for Male Exclusiveness
- Traditionalism as a Justification
- Gender as a Justification

These themes will be discussed in terms of the literature review in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, in the order presented above.

7.2 Themes Regarding the Participants' Experience of Belonging to the Freemasons

Freemasonry has been in existence since the 17th Century and there have been members from that time until now (Knight & Lomas, 1996). Freemasonry has always been a secret society with non-members not knowing a great deal about the fraternity (Carnes, 1989). It would appear that it was very difficult for non-members to become Freemasons since they were not aware of who were members and of the steps that were needed to be taken to become a Freemason. Therefore it can be assumed that membership of the Freemasons was passed down in families from generation to generation. In this study, three of the four participants had a long history of family membership of the Freemasons, which they stated played a role in their initial decision to join the Freemasons.

Since Freemasonry has been operational as far back at the 17th Century, it is heavily reliant on traditionalism, such as the tools that were used by operative masons in the 18th Century (Hamill & Gilbert, 1998). The Masons of today still use the hierarchy and procedures that were followed by the operative masons in the 17th Century (*Emulation Ritual: Revised Edition*, 2001). The Degrees that the Masons moved through are still the Degrees that the Speculative Masons of today progress through. In Masonry meetings today, the tools are still used in the actual ceremonies, but on a symbolic level. All the participants emphasized the importance of traditionalism in their experience of Freemasonry, and yet they also highlighted the fact that society is changing, and for Freemasonry as an

organisation to survive, it may have to evolve as well. Carmichael (2003) refers to how memory in Freemasonry in the 17th Century was central to the Order as it facilitated the education of the members. With the modern advent of technology and the change in the education system, this is no longer the case.

Much literature has been found on the ritualistic side of Freemasonry (Carmichael, 2003; Carnes, 1989; Knight & Lomas, 1996; Levitt, 2001). MacNulty (1991) mentions the elaborate rituals and ceremonies that the members need to follow. In *Emulation Ritual: Revised Edition* (2001) a comprehensive explanation of the ritual that needs to be followed is described. These rituals have not changed over the centuries, but the social aspect has evolved and gained a greater emphasis. All the participants spoke about the ritualistic aspect of Freemasonry, but the importance of these rituals varied for each. Interestingly, very little literature was found on the social aspect of Freemasonry. The participants did mention that in the 17th Century the social aspect of Freemasonry was enmeshed in the ritual side of the ceremony.

Brotherhood was and still is a central theme that was repeatedly emphasized in both the literature and the participants' experiences. This is consistent with the principal tenets of Freemasonry, which are brotherly love, relief and truth (Hamill & Gilbert, 1998). This principle of brotherly love is not limited to the members of the Freemasons, but also extends to friends and family. This sense of responsibility and duty encompasses the family in that they are protected and cared for by the members. This was emphasized by one of the participants, Richard, when he explained how he would not betray another Mason because it was his obligation to protect another Mason's family. Freemasonry is said to encourage diversity, but at the same time it requires individuals to love and have compassion for their fellow individuals (Anderson, 1738). As mentioned previously, brotherhood was strongly emphasized by all the participants. In fact, two of the participants quoted the principal tenets of Freemasonry during their interviews.

A core thread that ran through all the participants' experiences was the theme of morality and decency. Living a decent life and being a good citizen appear to be one of the main goals of Freemasonry. Levitt (2001) describes Freemasonry as an organisation that opposes bigotry and fear. By this he means that membership of the Freemasons extends across all religious beliefs, race and social status (MacNulty, 1991). The participants all mentioned that the essence of their experience in Freemasonry was to aspire to become a moral and decent person. The participants emphasized their need to adhere to strict morals and ethics and therefore become an upstanding person in society. This was clearly observed in the literature, which indicates that Freemasons should have the characteristics of virtue, honour and mercy, and to practise the cardinal virtues of temperance, fortitude, prudence and justice (Hamill & Gilbert, 1998). The participants indicated that morality and decency included the idea of charity. This was supported by the literature which states that in the First Degree, the lesson that is imparted to the member is that of the biblical teachings of faith, hope and charity (*Emulation Ritual: Revised Edition*, 2001). In giving back to society, the participants seemed to express a sense of achieving a moral and decent life.

Charity appeared to play an important role as it is something that is measurable and quantifiable both to themselves and to society. All the participants stressed the amount of money that had been donated to various charitable organisations over the past year. Two of the participants made reference to religion in connection with being a moral and decent person. One of the participants likened the ethos of the Freemasons to that of the Ten Commandments. In Anderson (1738) Freemasonry is seen as a place where a deep love for the Divine Creator is fostered.

Through the Freemasons a sense of purpose in life is achieved, and this was strongly linked to the above theme of morality and decency. All but one participant expressed a sense of Freemasonry challenging and enticing them to

become better individuals. The participants spoke about the desire to aspire to other higher ranking Masons, saying that being in the Freemasons could assist them with gaining confidence. One participant, Richard, included his children in how he achieves a sense of purpose in life. Through his children witnessing charity in the Freemasons, and their gaining a sense of compassion, Richard was able to feel that he had achieved something in life. In Anderson (1738) Freemasonry is described as a place for personal understanding and development.

7.3 Themes Regarding the Participants' Experience of the Male-Only Component of Freemasonry.

Historically, Freemasonry has always been a male-only society (Rich, 1997). One of the theories that have been put forward by Carnes (1989) for the establishment of male-only societies is that they felt a great need to break away from the Victorian society in which they were overwhelmed by the domestic power of women. These male-only societies were said to facilitate the young men's troubled passage to manhood by providing solace and psychological guidance. It was proposed by Carnes (1989) that the rituals that the members partake in fulfil a universal need amongst men. This could possibly explain why the participants expressed this great need to maintain male exclusivity. Most of the participants admitted that they would not be comfortable with the idea of women being permitted into the Freemasons.

Interestingly, all the participants seemed to answer in a defensive manner, showing that they did not want to come across as being prejudiced against women, even though they still wanted to maintain male exclusivity. This could be seen as the participants' attempts to appear socially acceptable and morally decent. As mentioned previously by Anderson (1738), Freemasonry is said to free the member from bigotry, therefore the participants' attempts to be politically correct and non-discriminatory is consistent with this principle. However, by excluding women from the organisation, the expressed need for male exclusivity

could be viewed as being prejudiced, and therefore not socially desirable. Therefore the male-only component of Freemasonry seems to create conflict and ambivalence for the participants.

Participants offered various explanations as to why females were excluded from the Freemasons. Only one participant did not use traditionalism as a justification as a reason for the exclusion of women. One of the theories on the origins of Freemasonry states that it developed from the medieval stonemason guilds (Knight & Lomas, 1996). The stonemasons who built the buildings and temples were always traditionally men. One participant referred to stonemasons as being men because they needed to be physically strong to build the temples. Another participant compared the Freemasons to other religious groups where men always played the leading roles. Traditionally, the priests were men, and today they are still men in most religions. Traditionalism was used as a justification for the exclusion of women, because “it has always been that way and should remain that way.”

One theory that can be linked to the themes of male exclusivity and traditionalism is the masculine crisis theory (Augustine, 2002). This theory seems to indicate that both men and women deviate from the master gender stereotypes of society. The masculine identity has been in crisis, with the first crisis occurring in the 17th Century (Lemon, 1991). The crisis that is referred to in the masculinity crisis theory has basically arrived because women are starting to make inroads into masculine areas of control. Men now feel threatened by the fact that their masculine roles are no longer clearly specified. Although this was not explicitly mentioned in the participants' responses, the manner in which they responded could be seen as an attempt to protect their identity by holding on to the male-only component. One participant did mention that the idea of a homogeneous society would be a “horrible” thought because male and female roles would then converge into one, and their male identity would possibly be lost.

Another justification for the exclusion of women that was used by the participants was gender. Hamilton (1998) discusses the difference between sex and gender. He defines sex as the innate structural and physiological characteristics related to reproduction. The participants also made mention of the physical differences between men and women. They did, however, use these physical characteristics from a traditional perspective, in that stonemasons had to traditionally be physically strong. Richardson (1984) carried this point into the social stratification that sex-based inequality occurs in society on all levels. One participant actually likened Freemasonry to the sport of rugby, where women would be too physically weak to play the game. The participants also spoke about the social interactions and cultural activities that pertain to men and women. Hamilton (1998) refers to this as *gender* and defines it as being specific to humans and connoting all complex attributes ascribed by cultures to human males and females respectively. The participants also referred to different activities that the different genders engaged in because of different interests and needs. Thompson (2003) offered one theory about why women are excluded from certain societies, which was that community norms designated private (family life) and public (work) spheres, and identified the former as the arena where women could exercise their power. The participants seemed to maintain that mixed-gender interactions were different to single-gender interactions and therefore it was necessary to maintain the male-only component of Freemasonry.

Another theory that was put forward by Carnes (1989) about the exclusion of women is the True Womanhood theory. This theory postulates that women are inherently moral and decent, and do not need to aspire to be even more so. By including women in the Freemasons they would be running the risk of their being tainted by the “immoral and un-pure nature of males”. As mentioned previously, Freemasonry aims to develop men into moral and decent individuals, and since women are already moral and decent they do not need to be members of the Freemasons.

7.4 Summary

From the above comparative analysis the experience of belonging to the Freemasons seems to fulfil many fundamental needs of the participants. Their core experience can be characterized by a sense of belonging and fraternity. A sense of security also seems to be fostered by membership of the Freemasons in that all the members follow the same ethos and share common values and principles. A sense of security and loyalty is sometimes difficult to establish in today's society, where the culture has become more individualistic and materialistic.

Gender roles are constantly changing, and Freemasonry possibly gives the members the stability of gender roles because of the exclusion of women. Although the exclusion of women from Freemasonry may, at first glance, appear to be sexist and prejudiced, there may be other underlying factors. These factors may include a need to maintain and protect their male identity in a society where women are gradually taking on various male-oriented characteristics in the public spheres, thereby encroaching on the traditionally male-dominated areas. Therefore it is possible that Freemasonry is seen as a domain that is exclusively controlled by males and thus they have a reluctance to include females.

Because Freemasonry has such strong roots in traditionalism and goes so far back in time, some of its rules and procedures may be seen as old-fashioned and outdated. This sense of traditionalism, however, does seem to provide its members with a fundamental feeling of goodness and purity because it has not changed over time. In today's society where individual and family values have evolved and altered, and where leading a pure and decent life is no longer the emphasis, Freemasonry seems to provide a space where these values are practised in their pure form in order to preserve the goodness of humanity.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

This concluding chapter will evaluate the present study in terms of its strengths and limitations. Recommendations for future research will also be offered.

8.2 Strengths of the Study

Seeing that each participant possesses a different cultural and social background that shapes his experiences and thus his meaning-making system, each participant's experience of Freemasonry will be unique. Although there were similarities in the participants, there were also a number of differences, which support the post-modernist view that there is no one true reality but rather multiple realities, and each is true to itself (Neuman, 2000).

This study contributes to the array of "truths" regarding the reasons for female exclusion in different societies, and is not intended to report the ultimate reality of how men experience the Freemasons and male-only societies. Therefore the stories of the various Freemasons that have been provided in this study are not representative of all, and therefore cannot be generalized to all other male-only societies or to other Freemasons. Such a view would presume the existence of one single truth, thereby removing the possibility of future reinterpretation and new discoveries of meaning (Owen, 1992).

The researcher realised that the participants are the experts of their own experiences and therefore did not attempt to impose her own subjective beliefs and feelings onto the participants. In order to achieve this modest position, the researcher was constantly aware of her own biases. However, it is important to note that the act of observing the phenomenon will in fact change that phenomenon. Therefore all the discussions in this study have been perceived through the subjective lens of the researcher. The researcher did bracket her assumptions before the commencement of the study, and kept those assumptions in mind, both during the analysis phase and the interpretation of the analysis.

Reliability and trustworthiness, which replace the concepts of validity and reliability in the traditional quantitative paradigm (Ely, 1991), were achieved in this study. When the researcher commenced with the research she made her orientation clear, and explained the social and cultural contexts of the investigation. As far as possible, any internal processes or biases that the researcher had were mentioned and considered during the analysis and the interpretation phase.

The researcher attempted to reduce bias and subjectivity by having the results checked by her supervisor, who is of the male gender. By doing this the researcher hoped to ensure that her feminist views and beliefs did not affect the results that were obtained.

8.3 Limitations of the Study

The interpretations and meanings that have been developed by the researcher regarding the experiences of belonging to a male-only society, namely the Freemasons, are not the only interpretations and meanings that could exist. The researcher is informed by her personal subjectivities, experiences, values and biases, and this may influence her perceptions of the experience of belonging to a male-only society. Researchers can never completely be “fair” or objective

since their subjectivity, values, beliefs and biases will always colour their perceptions.

Since the interpretations that the researcher has offered regarding the participants' experiences are subject to her personal beliefs and values, all the experiences of the participants in this study are second-hand accounts of their stories. This will be true regardless of how close the researcher attempts to get to the experiences of the participants. The researcher did, however, attempt to remain true to the experiences or worldviews of the participants and as previously mentioned, did bracket her assumptions at the beginning of the research. During the analysis and interpretation phase, the researcher selected excerpts from the interviews in an attempt to support her interpretations.

Owing to the time involved and the labour-intensive nature of the qualitative research methodology, only four active Freemasons were studied closely in this study. This small sample therefore represents only a fraction of all Freemasons' experiences, and the findings cannot be generalised to all other Freemasons. This does not mean that the data that has been obtained from the study is not valid, but rather that the information gathered is applicable only to the experiences of the participants at the time they were studied. This type of research therefore gains validity at the expense of generalizability (Moon, Dillon & Sprenkle, 1990). The themes that emerged in the study can therefore only be viewed as guidelines for conceptualizing men's experience of belonging to a male-only society, and cannot be used for all men who belong to a male-only society.

Another limitation of the present study is related to the fact that the researcher had a previous relational history with the participants. This relational history may have influenced the researcher-participant relationship, the interview process, and the data analysis process. The participants might have answered the questions in a way so as not to offend the researcher, and the researcher could

have felt that she needed to analyse the responses in a socially desirable manner so as not to offend the participants.

The gender of the researcher and the transcriber may also have been a limiting factor in this study. Because of the focus of the study, the experience of belonging to a male-only society, the participants might have answered in a far more socially desirable manner. If the researcher had been of the male gender the participants might have felt more comfortable to express what they obtained from a male-only society.

8.4 Recommendations for Future Research

Clearly the sample size in this study was small as this was an exploratory study. By increasing the sample size, the themes that emerge could possibly be more generalisable as well as comprehensive to other Freemasonry members and their experiences.

Another aspect that could be improved upon and possibly provide a greater understanding of male-only societies would be to include other male-only organisations into the study and not just focus on one such organisation. By incorporating other male-only organisations into the study, the results could be more generalisable to male-only societies.

It would be interesting to see if gender did play a role in the way that the participants told their individual stories. This could possibly be established by a male researcher conducting the interviews and analysis.

The researcher feels that a comparative analysis between the experiences of women who belong to female Lodges and men who belong to the male-only Lodges could be very valuable. It would be interesting to see if men and women had the same experiences irrespective of which gender was excluded.

8.5 Conclusion

This study has provided valuable information regarding the knowledge of Freemasonry and an understanding of the male psyche in male-only organisations. Themes occurring in the participants' experience were identified and they were discussed in relation to relevant literature. The qualitative research method that was utilised in this study proved to be a valuable way of obtaining the kind of information required, despite certain limitations. Some important areas for future research were also suggested in order to obtain an even better understanding of men's experience of belonging to a male-only society.

It appears that it is important for men to have a space which is exclusively their own without female influences, whether positive or negative. This seems to be even more essential now that women are gaining more influence in traditionally male-dominated spheres. However, this is in contrast to the Freemasonry ethos of equality and non-discrimination. It seems that it is this very conflict and ambivalence that characterizes the participants' experiences regarding the male-only component of the Freemasons.

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APPENDIX A

STRUCTURED QUESTIONS

PARTICIPANT NUMBER: _____

AGE: _____

WHEN DID YOU JOIN THE FREEMASONS AND HOW OLD WERE YOU?

HAVE YOU BEEN A MEMBER THE WHOLE TIME?

WAS OR IS ANY MEMBER OF YOUR FAMILY A FREEMASON?

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

1. Describe your experience of belonging to the Freemason's?
2. What meaning do you attach to the male-only component of Freemasonry?

The researcher will ask any probing questions that she feels may enrich the information obtained.

APPENDIX B



PARTICIPANTS INFORMATION LEAFLET AND INFORMED CONSENT

**DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA**

RESEARCHER: SANDRA BROWNRIGG

CONTACT DETAILS: 082 520 1491

INTRODUCTION

You are invited to participate in a research study. This information leaflet is to help you decide if you would like to participate. Before you agree to take part in this study you should fully understand what is involved. If you have any questions do not hesitate to ask the researcher. You should not agree to take part unless you are completely content with all the procedures involved.

TITLE OF STUDY

Being a member of a male-only society: The lived experience of Freemasons.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

You are a member of the Freemasons and the researcher would like you to consider taking part in this research study in order to understand men's experience of being a member of a male-only society.

WHAT PROCEDURES WILL BE FOLLOWED IN THE ABOVE STUDY?

If you decide to take part, you will be one of approximately 6 participants. You will be asked to meet with the researcher to undergo an initial in-depth semi-structured interview. If necessary the researcher may need to set up another appointment, at your convenience, in order to obtain any additional information.

WHAT ARE YOUR RIGHTS AS A PARTICIPANT IN THIS STUDY?

Your participation in the above study is entirely voluntary and you can refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time. No reason for the refusal or withdrawal will be required. You may also decline to answer any questions that may inconvenience you.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS INVOLVED IN THIS STUDY?

There are no risks involved in the above mentioned study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information that is obtained during the course of the study is strictly confidential. Any data that may be reported in scientific journals will not include any information which identifies you as a participant in this study. If you wish to withdraw from the study all the relevant information provided to you, will be destroyed.

INFORMED CONSENT

I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Sandra Brownrigg, about the nature, conduct and risks of the study. I have also received, read and understood the above information regarding the study.

I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details such as age, sex, date of birth and initials will be processed anonymously.

I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study and to decline to answer any questions asked by the researcher. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and declare myself prepared to participate in the study.

Participant's name: _____

Participant's signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher: _____

Researcher's signature: _____

Date: _____

The researcher, Sandra Brownrigg, herewith confirms that the above mentioned participant has been informed fully about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

Witness name: _____

Witness signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX C

DATE: 21/12/2005

BOB'S INTERVIEW

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, let's start with the structured questions. How old are you?

Bob: I'm 53.

MS BROWNRIGG: When did you join the Freemasons, and how old were you?

Bob: I joined in November 1990 and I was 38.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, and have you been a member the whole time?

Bob: I've been a participating member since joining.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay. And was or is any member of your family a Freemason?

Bob: I've got several members of my family who are Masons in Scotland.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, and are they still members - those?

Bob: They're still active in Freemasonry.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, all right. Now I'm going to ask you a couple of open-ended questions and I'm going to try not to prompt you at all - obviously I want your experience of it, okay?

Describe your experience of belonging to the Freemasons.

Bob: It's a feeling of camaraderie. My particular Lodge tends to be a Lodge of

businessmen, but when you meet them in the Masonic environment, the mask, the protection is all sort of dropped, and you tend to meet everybody at a level, regardless of where they're placed in society, so it tends to be very open discussions ... yeah, you meet people on basically a level playing field.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay. When you started, can you describe your experience when you joined the Masonry?

Bob: That's quite a difficult one because when you join Masonry, you take it on faith - you don't know what it is because it is sort of shrouded in secrecy although there's actually very few secrets in Masonry apart from methods of recognition of one another, so you actually join on faith that you have in the person who propose you. It was a lot more old fashioned in terms of its ritual than I had expected, although as I say you don't really know what to expect, but certainly it was a lot more old fashioned - the English used is very old fashioned in its ceremonies.

At evenings at Lodges is basically split into two parts - the first part is the Lodge meeting and that is the ritual side of it and the second part is a dinner, after the Lodge is closed and the dinner, I must admit is very sociable and very enjoyable. The ritual, much more old fashioned than I had expected.

MS BROWNRIGG: Can you explain that ritual to me ... not what happens in the ritual but what you get from the ritual.

Bob: Okay. The ritual is basically a three-act play. As you probably know there are three Degrees in craft or normal Masonry - First Degree, Second

Degree, Third Degree, and those plays are actually learned and repeated 'parafashion' by the various participants in that particular working. It is chaired by the Master of the Lodge and as I say everything is committed to memory, and it is in fact a play, so you're a participant in a play - in the First Degree, the second, and again in the third.

MS BROWNRIGG: Tell me more about the play - you used the word 'play'?

Bob: Okay. Masons learn a ritual from a book - that's laid down, it's basically unchanged since ... modern-day Masonry is about 1750, thereabouts, so as I say the English is very old fashioned. Each member will learn the part, but it's all basically about morality, brotherly love, relief, truth and the plays are actually based on living a good life, being decent, being law abiding, God fearing - whoever your God might be. Masonry is open to all denominations, all religions. The only thing you have to have is a belief in a deity. What God that is is actually academic, but in English Freemasonry and in most recognised Masonic Orders, you have to have a belief in a God - whoever your God is.

MS BROWNRIGG: You described when you joined, it was ... you weren't really sure of what you were doing - it was on trust ...

Bob: Absolutely.

MS BROWNRIGG: Can you explain to me more the process of you joining - not the formality, but what was your experience of joining - who proposed, how did that happen?

Bob: Okay. In the area I was raised - in the west coast of Scotland, Freemasonry is quite

extensive - you're almost expected if you're sort of ... if you're a decent sort of character to join Masonic Lodge. I left Scotland when I was 29, so I didn't actually get around to joining Freemasonry in Scotland. I had a conversation with Colin Robinson and he had told me that he had joined a lodge in South Africa and I sort of expressed interest, I said I've always sort of looked at joining Masonry but had never taken it any further, and he said that if I was interested, he would propose me, and those days which is only a relatively short time ago - 15 years ago, you had to actually ask to join a Lodge - you couldn't be approached to join a Lodge. That has since changed and if I think somebody might get something out of Masonry, add something into it, I could actually approach an individual and ask him if he would want to join a Lodge - prior to that you couldn't - you had to be approached by someone which to me is a silly way because I would they ever know you're a Mason in the first place.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, so Masonry has changed over the years as well?

Bob: Masonry is evolving. As I say it is certainly not a modern type of society but it is opening up in terms of ... you can go to a library and buy ... or take out a Masonic ritual book, you can pick up the whole ritual, the only thing that you won't find out in that book are the words of recognition and the handshakes - everybody knows them, Masons know each other or can distinguish each other by a handshake. There are also words that they use to recognise each other, but you'll find the whole ritual laid out - available at any public library, with the exception of the words of recognition and how the handshakes are given.

MS BROWNRIGG: You said it's a society that is becoming modern - can you tell me more about that?

Bob: No, it's not becoming modern at all ...

MS BROWNRIGG: Not?

Bob: No. And that is probably one of its biggest downfalls - it has to compete these days against all other types of entertainment that it didn't have to - cinemas didn't exist - now we're talking from 1750s. Now it's competing with cinemas, TV, computers, computer games, restaurants, pubs - those things just didn't exist and that was probably in the early days of Masonry, it was an evening of entertainment, where there weren't that many forms of entertainment around - now Masonry has to compete with a lot of other arenas for someone's time.

MS BROWNRIGG: You said it's one of the downfalls - that it is not becoming more modern - can you explain that more to me - that it is a downfall?

Bob: I think people just might find it too old fashioned. I don't think that beliefs in terms of your religious beliefs, although we kind of bring religion into Masonry, there are two topics that are banned in Masonic meetings - one is religion and the other topic is politics. As I say, it's a very old fashioned Order and I don't know if its continuance is guaranteed well into the future - it is a declining Order, I think it will remain a declining Order unless it modernises in some way.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay. I want to go to another section of Freemasonry - what meaning do you attach to the 'male-only' component of Freemasonry?

Bob: Okay, that's quite a difficult one as well. The way it was put to me is that it is a male-only society - it's mainly married men and when you go to a Masonic meeting, their ways are comfortable with the fact that it is a male-only society and you're going for a Lodge meeting followed by a dinner and socialising amongst males, so the way it was put to me is that it's a male-only society because of ... if it were mixed and you had married men going to meetings with mixed genders, that unless the wife was going, that there might be some objection to it.

MS BROWNRIGG: Objection to it - in what way?

Bob: As I say, when you go to a Masonic meeting, you're going to a male-only dinner - socialising, whatever, and if it were a mixed gender meeting - mixed gender socialising, if the wife wasn't involved or your partner wasn't involved, but didn't want to be involved, she might object to you going socialising where there are women.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, do I understand you correctly when you say by having women there, the women that didn't want to go, that would be the objection ...

Bob: Yeah.

MS BROWNRIGG: That you're socialising with other women?

Bob: Correct. That's the way it was put to me anyway.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay. And have you thought about it - you say it is how it was put to you - how do you understand it?

Bob: I have actually never given that a lot of thought, as I say, I've grown up with Masonry - in

the west coast of Scotland there's huge numbers of Masons and it was just ... that was a fact of life. I had never really given that thought - as to why it was male-only and not mixed gender.

MS BROWNRIGG: Can you explain to me your experience of it being male-only - with it being male-only, what is your experience of it, what do you get intrinsically from it?

Bob: I think the biggest thing I get from it is camaraderie. As I said earlier, when you meet people in business, they wear a mask - there's a wall and you only get to know somebody as far as they allow you to know them, in Masonry, that mask is removed - the wall is sort of taken down and you meet people of various social standing, basically on level playing fields.

MS BROWNRIGG: So in other words, if females were included in the Freemasons, those masks might be harder to let down?

Bob: I think in certain areas, but to be quite honest, no, I don't think so. In Masonry you have to have a belief in God, it's all about morality. The telling of jokes at the dinner is quite common, but they can't be off-colour, that would be totally frowned on if there were jokes of a sexual nature or whatever, so really in terms of having women in Freemasonry, I don't really think it would make a great deal of difference these days, apart from the reason I'd mentioned earlier about if your wife or your husband didn't want to participate, would they be keen on you spending so much time in Masonry? Because you do get to a stage in Masonry where you spend a lot of time at Lodge, going to a lot of meetings, particularly when you're about to take the Chair of the Lodge. Two

years prior to taking the Chair, you would spend a lot of time visiting other Lodges and a lot of time away from home, and if your partner wasn't participating with you in that interest, I think that could be problematic.

MS BROWNRIGG: You say 'a lot of time' - can you tell me what do you mean - 'a lot of time?'

Bob: Okay, your only commitment to Masonry is basically to attend your own Lodge - that is your prime commitment. My particular Lodge meets 8 times a year, it's a University Lodge, so we go and recess with Wits; other Lodges can have 12 - they can have a monthly meeting and have 12 meetings a year, but as you progress through the ranks of the Lodge and progressing towards going and taking a Chair of the Lodge, you're expected to get out and visit other Lodges and that, at its pinnacle, can be twice a week, so it does become quite time-consuming, but it is not evenly spread over a month, so you can have one week where you don't go at all, but then the next week, you can go about 3 or 4 times, so it's a big commitment in time.

MS BROWNRIGG: What was one of your driving forces to join?

Bob: I've always had the belief that it was a decent organisation. I know it's an organisation that ... one of its aims is to collect monies for charities, unlike Lions, Round Table and other organisations where they tend to be very direct - you'll find those organisations in shopping centres collecting tinned food for distribution amongst people less fortunate; you'll also find them at any public gathering, they're selling boerewors rolls and that sort of thing - again, it's a very direct collection of monies for charity. Masonry collects

from its members - like a church meeting where you have a collection during the service, there's a collection at the end of every Masonic meeting, and that money is collected for charity.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, so it was almost the underpinnings of Freemasonry that drew you to it?

Bob: Yeah, as I say it's a charitable organisation. I've always known it to be an organisation that is all about morality and charity, and as I said, the rest you basically take on faith of the person who proposes you - until you join, you don't really know what it's all about other than the fact you are aware that Masonry gives money to charity, and I can't give you exact figures, but I think in South Africa ... sorry, not in South Africa, in South African North Area which I'm a member of, I think we have contributed something in excess of 7m over the last 7 years. I don't know if you'll be speaking to Gerald or Colin - they might be able to better quantify the number, but it's certainly several millions - as I say, it's in the Order of 7m over 7 years, a substantial contribution to charity.

MS BROWNRIGG: You speak a lot about ritual and symbols and the play - the actual thing that you go through. I know you can't tell me about the rituals, but what importance has that for you - the ritual, the ceremony, the ...

Bob: To me that's ... people get out of Masonry different things - some Masons really enjoy the formality - it's a formally-structured meeting, some people enjoy that side of it. Others enjoy the festive board which is the dinner afterwards. I actually prefer the social side to Masonry more than the ritual side of it.

Other Masons might prefer the ritual side of it, and some people will go to the meeting and not stay for the meal, whereas to me it would be absolutely pointless if I didn't stay for the social side of things, so personally, I get more out of the socialising with members than with the formalised, old-fashioned ritual.

MS BROWNRIGG: How do you think Freemasonry could change - or what would your suggestions be for such change?

Bob: I think changes have already started to take place, in as much as Freemasonry used to hide its light under a bushel - it used to donate to charity anonymously - now we don't do that. We contributed 500 000 initially to Nelson Mandela's Children Fund; we subsequently donated another quarter of a million to the same fund, but in the name of Freemasonry. Amongst other charities that we've provided substantial amounts of money to is Gate Dogs for the Blind, ChildLine ... I'm just trying to think which others ... okay, that's I think a reasonable start ...

MS BROWNRIGG: And you say it was done anonymously and not any more ... what was ... why anonymously?

Bob: I think that was a mistake, and I think it was a mistake to hide your light under a bushel as I mentioned because in South Africa, whereas it wouldn't apply in my country of birth in Scotland, there is a suspicion amongst some religious groups where they have some sort of conception that Masonry is something other than it is and I think a lot of the secrecy around Masonry has not done any good. The only thing as a secret is the method of recognition, and I think giving monies to charities anonymously, I think that was a mistake - that

has been rectified. I think not being able to approach someone to join a Lodge – that they had to approach you, has been rectified, because that was an unworkable situation – that you had to know someone was a Mason before you could approach them – how are you suppose to know if someone is a Mason, so there is degree of change in Masonry.

My particular Constitution is English Constitution with its headquarters in London and they are actually dictating to the various Districts. In Britain they're called Provinces – a District is a Province overseas, such as South Africa, and the ruling body – the Grand Lodge of England is actually determining that they must be more open, they are more open in the press, you probably have noticed that there's been interviews with Gerald Fotinakis on television, on radio he's been interviewed by newspapers, so it's a lot more open than it used to be, and I think that's a good thing – I think it will dilute the idea that there is something strange about Masonry – it's not, it's 'a Lions', it's 'a Round Table', it's the secrecy that has not done us any favour over the years.

MS BROWNRIGG: Secrecy obviously played a very big role in it – what was the need for the secrecy?

Bob: It's historic, it's based on working Freemasons – people would have build cathedrals, castles, that type of thing, and the secrecy comes about by their method of recognising each other. The original operative Masons, were in three Degrees – they Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft and Master Mason, which is a terminology that we still use – those are the three Degrees, and they were given a secret, if you like, the Master Mason had qualified – he had his trade test and he

had something to show that ... as an Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Masons, you get levels of remuneration in those days and you had to go and proof that you were a fellow craft or a Master Mason to get your remuneration, so it's historical. We're obviously inoperative Masons, but that's where the secrecy comes from - the method of recognising where you are in the Order in terms of seniority, and also the method of recognising one another.

MS BROWNRIGG: How has your experience changed from the day you joined in 1990 to now - of the Freemasons?

Bob: It hasn't changed, I enjoy going to Masonic meetings, I think sometimes when you've had a hard day, you would like just to go home, put your feet up and relax and it's an effort to get into a dinner suit and drive into Johannesburg to go to a meeting, but once I'm there ... I've never gone to a meeting where I thought, 'that was awful, I don't know why I bothered' - I've enjoyed every single meeting I've ever gone to, so over the years, after 15 years, I'm still enjoying it. I know a lot more Masons around the country by my participation in it, so almost every Lodge I go into, I've met members of that Lodge before, socialised with them before and it's nice to see old friends.

MS BROWNRIGG: They say that Freemasons are a group that - almost like the Jewish community, will rather do business with a Freemason than a non-Mason - what is your experience of that?

Bob: The first thing is you're asked specifically if you expect to get anything out of your membership of Freemasonry - if your answer to that is yes,

you would actually disbar yourself from joining. There is a myth that Masons grease each other's palms if you like - in the 15 years that I've been a member of the Lodge, I certainly have had no financial, commercial advantage from my membership. If anybody approached me or the people I know, with the intent of getting some financial benefit, I think it would backfire, it would actually be totally frowned on. However, in saying that, if I needed something to be done, I would go to someone I know, you know if you want a wall around your house or whatever and you know somebody that builds walls around houses, if you know him, you'd give him the business. So meeting hundreds of people, if you know someone who was in that business, yeah, you would tend to go to them - you'd rather buy from someone you know than a total stranger, so there's an indirect gain if you like, but it's very indirect.

MS BROWNRIGG: Is there anything else that you want to add that I haven't asked you or that you feel would help me to understand your experience of Freemasonry better?

Bob: You haven't ... well you did ... you asked one question about the ritual - you have access to a ritual book - it's too long-winded, I can't give you an explanation of the ritual, it's quite a thick little book as you've probably seen your boyfriend reading his, have a look at the book, it will give you a better understanding of the English of the 'old-fashionedness' of the whole order, and I think it might be worth ... you don't have to read the whole - just read extracts from it or read the First Degree - the initiation of a Mason - it's in the public domain.

MS BROWNRIGG: As you say the secrecy
has subsided a lot.

Bob: That's been in public libraries,
it's been in the public domain for many years. The only
thing it doesn't divulge is the method of recognition and
that's the only secrets there are in Masonry, how we
recognise each other.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, so nothing else to
add?

Bob: I can't think of anything ...

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay.

Bob: Is there anything which you'd like
to ask?

MS BROWNRIGG: Not at the moment, but
if I do have anything, if I can call you?

Bob: Yes, you certainly can.

MS BROWNRIGG: Fine, great, thank you.

Bob: Okay.

(END OF INTERVIEW)

APPENDIX D

DATE: 21/12/2005

RICHARD'S INTERVIEW

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, Richard, how old are you?

RICHARD: 52.

MS BROWNRIGG: 52. When did you join the Freemasons and how old were you?

RICHARD: In '92 and I think I was 39, if the math is correct.

MS BROWNRIGG: Not a problem. Have you been a member the whole time?

RICHARD: Yes.

MS BROWNRIGG: Was or is any member of your family a Freemason?

RICHARD: Yes.

MS BROWNRIGG: Who?

RICHARD: My great uncle Bill William Webb, my grandfather, my great grandfather and I assume his great grand ... his father after him, so ... on there is my grandfather's installation, but it's in 1910.

MS BROWNRIGG: 1910?

RICHARD: So that's ... yeah, that's Joseph Woodward there ... beside ... there's Joseph Woodward.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, great.

RICHARD: And my great uncle, Arthur Woodrohl was also a Freemason.

MS BROWNRIGG: So a long history of ...

RICHARD: Yes, it's been ... yeah, I think I can go back for about at least a hundred years.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, great.

RICHARD: And I'm getting a whole lot of stuff from ... my dad died a couple of months ago and I've got ... there's a suitcase of stuff and my sister says there's a whole lot of Freemason stuff in there, which Yvonne is going to bring back from PE now.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, excellent.

RICHARD: So I'll get that in the next day or so.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, first question - describe your experience of belonging to the Freemasons?

RICHARD: I suppose it's a sense of pride and fulfilment, there's a sense of tradition in it, and I suppose there's a sense of that it's worthwhile - it's a worthwhile organisation to belong to.

MS BROWNRIGG: Can you explain that a bit more to me - the pride, the worthwhileness ...

RICHARD: Well, I suppose from a family point of view, it's been in our family for many, many years, so I suppose on that basis there's been an acceptance that it's good, in other words, I wouldn't have thought that my family would have stuck with it if somewhere along the line somebody said, 'well, it wasn't a good thing to belong to' and I like the pomp and ceremony of it and the pageantry in it, there's a lot of that in it. It's also a very rigid organisation - so I like the discipline in it ...

MS BROWNRIGG: Rigidity in what way?

RICHARD: The Rules and Regulations pertaining to being a Freemason and how you conduct yourself and that there's a strict moral emphasis - in other words you can't open any meeting without the Bible being opened up on the pedestal in other words, so it's not

... so the whole emphasis is on a moral perfection if you like - you want to be an upstanding person of society.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay. The importance of morality, can you tell me a bit more about that for me?

RICHARD: Well morality I suppose defines the difference between good and evil and that you would have a sense of order in society, so for instance if you're a moral person, you wouldn't be one that would be cheating on your wife, you wouldn't necessarily ... you wouldn't be involved in white collar crime, no matter how frequent it is, you wouldn't be involved in stealing, cheating - you'd want to be an upright person - look up as a pillar in society as someone who ... as they say in the one degree - 'Lived respected and Died Regretted' in other words it gives you that sense, that you're on the straight and narrow and you can pass down principles to your children and people around you, that in fact you're not a wheezele or someone not to be trusted.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay. You said you started in 1992, can you explain to me what led you ... what was your experience at that time of Freemasonry?

RICHARD: Well I was exposed to it quite young - when we used to go back to England, my grandfather ... once I had gone through some of the ceremonies of Freemasonry, I picked up things that he had said, it was just quite interesting, it's almost like a little flashback here and a flashback there, so I knew sometimes when things were coming ... I had never been exposed to it as an adult, but in the 70s I was exposed to it through work - there was some guys at work who were Freemasons, in fact my one supervisor was a Freemason and he was selling raffle tickets and stuff and then we went to

the Transkei, to Mtata and I was a member of the Moths at that stage, and quite a lot of the Moths were Freemasons. There seems to be a sort of like a thread - as a Moth, a true comrade should mutual help and sound memory, is also ... you know in other words you're not going to lie about your military past and that you killed 5m Germans to make yourself look like a hero, in other words there's a balance of what's truthful and what's fair, and so a lot of guys who were in the Moths and still are in Moths are also members of the Freemasons, and while I was in the Moths, the guys were saying, you know would you like to look at Freemasons and then when I spoke to my dad about it, he says, 'yeah, Freemasons has been around a long time' and you know I always put a lot of, what do you call it, placed a lot of importance or emphasis on what my dad said because he was a wise old man anyway, so if he said that it was great and everything and if I had an opportunity to join them, maybe I should. At that stage I didn't know all my uncles and aunts ... not my aunts ... all my uncles were Freemasons at that stage, in much detail because my dad wasn't a Freemason, he never bothered to join, so he's the one (indistinct) in the woodpile, if you like, that's actually the broken the Woodward chain for just about more than a hundred years, so ...

MS BROWNRIGG:
bother to join' - can you?

You say 'he didn't

RICHARD:
Well he said that he ... he just never got round to it, he was ... I think he was a bit lazy at times, you know he was ... he just believed in working 08:00 to 17:00, he was Municipal official, he was a civil engineer by training, very clever, but he just never got there and I guess he would have joined if he'd stayed

in England, but then we all came out to Africa, and that would have broken the connections a bit, although he could have picked up because there's a lot of Freemasons in Africa. So getting back to our (indistinct), so eventually the one guy who was a good friend of mine for many years in Mtata said 'I'll propose you into Freemasonry' and so that's how I got in, that's how I joined it, so I joined the Charles Egan Lodge in Mtata.

MS BROWNRIGG: And you started at age 39?

RICHARD: About then, yeah.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay. Why not sooner?

RICHARD: I think I spent ... I think it's a trend anyway - if you look at the age of guys joining Freemasonry, is that probably before 40, you're too busy raising a family and establishing a career and I really wouldn't have had much time for it anyway and I was hanging on with my fingernails just with ... just sticking with the Moths at that stage, so ... I think Freemasonry is really, it's not ... although if you can join - the earliest you can join is 21 years old, you know, a lot of the time if you've got a high-pressured job, you're just never going to get there because of the ... because what's involved in Freemasonry, I mean it's committed meetings once a month. If you've got an office like one of the wardens or something like that, it's twice because you've got committees. And then you know the ritual that we do is learned by hard - you learn it out of memory, so you know, suddenly if a guy is doing a tough job, for him to really sit down and learn 5 or 6 pages of stuff, the guy is not going to get there - they're just too busy.

MS BROWNRIGG: Can you tell me your experience of the rituals - you don't need to tell me about them obviously, but just your experience of the ritualistic act?

RICHARD: Some of them are boring - some parts are boring, opening and closing, they're all the same; the First Degree is always the same, second is the same and the third is the same - and it's strictly laid down in the ritual book, exactly what it is and they call it the Perfect and Regular Ceremonies of Initiation, Passing and Raising, so those are the three Degrees in Freemasonry, but it's all the same, so if you're somebody whose not really involved in any of it, you can quickly get bored and I tend to get bored if I visit Lodges a lot and I'll go to like two or three initiations, because it's all the same, the only thing that's usually different is that they usually mess it up because they haven't learned it properly, so it's a lot of 'humming and ha-ing' and prompting and the guy doesn't know it properly and then you just like ... 'what the hell am I doing here, I didn't come here to sit and watch guys messing up you know' so ... but there is a lot of satisfaction of getting it right, if you can do it perfectly, it actually sets you a notch above anybody else in fact, so in my case I'm actually regarded as a (indistinct), I can get up there and I can do any of the stuff, if I learn it, and once it's learned, it stays in my head, I don't actually have a lot of rehearsal to get it back in or to revise it.

MS BROWNRIGG: You said that the pompous part of it ...

RICHARD: Pomp and ceremony ...

MS BROWNRIGG: Yes, that ...

RICHARD: Yes.

MS BROWNRIGG: Tell me a bit more about that - what do you get from it, what is your experience of that - your feelings?

RICHARD: Well it's like dressing up you know, I mean I was in the army for a long time as well - in the Citizen Force, and I liked uniforms and I like badges, I mean I was in the Cups years ago, and I mean you know, that's me you know and lots of people are like that. And if you look at the photographs you'll see there you've got a collar and that denotes your rank and your position in the Lodge; you have an apron which also denotes your rank - all of it's symbolic, there's all... everything on there has got a symbol of some kind. And you wear breast jewels, they call it 'jewel' but it's like a medal thing that tells you whether you're a Past Master, I've got them if you want to see them, but they're very nicely made and you know, everything is like nice you know, so yeah, I like it.

MS BROWNRIGG: How has your experience of the Freemasons differed from when you joined to now?

RICHARD: Well the Rules and Regulations that govern Freemasonry have been the same for many years, if you go back through the old little books - I've got lots of these little old books and the language is pretty much the same, and the ceremonies are pretty much the same, so it's the same, I mean it's not like ... I suppose what's different is that as you go up and become a Master of the Lodge and then a Past Master, then obviously you take on more responsibility about running the Lodge and stuff like that, but the actual ceremony - the initiation that I went through 20 years ago - whenever it was is

exactly the same as it was today and probably my great grandfather went the ceremony essentially, except maybe the odd words which were revised – so instead of a 'the' or a 'they', they had a 'thou', or whatever it is, so there might have been changes in the language a little bit, but essentially it's all the same, so a lot of the old members, some guys have been members ... there's a guy in our Lodge who has been a member for 60 years and he says that his initiation ceremony was exactly the same as the guy we did the last meeting, so ...

MS BROWNRIGG: And what do you get from the Freemasons, intrinsically, feeling-wise?

RICHARD: Well that's where I think the sense of belonging to a worthwhile organisation comes in. There's the cornerstones of Freemasonry, it's Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, so brotherly love, I mean I'm not going to go behind Dale's back and try and have an affair with you or another Mason's wife and his daughter and his child, you have to protect them, that's part of your obligation in the Third Degree – you have to protect and look after another Mason's family, and they say, the persons of his wife, his sister and his child, so you're setting a standard already there. And then you know, we raise ... each Master of each Lodge sets a task for himself to raise some money for charity in his Mastership here – in my year we raised R15 000, which we gave to the District and then last year they gave a million rand to a designated charity which was Reach for a Dream I think it was; this year they gave another million – that's the ... I belong to the United Grand Lodge of England and the United Grand Lodge of England, South Africa North is the District that I belong to as well, and that's who we affiliate into; and we

gave a million rand a couple of weeks ago to Reach for Recovery, which is the ladies that go around to all the hospitals, for women who have got breast cancer and cervical cancer and stuff like that, and they go around and help them, and the only people who help are people who have had breast cancer, so ... you know like Yvonne for instance ...

MS BROWNRIGG: Mmm.

RICHARD: When she was in hospital, a lady called Jenny came around who was from Reach for Recovery ...

MS BROWNRIGG: And helped them.

RICHARD: And helped them, so the charity is quite a big thing - you give to charity and then you live by a strict moral code which is laid down in the ritual books as well, and then you've got like lots of nice friends, I mean ... and you go to different functions and stuff.

MS BROWNRIGG: Tell me about that - lots of friends, how do you experience that - the lots of friends.

RICHARD: For myself - having lots of friends, I like lots of friends.

MS BROWNRIGG: No, from the Lodge.

RICHARD: Oh from the Lodge?

MS BROWNRIGG: Yeah, specifically Freemasonry, is that a big part of it, the social side, or ...

RICHARD: Well what you have, every Lodge - after a guy has been initiated, there's a charge after initiation, so some senior guy stands up and he recites in his head about a 4-page story in the ritual to the new candidate, where he tells the candidate that you

don't come into the Lodge if you've got an argument with somebody or you're at variance or you've got a 'barney' on or a fight or something like that, so if for instance Dale and I are members of the same Lodge and we agree that I'm going to buy his computer and I find out that he has actually taken all the memory sticks or the memory cards out of it, and now I've got a big fight with him and say to him, 'look, I think R50 000 for this old laptop of yours really isn't worth it, and I want my money back' and then there's a big fight - morally and by the Rules of the Lodge, we shouldn't go into the Lodge together because we're going to cause disharmony in the Lodge, so a Lodge is a place of harmony and peace, so we can't go there and fight each other, and if there is a fight, then we've got to get out. The other side to prevent the fighting and perhaps introducing members who are potential troublemakers, if you like - we're not allowed to initiate somebody without advising everyone, so we have what they call 'a summons', which is a notice of a meeting and in there we list all the details about the person - I've got one here if you would like to have a look at it, and in there it says that there's application from John Ford residing at this address, employed here, age, date of birth, who would like to join Freemasonry, and then that letter - that notice is sent to all the members plus it's sent to District and all round, and to other Lodges, and what that does is it gives everyone an opportunity to say, 'hey, I can't have Dale in my Lodge, he just ripped me for 50 grand', or 'there's been a sour deal with a member of my family, I'm not going to have this guy in the Lodge' and so what happens is that before you get to the point where you're going to ballot for the guy to accept him into the

Lodge, you have an opportunity in that month to actually say to the Master and the other guys, 'look' ... and to his proposer, 'look you know, this is going to be ... I'm not coming to Lodge if this guy is coming into Lodge' and immediately they squash it and say, 'all right, well there's a problem', and the Rules provide I think that the ... that maybe it's a temporary disagreement or something like that, so there's a 6-month period of cooling down - 'a cooling down period' and then maybe he can bring the guy back, usually it never happens, but if you voice an opinion not to ... so you've got 6 months is a 'cooling off' period but usually if you've declared that you don't want the guy in the Lodge, you don't, it doesn't usually ever come ... in fact, I heard the other day that they did just that - what you do is when his application is read out in open Lodge, in other words in the regular meeting, and not a committee meeting, which is outside the Lodge building itself, or it can be at the Lodge, but it's not a regular meeting where we dress up, you just come like I'm dressed now - when you read out his application, then you can ballot for the guy again and at some Lodge, I heard the other day they went back to the proposer and said, 'look, we're not going to have John coming into the Lodge' and they ignored the objection, so when it came to the meeting, what they do is they have a secret ballot - you get a black ball and a white ball ...

MS BROWNRIGG:

Okay.

RICHARD:

Okay, so the Master of the Lodge will declare the ballot open - white if for; black is against, and then the guy goes around and his got one of those like boxes where you can put your hand in a drop what ball it is, so you can't see what he is voting, and then

you put white balls in, if it's all white then obviously everyone in the Lodge accepts the guy and then they may initiate him, or if his a member of another Lodge joining us, then joining that Lodge, then he does join ...

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay.

RICHARD: Then ... but if you put a black ball in, then that's a serious problem because by putting a black ball in, you're actually causing a disturbance in the Lodge, you're actually like ... when you 'blackball' someone ... technically you should never 'blackball' because if all the processes have been correct up to that point, you'd never have to 'blackball' because the proposer would have withdrawn his candidate because there's unhappiness in the Lodge ... anyway, two guys 'blackballed' him and it caused a hell of a storm, which I think is still raging.

MS BROWNRIGG: Because as you say the harmony ...

RICHARD: Because he disturbed ...

MS BROWNRIGG: The harmony in the Lodge, that ...

RICHARD: It's got to be maintained at all costs - not at all costs but it's the Master and the Wardens to keep harmony in the Lodge and it sometimes can be very tricky because some of the old buggers, you know they can stir for very small indiscretions that you might not even know about or if you're a young Master, you know you might have got to the Chair in 5 or 6 years instead of the usual 10 because in 10 years you would know really all the ins and outs, but some of the guys - for instance we had a treasurer who was a very crotchety guy and we got the collection for charities and he was still counting out the money when I (indistinct) to close the Lodge and he was

like furious because I didn't give him enough time to count the money and to stand up and say, '(indistinct) Master, the Lodge charity has benefited by the sum of R500.00', so he was like lived with me and he gave me a good old telling off, but that was our very first meeting, after that I was okay, I said 'sorry', and I didn't do it again, but it happens, but it's just little things that can cause disharmony and that's where the balance of the Master comes in and the successful Masters are guys who are able to maintain a harmonious Lodge and you know, when your senior District guys, like the District Grand Master and guys like that, come and visit your Lodge, and they can see the harmony in the Lodge and see things are working nicely and people are happy, and you go to the festive board which is where you have food and refreshments and stuff, and all the guys are happy and there's a good camaraderie, then they just love it because then everyone knows that the Master is doing a good job, because some Masters can be absolutely atrocious and don't even know how to run a meeting properly, so the old buggers get up and they start muttering ... 'you know this guy mustn't ... so ...

MS BROWNRIGG: How do you see the Lodge now - obviously Freemasonry has been around for centuries, how do you see it now in the 21st Century - today?

RICHARD: Well I've often said that if everyone was a Freemason then I think the first thing that would have happened is that all the rapes and abuse against women and children would decrease dramatically. I think there's a great place for it, I think that the Freemasons are totally unwavering in their principles - they're not going to budge on any of it, and I think that's a beacon of hope, that we can go forward or the Lodges go forward into

this next Century and there's a great base for it, and a lot of young guys are coming in now - a lot of them are finding a lot of satisfaction being members.

MS BROWNRIGG: Is that different than the (indistinct), because earlier you stated that the average age is just over 40 ...

RICHARD: Yeah, when I went, you weren't getting guys in before 40, but in our Lodge particularly ... I think it might have just been luck you know, because our Lodge particularly has got probably 10 guys under the age of 40 who are members, of which 3 have gone through the Chair - the youngest guy, Lance, he's about 38 and he is going through the Chair already, and before him was a guy of about 35, so we've got some very Masters, guys who come in and I think it was just luck, one guy want to know about it and then he told his friends about it and they've come in and so it has started the ball rolling. Most of the lodges in our District don't have that at the moment. We're one of the few lodges where we've got some really young guys in it.

MS BROWNRIGG: How do you understand ... you say it's just co-incidence - that they all came in, but how do you understand this insurgence of younger blood into your Lodge - how do you see it?

RICHARD: I don't know, I suppose that's a bit difficult hey, I'm not sure. Maybe they're looking for some stability in a very unstable world, you know, maybe they see all the mess the whole place is in you know - crime is skyrocketing, morality plummeting you know ... you know I was laughing looking in the ... they had some stats the other day, I think it was on 702, they said they did a sex survey - 52% of all men have affairs and 26% of

all women have affairs - so are the men having twice as many affairs as women or are the women going ... doubling up with the 52%, I mean you know you look at the maths and that, but I mean that's a huge number of people that are breaking out of ... are having extramarital affairs and stuff like that. We've got a couple of guys in our Lodge that are doing that and they're not popular and I think they know it. I mean the one guy was moaning at us the other day saying now his wife's run off with this other guy now and married him and she's going overseas and there's a big 'barney' about it, and the one guy said 'look, if you can't keep your (indistinct) zipped up in your pants, don't come crying to us when your wife sues you and divorces you, so you know, don't bring that ... don't bring your mess into this Lodge', so he was very unhappy about it, seeing he is already a Past Master, so ... yeah, a lot of the guys ... so I tend - I would like to think that they are getting something out of ... even as junior members, they're picking up something of value out of it.

MS BROWNRIGG: Speaking about women, what meaning do you attach to the 'male-only' components of Freemasonry?

RICHARD: Well I suppose, I mean I don't have any ... I don't have a particular sexist view about it, the only thing is that I think traditionally, Stone Masons are all men, I don't recall ever hearing about women ever being a Stone Mason as such, and therefore it would have been a male thing, but there are women's Freemasons Lodges in Johannesburg - there's one in Roodepoort, I think it's called Lodge Protea, and they do the same ritual that we do and everything.

MS BROWNRIGG: And what is your experience of that - what are your feelings towards a female Lodge?

RICHARD: Well, the United Grand Lodge of England strictly prohibits you from visiting them, you're not supposed to visit them - you only visit Lodges that you're in amity with, in other words Lodges that are recognised by the United Grand Lodge of England, and ...

MS BROWNRIGG: So the female Lodge is not ...

RICHARD: Is not recognised, no, it's not recognised, and it probably never will be, and I don't think it's for anything other than ... you know I mean I don't think that the men have an axe to grind ... but it is, it's just a male thing, it's been a male thing for millions of years and I said to you 'well, if you're interested in Freemasonry, you can go to the ladies one if you want', they do the same stuff as we do. In fact, I was told and I have no factual basis for it, that the one in Roodepoort, their ritual is actually checked for accuracy by United Grand Lodge of England - that it is the same stuff - there's just the dress changes, obviously the women don't put on tuxes - they wear a sort of like a gown thing, but it's a short thing, you know like the altar boys in a church wear, those white surplus things - sort of like that, they wear that, but obviously nicely embroidered and with all the symbolism and stuff like that, but look there's no - in English Freemasonry there's no place for women, it's just ... that's how it is.

MS BROWNRIGG: Explain that a bit to me ... a bit more - 'no place' - what is your experience of it

just being male-only and how would it be different if there were females in your Lodge?

RICHARD: How different would it be?

MS BROWNRIGG: How do you think it would change it for you?

RICHARD: Well they've had ... there are Lodges - male and female in the world, there are lots in the States, there are male and female Lodges ... I've never given it much thought, you know what would it mean to have women in the Lodge. Yeah, I think it's the same as like a rugby club you know, it's like ... I mean I played for Olympics in PE and I went to an all-boys school, well in my later ... from standard 5; standard 6 to 10 I went to a boys school, before that I was in a co-ed school and my boys have gone to co-ed school, so I mean it's not like I've avoided female contact in that sense but it just seemed a natural thing actually, I mean when I played rugby, I never expected to have a woman scrumming down with me, it just was ... like there just wasn't the place for her, I mean I always have that joke about 'the woman being the hooker in the side', but you know, I mean, you're not going to get a woman playing rugby against men because men will just unfortunately flatten them - most of them I guess, so I played rugby and I played for a club and it was all men, and nobody argued about that, and all the women came into the club and had drinks with the guys and there are you know ... but never on the rugby field and I suppose it's similar to Freemasonry, it's like when I'm in the Lodge - that's the rugby field, and it's men you know. I don't have a problem with it, I don't think that there's anything untoward with men getting together. Each Lodge is a private Lodge within the District, but you have an

(indistinct) right to visit, so I can go and visit any Lodge in the District that's recognised by United Grand Lodge of England, and they can't stop me, what they can do is they can test me to make sure that I ... for instance if there's nobody in that Lodge that recognises me, then they've got to see my Grand Lodge certificate, and then they must test me to see that I'm a Freemason, and there's signs of recognition and passwords which are ... which we keep to ourselves - if you want them you can go to the library, you can get a (indistinct) stuff, there's books with everything about the Freemasons Degrees - the first, second and the third if you want to get them, but I've made a promise that I'm not going to spread them around because out of all so-called secrets of Freemasonry, the only ones are modes of recognition - how do you tell another Mason from another one and the passwords, and that's all, the rest, we take guys into the Lodge, they can have a look around, they can understand it, we can do whatever we like there, so ... what do I ... I'm trying to get to my point here ... so if there's any hanky-panky in a purely men's Lodge you know, they'd be found out very quickly because you're having visitors going in and out of Lodges all the time. I go to a Lodge and I look around and - 'gee, what's going on here, this isn't right', and then I'll tell the District Grand Master, 'yeah, I went to a Lodge where all the guys took their shirts off' or whatever - something really like peculiar you know, and then they'll quickly shut them down or fire them or ... because a District Grand Master has powers to shut a Lodge down - he is quite a powerful man in the system of Freemasonry, and it's a very structured system.

I've got the year book, if you like I can go and get it, I didn't think ... and I can show you in that book I've got ... there's a year book that the United Grand Lodge publishes, in there are published all the Lodges of the world that are United Grand Lodge Lodges, so for instance in South Africa, there's no United Grand Lodge of South Africa - there is a United Grand Lodge of South Africa, but it's not really - it's the South African boere stuck something together quickly, but there's Irish Lodges here, Scottish Lodge and English - English being by far the largest, and English Lodges are in Ghana, in Nigeria ... all the way through Africa and in this - in the year book, which I can give you a copy if you want to borrow it - in there is a list of all the Lodges that the United Grand Lodge of England recognises - all the Grand Lodges of the United States, in Canada, Australia, India - all over the world, and I can go to any of those Lodges, but I can't go to ones where women are admitted or what they say, 'are you not in amity with' in other words you're not recognised, in other words that it's a regular Lodge, so all Lodges that the United Grand Lodge of England doesn't recognise are termed 'irregular' - there's something about the way they do things that's not regular, for instance they talk about what would make a regular Lodge - a) no women, b) you've got to have what they call the Volume of the Sacred Law or the Bible, and it can be purely an Old Testament or a New Testament or combined. If you're in a Muslim country, it can be the Qu'ran - whatever ... what we call the Volume of the Sacred Law - it's the book by which you believe is holy and linked to your religion or whatever it is, so in some Lodges like in Singapore, I've seen e-mails - I'm on a UK Mason list, they could have

three books there because you've got three mainstream religions - you've got the Catholics or the Judaism, you can have the combined bible, you might just have the Old Testament just for Jewish members, you can have the Qu'ran purely for Muslim members, and then I'm not sure what the book is that the Hindu's use or the Buddhists - they've got their own holy books, and the Japanese I think also have a book, but I think there's the Buddhism have theirs. So you can have in a Lodge all those for instance, and then that would termed the Lodge regular.

Now you might find that in a male/female Lodge they say, we don't want a volume of the sacred law, so that's termed irregular - having women is irregular, there's a whole lot of things ... to be a Mason you have to believe in a Supreme Being, in other words you can't believe you are your own creator, okay, so maybe a Lodge (indistinct) for people who are atheists - a Mason can't be an atheist - if he is a Mason and he did go to church and then later on he professes to be an atheist, then they'll chuck him out the Lodge - they'll throw him out; likewise, on your application form, if you ... they ask you if you've ever been convicted of a criminal offence and stuff like that - if you say no, but you actually have been, you can be kicked out, and United Grand Lodge issues a quarterly where they list people that are thrown out for theft and for stealing and for being convicted before or after joining, so ...

MS BROWNRIGG:
future of the Freemasons?

How do you see the

RICHARD: I think it's a bit tight at the moment, I think that a lot of Lodges are struggling. I think the world as we're going is too fast - it's very,

very fast and I think guys just ... a lot of people just haven't got time to devote to Freemasonry because it is a bit time consuming, you do have a meeting - it's not an hours meeting, it's a couple of hours and a festive board afterwards. It can be a bit expensive - you've got to get your tux, you've got to buy an apron which is your apron, then you've got to learn some ritual. Then if you take an officer's position, then sure you've got stuff to learn, and it's a commitment, and maybe ... I don't know much about generations, but you know you talk about the silent generation which is my folks, we're the baby boomers - I'm a baby boomer, so what am I - I'm the dreamer generation, isn't it what they call it - the dreamers, we're the dreamers - you know peace and love and we just dream, and then generation X which is you - you must be generation X, and then I think they talk about the 'now generation' which is really a grant - and the 'now generation' is instant gratification or everything now, I don't want to wait for anything. And Freemasonry isn't like that, Freemasonry is take your time - it's a take your time society - you can't just become the Master because you hand a million bucks over to the Lodge and say you know ... you can't buy your way through it, it's something that just takes your time, so I think that's part of the problem, is that ... and I'll guess that that's why your ages are probably later - after you've got over getting your kids out of nappies and your kids are sort of ... most of the Freemasons that are joining now I think have got kids basically at high school, so they've got through the whole trauma of establishing a career or maybe studying later on for ... like when do you finish studying - 25, 26, start a job, 3 years later you say shit, I want to do an MBA now, so that's 3 years, 4 years, maybe

even 5 or ... like my sister wanted to do a Bproc degree, whatever it is and she took forever on that. So people do a lot of their studying because they suddenly find that their BCom or whatever it is isn't going to get them the professional qualification that they may want, so you know like if you want to join the ... like I did, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and then you know, you've got to do further studying and all sorts of stuff which you just ... Freemasonry, there's just no place for it if you're studying at night and all that sort of thing. So yeah ... but I think there is, as I said before, there is a future for it, I think there's a great future, I think it's one of the few really 'A' religious fraternities where anybody can join - a Muslim or a Christian, Jewish faith - any faith can join and make a contribution to society because there's no other place I know other than a Freemasons Lodge that you'll get a Christian and a Muslim sitting together, you generally don't, except at work obviously, when you're sitting in the same offices, but normally for them to voluntarily come together and follow a common goal of the three basic tenants which is Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, so yeah, but I like it.

MS BROWNRIGG: Well I don't have any more questions, I just want to know if there's anything that you feel you'd like to add that can help me to understand your experience of the Freemasons?

RICHARD: Well I think that maybe what I could do is I could take you around to one of our ... take you around our Lodge inside and I could show you where everyone sits and how everyone sits and how the interaction and the interplay of everyone is, and that it's not anyone's prerogative to stand up and say, 'look brother

Tom, you know really you're talking the biggest load of rubbish I've ever heard', you just never get to do that kind of stuff. And it's a very structured system, with lots of rules and regulations, and maybe if you just see the room and how it all fits together and where everyone walks, and then the collars, and I can explain the regalia and everything, I can do that for you at any time because I've got the keys to the Lodge, we can go in, and you can see it. I can give you ... I can lend you the year books, if you'd like those, you can look through those and they'll give you a sense of scale on how big English Freemasonry is. We're just doing our centenary now for Norwood, so it was 1905 to 2005 - that's a hundred years, and the number of this one is 1 439, but Lodges down to 200 and ... started in 17-something, so the number of the latest Lodges I think are nearly at 9 000 - English Lodges, just English, not any of the other Lodges - not the Irish or the Scottish or Grand Lodges throughout the United States - every State in the United States has got its own Grand Lodge, and they have their own Grand Master and everything like that and obviously there's thousands of members there. That book will show you all of that, it will give you a sense of all the Lodges that United Grand Lodge of England recognise. There is a website, I don't know if you've been onto the website - you can go to ... I'll have a look now ... the United Grand Lodge of England - ugle.org.uk, or something, I can get that for you, or in fact it might be in the book I'll give to you - you can go onto there and you can go and have a look at their website, and you'll see whole lots of stories and stuff there.

MS BROWNRIGG:

That would be fantastic.

RICHARD: So you can have that as well.
But yeah, I think also what's quite nice about being a member of the Freemasons is that it's also ... like I also involve the boys and Yvonne to a ... not to a great extent, but particularly the boys that at some point in the year, they can give at least one day away to charity because what they do, like help at a pub function or some cheese and wine or something like that, they'll act as the barman and then I'll say, 'I'm going to pay you 150 bucks' ... 'thanks dad' and then they say 'yeah, it will just go into the charity fund', you know, but at least they get the sense that there's more to life than just making and grabbing money, so it's just another sort of aspect of life. And I think from the boys' point of view, I mean, I don't think they say, 'it's stupid this and stupid that, and dad's going to another meeting', I think probably deep down they probably can pick up that there is a sense of morality in the system, which is quite heart-warming in a way.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, excellent.

RICHARD: Is that it?

MS BROWNRIGG: That's it, thank you.

RICHARD: All right.

MS BROWNRIGG: That's us.

(END OF INTERVIEW)

APPENDIX E

DATE: 21/12/2005

PATRICK'S INTERVIEW

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, you're ready?

PATRICK: Mmmm.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay. Patrick, how old are you?

PATRICK: I'll be ... very nearly 53.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay. When did you join the Freemasons and how old were you?

PATRICK: 1997, and I'm not very good at mental arithmetic.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay. Have you been a member the whole time?

PATRICK: Yes.

MS BROWNRIGG: Was or is any member of your family a Freemason?

PATRICK: Never, as far as I'm aware.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay.

PATRICK: However, there's a (indistinct), but we'll get to that maybe later, as an addendum.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, great. Okay, the first question - describe your experience of belonging to the Freemasons.

PATRICK: Wonderful Order ... what more - more - embellish? It's (indistinct) gentlemen, we've all got reasonably a few bob in it, so much that it's very rewarding at the end of the year when we can give thousands, if not millions to charity - a bit of a

competition between Lodges who raise the more money, which is good. It's nice, (indistinct) gentlemen, men only, women sometimes are allowed to come in at festive boards, which is also super, just a nice evening out.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, you mentioned with the boys, explain to me more about that - tell me with the boys, what's happened?

PATRICK: Much like the pub, however, if we're just in a Craft meeting, some further meetings, a little more formal and it's lovely to meet the so-called hierarchy of some gentlemen that we may or may not want or wish to aspire to.

MS BROWNRIGG: Tell me more about that - 'may or may not wish to aspire to?'

PATRICK: Well some are wankers and some are nice people.

MS BROWNRIGG: Are these the people in the Lodge?

PATRICK: The hierarchy, whatever Constitution ... there's some nice people that you want to aspire to and there's some people that you want to be friends with outside of Lodge and inside of the Lodge - just to be known as a Freemason doesn't make you a wonderful person, you have to earn that. Am I rambling?

MS BROWNRIGG: No, it's perfect.

PATRICK: Prompt me.

MS BROWNRIGG: Prompt you? Okay, when you joined in 1987, what were the reasons or what moved you to join the Freemasons?

PATRICK: Nosiness. In the UK, let me explain, most Lodges met in the afternoon and they were, I think in my opinion were lawyers or whatever, the

self-employed or money ... they could have the afternoon off and do Lodge meetings. Predominantly here in South Africa, most of them are in the evening where everyone can attend, as you know yourself Sandy, we've got some luncheons over the weekend or mid month on the odd month where there's a luncheon, but generally ... it was I suppose ... what's another word for nosiness?

MS BROWNRIGG: Being inquisitive.

PATRICK: Yeah. I finally met someone who was in the Order I'd like to join, and it's quite a lengthy procedure, I think my application was hanging around for a year before I actually got balloted and went in. I've had no regrets at all. I was married at the time, but my ex wife eventually started whining about Freemasonry, and there's ... well written about Freemasonry that's not very complimentary. In hindsight, which is a wonderful thing, no one really answered back, so everyone started believing we were shagging goats or doing all sorts of things, which isn't true at all. But I was brought up as a Catholic, I've been an altar boy - I was quite a good little boy. Nothing at all has shocked me, or that I can't handle within Freemasonry, it's a wonderful Order, as I said I think earlier, it's a nice Order - a wonderful Order.

MS BROWNRIGG: You said you entered because of nosiness - can you tell me more about that nosiness, what were you nosy about?

PATRICK: Well it seemed to be so special and I wanted to know, and all the books I've read about (indistinct) history and illuminat  and all that thing - I wanted to find out for myself and so far I'm an 18th Degree Freemason and this thing where the devil may be

sitting at the top table when you get to the 33 Degree is horseshit. All the good Freemasonry has done, albeit (indistinct) now, and I've been in it for very nearly 20 years, it has lost its worth in the world. We've read history, which I have a lot, say a hundred or two years ago, there was a lot of Freemasons that did a lot of good in the world - (indistinct) and (indistinct), civilisation or industrialisation in England, in the colonies and all those days have gone - we're a bit of a dying Order - probably all the people you've interviewed, I'm guessing, are all over 40 anyway, and probably much older. Not a lot of youngsters are coming into it now, which is a shame but understandable.

MS BROWNRIGG: So you say you've been in for 20 years, if you had to meet someone and they don't know anything about Freemasonry, how would you describe those 20 years?

PATRICK: Lots of fun. The most rewarding thing is what Freemasonry teach, which is me as an individual, on how to run my life, which isn't very different from I suppose the Ten Commandments, they just put a bit more worth to them in archaic words, it adds a bit of worth to the statements. If the man is a bit like me, I hope he likes a beer, he likes ... I've met a whole (indistinct) of friends in Freemasonry that I wouldn't have done going to our usual haunts in the pub or my social circle. Some are good, some are bad, some are a bloody nuisance, but it broadens the circle. I would recommend it, a very hard thing to sell, especially when we've got DSTV and the movies and what have you, it is very rewarding to spend all day at a golf day and we've raised 50 000 in a day, will do without it, but at the end of the day, we've

done our ... we have 3 days like that a year, and we can hand over some good (indistinct) for well-deserving cases. It's one step ahead of (indistinct), lots of (indistinct) members I think still, and the Toastmasters and all that, we've just got a little society which is a little more unique, where we've got some secret signs and tokens, and it makes it that little more special, which I dig.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, so those ... the rituals and the symbol and that, you say it makes it a little bit more special - in what way?

PATRICK: The rituals are ... to quote some of the rituals we've got are from time in memorial - it's very archaic, but they've got some wonderful expressions on how to run your life, it makes you think - lovely, lovely.

MS BROWNRIGG: So you started when you were what - about 33?

PATRICK: Mmmm.

MS BROWNRIGG: You're now 53. How has Freemasons changed for you in those 20 years, if it has all?

PATRICK: How has Freemasonry changed?

MS BROWNRIGG: For you?

PATRICK: The worth is gone ... the worth ... for me, very selfish, I've got about 18 months and I can get 30th Degree, which will be smashing, I'll be very happy to croak with at least 30 ... the Master of the Perfect Secret is a 33rd Degree, so it would be lovely to know what was going on there, but it's probably not much different to what I've learned today, just another silly word that I've known all along, but out of context.

Freemasonry has changed - lack of numbers, lack of support and some really old bastards that are boring, I mean really old - they're in their 70s, they've done some wonderful work during their years, and they've been in there 50 and 60 years and they're still at it.

Television and the Age has changed it really, it will be hard ... I think it's dying, I think it's dying.

MS BROWNRIGG: You've mentioned television in that twice now - what is your understanding about the television and ...

PATRICK: I've got a choice - do I go and meet you for a drink at the pub Sandy, for example ... television was the wrong example, or get tucked in to watch telly with a take away or do I go to Lodge - a hard call, sometimes you can become very lazy, it's much easier to have a take away and watch TV or go and see you in the pub. Often I've done it with Dale ... 'I should be at so-and-so tonight, by the looks I'm not going ... do you mind being there' ... 'I'm not sure', ... which is a shame because there's a lot of other members within my Craft Lodge that may or not be counting on me, but it's not a train smash, but if everyone did that, it probably would be, but it's happening more and more and more.

The higher Degrees now ... let me explain ... a Craft Lodge meets every month, which isn't too arduous; the higher Degrees meet every 3 months, which is less arduous - maybe a tad more to learn, but more comfortable. We've all got busy lives, a lot of the hierarchy in Freemasonry have got their practice, be it an accountant, be it a geologist, be it an architect, they've got the time to give it, and it does take a lot of time. I had a year in Provincial, which

is the equivalent of the English District, and I had to visit 32 Lodges that year, being Tzaneen, White River, wherever - it's a lumber, it's a lumber, but they're ever so pleased to see you in these so-called country Lodges and it's a joy to have been there, and the welcome you get, and the festive board you get, great.

MS BROWNRIGG: You said the numbers are dropping and people don't come as often these days - what meaning do you attach to that - for your experience?

PATRICK: The world is changing ... now I'm going to sound really old - tenants of life, even the Ten Commandments are being thrown out of your normal day-to-day existence. Freemasonry compounds ... or the obligations you've got in life, most of the youngsters are not really interested in those old ... I nearly said it myself ... they're all deemed to be old-fashioned now, aren't they, which is a shame. I think that's a good answer.

MS BROWNRIGG: And when you say 'old-fashioned' what do you ... are you speaking about the rituals or the Freemasons in general?

PATRICK: I'm talking about the ... the rules of morality, your obligations in life in general. Even when I was a teenager in a little (indistinct) school and I think I might have considered myself a hooligan, but my heart was good, now they're doing it the same, but the ... just say the Ten Commandments, if we could run with those in life, it would be pretty good - they're being ignored and there's one step further in Freemasonry that I believe, is to look after your fellow man, not all the people are interested in that anymore - they're looking after themselves, whether it's (indistinct), too many kids or whatever, they have too many beers, too many drugs, I don't

know, but those old-fashioned rules that I grew up with, seem to be falling away.

MS BROWNRIGG: You said nosiness got you into it, what is keeping you in?

PATRICK: The brotherhood. I made a lot of friends – good friends, and I do like and applaud all of us at the end of the year when we give those monies out to charity.

MS BROWNRIGG: Can you explain the brotherhood to me more – what do you ...

PATRICK: Nothing more than the ... it's (indistinct) Sandy, when we meet in the pub, 'hello mate, how do you do', we know one another. It's a little one step further maybe with Freemasons – we know the grips, we know the signs, we know all the rituals and it's just nice that we all know – another step further. There's Masons in the ... what is it called ... (indistinct), that you probably do or don't know, just wait, there's 2 or 3 or 4 that go in there – Past Masters or whatever.

MS BROWNRIGG: The rituals?

PATRICK: Lovely.

MS BROWNRIGG: When you say 'lovely' – explain that to me.

PATRICK: Craft Masonry – there's an apprenticeship there. The first ... which isn't a secret ... you go in as an Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and then Master Mason. The sublime degree of a Master Mason – lovely, lots to learn in there. It's all speculative, I mean we don't build walls or Cathedrals anymore – they used squares and compasses and rulers, a 12-inch roll, and they'll put it into words – simple words that will remind you that you should ... a 24-inch gauge is ... you spend which

signifies 24 hours in a day, and you spend part in labour, part in ... and part through your ... it's lovely, a nice expression, I (indistinct) put it like that, and they have lots and lots of that - reinstills what you should be about in life or reminds you ... because we're all a bit (indistinct). I love it, and the higher Degrees ... Craft Masonry is we're believing in a Higher Being - they call it the 'Great Architect' - call it 'an architect.' But in the higher Degrees there's some of them that are very into Christian stuff, and by invitation you're invited - you have to believe in a trilogy, so that means members of all faith, method. No, lovely. I've got all the ritual there, if you'd like to peruse them. Things I can't express probably, a bit like this interview, the tenants of Freemasonry are very sound and every young Mason have one. But of course, it's really boring ... if you go there, all the boys are 60 or 70, it costs you a packet in the end, it goes to a good cause, it gives me an excuse to dress up in my dinner suit or morning trousers or my kilt or ... it's a different night out.

MS BROWNRIGG:

How do you see your

future in the Freemasonry?

MS NOLAN:

I've been offered Chain,

but the commitment is enormous and I declined. I'm a Past Provincial Sword Bearer, I passed Provincial Grand Assistant Director of Ceremonies, and I turned down District Provincial Officer here, only due to pressure of work. On the sublime degree ... let me instil that the sublime degree of a Master Mason is really the highest you can get in Freemasonry, but the rest (indistinct) Degrees, although we all would like to attain that 33rd. As I say, if I make 30, I'll be quite happy. I might not be so busy

with Freemasonry, but I'm always there ... I've got a lot of mates, every time I go to a Lodge - 'hello Pat, how are you?' and that's taken a number of years to muster. Other people come with me, 'how do you know everybody?' - it's only visiting, only visiting.

MS BROWNRIGG: Another question I want to ask you is what meaning do you attach to the 'male-only' component of Freemasonry?

PATRICK: Not being a chauvinist or anything, it's nice - it's nice to have a break - men only and we talk men shit as I'm sure you do Sandy when you have had parties or you have your thing, you can sit in the corner of a pub or with your girls, it's nice, isn't it, it's not often ... it's no disrespect to women at all, it is lovely to have a men-only thing and talk men stuff.

MS BROWNRIGG: Explain that - 'nice' to me, 'it is nice'

PATRICK: We're not allowed to talk about politics, sometimes we do, we're not allowed to talk about religion either, sometimes we do, and we're not meant to be discussing ... and mainly we are, in a gentlemanly sort of way, it's just nice, where there are some people that we'd all like to aspire to ... I'm still of the old adage that there are aristocracy - we're not equal - back to that word 'aspiration' - you'd like to be like him or you wouldn't. You know your place or standing in life ... it's just nice to listen to some gentleman who will come out with some cracking jokes, but hasn't even mentioned a swear word, you've got exactly the point, and it's probably funnier for it.

MS BROWNRIGG: How would you experience a Freemasonry change if females were allowed in?

PATRICK: I wouldn't dig it.

MS BROWNRIGG: Tell me more?

PATRICK: I wouldn't dig it because then I could go anywhere - it would be that Order, and this Order supposedly goes back 2, 3, 4 thousand years - my certificates are dated 5 thousand and '87 instead of 1987 from King Solomon's temple ... no, the festive boards, the ladies are more than welcome; in the temple, there are, I believe women Lodges - I don't believe they're recognised by Grand Lodge, but they're doing it. It's a bit like, that's very emotive, it's like now the Catholic church or even the Anglican church, women were always there as lay - now they're asking them to be priests or whatever - it has caused a lot of shit within religion - I think it will cause much the same in Freemasonry, not on - I couldn't handle a woman priest ...

MS BROWNRIGG: How do you understand the exclusion of women?

PATRICK: You've got your own organisations - probably not as profound as Freemasonry, but I wouldn't for a minute presuppose that I would want to go crash your little club, I don't think I'd even want to go into your little club, meeting, or whatever you get up to ... let the man off ... you know when I was married, bless her heart, Friday's used to be mine, we'd do everything together, but let me have Friday off, probably later on she'd come and pick me up and she'd drive me home, which was super, but she'd give me those few hours ... I don't think that's anything contradictory or derogatory to you as a lady, which I think all of us - you and myself included, like a bit of (indistinct) ... was that a good answer?

MS BROWNRIGG: You said it's very time consuming?

PATRICK: Oh yes. I've got ... look, I've just put it over there ... I'll let you read it, nothing secret (indistinct - away from microphone) secret, you've got to remember it ... page 43, just ... that's all I've got to learn, just read it, it's not the sort of thing ... now I've got to learn this and say to the candidate as if ... read the second paragraph, that's what they call a 'working' because you've got to get your head around that, but once you've learned it, it's a lovely ... it's in your head all the time.

MS BROWNRIGG: And this is done off by hard?

PATRICK: Yes, I'll work ... and I will learn that by hard and hopefully the candidate won't know that I've learned by ... he'll think it came from my heart ... this is all ...

MS BROWNRIGG: When you say the candidate might not know?

PATRICK: When I was initiated, there was an old man called Davy Hearst, he must have been 70 then, he gave me the charge, which is a wonderful thing about Freemasonry - 'Older than the Golden (indistinct), even Monarchs have not thought it below them to (indistinct section)', 'that's deep, wonderful' - it's a month or two later then you realise ... but it's lovely, it's lovely.

MS BROWNRIGG: When you say it's lovely, if you can remember, what did you feel at that time, hearing that?

PATRICK: Special, very special. Then you learn a bit more, then you get your Fellow Craft,

and don't underestimate that - if you were a Fellow of the psychology, you'd think I'm a Fellow there, (indistinct), I am. Now I'm a Fellow, and then you go a Master probably like a doctor in (indistinct) or whatever, it's lovely, it's lovely.

MS BROWNRIGG: Those different Degrees?

PATRICK: Yes, they're 1 to 33, and there seems to be some trouble - 33, if I had some illusion to Christ then ... I haven't got that far yet, I don't think so.

MS BROWNRIGG: The moving through the Degrees, your feelings about that, because you said when you were initiated and you said that you felt immensely special?

PATRICK: It's still special. It's all on ... the lower degree is all about (indistinct) from building King Solomon's temple, we do the Master Masons - Craft Masons and then you go into marked degrees, and then you're given a mark on ... to put it allegorically, that your stone would have your mark on it and it will fit and then there's (indistinct) Mariners, that is professed to be even older than Craft Masonry because this is all about Noah and the flood ... it wasn't stone, it was all about wood. Then there's lots of other Degrees, but it all goes along the theme and it's all (indistinct) into how do you deal with your life. Lots of it is (indistinct) and charity, other things are much the same - looking after your brother - your fellow man, and that doesn't mean brotherhood men only, it's looking after 'them', 'us', 'them.'

But now I have a problem that always occurs in my head, the Ten Commandments I can

deal with - all of them, and I understand them - I can't really get my head around 'love thy neighbour' because there's a lot of people that I don't love and I never will love, and I don't mean it in the context in Africa, I mean if I meet a prick, he's a prick, yeah.

MS BROWNRIGG: How do you get around that?

PATRICK: Just be nice. Not too (indistinct) I hope - you've seen me operate in the pub, and they go away smiling, I'm never that horrible - I think Freemasonry has given me that as well.

MS BROWNRIGG: How?

PATRICK: By default, with all the (indistinct) they gave me ... just be nice. Often we've been a bastard ... one night ... I woke up in the morning, I was a bit (indistinct) I wish you could repeat that ... you don't get a second chance sometimes, although you can apologise.

MS BROWNRIGG: And is that something that you say Freemasonry has taught you or given you or ...

PATRICK: Reaffirmed.

MS BROWNRIGG: Reaffirmed?

PATRICK: Yeah, yeah, I think you're a good person or not. There's a lot of people in Freemasonry also, in my opinion, who shouldn't be Freemasons, but they may be saying that about me ... that's all opinionated, (indistinct) and wonderful, somebody might think I'm a complete wanker, but I don't think so, I'm setting a standard that I'd like them to aspire to as I want to aspire to them.

MS BROWNRIGG: I don't have anything else. Do you have anything else to add?

PATRICK: No, I don't know what else I can add. It's a wonderful Order, I'd like to finish it, it's a wonderful Order and I'd recommend it to anybody. Unfortunately it's a little bit unfashionable at the moment?

MS BROWNRIGG: Unfashionable?

PATRICK: Isn't it ... it's a bit daunting as well. When I joined Freemasonry, you'd had to buy ... every time I would wear a dinner suit, I used to hire it from Top Shop or Top Hat or Boxing whatever, then you've got to buy one, then these shoes, and the regalia, they can be, especially nowadays - 20 years later, it must be quite an investment. No, I've got nothing against ... it's a wonderful Order, it's still a wonderful Order, and I'm very pleased to go to the church services in all my regalia and if anyone asked me if I'm a Freemason, I think in the early days I might have hesitated, because it was in those days a little bit back to that 'goat and the devil', now we're a lot more open and 'they' ... 'they' - no disrespect to you, have more understanding. I'm very proud to ...

MS BROWNRIGG: The secrecy - you've mentioned secrecy quite a bit. What importance do you have without the secrecy - you said now you're more willing to say that you are one ...

PATRICK: Because we were 'bad' now, so I think to a degree that's been put in a good light. There's no secrecy, you can drive anywhere you like, you can drive to Brenthurst Clinic, and it says Freemasons Hall, that's not a secret. You can drive by an old age peoples home, a hospital, whatever, it's got the square (indistinct), and it says Freemasons Hospital, Freemasons old age home ... as I said we're not a secret

society, we're a society with secrets, and it's lovely to know in my Degrees, there's certain grips - handshakes, and it's not the (indistinct) an old (indistinct) stuff.

There's certain words and signs that we know which are wonderful. I could see Tom over there, and would give him a little sign, and we feel great because only we know that, it's a bit special, a bit like that, I've never been a Brownie, but you probably have that with ...

MS BROWNRIGG: And that 'specialness' - that 'specialness', what is it around?

PATRICK: You've been nominated, you've been balloted for and you're in ... you can get 'blackballed' - that's where the expression come from - in the ballot. In the Irish Constitution, it's 1 blackball, I believe in the English it's 2, but that must be a bastard, you come in and someone blackballs you and you don't know who it is, that means you're not up to scratch in whatever standard ... that particular Lodge is out, so if you're into ... I was very pleased to get into the Supreme Council of the (indistinct), lovely, by invitation - lovely, smashing ... Deon de Beer is there, Guy Charlsworth is there, lovely, lovely. Bring a bottle of single Malt, we do our ritual which is sincere, it's a lovely ritual, then we have a lovely meal, wine and beer, somebody's always got to bring a bottle of single Malt which we rotate and about 12:00 we all go home, fairly mellow and think we've done wonders for the world. To me, still in ourselves, God and everything that means to you, or especially me. How often do you go to church?

MS BROWNRIGG: Never.

PATRICK: See. I haven't been since ... I was an alter boy and I did ... I think I more

enjoyed the Latin, where you could kneel down and speak to your God - nowadays it's a little bit more busy, we're up and down, and shaking hands with the fellow behind you that you love or not, so I haven't gone either, not very often, but I suppose Masonry could maybe have taken its place. But I will feel guilty at Christmas - usually at Christmas and Easter I'll go to mass ... and it's dreadful, people are there with new (indistinct) and new cars and it's nothing to do with God at all, however Freemasonry is all about 'the great architect' and (indistinct) - the Second Coming, which you do or don't ... good Order.

MS BROWNRIGG:

Thanks.

PATRICK:

Was that all right.

MS BROWNRIGG:

Perfect, yeah.

(END OF INTERVIEW)

APPENDIX F

DATE: 21/12/2005

PAUL'S INTERVIEW

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay Paul, how old are you?

PAUL: 31.

MS BROWNRIGG: When did you join the Freemasons and how old were you?

PAUL: August 2004, I was 30.

MS BROWNRIGG: Have you been a member the whole time?

PAUL: Yes.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay, was or is any member of your family a Freemason?

PAUL: Yes.

MS BROWNRIGG: Who?

PAUL: My father.

MR BROWNRIGG: Okay, is that it?

MS SPENCER: That's it.

MR BROWNRIGG: Okay. Just some open-ended questions - I want you to describe your experience of belonging to the Freemasons for me.

PAUL: Describe my experience - okay, it's simple and I probably did quite ... I think the Freemasons, certainly my experience has been one of acceptance, one of being a member of something that's always available to you and I suppose what I mean by that is, if there's ever a need or you ever find yourself in a predicament, there's always a phone call away, one of your fellow Masons who will always come to help you out. That's the one side, and then the friendships that I've ... you know you can see I've only been a mason for a short time, in

just that short time I've made some of the best friends ever, purely because I think we're all of a similar ilk, and I think the ethos and the ethics are similar ...

MS BROWNRIGG: Can you tell me about the ethos and the ethics?

PAUL: Yeah, again the ethos is just one of fraternal friendship, obviously it's a charitable organisation, I mean the main thrust or the main drive of Freemasons, other than obviously the rituals and all the bits and bobs that one does at a meeting and a festive board that one has afterwards which is obviously always good fun and good camaraderie is obviously one of charity, so it's quite a bit charity drive, and ethos is quite charitable, not only to the Masons, obviously you're your fellow brethren, but also to the general public at large and that I think has been proven over the years with the amount of funds worldwide that have been given to non-Masonic charities and certainly in South Africa, I think it's about R15m or something they've given to non-mason charities, including R1m last year to Reach for a Dream and a R1m this year to cancer research - breast cancer research, so that I think is one of the main ... that's the sort of main ethos one gets from belonging to ... you're giving something back to the community as well as getting something out for yourself, which is always quite rewarding.

MS BROWNRIGG: And the ethics?

PAUL: Ethics again, you've got to have high morals and everything about ... everything that you learn and you're taught is to have high morals and to keep yourself on the straight and narrow, to such an extent that if you've got a criminal record, you can't - even if it's a

long time, you can't be a mason, so you've got to adhere to strict morals and ethics, and it does - it teaches you ... I mean the rituals obviously I'm not going to disclose those, but you are taught and obviously reminded that ethics and good, strict morals and the normal sort of love thy neighbour like you love yourself, without being religious though, you know you don't have to be a Christian, as long as you believe in a higher power, that's enough to be a mason, as long as you're not an atheist; an agnostic believes in a higher power, an atheist is one who believes in nothing hey?

MS BROWNRIGG: Yes.

PAUL: Yes, as long as you're not an atheist, okay, you can be an agnostic, but you can't be an atheist, so that's it.

MS BROWNRIGG: Can you tell me a little bit - you joined in August 2004, can you tell me - just your experience, the lead up to the joining, how that came about?

PAUL: Okay, well mine is not that unique, but it's a little unique, a lot of guys who had fathers who are Masons join as soon as they can, and you can join as an 18 year old, if you're the son of a mason and those who are (indistinct), and if you're not, then you're 21, but I wasn't that keen being a mason, I must be honest, till probably 3, 4 year ago, I started thinking agh, what is the old man with his little briefcase running off to these meetings for ... and what's ... and I've met a lot of his mates, and they're all nice guys and I got on with them very well and made some good friends - one of our common friends obviously is Colin Robinson and Colin had a long chat to me a few times and eventually I said, 'agh dad

you know, what's it all about' and my old man being as elusive as ever, he wouldn't (indistinct), but he said, 'yeah, no, that's great, this is the Lodge I'm a member of at the moment and it's a great Lodge, it's a dining Lodge which is a bit different to the traditional Lodges, it's a bit more fun, and we meet a bit earlier', and I said, 'how onerous is it, how many meetings a year do we have, how much money is it going to cost me' - all that sort of questions one has to ask and what is involved, so he gave me a bit of this, a bit of that, and Colin gave me a lot more inside information, and then yeah, then I joined, so there was a long time though I didn't ... because my old man has been a mason since before I was born, so I grew up with the whole thing, so I was always on the outskirts and I think certainly, I was somewhat jaundiced towards the Masons for many years, obviously as a youngster growing up, my father was very involved, I think maybe that's why I would always be a little bit hesitant to get as involved as he was, because he didn't spend that much time with his kids growing up, so I was a bit jaundiced towards the whole Freemasons story, but that's because I didn't really know what it was about, I just knew my old man was away a lot.

MS BROWNRIGG: How did that change,
going from ...

PAUL: You mean from being a bit
jaundiced to ...

MS BROWNRIGG: Mmm.

PAUL: Well I think I realised that
my old man, if it wasn't the Masons, he would have been at
the tennis club or the bowling club or some other
institution would have taken up his time, so that's just ...
it's not the Freemasons, now that I've come to discover

that it was not the Freemasons that kept him ..., it's just my father's nature, he's just one of those people that can't stay home, he's always got to be doing something, he's always got to be the Chairman of the club, he's always got to be the you know ... so he gets stuck in rather ... so that's just the nature of the beast. I think one thing I've certainly realised is that it can be as much as you want it to be ... so I think for the older guys ... I mean that's the one thing I'm enjoying now is growth because it will take you a long time to get to where it does take up your time, at the moment it doesn't take up much time at all. But when you're a bit older and maybe your kids have left home, you want to go pop off to a Lodge meeting and have a nice dinner and a few pots afterwards with the boys, I think that's great, I really think that it quite 'lekker', it just gives you something to do, it give you a bit of purpose and it gives you purpose in that again, you've got good friends and there's lots of family drives and obviously then the charity, it gives you a bit of purpose - or a sense of purpose I suppose in a way, but that's ... does that answer your question?

MS BROWNRIGG: Mmm. Tell me, how has your experience changed in, gosh just over a year of the Freemasons?

PAUL: My experience of the Freemasons specifically.

MR BROWNRIGG: Mmm, if it has. Yeah, so how has it changed, if it has at all over the last year?

PAUL: How has what changed, just repeat the question.

MS BROWNRIGG: Your experience of Freemasonry, being a member, being part of it.

PAUL: Well, any experience, once you become a member, it is a ... I mean you've got to be carefully how you answer this, but it's true, I mean you become, you certainly, I mean when you're not a member, you're definitely on the outskirts, you definitely get treated a little bit better, I mean undoubtedly, there's like a ... you get enveloped in the fold I suppose, and you get treated, I wouldn't say with more respect or more love or more ... but you become a member of something, it's like a member of anything, as soon as you're a member of something, like being a member of a really, really strong team, but the nice thing, you know if you look at a member, I suppose the only analogy I've got being a sportsman, if you're a member of a team - a sports team, I suppose you've got build confidence, you've got to build respect amongst ... in your team, to be part of that team, you go through initiations, all those good things. And with the Freemasons, it's the same thing - you go through your initiation, you go through those good things and you become part of a team that accepts you, but the nice thing is if you're part of that team, it's, I think anywhere in the world, you get acknowledged for your membership of that team and I would be accepted which is quite nice, and I'll tell you the other experience I've had, is the acceptance of others, we had a guy come in from Canada who didn't know anyone in this country, so he looked up the Freemasons, popped off to a Lodge meeting and he's now got a whole new circle of friends, just like that, which is fantastic, so, and again, that helped him set up, who the right estate agents to talk to, who are the right plumbers when something goes wrong, who is the right doctor to go to, who's the ... like simple things like that when you go to a

foreign place that he would have still been struggling with, that the fraternity had just taken him and said, 'here you go, he's a lawyer, he's a doctor, he's a plumber, that's an estate agent, they're all good, reputable guys, they'll look after you, so there's that acceptance that one get, and not only for the member of the Freemasons, but also the family, I mean the families are very well looked after, you know the older - the old ladies whose husbands have passed away are very well looked after, and guys go to visit them to see if they're doing okay, if there's financial help - where assistance is required, it's taken care of, so ...

MS BROWNRIGG: You said earlier that you see the age that you started as the right age or the right time ...

PAUL: Well for me it was, again, it's a subjective opinion.

MS BROWNRIGG: Can you tell me a bit more about that?

PAUL: I think when you ... because there are two things and one can never delegate from this, I think this is where people get foolish and certainly wife's and girlfriends of Masons-to-be or current Masons, and I've told my mates who wanted to join that there ... although there might, like our Lodge for instance and others, there's only between 6 and 10 meetings per year, so you think that's not too bad, that's only R500,00 per year or R350,00 a year, and you say 'yeah, it's not too bad', but when you're 21, 22 and you're joining your mates and you've got a girlfriend and now you've got to don this and get a bit serious and you know R300,00/R500,00 - and it's never that, because it's always more than that, so it's

more like ... because you've got to pay for the dinners and you've got to ... there's obviously ... you're expected to donate a little bit to charity, so it's never that, it's always a little bit more than that, and the time is always a bit more, because it's nice to go and visit, it's nice to go and see your mates at other Lodges, so I think it's important, and you've got to be ... in my opinion, you've got to be at that stage of your life where, I think you've got to be semi-financially secure, that you're comfortable that ... and that's not a prerequisite, I think that's just my opinion and you've also got to have the ability to spend, or the aptitude to want to spend time away from someone. You know like when you're first going out with someone or when you're first married - a) they don't want you to go anywhere, b) you probably don't want to go anywhere because it's still fresh and it's all those good things, so I think you've got to want to be ... you don't want it to be a begrudging - like 'I've ... shit, I've got a bloody meeting tonight' that's not the point, then rather not, it must be 'I'm looking forward to next month when I'm going to a meeting, meet with the guys and do the thing, and we do whatever, it's going to be good fun and a nice festive board, that I think is the key, so you could be 21 or 41, I mean there's guys joining now at 65 that like wonder what's going on, or what are my mates doing, they've joined - yeah, well into their 60s and they love it - they're at that stage in life where it's great to go out once or twice a week even sometimes because you know, it's either that or they go down to the bowling club or they go to the tennis club or they sit at home and watch TV by themselves, so I mean, it's quite nice for them.

MS BROWNRIGG: I was just wanting to ask you - how do you see the Masons in the future?

PAUL: This is something that's quite close to me, because I think I'm a great traditionalist, I think it does need a bit of revamping, I think it definitely needs a bit of young blood, which is starting to happen in this country, I don't know what the (indistinct) or the UK is like, but I think they're also getting some younger members in, but I think for a number of years, I'm talking to a lot of guys, it has plateaued and it has become quite stayed, so certainly with the younger guys that are starting to come in, in certain Lodges we've started building up quite a nice base and we're starting to bring new initiatives, new ideas and a bit of energy, because that's what anything requires - is energy to keep it going, I think ... it's been going for hundreds of years so I don't think it's going to fall apart tomorrow, I think as long as the impetus can be picked up again, I think it will go from strength to strength. You probably find in the modern era, I mean there's not much that's not known, I mean you can jump on the internet and find anything you want to find out you know, really I suppose, I certainly think that the secrecy of the society I suppose will be maintained, I think that's important, it's like anything, I mean it's like guys of a (indistinct) club, there's certain rules and secrets that they keep to themselves, this is maybe slightly bigger, there's certainly nothing malicious or malign about the secrets and ...

MS BROWNRIGG: You say important, tell me more about that, that it's important - the secrecy.

PAUL: I think it's nice, otherwise you wouldn't be ... it's like if you were ... I mean if

everyone knew your rugby lineout calls, it wouldn't be so secret, would it, you know it would be ... it wouldn't be part of ... so, not a great analogy, but that's, I suppose, I mean the Round Table, that bond is nowhere near as strong as the Freemasons, and I've spoken to people that are members of both, so there's quite a strong experience on both parts and they're not jaundiced towards one because they're not a member of the other, whatever it is, but ... Yeah, no, going forward, I think people ... it's a funny fascination people have had for years about Freemasons, I mean you read the books about ... I mean it's an incredible fascination and the fact that you're doing a thesis on it just proves that it's an unbelievable fascination, and the fact a women's ... I wish you were there for that debate - there's a women's Lodge, I forgot the name of it, look that astounds me and I've got some fairly strong views on that, but I certainly don't think in the future it's going anywhere, I think it will go from strength to strength and I think what will happen, and I think one of the drives that has started happening is more acknowledgement and more publicity for the good that they do or that we do because there I think, you know we've always given some money and it's been very hush-hush, people didn't want to take any glory, because again, it's not why you do it, you know you don't do it because you want the recognition, you do it because it's the right thing to do, but I think by getting some recognition, people will realise and understand that we're not a (indistinct) society running in the dark alleys of suburbia, chopping peoples' heads off on Thursday nights and running around with goats, so I think that's quite important and that will probably become more prevalent going forward.

MS BROWNRIGG: You said that there's a ... I wouldn't say an insurgence of young people coming but a lot more young people joining the Freemasons - what is your understanding of that?

PAUL: Well it's just a case of ... and again, it's word of mouth, it's like anything, I mean I joined - I mean Dale joined, I knew Dale joined, so that was one of the main reasons I joined, Dale is what, 28, 29, so I thought oh well, he's joined, Dean joined, another mate of mine, he's only 35, he joined at 22, he loves it, he's spoken highly of it, so I thought okay, it's not a whole bunch of old fuddy-duddy's sitting in an old dark room with (indistinct) bones chanting nasty things, so that was ... and then it just happened, I joined and then like four of my friends have joined because they wondered about it, but they were waiting for someone to take the lead, I think that's what will happen, and then (indistinct), he joined, so then ... so if someone says 'what are you doing tonight', 'I'm going to Lodge', 'oh really, so what is ... okay', ... obviously you don't want it to grow too big, but that's what's happening, and that's just really word of mouth in that circle of people, that were friends anyway, who just now become part of maybe something bigger or are interested in becoming part of something bigger, I mean that's why there's an insurgence of young people, and certain Lodges are stronger than others in that, purely because they've got a nucleus of younger people.

MS BROWNRIGG: Okay. The second question I want to ask you is what meaning do you attach to the male-only component of the Freemasons?

PAUL: I don't attach any sexist connotation to it at all, I just believe it's one of those

things, Masons, and I'm not a great historian, I do it purely because I enjoy it and I haven't really delved into the history, like a lot of guys will go and whip books out of the library and (indistinct) the history and where it started, but it started - it was stone Masons that built temples and buildings back in the day - I mean they were all men, and the rituals were designed, performed by men, there was no ... even in those days, obviously it was a little bit different, obviously women were segregated slightly and seen to perform certain functions and men were seen to perform other functions. But having gone through it, I wouldn't ... I honestly, my opinion, and this is again, because I'm not sexist all, I wouldn't understand why women would want to do that, to be honest - why women would want to be a mason to start with, in my opinion and this is maybe where it does get a little bit heated, is that ... or not heated, what's the word I'm looking for ... you shouldn't have caught me on a day like today when I'm on holiday ... contentious, this could be somewhat contentious, is that I think women have started a Lodge, because it's like a lot of things, because why, for so many years, the perception is that we've been put down and we've only been allowed to do certain things, why should men have any sacrosanct fraternities or Lodges or sports memberships or sports clubs *et cetera et cetera*, and I think it's just a case to experience that, so it's maybe the left-wing or the right-wing women wanting to experience ... just for the sake of experiencing, not because they're going to get a lot out of it initially, I don't think, maybe they do now, I've spoken to one or two female Masons, they do get something out of it, probably something similar to what we get out of it, but I don't see why it was such a big deal. To my mind

there's things that women do on their own that I mean quite honestly, none of us want to run in there and take over their ground. They started it, they're doing it, so let them do it, why must we now run in there and experience it, I mean let them ... they're doing it, so great. There is a difference between sexes, I mean men are sometimes from Mars and women from Venus, we know this for a fact, I mean I don't know why we keep fighting this fact, because it's there, so, I enjoy it and I think it's a good thing and not because my sexual orientations are different from a heterosexual, but again, I mean there's gay guys, there's straight guys, it's just a male fraternity, it's just something that men have done for hundreds of years and I think they'll continue to do that, it's not to say, and look, I'd be very surprised, not to say it won't happen that ... the Grand Lodge of England actually acknowledges the fact - the existence of the ... I think it's the Phoenix Lodge or something, I'd be very surprised if they do, and look, the old guys are quite hard and fast on that, then again, I've got certain things that other guys don't seem to ... other young guys don't seem to have a problem with. Who knows?

MS BROWNRIGG: You say 'it's a good thing?'

PAUL: What - that's it's a male-only?

MS BROWNRIGG: Mmm. Just explore that a bit more with me - 'a good thing' - in what way?

PAUL: You know it's nice to go ... and again, subjectively, it's nice to go somewhere where there are guys only, because there is a different interaction - guys and girls vs guys and guys and girls and

girls, but it is quite nice to have that once in a while where a guy can be just a guy with a guy you know, and that's why I think it's a good thing - there's no airs and graces, guys around guys, there's no airs and graces ... there's very little pretence, and the guys just want to go ... they want to try and do the meeting well, okay there's maybe a little bit of ego there because guys can never put that completely in their pocket, so there's a little bit of 'I want to do it well' for ourselves and for our fellow guys and then the festive board - it's a case of we just want to be who we want to be, and that's not to say that you can't do that in front of women, but very often, in fact I will *de facto* say that in my opinion guys around guys are not what they are if there's female company, and that's not to say that society won't one day get to where it's a sort of a homogeneous society - that would be a horrible environment to me, I think so, so that's why I think it's a good thing, the guys can just go and be who they want to be, there's no pretence, there's no stress of trying to watch your Ps and Qs sometimes, or whatever society placed on you from a principle perspective, so that's why I think maybe it's a good thing.

MS BROWNRIGG: Can you explain your experience of a Lodge meeting, one meeting, what are your feelings; obviously you don't have to go into ...

PAUL: No sure, it's definitely different times, I mean again, having gone through, because I mean obviously there's a number of Degrees, so as you go through them ... I must say the first one is quite ... you think wow, this is a bit strange, and then afterwards you actually get the meaning of it, it's 'yeah, right.' I think every meeting you go to, when you go to the meeting

for the first time, whichever meeting it might be at whichever degree, and if you are able to pay attention during your ceremony or normally when you go back to your meeting or you go to another Lodge or another meeting, there's quite a lot of symbolic meaning and there's quite a few lessons - just normal life lessons, I mean it's not ... and I'm not a great believer ... you know people that know you will say 'I go through life the way it is and take it forward the way it is', but there's I think, over and over, as you go to these meetings, you realise the good that's being spoken about and being taught, for want of a better word, which ... and that's really the experience is that you come out of any meeting, and you feel - you feel a bit revived, 'yeah, life is ...' because you might have had a bad day and you come out of a meeting and you think 'I feel good now, I don't have to worry about life for a while, it's taught me a few good things, or it's reminded me of a few good things', you know I might have been thinking this or that and it has sort of reminded me it's not really the way you should be thinking and it's taught you maybe a slightly different way to handle a certain situation, and so that's the meeting part - you certainly feel ... very rarely do you come out of a meeting feeling that was a waste of time - often, 95% of the time you come out of a meeting feeling quite invigorated. Look there are the meetings when you knock it and you have a big mouth, and think this is the last place I want to be, but that's normal with anything though.

And then, the other side, then you go to the festive board and your mates will all just say 'what's wrong' and you can get it off your chest with each other, and that's a great thing as well. I

don't see the meeting as ... some guys won't go to the festive board afterwards because they obviously enjoy the ritual or they don't really have that much time, but to my mind, it's all one thing, to separate it is quite difficult, because I think you loose out you know, so it's, to my mind, that whole thing, when you get there ... when I go to a meeting, as I arrive, meeting the guys ... and look quite forward to when we go home afterwards, it's ... cathartic is probably too big a word but it can be quite a ... it's an invigorating, it's invigorating and it certainly teaches you that your problems aren't as big as you often thought they were, that's if you're having a problem, and if you're having a ... and the other side of that coin is if you're in a great, positive frame of mind, it's being able to impart that on other guys that are perhaps not having such a 'lekker' time at the moment, so yeah, which is also great, that's also an invigorating thing, so you come out then ... somebody who was feeling down, his dog chewed his car tyre and his boss fired him and his wife just left him, and he's able to leave there feeling a lot better because you had something to do with it, and the meeting, I think that's also an invigorating experience.

MS BROWNRIGG: You said that you're a great ritualist, tell me a bit about that.

PAUL: When did I say that?

MS BROWNRIGG: Earlier in the interview, you said that you see yourself as a great ritualist or you enjoy the ritual ...

PAUL: Yeah, I don't think I would be as egotistical as to say I'm a great ritualist because I don't think I ... I mean I enjoy the ritual because I think it is ... and this just goes back to my acting days, I think

because I love to act, I love to perform and it's effectively what you do, it's 'lekker' to learn words again and stand up in front of people and perform, and do it well, I enjoy that. You get people who enjoy sitting and watching, like in any society, and you get people who enjoy taking part, and that I think is what (indistinct) the balance, so Freemasonry does another thing, which I'll get to now. Yes, the ritual side, yes, I enjoy taking part, I mean it gives me another sense of purpose to go to a meeting, as opposed to sit on the sidelines and just watch. What it does do for other people that are maybe in society and also in public, a bit shy and a little bit more reserved, it gives them confidence to stand up in public, it gives them confidence in the workplace, it gives them confidence at home, that they have now done in front of 10, 20, 30, 40, 100 people, they've now performed something and they've done it well and you get guys who acknowledge that it's been done well, and afterwards at festive board, they've had to stand up and make a speech, which you know for some people, for them to stand up in front of 5 people is the most nerve-wracking ... I mean I know people like that, I mean my financial director is a mason, he's terrible, but let me tell you this, he's also been just over a year, from his first speech to when we had our last meeting in December, he's a different person, his confidence is unbelievable, and he's getting a kick out of it, second to none I think, and it shows in all facets of his life now. He's got that, you know very introverted, shy character, I'm hesitant to use the 'typical financial director' but that's exactly what it is you know, but really he's grown, he's able to talk to the staff now, he's able not to sort of shake hands like that and duck into one

side, so I think that's what people get ... that's why the ritual is .. that's why I enjoy it, and it's to improve, and it's also you know, you make mistakes, you'll do it better next time, it's maybe a self-actualization thing sometimes, as opposed to wanting to be egotistical in front of other people, it's just you want to perform well for yourself and for your mates, not so that you get a pat on the back, but you just want to do it well for them, and it encourages the guys in the wings to, I mean if it's done well, it encourages them to sort of say 'well, I'd like to have a go' and also the speeches and things afterwards and the ability to interact with other people is improved.

MS BROWNRIGG: Mmm. I don't have any other questions to ask, I don't know if you have anything to add that will help me to understand your experience of the Freemasons.

PAUL: Yeah, I'll just reiterate what I said earlier, I think my experience of the Freemasons is it's a wonderful fraternity of men, and their respective lovers, husbands, girlfriends, wife's and kids, whatever and so on and so forth, and assistance with regard to society in general, I mean it's a charitable organisation, it's a charitable fraternity and it's a fraternity that's certainly incite brotherly love and truth, which doesn't often always happen, but most of the time it does and it's encouraged. That's it.

MS BROWNRIGG: Thank you.

PAUL: Pleasure.

(END OF INTERVIEW)