



## **Secret Societies in America: Foundational Studies of Fraternalism**

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# Secret Societies in America: Foundational Studies of Fraternalism

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Fraternal organizations, often called "secret societies" because of their proprietary ritual initiations, have thrived in America since the 1730s. Only recently, however, have they become the subject of rigorous academic scrutiny. Bringing together foundational studies of American fraternalism by respected journalists, historians, and sociologists, this volume seeks to contribute to a greater understanding of this aspect of American life. Two respected authorities in the field have carefully selected and edited writings which shed light on how contemporaries understood fraternalism during its golden age of the 1800s, document how 20th century scholars understood these groups, and hopefully facilitate further research into this quintessentially characteristic American phenomenon.

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