



Independent Order of Odd Fellows  
Dedicated Members for Change

May 5, 2013

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Continuing this series of articles on the decline of fraternal organizations in the United States, please click on the link below. This presents an interesting article, written in 1992, about the rise and fall of fraternal insurance organizations. For those who dispute that fraternal organizations "change" over time, this article explains the rapid expansion of fraternal orders that offered insurance (of various kinds - life, medical, loss of job, etc.) to their members and then the diminution of those fraternities when government and the private sector entered these fields.

The ability of a fraternal order to adapt to its times (and appeal to new members) is the secret of success. Fraternities in the latter half of the 19th Century and early part of the 20th Century adapted to the needs of those times and grew. Alternatively, most fraternal orders in the latter half of the 20th Century and now into the 21st Century have failed to adapt to their times, and are declining. Evolution and change is natural, and those fraternal orders that fail to evolve to fit their "climate" will continue to diminish, and in some cases, will become extinct. The list, sadly, numbers in the hundreds of American fraternal orders that flourished in the 19th and 20th Centuries, failed to adapt, and are now extinct.

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Dave Rosenberg