

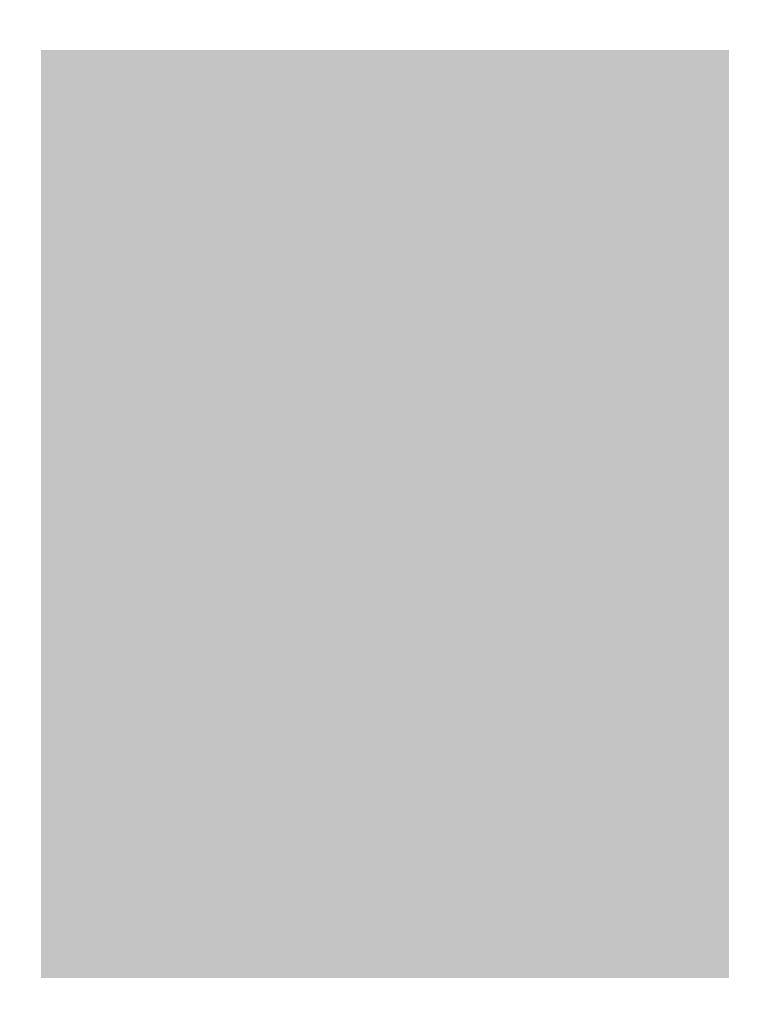
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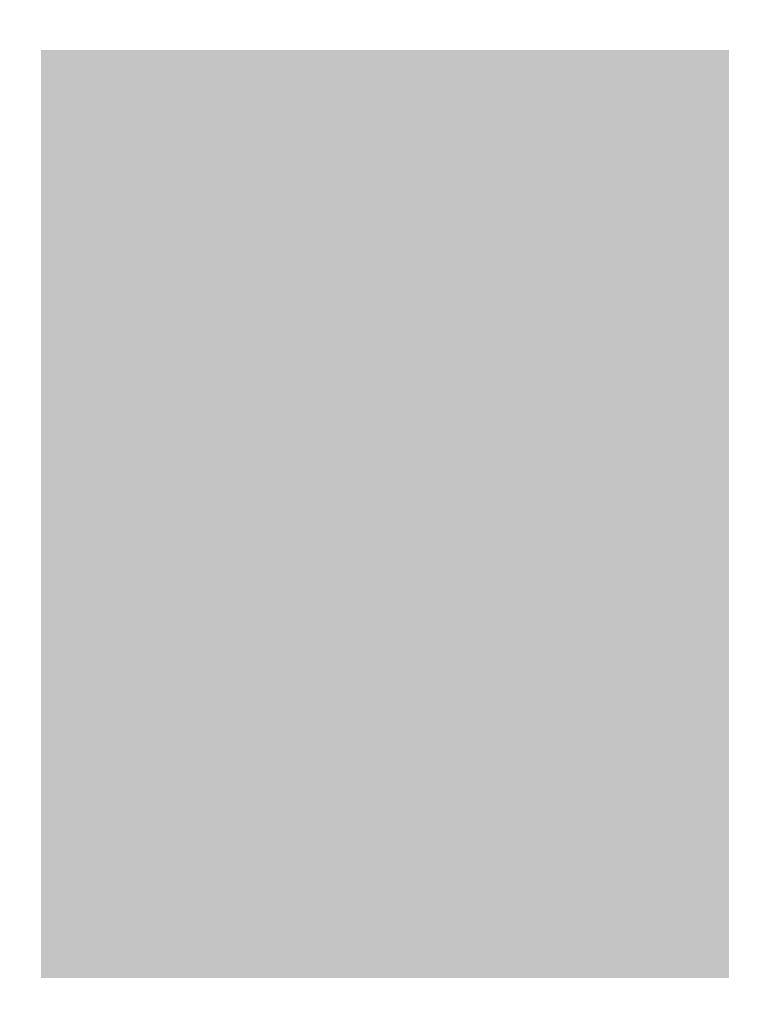
Saturday, April 8, 2017 American Brotherhood The Muslim Brothers Are Present in the United States, But Not a Threat Peter Skerry

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assassination and terrorist attacks. But this long and blemished history does not necessarily mean that the contemporary Brotherhood is a terrorist organization. In the Arab nations where it has been rooted for generations, the Brotherhood today is <u>more of a social and cultural movement</u> [6] than a political party. And although the organization has <u>never</u> <u>articulated a principled position against violence</u> [7], neither has it relied primarily on violence to achieve its goals. Nevertheless, since the Egyptian military's 2013 coup against then President Mohamed Morsi's Brotherhood government, the new regime in Cairo, along with a few others in the region, has deemed the group a terrorist organization and urged Washington to do the same.

In the United States, the Brotherhood has never been directly tied to or involved with any terrorist threats or attacks, although some Islamists who have engaged in violent jihad





in such circumstances, these Brothers would have been prone to all variety of brash, intemperate, and outrageous words, deeds, and fantasies.

Nor do these critics' writings contain any acknowledgment or awareness that in the intervening 20 to 30 or more years, youthful Islamist fantasies—especially those of typically geeky science and engineering students—might have changed or evolved. Assuming they did not return home, which many did, these young men likely obtained their degrees, got married, pursued reasonably successful careers, and raised families here. The available socio-economic data certainly confirm this trajectory. But even if their fundamental views or values had not changed, such life-experiences would foster new circumstances and bonds that would presumably complicate any inclinations to act on them.

Brotherhood there, such considerations arise with renewed force, especially as new Islamist leaders arrive here from the Middle East.

The Brotherhood's enduring penchant for secrecy and the inevitable deception that results might in theory be put in the service of genuinely threatening deeds. But in the United States at least these deeds have yet to materialize. Nonetheless, the organization's culture of concealment has led to pervasive corrosion of trust. This arises in Muslim families when husbands are instructed by the Brothers not to tell their wives about their activities in the organization; or in institutions, such as the mosque in Bridgeview, when groups of Brothers conspire to take control. Concealment creates confusion, anger, and division among Muslim Americans—a population already divided along an extraordinary array of sectarian, ethnic, and racial lines.

Such secrecy also tends to strain relations between Muslims and non-Muslims. For as Edward Shils pointed out sixty years ago in *The Torment of Secrecy,* his penetrating study of McCarthyism, in a nation of immigrants such as the United States, questions of loyalty naturally and inevitably arise. And the subsequent, m 559 542 I 559 521 I 55 521 IT 1suq m(n)

[18] https://www.the-american-interest.com/2011/07/01/the-americanization-of-islamism/ [19] https://www.amazon.com/Muslim-Brotherhood-Burden-Tradition/dp/0863564755/ref=sr\_1\_1?s=books& amp;ie=UTF8&qid=1491610252&sr=1-1& amp;keywords=the+muslim+brotherhood+the+burden+of+tradition