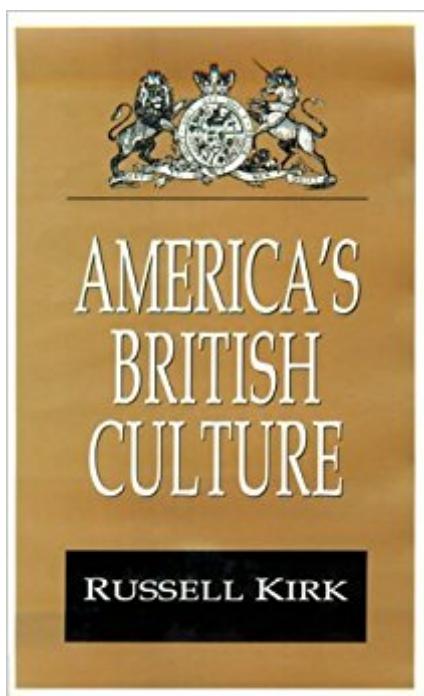


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America's British Culture (Library Of Conservative Thought)



Synopsis

It is an incontestable fact of history that the United States, although a multiethnic nation, derives its language, mores, political purposes, and institutions from Great Britain. The two nations share a common history, religious heritage, pattern of law and politics, and a body of great literature. Yet, America cannot be wholly confident that this heritage will endure forever. Declining standards in education and the strident claims of multiculturalists threaten to sever the vital Anglo-American link that ensures cultural order and continuity. In America's British Culture, now in paperback, Russell Kirk offers a brilliant summary account and spirited defense of the culture that the people of the United States have inherited from Great Britain. Kirk discerns four essential areas of influence. The language and literature of England carried with it a tradition of liberty and order as well as certain assumptions about the human condition and ethical conduct. American common and positive law, being derived from English law, gives fuller protection to the individual than does the legal system of any other country. The American form of representative government is patterned on the English parliamentary system. Finally, there is the body of mores--moral habits, beliefs, conventions, customs--that compose an ethical heritage. Elegantly written and deeply learned, America's British Culture is an insightful inquiry into history and a plea for cultural renewal and continuity. Adam De Vore in The Michigan Review said of the book: "A compact but stimulating tracta contribution to an overdue cultural renewal and reinvigoration. Kirk evinces an increasingly uncommon reverence for historical accuracy, academic integrity and the understanding of one's cultural heritage," and Merrie Cave in The Salisbury Review said of the author: "Russell Kirk has been one of the most important influences in the revival of American conservatism since the fifties. [Kirk] belongs to an almost extinct species on both sides of the Atlantic--an independent man of letters."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“Kirk chronicles the transference of British traditions across the Atlantic not with the xenophobia of stereotypical cultural conservatives but rather with the scrupulous care of a seasoned thinker: Kirk evinces an increasingly uncommon reverence for historical accuracy, academic integrity and the understanding of one’s cultural heritage. . . . [Kirk] succeeds in marshaling the primary arguments against multiculturalism, situating them within a broader understanding of culture, and defining the responsibility incumbent upon individuals to preserve their cultural patrimony.” • Adam DeVore, *The Michigan Review* “Kirk discusses four main categories in which British culture has been absorbed by the United States in its conception and development. These are the English language and literature; the English system of common law; the American form of representative government based upon the British parliamentary system; and moral beliefs and intellectual disciplines, what Tocqueville called *mores*. Each of these areas deeply affected the settlers that first journeyed to North America, and we see their influence upon our founding fathers in their creation of the republic. These British influences are undeniable, and Kirk explains that without them, our nation would not be the success that it has become.” • Robert Paterno, *The Dartmouth Review* “In a timely new book, *America’s British Culture*, Russell Kirk, one of our foremost men of letters and editor of the *Library of Conservative Thought* series, points out that contemporary America is a product of the long evolution of law, governmental structure, religion, philosophy and literature of the larger Western world and, more particularly, of Great Britain, through which this Western culture in its British form reached the new world.” • Allan Brownfeld, *America’s Future*

Russell Kirk (1918–1994) was the author of twenty-nine books in several fields. He was the founding editor of Transaction’s *Library of Conservative Thought* series. A

An Amazing little book. It digs a bit in to who as Americans We are and what We owe our mother country. The Author is well written and thought out. The only fault I wish he would have written more. If you Love our Culture and Heritage as Anglo Americans, I highly recommend this book. You

will have a lot of food for thought. One has a lot of information on how our ways came about. How our laws developed, Our form of Government came about and also a bit on how we need to save our Heritage. Buy this book as Trust me you will thank me.

I have a deep respect for the author. His writing style is logical concise and full of great insight. It is also a potential antidote for the poison of multiculturalism . An answer to their metaphysical madness.

Very pleased, looking forward to reading it. This book arrived on Feb 23 and in very good condition.

As Russell Kirk notes, less than 20 percent of Americans have British blood, but if you took away all the elements of British culture from America, it wouldn't be America. In *AMERICA'S BRITISH CULTURE*, Kirk provides a quick run through of the various influences of British culture on the America. Whether it's the common law, representative government or the immense heritage of English literature, one need only reflect for a moment on how important British culture has been on American life. This book covers familiar ground and those who have read *THE ROOTS OF AMERICAN ORDER* probably won't learn all that much. At the same time it is filled with interesting facts and provocative theories. For example, Kirk argues that that America's political institution owes little to the ancient world. It was from their English background that they learned representative government. Once independence was gained, the states carried over their institutions. Connecticut and Rhode Island transformed their Royal charters into constitutions, simply striking out references to the king. This is a familiar theme in Kirk: the American Revolution was essentially conservative.

A short, though not cursory, examination of the British culture that America has inherited and improved on gives the lie to those who claim the US is merely the polyglot combination of a thousand equal influences (if you were taught that the Iroquois gave us democracy, you know what I mean.). Kirk examines four ways in which America carries the torch of British civilization: the English language, the common-law tradition (which could have been better explained), representative government, and the general mores. Good quick read for the Anglosphere fan, but should not be your exclusive resource.

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