



Roots of a Region: Southern Folk Culture

John A. Burrison

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Roots of a Region reveals the importance of folk traditions in shaping and expressing the American South. This overview covers the entire region and all forms of expression-oral, musical, customary, and material.

The author establishes how folklore pervades and reflects the region's economics, history (especially the Civil War), race relations, religion, and politics. He follows with a catalog of those folk-cultural traits-from food and crafts to music and story-that are distinctly southern. The book then explores the Native American and Old World sources of southern folk culture. Two case studies serve as examples to students and as evidence of the author's larger points. The first traces the origins and development of an artifact type, the clay jug; the second examines a place, Georgia, and the relationship of its folklore to the region as a whole.

The author concludes by looking to the future of folklife in a region that has lost much of its agrarian base as it modernizes, a future dependent on recent immigration and appreciation of older southern traditions by a largely urban audience. Supporting these explorations are 115 illustrations-sixteen in color-and an extensive bibliography of books on southern folk culture.

John A. Burrison is Regents Professor of English and director of the folklore curriculum at Georgia State University. He also serves as curator of the Goizueta Folklife Gallery at the Atlanta History Museum and of the Folk Pottery Museum of Northeast Georgia at Sautee Nacoochee Center. His previous books are *Brothers in Clay: The Story of Georgia Folk Pottery*, *Storytellers: Folktales and Legends from the South*, and *Shaping Traditions: Folk Arts in a Changing South*.

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