

Tradition and Convention  
Benjamin Myers

Abstract

American conservative thought has in recent years suffered from a lack of consistency and from faltering resolution. Conservatives have rightly resisted abstract theory, but we should be careful not to let this resistance to abstraction shade over into a form of relativism. When we properly distinguish tradition from mere convention, we establish more reliable and lasting foundations for conservative thought. The difference between tradition and convention may be demonstrated by looking at contemporary and traditional thinking on issues such as education and marriage. It is the proper function of liberal arts education to teach students to discern convention from tradition.