



# John Randolph of Roanoke: A Study in American Politics

*Russell Kirk*

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John Randolph of Roanoke—Roanoke being the name of his home in Charlotte County, Virginia—is unique in American political history. Only twenty-six when first elected to Congress in 1799, he readily became the most forceful figure at the Capitol. An incomparable orator, he was also, in the observation of Dumas Malone, "a merciless castigator of iniquity."

For most of his public career Randolph was a leader of the opposition—to both Jeffersonians and Federalists. He was, writes Russell Kirk, "devoted to state rights, the agricultural interest, economy in government, and freedom from foreign entanglements." Above all things Randolph cherished liberty, and he famously declared, "I love liberty; I hate equality."

"This fourth edition incorporates the corrections and modest revisions provided by the author shortly before his death in 1994. Among the new material is a transcription of the first-hand account of Randolph's death that relates information long deemed apocryphal. The account is by Dr. Joseph Parrish, who was at Randolph's side when he died in 1833.

**Russell Kirk** (1918–1994) was the author of some thirty books, including *The Conservative Mind*, and was one of the seminal political thinkers of the twentieth century.

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