



Notes Towards the Definition of Culture

By T. S. Eliot

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'The term *culture* ... includes all the characteristic activities and interests of a people; Derby Day, Henley Regatta, Cowes, the twelfth of August, a cup final, the dog races, the pin table, the dart board, Wensleydale cheese, boiled cabbage cut into sections, beetroot in vinegar, 19th-century Gothic churches and the music of Elgar. The reader can make his own list ...'

In this famous essay T. S. Eliot examines the principal uses of the word, and the conditions in which culture itself can flourish.

'So rich in ideas that it is difficult to select two or three of them for comment ... it is a natural history of culture.' *Sunday Times*

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Editorial Review

Review

Critical treatise by T.S. Eliot, originally appearing as a series of articles in *New England Weekly* in 1943, and published in book form in 1948. In the Notes, Eliot presents culture as an organic, shared system of beliefs that cannot be planned or artificially induced. Its chief means of transmission, he holds, is the family. The book has been viewed as a critique of postwar Europe and a defense of conservatism and Christianity. -- *The Merriam-Webster Encyclopedia of Literature*

About the Author

Thomas Stearns Eliot was born in St Louis, Missouri, in 1888. He came to England in 1914 and published his first book of poems in 1917. He received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1948. Eliot died in 1965.

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Todd Crain:

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