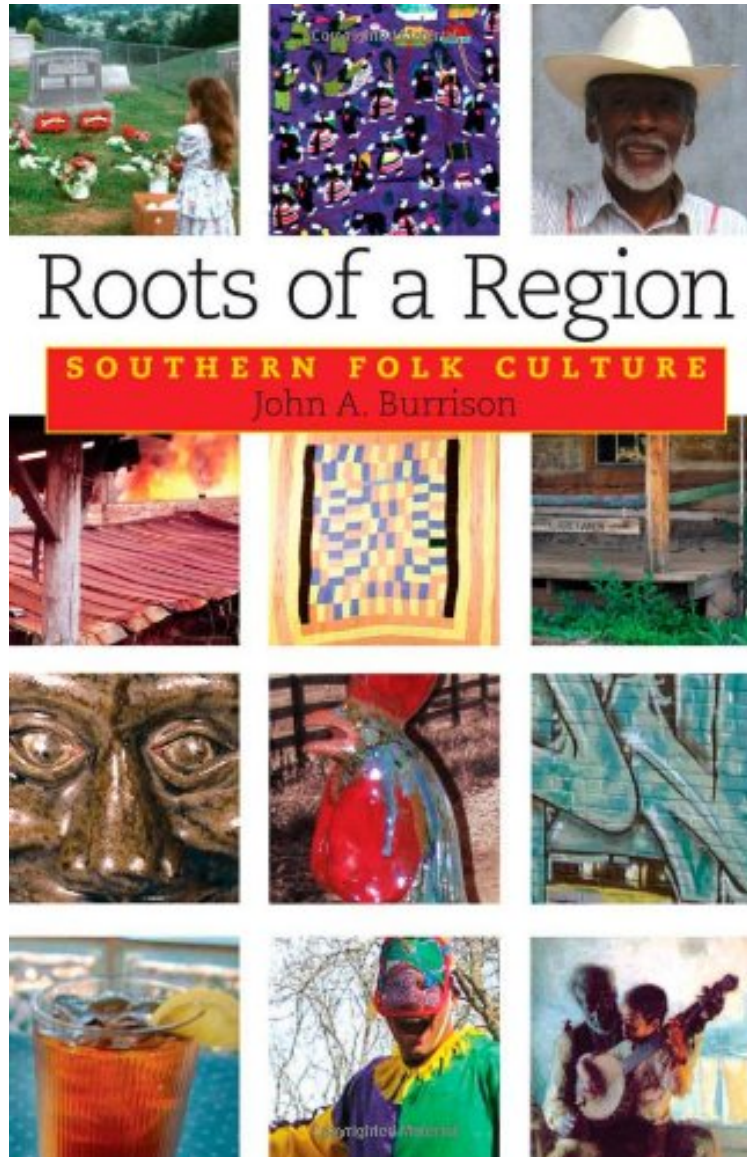


## Roots of a Region: Southern Folk Culture

*John A. Burrison*

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**John A. Burrison : Roots of a Region: Southern Folk Culture** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Roots of a Region: Southern Folk Culture:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Rooted in the SouthBy grasshopper4This book is a fine introduction to folklore in America's southland. It's written by a professor and published by a university press, but it doesn't feel like a dry, arcane tome. Burrison introduces southern folklore by first introducing readers to himself. This approach works effectively as he discusses how he moved from Philadelphia to Atlanta in the 1960s to accept a position teaching

and researching folklore in the Deep South. These chapter shows how his initial preconceptions, interests, and experiences shaped his later research. It also provides a great background for understanding his presentation of various aspects of folklore, especially as they relate to southern history. My favorite chapter is drawn from Burrison's excellent research on folk pottery in Georgia and North Carolina. It is an in-depth study of this still-vibrant tradition, presented in an engaging, well-written style. The discussion is particularly interesting when he focuses on the history of the face jugs (or "ugly jugs") that have now achieved the status of icons of southern folk art. The book is especially well designed and illustrated with good drawing, photos, and vivid color plates. Readers wanting more information will appreciate the extensive bibliography, but they'll also find a solid background on a variety of traditions within the book's varied chapters.

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*.

From the Publisher This exploration of the integral role of folk traditions in southern life ---Catalogs and describes those features of southern folk culture that are distinctly regional, from oral, musical, and customary traditions to material culture ---Examines early international sources of southern folk culture ---Includes artifact and place-based case studies ---Offers numerous black-and-white and color images and other illustrations

From the Inside Flap An exploration of the integral role of folk traditions in southern life

About the Author 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*, *Storytellers*, and *Shaping Traditions: Folk Arts in a Changing South*.