

The Russell Kirk Center for Cultural Renewal

Russell Kirk (1918-1994) was the author of thirty-two books on political theory, the history of ideas, education, and cultural criticism and one of America's leading thinkers. His landmark book, *The Conservative Mind*, demonstrated that a vital and respected conservative tradition was central to the American experience. *The New York Times* acknowledged the scale of his influence when it wrote that the book "gave American conservatives an identity and a genealogy and catalyzed the postwar movement."

Kirk spoke on hundreds of college campuses as well as debated with such well-known speakers as Norman Thomas, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Eugene McCarthy, Malcolm X, Dick Gregory, and Tom Hayden. He especially enjoyed addressing college audiences, believing strongly that the key to the lasting triumph of conservative ideas lay in shaping the cultural and moral beliefs of the rising generation.

Over the years, Kirk invited prominent scholars and journalists to academic seminars at his home and library in Mecosta, Michigan. William F. Buckley Jr, Sir Roger Scruton, Justice Antonin Scalia, Malcolm Muggeridge, Judge Brevard Hand, Charles Colson, emigres from totalitarianism, and many others, came to Mecosta to engage with students.

Building on this experience, the Russell Kirk Center was founded in 1995 and has gained a national and international