



# Made in America: A Social History of American Culture and Character

*Claude S. Fischer*

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Our nation began with the simple phrase, “We the People.” But who were and are “We”? Who were we in 1776, in 1865, or 1968, and is there any continuity in character between the we of those years and the nearly 300 million people living in the radically different America of today?

With *Made in America*, Claude S. Fischer draws on decades of historical, psychological, and social research to answer that question by tracking the evolution of American character and culture over three centuries. He explodes myths—such as that contemporary Americans are more mobile and less religious than their ancestors, or that they are more focused on money and consumption—and reveals instead how greater security and wealth have only reinforced the independence, egalitarianism, and commitment to community that characterized our people from the earliest years. Skillfully drawing on personal stories of representative Americans, Fischer shows that affluence and social progress have allowed more people to participate fully in cultural and political life, thus broadening the category of “American” —yet at the same time what it means to be an American has retained surprising continuity with much earlier notions of American character.

Firmly in the vein of such classics as *The Lonely Crowd* and *Habits of the Heart*—yet challenging many of their conclusions—*Made in America* takes readers beyond the simplicity of headlines and the actions of elites to show us the lives, aspirations, and emotions of ordinary Americans, from the settling of the colonies to the settling of the suburbs.

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