

Reflections of a Conservative

Pilgrim's Promise: America's Brand of Freedom

By Chris B.



When I read about Kirk's Fifth Principle, The Principle of Variety, I asked myself, what is so uniquely conservative about this? It just seems American.

In each issue of Team Sarah Conservative Voice, I discuss one of the ten conservative principles Russell Kirk writes about in *The Conservative Mind* and *The Politics of Prudence*. The Principle of Variety is his fifth principle and the topic of my column for this issue.

The Fifth Principle: Principle of Variety

Conservative minded people tend to depend on long established social institutions and modes of life.

According to Kirk, the Principle of Variety refers to the idea that conservative minded people tend to depend on long established social institutions and modes of life. What does this mean? In other words, it means that we as human beings start out in life with the circumstances, talents, and resources with which we were born. What we make of our lives ultimately ends up as the thread of the fabric that makes our society.

When the pilgrims landed on the shores of the new world, they forged a brand of freedom that was nurtured by our founders, and defended by our soldiers and countless brave citizens. America's brand of freedom is the epitome of Kirk's Principle of Variety. America's brand of freedom includes the freedom of speech, success, failure, notoriety, anonymity, health and wellness, choice of occupation, where one lives and dies, religious practice, etc.

This freedom is what gives our society diversity. It gives us choice with our health care providers, consumer products, level of education, religion, occupation, and more. Our government does not choose who is a doctor, a lawyer, where and how we live, who raises our children or how and when we get health care. As a result, we have people from all walks of life living their lives as they choose each day. When I read about Kirk's Principle of Variety, I asked myself, what is so uniquely conservative about this? It just seems American.

Nearly 400 years have passed since the first Pilgrims landed upon the shores of their new home. Since that time we have enjoyed the variety of freedoms that their vision and the vision of our founders has given each one of us. However, a number of past and present Presidents and their administrations have gradually whittled away our freedoms. Generally, we've accepted this as a necessary evil to our growing society, until now.

Today's pilgrims are those of us who are writing letters, attending town hall meetings, marching on Washington, and attending Tea Parties. We are from all different socioeconomic backgrounds, occupations, and political persuasions. We have awakened, we will not go away, we will not be equalized and made all the same. From where I sit, it looks increasingly like Kirk's conservative Principle of Variety is just plain American! 