

The Extent of Russell Kirk's Support for the Free Market*

Jason E. Jewell
Professor of Humanities
Faulkner University

Scholarship on Russell Kirk (1918–1994) tends to ignore or underemphasize his writings on economics, and scholars who have written about this area of his thought have insufficiently stressed his support for the free market. This article contends that Kirk became more supportive of the free market over the course of his career as he read deeper into the field and wrote more on the subject. It analyzes key passages from his textbook *Economics: Work and Prosperity* (1989) and other late works and compares them with writings from earlier in his career to show a market-friendly evolution in his thought on topics such as trade, government intervention in the economy, and overpopulation.

Introduction

In the course of his career, Russell Kirk (1918–1994) offered numerous observations on the field of economics. However, scholarship on Kirk tends to ignore or pass over with little comment his output in this area. Kirk's first biographer, James Person, does devote one brief chapter to Kirk's political economy.¹ The chapter is to a great extent a summary of and commentary on a pair of articles written for the *Freeman* and *Modern Age* by John Attarian a few years after Kirk's death.² Apart from these examples, hardly any scholarly discussion of Kirk's economic thought running more than a few pages has found its way into print.³

John Pafford's treatment of Kirk's economics is typical of the secondary scholarship on the subject. Pafford begins by acknowledging that Russell Kirk favored the market economy and private property. He then hastens to point out

that Kirk was not a free-market absolutist but favored government's preservation of a healthy institutional environment within which the market could operate. Moreover, he reminds us that Kirk was far more concerned with the cultural context necessary for the flourishing of the economy than with the economy itself. A reference to Kirk's affinity with German economist Wilhelm Röpke accompanies this observation.⁴

All these statements are true so far as they go, but they present an incomplete picture. The existing scholarship on Kirk tends to treat his economic thought as static, not taking into account the development in his thinking that occurred during the course of his career. It emphasizes his differences with free-market economists rather than his common ground with them. Additionally, it usually does not give the interested reader many insights into Kirk's understanding or description of economic phenomena, instead pivoting quickly away from economics *per se* to discuss his broader social or cultural concerns.

Such lacunae in Kirk scholarship were innocent enough in the first couple of decades after the writer's death. Now, however, the American conservative tradition to which Kirk gave voice is embroiled in a new dispute over the value and desirability of free markets. For example, the influential conservative magazine *First Things* has shifted its editorial position to one that openly questions the free market, and popular writers such as Joseph Pearce are attempting to revive the early twentieth-century anticapitalist movement called Distributism.⁵ At a July 2019 conference devoted to "national conservatism" in Washington, DC, many prominent conservative voices signaled a desired departure from the free-market tradition characteristic of the movement since the 1950s.⁶

In the current context, it makes sense to revisit the economic thought of the "Sage of Mecosta" and attempt to comprehend the true extent of his understanding of and support for the free market. Both of these elements of his thought have been underestimated by conservatives, classical liberals, and libertarians. Whereas Kirk displayed a decent layman's understanding of economics early in his career, his knowledge of the discipline increased in later years. As it did so, his appreciation of and support for free markets grew, reaching its mature expression in the 1980s.

The Importance of Economics: Work and Prosperity

Undoubtedly, an important reason for the lack of appreciation for Kirk's advocacy of the free market is the unfamiliarity of most scholars with *Economics: Work and Prosperity* (*EWP*). Kirk wrote this work in the early 1980s when he was employed by the Educational Research Council of America (ERCA), a

Cleveland-based, not-for-profit developer and publisher of curricula that were used by school districts throughout the country. He had completed the manuscript by 1983⁷ and was in the process of piloting it with Cleveland-area schools when the ERCA was forced to close its doors in 1985 for lack of funds.⁸ The book did not appear in print until 1989, when A Beka Books, a producer of curricula for Christian private schools and home schools, published it.⁹

Gerald Russello notes that the textbook of more than 350 pages “was all but ignored when it first appeared and . . . has not been given extended analysis by commentators on Kirk’s thought.”¹⁰ Kirk himself mentions the book in a single paragraph in his autobiography, writing that it “was received cordially” and that a few colleges had adopted it.¹¹ William Campbell, who assisted Kirk in the book’s preparation, wrote that “probably not more than one or two economists” read the book despite its being “a good first book in economics which even professional economists could read to their advantage.”¹² The Russell Kirk Center for Cultural Renewal, which archives every review published on Kirk’s various works, has cataloged just five reviews of *EWP* that appeared within a year of its publication. All of these appeared in periodicals catering to conservative or libertarian readers; two of the publications had been started by Kirk himself. Although all the reviews were favorable, one was exceedingly brief, and another paired discussion of *EWP* in a perfunctory way with an unrelated book on farming.¹³ The other three reviews were more substantive but none was lengthy.¹⁴

Because *EWP* is the lengthiest work on economics Kirk ever produced, and because he wrote it relatively late in life, it is reasonable to consider it as expressing his most mature and considered thoughts on the subject. Below I summarize some of Kirk’s positions as expressed in *EWP*, comparing and contrasting them where appropriate with writings from earlier in his career. Where it is possible to do so, I offer explanations of what catalyzed his change in thinking over time.

Government’s Role in the Economy

Readers whose familiarity with Kirk is limited to *The Conservative Mind* (1953) and other works from the 1950s will find many passages in *EWP* consonant with his earlier writings, but they may be surprised to find several others in which he reads like a *laissez-faire* liberal, to the point that one reviewer apparently considered these passages a problem to explain away.¹⁵ One prominent example of this tendency is found in chapter 10, “The Government and the Economy.”

Most of the chapter is descriptive; Kirk discusses different approaches to government regulation found in various countries around the world and lists different kinds of regulatory activities before going on to write that Americans historically

have favored a relatively low level of regulation. He produces a lengthy list of things the American political authority does *not* do, such as nationalize industries or tell citizens in which occupations they must work.¹⁶

The opening section of the chapter is titled “How Much Should Government Do?” Kirk asks the question as a way to introduce the debate over the level of government involvement in the economy and does not offer his own prescription. However, he does provide a list of “essential” government activities without which, he argues, the market economy cannot function properly:

Thieves and robbers must be kept out of markets. Buyers and sellers who cheat must be dealt with by judges. Contracts made in markets must be enforced by governmental officials. Standard weights and measures used in markets must be certified by local or national governments. In these and other ways, markets are made possible by political authorities. Otherwise, buyers and sellers could not come together to exchange goods safely. *Without political protection, even the most simple market economy would collapse.*¹⁷

Anyone familiar with Kirk’s writings knows he is not an anarchist, so this insistence on the government’s establishing a framework within which markets can operate is not surprising. The surprising thing is how few items Kirk includes in this list of essential government activities. Punishment of theft and fraud, enforcement of contracts, and standardization of weights and measures—no classical liberal would find fault with this list.

The careful reader will note that Kirk still leaves room for prudential regulation of economic activity in the way he frames this discussion. However, elsewhere in the text he shows a marked reluctance to endorse such regulation. For example, in chapter 6, “The Good That Competition Does,” Kirk includes a section of several pages on the question of monopolies. Readers familiar with Kirk’s affinity for the English legal tradition might expect to see here an endorsement of legislation designed to curb monopolistic practices; such legislation has an extremely long history dating back to before the Norman Conquest of 1066. However, Kirk simply notes that antitrust legislation, while a deterrent to the formation of monopolies, “is not always effectual, because enforcement of the antitrust laws is difficult.”¹⁸ He immediately follows this statement with a discussion of how the operation of the free market is a more effective protection from a business’s behaving in a monopolistic fashion, clearly describing the process by which competitors with free entry into the marketplace can either take market share away from a would-be monopolist or force the latter to lower its prices. He concludes, “In this fashion, the market tends to find its own remedies for monopoly. *Where no*

free exchange of goods exists, monopolies endure, because they are supported by the force of the government or operated by the government itself."¹⁹

Another area where Kirk deviates from the position a reader might expect a traditionalist to take is environmental policy. In chapter 13, "The World's Distressed Economy," he writes at length about the problem of "Pollution, Waste, and Ugliness." Kirk argues that a "hasty and ill-planned industrialization" has resulted in many environmental problems in the twentieth century. He refrains from offering specific solutions to these problems, stating only that paying high costs in the short term may be necessary to prevent long-term impoverishment. He does not specify whether the process of pollution prevention and conservation should come from the private economy or the government.

However, the tone of the section is more skeptical of the government's track record in environmental affairs. After briefly noting that the private sector has caused environmental damage, he pivots to state, "yet governments and governmentally controlled organizations can do more damage." He goes on to describe the role of the Great Lakes Naval Training Station in polluting Lake Michigan in the 1960s and 1970s to the point where journalists were referring to the lake as a "dead sea." He also gives examples of the even worse environmental conditions in socialist countries, where denunciations of "capitalist exploitation of the environment" were common.²⁰ Statements such as these give the reader cause to doubt that Kirk would have placed much confidence in the command-and-control environmental regulations called for by those on the political Left and by some on the traditionalist Right. In the book's final chapter, he expresses confidence that increasing wealth and new technologies will make industrial pollution in the twenty-first century less of a problem than it was in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.²¹ The impression left on the reader is that it is a free economy that will eventually provide the best solutions to environmental problems.

Trade

In his early writings, Kirk seems ambivalent about the benefits of trade, particularly of international trade. In *The Conservative Mind*, the free-trade position is presented as a manifestation of a capital-L Liberalism that is parasitic on the morality and politics of an older, more traditional order. The Manchester Liberals, who successfully championed the repeal of the protectionist Corn Laws in the 1840s, are described as "conspicuously lacking" in "higher imagination."²² Kirk laments that George Canning was unable to enact the Corn Bill of 1827, which might have preserved a moderate protectionist tariff for agricultural interests

over the long term. Instead, in the succeeding years, Robert Peel, “who was not a man of ideas, succumbed through a kind of mental osmosis to the free-trading theories of the Liberals.”²³ Kirk does note that the middle of the nineteenth century was a period of increasing prosperity for Britain, but he does not connect this phenomenon with trade liberalization.²⁴ The advance of free trade is presented purely as something harmful to the conservative interest, and the reader is left to infer that it is an undesirable thing.

A few years later, Kirk wrote a short work titled *The American Cause* (1957), intended as a civics primer that could be used by, among others, active-duty American soldiers who had been found lacking in basic civic literacy.²⁵ In two chapters dedicated to the American economic system, Kirk invokes Adam Smith and discusses the benefits of private ownership and competition in bringing about economic progress. However, he uses the word *trade* only once, noting in passing that one (of several) sources of American prosperity is its large internal free-trade area.²⁶ It seems an odd omission, especially given that Smith’s famous metaphor of the invisible hand, which Kirk employs, was used originally explicitly in the context of discussing trade.²⁷ (Kirk, on the other hand, writes that the invisible hand guides the economy “in which there are free competition, sufficient reward for private industry and private saving, and reliance upon ordinary motives and ordinary virtues.”²⁸) When Kirk cited Smith as one of “three pillars of order” along with Samuel Johnson and Edmund Burke in a 1981 essay, he likewise made no reference to trade.²⁹

By contrast, in *EWP* Kirk clearly acknowledges trade’s benefits at greater length in the chapter “Efficiency of Production.” After a cogent discussion of the division of labor, he writes, “One important cause of America’s prosperity is the fact that within the immense free-trade area of the United States, geographic specialization leads to a greater abundance of goods at lower prices. And a major reason for the prosperity of the wealthier nations in our time is international trade.”³⁰ There follows a detailed explanation of the concept of comparative advantage. Although Kirk raises the possibility of “overspecialization” in the chapter, he does so in purely economic terms and never suggests that trade *per se* might be unwise. The closest he comes to doing so is in noting that maximizing the division of labor in the pursuit of efficiency has some costs as well as benefits. In the teacher’s guide to the chapter, Kirk calls Smith’s *Wealth of Nations* “the basic work to consult” on the division of labor.³¹ Later, in the chapter “Government and the Economy,” Kirk omits the regulation of trade (foreign or domestic) from his list of essential activities government should perform to keep the economy running smoothly. He does, however, note that “excessive” taxation of commerce leads to negative effects.³²

It would be going too far to claim that by the 1980s Kirk had become a “free trader.” After all, he did support Patrick Buchanan’s 1992 presidential bid, in which tariff protection for domestic manufacturers was a major theme. In private correspondence, Kirk confessed that he was “not at all sure what Buchanan means by his talk about protection” before going on to list a handful of concerns, such as national defense, that could in principle override a normal preference for free trade in his view.³³ Nevertheless, the discussion of trade, the division of labor, and comparative advantage in *EWP* shows that Kirk well understood the insights of the classical economists and the benefits of trade, an awareness not necessarily evident in his earlier works. That Kirk left the door open to some regulation of trade on prudential grounds should not blind us to this apparent evolution in his thinking.³⁴

Resources and Population: The Influence of Julian Simon

One of the most striking developments in Kirk’s economic thinking by the time he wrote *EWP* is the apparent influence of the free-market economist Julian Simon (1932–1998), a professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Simon attracted a great deal of attention in the early 1980s for two reasons. First, in 1980 he made a much-publicized bet with biologist Paul Ehrlich (b. 1932) concerning natural resources. Ehrlich was known for his book *The Population Bomb* (1968), which predicted mass starvation and shortages of natural resources around the world as a result of overpopulation. Simon was convinced that Ehrlich’s arguments were faulty, and he bet Ehrlich that the price of any commodities Ehrlich chose would fall in price by 1990. Ehrlich accepted the wager, which Simon ultimately won.³⁵

The second reason for Simon’s prominence in the early 1980s was the publication of his 1981 book *The Ultimate Resource*, which was also written in rebuttal to Ehrlich and similar voices who were predicting resource crises and overpopulation. Simon argued that the world was moving “toward our beautiful resource future” and that there would be no long-term shortages of natural resources. His reasoning was that as the readily available supply of a resource declines, the price rises, and human beings acquire an incentive to discover new supplies of the resource or increase the efficiency in the resource’s production as a means of bringing the price back down. Failing that, humans could also find resource substitutes that could accomplish the same objectives at a lower price. Because the long-term trend of resource prices is downward, there is no need to be overly concerned about rationing replaceable resources other than through

market prices because future generations are likely to enjoy those resources in relatively greater abundance than we do.³⁶

On the question of population, Simon argued that an increasing population is no cause for alarm. In economic terms, children are capital investments that require up-front sacrifices but that pay handsome returns to society over the course of a lifetime. A growing population both increases the division of labor and creates more knowledge in the society from which everyone can derive benefits. Simon concluded the book thus: “The ultimate resource is people—skilled, spirited, and hopeful people who will exert their wills and imaginations for their own benefit, and so, inevitably, for the benefit of us all.”³⁷

That Russell Kirk would be influenced by Simon’s arguments might come as a surprise to readers considering Kirk’s affinity with the German economist Wilhelm Röpke, who lost his professorship in Germany after criticizing the Nazis and thereafter taught at the Graduate Institute of International Affairs in Switzerland.³⁸ Röpke was the author of such works as *The Social Crisis of Our Times*, *Economics of the Free Society*, and *A Humane Economy*, the title of which last work Kirk claimed to have suggested.³⁹ Röpke emphasized the cultural and moral framework within which market economies function best and expressed a preference for an economy dominated by independent, small-scale producers as opposed to one dominated by large corporations. This vision resonated with Kirk, who reprinted *The Social Crisis of Our Times* in America as part of Transaction’s Library of Conservative Thought, a series Kirk edited.⁴⁰ Kirk also devoted one of his Heritage Lectures, later reprinted in *The Politics of Prudence*, to an appreciative consideration of Röpke’s ideas.⁴¹

Röpke in most of his writings seemed pessimistic about the prospects for modern society. For example, he devoted a lengthy chapter of *A Humane Economy* to the phenomenon of “modern mass society” and the threat it poses to human flourishing. The process of “enmassment,” he wrote, degrades culture, makes people more susceptible to irrational impulses as part of a herd, and deprives them of a healthy contact with the natural world. One of the root causes of this development is the dramatic increase in world population in the twentieth century, which threatens to impoverish everyone: “There is little doubt that the industrial countries of the West, let alone the nations of Asia and Africa that are vegetating on the borderline of absolute overpopulation, have already gone beyond both the economic and the social optimum, and it is quite certain that they have left the vital optimum far behind and are rapidly approaching the vital maximum.”⁴²

Similar concerns about mass society pepper Russell Kirk’s early writings. Like Röpke, Kirk was fond of citing Ortega y Gasset’s *Revolt of the Masses*, complaining of the degrading effects of industrialism and warning of the problem

of social boredom. In fact, Kirk and Röpke cited exactly the same passage from the writings of W. H. R. Rivers to illustrate their concerns.⁴³ The early Kirk did not argue at any length that overpopulation was the cause of this problem, but the overlap with Röpke is obvious enough. As late as the mid-1970s, Kirk seemed sympathetic to concerns about overpopulation. When his friend Jane Soames Nickerson, a former assistant to Distributist Hilaire Belloc, published a book titled *Homage to Malthus* in 1975, Kirk penned an introduction for it, writing that whereas “smug economists” earlier in the century had dismissed Malthusianism, it is now time to “begin to respect Malthus heartily once more.”⁴⁴

One still sees in *EWP* echoes of these concerns, as in the mentioning of boredom in connection with overspecialization cited above. Additionally, Kirk points to the problem of urban sprawl along with “bored and discontented populations” in the same chapter where he deals with environmental problems.⁴⁵ However, there appears to be much more of Simon’s optimism than of Röpke’s and Nickerson’s pessimism in Kirk’s assessment of the late twentieth-century world. That Kirk read and was influenced by *The Ultimate Resource* seems clear. The book was in his personal library at the time of his death.⁴⁶ More significantly, Kirk included the work in the list of recommended resources for *EWP*’s final chapter, calling it “[t]he optimistic study most widely known.”⁴⁷

Simon’s influence on Kirk appears in at least two chapters of *EWP*. The earlier instance comes in chapter 7, “Efficiency of Production.” As discussed above, the bulk of this chapter consists of explaining insights regarding the division of labor and comparative advantage gleaned from classical economists. However, the chapter’s final section is titled “Intelligence and Imagination as Causes of Efficiency.” Here Kirk uses examples of individual entrepreneurs and entire cultures such as the Swiss and the Japanese to illustrate the importance of shrewdness and work ethic in economic progress. (As is typical throughout *EWP*, Kirk uses a literary reference, in this case a poem by George Herbert, to emphasize the point.) He also calls attention to the role of entrepreneurial imagination: “The entrepreneur and the economist need that power called imagination, or inner vision. Both must perceive what does not exist, at the moment, in any material form. The entrepreneur needs to imagine economic developments that have not yet come to pass—and which may seem impossible dreams to most people.”⁴⁸

In the corresponding section of the teacher’s guide, Kirk offers no recommended reading but includes a passage about the comparative neglect of the role of reason and imagination in formal economic studies: “To remedy in part that neglect of the human factor, the concluding portion of this chapter is concerned with intelligence, imagination, and proper motivation as causes or sources of economic efficiency. Especially in this age of the computer, high school students

may tend to think of efficiency as produced automatically by certain technological systems. But it is not machines that give us prosperity; it is the human mind, and human habits, that make all the economic difference.”⁴⁹ No explicit reference to Simon (or to any other writer) is made, but the passage is so consonant with the central argument of *The Ultimate Resource* that it is reasonable to infer a connection.

Simon’s influence is more clearly seen in the textbook’s final chapter, “A Cheerful View of Our Economic Future.” Kirk informs the reader that certain “prophets of doom” make dire predictions about the earth. The list of such predictions Kirk provides tracks closely with the warnings of Paul Ehrlich; among them are a shortage of natural resources, mass famine, an energy crisis, the destruction of our air and water by industrial pollution, and excessive crowding as a result of overpopulation.⁵⁰

Over the next several pages, Kirk responds to these predictions with arguments that are clearly inspired by Simon. For example, Kirk notes that since antiquity, the cost of raw materials has been going down, not up. He gives specific details about copper’s increasing affordability over the past two centuries, and then writes, “This is true of nearly all other raw materials. Human intelligence, century after century, has succeeded in increasing the supply of raw materials, and there is no reason to suppose that the human beings of our time are less intelligent than the men and women of previous centuries.”⁵¹

In response to the prediction of a looming energy crisis, Kirk states flatly, “That is not going to happen.” He goes on to describe new technologies that have increased energy supplies in recent years and other energy technologies on the cusp of development. He concludes, “Presumably all societies of the twenty-first century will have available much more energy (usually in the immediate form of electricity) than had the advanced societies of the twentieth century.”⁵²

Kirk’s response to the prediction of overpopulation is perhaps most interesting because his adoption of Simon’s argument puts him in tension most clearly with Wilhelm Röpke. Even though global population had grown dramatically since Röpke complained of overpopulation in the 1950s, Kirk downplays such concerns. While acknowledging that populations are likely to rise over the next 50–100 years, he views the prospect optimistically: “more people will be available for work, so increasing production of goods ... an increase of human resources in many ways.”⁵³ The passage hearkens back to Kirk’s emphasis on human intelligence and imagination in the chapter on efficiency.

Conclusion

More instances from Kirk's mature writings on economics could be cited here to emphasize the depth of his understanding of economic phenomena and his preference for the operation of market forces as opposed to state guidance or regulation of the economy. His commentary on money and banking, the necessity of saving to maintain the capital structure of modern economies, and the distinction between interest and profit in investment returns all go beyond what one would expect of a dilettante. Those who might wish to frame his posture toward the market economy as one of halfhearted, insufficient support have probably not fully absorbed his mature statements on the subject. The same can be said of critics of markets who may be tempted to conscript Kirk from beyond the grave into a twenty-first-century anticapitalist agenda. The Sage of Mecosta supported the free market and property rights throughout his career, and this support deepened and strengthened as he continued to study and learn in the final decades of his life.

Notes

1. James E. Person, Jr., *Russell Kirk: A Critical Biography of a Conservative Mind* (Lanham, MD: Madison Books, 1999), 201–13.
2. John Attarian, “Russell Kirk’s Economics of the Permanent Things,” *The Freeman* 46 (April 1996), <https://fee.org/articles/russell-kirks-economics-of-the-permanent-things/#0>; John Attarian, “Russell Kirk’s Political Economy,” *Modern Age* 40, no. 1 (Winter 1998): 87–97.
3. For example, Bradley Birzer’s award-winning biography of Kirk contains a short section on Kirk’s interaction with F. A. Hayek but no extended discussion of Kirk’s economic thought. See Bradley Birzer, *Russell Kirk: American Conservative* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2015), 157–62.
4. John Pafford, *Russell Kirk* (New York: Continuum, 2010), 51–56.
5. See, for example, R. R. Reno, “The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism,” *First Things*, October 2017, <https://www.firstthings.com/article/2017/10/the-spirit-of-democratic-capitalism> (accessed July 8, 2019). Also see Joseph Pearce, “Distributism vs. Free Market Globalism,” *The Imaginative Conservative*, July 29, 2018, <https://theimaginativeconservative.org/2018/07/distributism-vs-free-market-globalism-joseph-pearce.html> (accessed July 8, 2019).
6. Emma Green, “The Nationalists Take Washington,” *The Atlantic*, July 17, 2019, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/07/national-conservatism-conference/594202/> (accessed August 1, 2019).
7. It might be appropriate to note here that some scholars in private conversation have wondered aloud to me whether Kirk employed the services of a ghost writer in his work on *EWP*, the operative assumption being that he lacked the necessary knowledge of economics to write the work himself. I have been able to find no evidence of such an arrangement after inquiring into the subject with several people who presumably were in a position to know the truth of the matter, reading Kirk’s related correspondence from the period, and comparing the text of *EWP* with Kirk’s other writings. In particular, the similarities between many sections of *EWP* and the two chapters on economics in Kirk’s 1957 book *The American Cause* suggest that the same person wrote both works. Moreover, the frequent literary references and stories that litter the text of *EWP* and the idiosyncratic way in which various economic concepts are presented therein are likely to convince any but the most diehard skeptic that Kirk is in fact the author.
8. Feedback on chapter drafts from teachers and administrators at schools piloting the text is archived at the Russell Kirk Center for Cultural Renewal.

9. According to Calvin Beisner, the lengthy delay in finding a publisher was the result of mainstream publishing houses' shying away from various religious references Kirk employed in the manuscript. E. Calvin Beisner, "Economics: *Work and Prosperity* by Russell Kirk," *The Freeman* 40, no. 6 (June 1990): 239.
10. Gerald Russello, *The Postmodern Imagination of Russell Kirk* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2007), 139.
11. Russell Kirk, *The Sword of Imagination: Memoirs of a Half-Century of Literary Conflict* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 463.
12. William Campbell, "An Economist's Tribute to Russell Kirk," *Intercollegiate Review* 30, no. 1 (Fall 1994): 70.
13. Gregor MacDonald, "Economics: *Work and Prosperity* by Russell Kirk," *The St. Croix Review* 22, no. 6 (December 1989): 53–54; Stephen Miles, "Economic Questions," *Modern Age* 33, no. 3 (Fall 1990): 305–8.
14. Beisner, "Economics," 238–39; Jeffrey Tucker, "The Free Market Traditionalist," *Crisis*, February 1990, 43–45; Joseph McNamara, "The Dismal Science Redeemed," *University Bookman* 31, no. 1 (1991), 17–19.
15. Miles, "Economic Questions," 306.
16. Kirk, *Economics*, 238.
17. Kirk, *Economics*, 228–29 (emphasis in original).
18. Kirk, *Economics*, 136.
19. Kirk, *Economics*, 137 (emphasis in original).
20. Kirk, *Economics*, 306–7.
21. Kirk, *Economics*, 351.
22. Russell Kirk, *The Conservative Mind* (Chicago: Regnery, 1953), 229.
23. Kirk, *The Conservative Mind*, 114–15.
24. Kirk, *The Conservative Mind*, 231–32.
25. Gleaves Whitney, "Editor's Introduction," in Russell Kirk, *The American Cause* (Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2002), x–xi.
26. Russell Kirk, *The American Cause*, 110.
27. Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, bk. 4, chap. 2, https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/237#Smith_0206-01_1211.

28. Kirk, *The American Cause*, 96.
29. Russell Kirk, "Three Pillars of Order: Edmund Burke, Samuel Johnson, and Adam Smith," *Modern Age* 25 (Summer 1981): 226–33.
30. Kirk, *Economics*, 153.
31. Russell Kirk, *Economics: Work and Prosperity, Teacher's Guide* (Pensacola: A Beka Books, 1989), 104.
32. Kirk, *Economics*, 243.
33. Russell Kirk, letter to John Bowling, December 30, 1991.
34. Historian Forrest McDonald commented in 1985 about Kirk's apparent increase in respect for Adam Smith that took place between the writing of *The Conservative Mind* and the early 1980s. See Forrest McDonald, "Russell Kirk: The American Cicero," *National Review* 37, December 31, 1985, 92–93.
35. For a book-length treatment of this wager, see Paul Sabin, *The Bet: Paul Ehrlich, Julian Simon, and Our Gamble Over Earth's Future* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).
36. Julian Simon, *The Ultimate Resource* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 149–51.
37. Simon, *The Ultimate Resource*, 348.
38. See, for instance, Pafford, *Russell Kirk*, 52–53; Person, *Russell Kirk*, 203–6; and Campbell, "An Economist's Tribute," 79–80.
39. Russell Kirk, *The Politics of Prudence* (Wilmington: ISI Books, 1993), 115.
40. Wilhelm Röpke, *The Social Crisis of Our Time* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1992).
41. Russell Kirk, "The Humane Economy of Wilhelm Roepke," in *The Politics of Prudence*, 114–24.
42. Wilhelm Röpke, *A Humane Economy* (Wilmington: ISI Books, 2014), 49.
43. Russell Kirk, *A Program for Conservatives* (Chicago: Regnery, 1954), 103–4; Röpke, *A Humane Economy*, 80. Röpke credits Kirk for his discovery of the Rivers quote (idem, 272).
44. Russell Kirk, "Introduction," in Jane Soames Nickerson, *Homage to Malthus* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1975), 4.
45. Kirk, *Economics*, 306.

46. The Mossey Library at Hillsdale College acquired Kirk's personal library upon his death in 1994. At the time of this writing, the collection is not yet on public display, but the librarians have created a catalog of its contents, a copy of which was provided to me. Simon's *The Ultimate Resource* appears in it.
47. Kirk, *Economics: Teacher's Guide*, 252.
48. Kirk, *Economics*, 165.
49. Kirk, *Economics: Teacher's Guide*, 105–6.
50. Kirk, *Economics*, 346.
51. Kirk, *Economics*, 348.
52. Kirk, *Economics*, 350.
53. Kirk, *Economics*, 351.