



Alistair Cooke's America

Alistair Cooke

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

Alistair Cooke's America

Alistair Cooke

Alistair Cooke's America Alistair Cooke

Alistair Cooke's America 1st edition by Cooke, Alistair published by Alfred A. Knopf Hardcover – September 12, 1973

Alistair Cooke's America Details

Date : Published September 12th 1973 by Knopf

ISBN : 9780394487267

Author : Alistair Cooke

Format : Hardcover 400 pages

Genre : History, Nonfiction, Travel, Reference, Literature, American

 [Download Alistair Cooke's America ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Alistair Cooke's America ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Alistair Cooke's America Alistair Cooke

From Reader Review Alistair Cooke's America for online ebook

Steve Haywood says

This is a great book, a fascinating all in one guide to American History. I've only read half of it. This may seem not much of a recommendation, but reading the book drew me in to the subject so much that I start deviating off, reading other sources covering the same period of history. It was a library book, I'd renewed it once, and thought I should give someone else a chance and get on with reading a novel or two. But I will go back to it, but I'll probably buy it next time.

Mark says

Superb read. A man with a true grasp of the massive history of America and its development. His perspective of historical events come with an excellent slant and he has managed to note the many hidden aspects of American history that you would rarely find in such detail in a single place. One of the best non-fiction novels I have read.

Fran says

A bit dated as to his conclusions, probably because it was written before the turn of the century. But up to the final chapter, the story of our development flows fascinatingly from Mr. Cooke's pen, from the continent's earliest days until the 70' or 90s. I would strongly recommend this book.

Emily Van Doozer says

A excellent and simple history book. It is a perfect start for any young adults historical reading.

Chris Brimmer says

A little dated and by nature not as deep as it could be, but it is a sympathetic third party look at American history by an Englishman who knew us well. The writing style is very user-friendly especially for those who are not history wonks. I think it could be the basis of a good high school American history course. I've re-read this book countless times since I rescued a copy from the recycling bin while in high school.

James Haliburton says

Excellent overview of the last 400 years of the US's history told in Cooke's inimitable style - witty, deeply thought out and above all informative. Although written in the 70s, his comments are just as relevant today and give an interesting insight in the historical causes and effects of American society as we know it.

Fran says

Nicely read by Mr. Cooke. A very interesting retelling of our history. I like his perspective on the origins of our various episodes in history and the way he made the story of America blend into a complete whole rather than merely a series of chapters. I didn't agree so much with all of his conclusions - this story was written prior to 2001. Found this book to be interesting and thought-provoking.

John Sutherland says

I loved to listen to Alistair Cooke when he broadcast 'letter from America' on the BBC in England in the 1950's, when I was a boy. Elvis was also a popular entertainer. Cooke was a most entertaining speaker. He wrote, as he spoke, concisely, pungently, informatively, wittily, in superb English as befitted his journalistic training, and always entertainingly. This book as well as his 'The Americans' and 'Six men' are all in the same genre; very clever. Well worth reading.

Nirmal says

This is an old book but very well written with great photographs and illustrations. It was originally aired as a BBC TV series.

It covers the narrative history in a nice documentary sort of way and its highly readable, enjoyable and informative.

It is a good introductory work about America. Recommended for anyone not familiar with American history or anyone interested in brushing up his knowledge about America.

Aakash Kumar says

It's really a fascinating book with some very interesting collection of incidents that have taken place in American history. I loved it and got to know about many facts regarding American history which I never knew.

Steven Naude says

This is for the audiobook to be found on Audible.com

Cooke has gained worldwide fame for his splendid weekly "Letter from America" which lasted for many decades. In this book he provides a succinct yet masterfully insightful panorama of American history from pre-Columbus to about 1970. It was based on a TV series he made for the BBC. He has the gift of vision and discrimination - he can cut through the glory of a folk hero and an assassinated president while shining a

worthy spotlight on neglected characters who are somehow less appealing to the modern American psyche. The narrator is superb and captures Cooke's style and eloquence quite brilliantly. Cooke is said never to have written a poor sentence, and that statement is proven yet again. Eminently listenable and thoroughly enjoyable. I only wish he had not stopped in 1970.

Olivia says

Whether speaking or writing; listening or reading, his was a clear and mellifluous voice. The tone and emphasis always just right. although his Radio 'Letters from America' are, today, described as having been 'informal' I don't think that would be said if heard again in current times.

The inflection, tone and timing were always just so and crystal clear. His pronunciation never grating. He conveyed a gest, a joke, humour, sadness or severity without needing to announce that to be his intention. We listened to him weekly, for many years with anticipation. Usually about the time we might be preparing and cooking dinner. Sherry or gin tonic in hand. You would find yourself smiling, nodding or grimacing as he outlined some event he had witnessed in Manhattan or sagely philosophised on how things now might be after some speech, election or international change. His voice and insights made you sit up straighter in the chair.

My recollection of his talks was always, just always, that one had listened to a most excellent lecture or after dinner talk by a master. I always found his accounts to be considered, all-round coverage of an event or issue, leaving one feeling that in a short space of time one had been introduced to a topic, covered the various aspects and come away informed in an easy manner.

A truly wonderful radio personality. A gift to every home who tuned in for his deliveries.

You might say, but this is about a book. TRUE. and every word could be repeated for his writings. Not dry or stuffy they cover subjects others have tried but never mastered. Cooke would draw back from some topics saying he was, indeed, no Master in the subject...but that he would try his utmost to bring some understanding to the matter for both his sake and that of the reader, or listener.

No longer with us his talks and books can still be accessed for pleasure and insight. he was fond of drawing upon the insights of H L Mencken. In turn it seems we could and should utilise the mind and matter in the legacy of Cooke's work. (I could say why read HST when you can have AC? same America, same overall topics, different legacies)

Roy Lotz says

... a sign proclaiming in three words that a Roman emperor's orgy is now a democratic institution. It says: 'Topless Pizza Lunch.'

(As in my reviews of Kenneth Clarke's *Civilisation* and Jacob Bronowski's *The Ascent of Man*, this review focuses on the documentary, not the tie-in book.)

This documentary is a window into another time, when the public intellectual was a far more respected institution. Nowadays it is hard to imagine a popular program that contained long stretches of a man simply talking into a camera; nor it is easy to think of a contemporary program so fully dominated by the personality of one person. As the subtitle of this program indicates, this is "A Personal View," not an attempt at impartiality or objectivity. Cooke is giving us America as he sees it, through the eyes of a highly-educated, well-traveled English immigrant.

The 13 episodes of the series follow a chronological scheme, beginning with the French and Spanish colonists and ending with the (then) present day. The exception to this is the first episode, the best in the series, in which Cooke tells his own story—coming to America as a young man during the Great Depression, and taking a road trip out west. As for the other episodes, there are few surprises in Cooke's choice of subject: the English dissenters, the Revolutionary War, the drafting of the Constitution, the Louisiana Purchase, and so on, all the way up to the Cold War. We see Ellis Island and the Oregon Trail, New England foliage and the Hoover Dam, Hippie communes and Black Baptist churches—a panorama of American scenes.

In many ways this series falls short of the other two major BBC documentaries of the time, Clarke's *Civilisation* and Bronowski's *The Ascent of Man*. Cooke's *America* has none of the gorgeous cinematography of the former nor the innovative editing of the latter. Indeed, the shooting style of the documentary is remarkably basic—which is not necessarily a bad thing, of course, but in this case it imbued sections of the documentary with a soporific effect. Another difference in quality was due to the level of insight that the programs offer. Cooke, though no chump when it comes to American history, seems an amateur when his expertise is compared to Clarke's grasp of art and Bronowski's understanding of science. I was consistently interested, but I cannot say I came away from the program with any deep sense of insight into my vast homeland.

All this being said, there are some delightful sections in the program. Cooke has a great knack for finding fascinating props. He holds up a vial containing tea preserved from the Boston Tea Party, or he holds the manuscript of Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* in the Morgan Library, or he itemizes the typical equipment and supplies taken by families on the Oregon Trail. And if the information he presents is not exactly striking, his easy eloquence and gentle wit give his facts a pleasing ring. Cooke's voice—with his faultless Transatlantic accent—was made for broadcasting, and transmits a sense of confident sophistication that is entirely rare today. Most valuable for us is Cooke's convincing sense of being above partisan politics—an intelligent observer unbound by any tribe. Again, could any similar program exist today?

pjr8888 says

autographed by the author
sixth printing 1974

Bill says

One of the big cultural communicators of his time, so I expected more quirky insight, that everyday experience would inform this magnum opus more. But it was mainstream and conventional. In some areas (nuclear power and computers) he's drunk the kool-aid but had no insight. To be fair this was written in the 70s when the Cold War was a major pre-occupation. So respect to AC but no worship.
