

Defining the Common Good: Empire, Religion and Philosophy in Eighteenth-Century Britain (Ideas in Context)

Peter N. Miller



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This book discusses the crisis of the early modern state in eighteenth-century Britain and sets it in its European context. The American Revolution and the simultaneous demand for wider religious toleration at home challenged the principles of sovereignty and obligation that underpinned arguments about the character of the state. At stake was a fundamental challenge to the way in which politics was described. The Americans and their British supporters argued that individuals, by voting and thinking freely, ought to determine the "common good." These influential ideas continue to resonate today in the principles of "one man, one vote" and "freedom of thought."

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