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Finding Purple America: The South and the Future of American Cultural Studies (Paperback)

By Jon Smith

University of Georgia Press, United States, 2013. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. The new southern studies has had an uneasy relationship with both American studies and the old southern studies. In Finding Purple America, Jon Smith, one of the founders of the new movement, locates the source of that unease in the fundamentally antimodern fantasies of both older fields. The old southern studies tends to view modernity as a threat to a mystic southern essence—a dangerous outside force taking the form of everything from a bulldozer revolution to a national project of forgetting . Since the rise of the New Americanists, American studies has also imagined itself to be in a permanent crisis mode, seeking to affiliate the field and the national essence with youth countercultures that sixties leftists once imagined to be the future . Such fantasies, Smith argues, have resulted in an old southern studies that cannot understand places like Birmingham or Atlanta (or cities at all) and an American studies that cannot understand red states. Most Americans live in neither a comforting, premodern Mayberry nor an exciting, postmodern Los Angeles but rather in what postcolonialists call alternative modernities and hybrid cultures whose relationships to past...



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