



Rethinking the Irish in the American South

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Studies of the Irish presence in America have tended to look to the main corridors of emigration, and hence outside the American South. Yet the Irish constituted a significant minority in the region. Indeed, the Irish fascination expresses itself in Southern context in powerful, but disparate, registers: music, literature, and often, a sense of shared heritage. *Rethinking the Irish in the South* aims to create a readable, thorough introduction to the subject, establishing new ground for areas of inquiry.

These essays offer a revisionist critique of the Irish in the South, calling into question widely held understandings of how Irish culture was transmitted. The discussion ranges from Appalachian ballads, to *Gone With the Wind*, to the Irish rock band U2, to Atlantic-spanning literary friendships. Rather than seeing the Irish presence as "natural" or something completed in the past, these essays posit a shifting, evolving, and unstable influence. Taken collectively, they offer a new framework for interpreting the Irish in the region. The implications extend to the interpretation of migration patterns, to the understanding of Irish diaspora, and the assimilation of immigrants and their ideas

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