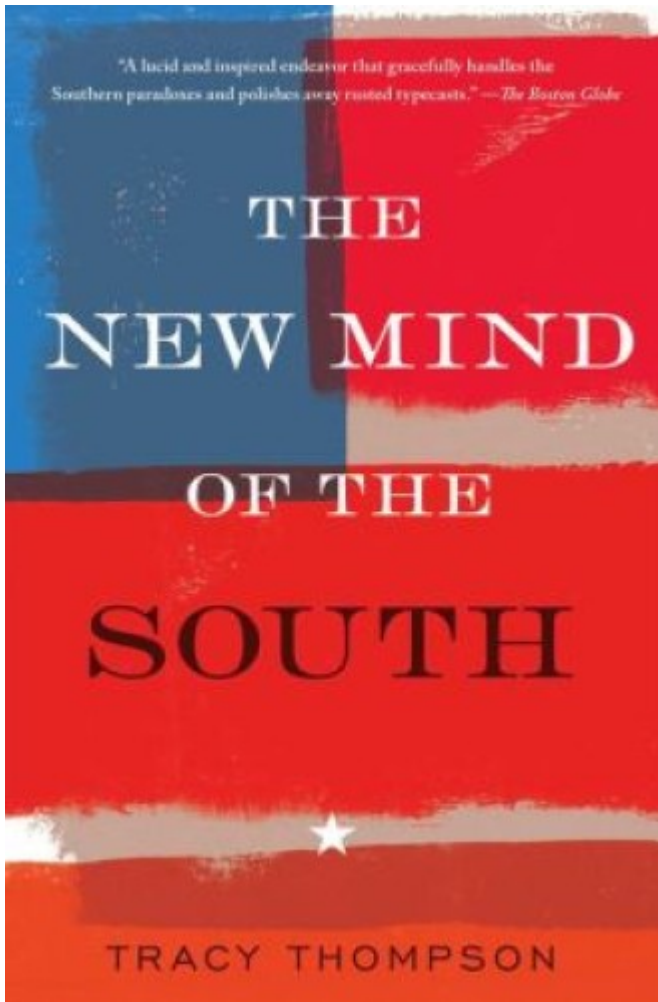


The New Mind of the South, by Tracy Thompson

Books in the [March 5, 2014](#) issue

In Review



The New Mind of the South

By Tracy Thompson
Simon & Schuster

Thompson is trying to update Wilbur Joseph Cash's classic 1941 work *The Mind of the South*. One can't understand the South without dealing with the two Rs, race and religion, and Thompson covers those quite astutely, along with family life, farming,

rural culture, and politics. Immigration is a new factor, because until recently most immigrants to the United States didn't choose to settle in the South. Since the 1990s, however, the South has had a wave of immigrants, mostly Hispanics, which complicates the black-white dichotomy. Thompson is mostly evenhanded until she devotes a chapter to Atlanta, where she grew up. Atlanta presents a shining, prosperous public image, she argues, which conceals its underbelly of racism and poverty.