



# Charlotte, NC: The Global Evolution of a New South City

*William Graves Graves*

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The rapid evolution of Charlotte, North Carolina, from “regional backwater” to globally ascendant city provides stark contrasts of then and now. Once a regional manufacturing and textile center, Charlotte stands today as one of the nation’s premier banking and financial cores with interests reaching broadly into global markets. Once defined by its biracial and bicultural character, Charlotte is now an emerging immigrant gateway drawing newcomers from Latin America and across the globe. Once derided for its sleepy, nine-to-five “uptown,” Charlotte’s center city has been wholly transformed by residential gentrification, corporate headquarters construction, and amenity-based redevelopment. And yet, despite its rapid transformation, Charlotte remains distinctively southern—globalizing, not yet global.

This book brings together an interdisciplinary team of leading scholars and local experts to examine Charlotte from multiple angles. Their topics include the banking industry, gentrification, boosterism, architecture, city planning, transit, public schools, NASCAR, and the African American and Latino communities. United in the conviction that the experience of this Sunbelt city—center of the nation’s fifth-largest metropolitan area—offers new insight into today’s most pressing urban and suburban issues, the contributors to *Charlotte, NC: The Global Evolution of a New South City* ask what happens when the external forces of globalization combine with a city’s internal dynamics to reshape the local structures, landscapes, and identities of a southern place.

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