



Sorting Out the New South City: Race, Class, and Urban Development in Charlotte, 1875-1975

Thomas W. Hanchett

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One of the largest and fastest-growing cities in the South, Charlotte, North Carolina, came of age in the New South decades of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, transforming itself from a rural courthouse village to the trading and financial hub of America's premier textile manufacturing region. In this book, Thomas Hanchett traces the city's spatial evolution over the course of a century, exploring the interplay of national trends and local forces that shaped Charlotte, and, by extension, other New South urban centers.

Hanchett argues that racial and economic segregation are not age-old givens, but products of a decades-long process. Well after the Civil War, Charlotte's whites and blacks, workers and business owners, all lived intermingled in a "salt-and-pepper" pattern. The rise of large manufacturing enterprises in the 1880s and 1890s brought social and political upheaval, however, and the city began to sort out into a "checkerboard" of distinct neighborhoods segregated by both race and class. When urban renewal and other federal funds became available in the mid- twentieth century, local leaders used the money to complete the sorting out process, creating a "sector" pattern in which wealthy whites increasingly lived on one side of town and blacks on the other.

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