

Boom Town



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Investigating the personal stories behind the headquarters of the Wal-Mart empire, this examination focuses on the growth of Bentonville, Arkansas -- a microcosm of America's social, political, and cultural shift. Numerous personalities are interviewed, including a multimillionaire Palestinian refugee who arrived penniless and is now dedicated to building a synagogue, a Mexican mother of three who was fired after injuring herself on the job, a black executive hired to diversify Wal-Mart whose arrival coincided with a KKK rally, and a Hindu father concerned about interracial dating. In documenting these citizens' stories, this account reveals the challenges and issues facing those who compose this and other "boom towns" -- where demographics, the economy, and immigration and migration patterns are continually in flux. In shedding light on these important and timely anecdotes of America's changing rural and suburban landscape, this exploration provides an entertaining and intimate chronicle of the different ethnicities, races, and religions as well as their ongoing struggles to adapt. Emerging as subtle sociology combined with drama and humanity, this overview illustrates the imperceptible and occasionally unpredictable movements that affect the non-metropolitan environment of the United States.

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