



The Reconquest Of Montreal: Language Policy and Social Change in a Bilingual City (Conflicts In Urban & Regional)

Marc Levine

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Although Montreal has been a bilingual city since 1760 and demographically dominated by French-speakers for well over a century and a quarter, it was not until the late 1960s that full-fledged challenges to the city's English character emerged. Since then, two decades of agitation over la question linguistique as well as the enactment of three language laws have altered the places of French and English in Montreal's schools, public administration, economy, and even commercial signs. In this book, Marc Levine examines the nature of this stunning transformation and, in particular, the role of public policy in promoting it. The reconquest of Montreal by the French-speaking majority makes for interesting history. It includes episodes of intense conflict and occasional violence and tells the fascinating story of how an economically disadvantaged and culturally threatened linguistic community mobilized politically and used the state to redistribute group power in Canada's second largest city.

In addition, the history of Montreal's language question offers analysts of urban politics and public policy an excellent case study of some of the central issues facing cities containing more than one major linguistic community. After tracing the politicization of the language question in the 1960s and 1970s, Levine analyzes the impact of the three controversial language laws enacted by the Quebec provincial government between 1969 and 1977. Exhaustively researched, "The Reconquest of Montreal" is the definitive study of the most explosive issue in Quebec political life. Marc V. Levine is Associate Professor of History and Urban Affairs and Director of the Urban Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

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