Making English Official

In communities across the United States, people wrestle with which languages to use and who gets to decide. Despite more than sixty-seven million US residents using a language other than English at home, over half of the states in the United States have successfully passed English-only policies. Drawing on archives and interviews, this book tells the origin story of the English-only movement, as well as the stories of contemporary language policy campaigns in four Maryland county governments, giving a rare glimpse into what motivates the people who most directly shape language policy in the United States. It demonstrates that English-only policies grow from more local levels, rather than from nationalist ideologies, where they are downplayed as harmless community initiatives, but result in monolingual approaches to language remaining increasingly pervasive. This title is part of the Flip it Open program and may also be available as Open Access. Check our website, Cambridge Core, for details.

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Making English Official

Writing and Resisting Local Language Policies

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