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Loyal but French: The Negotiation of Identity by French-Canadian Descendants in the United States

Mark Paul Richard

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By focusing on patterns of immigration and acculturation in a small industrial city in the northeastern United States, Mark Paul Richard offers a noteworthy look at the ways in which French-Canadians negotiated their identity in the United States and provides new insights into the ways in which immigrants "Americanize."

Richard's work challenges prevailing notions of "assimilation." As he shows, "acculturation" better describes the roundabout process by which some ethnic groups join their host society. He argues that, for more than a century, the French- Canadians in Lewiston, Maine, pursued the twin objectives of ethnic preservation and acculturation. These were not separate goals but rather intertwined processes. Underscored with statistics compiled by the author, *Loyal but French* portrays the French-Canadian history of Lewiston, from the 1880s through the 1990s, in this light.

With a wealth of data, the insights of a professional historian, and the sensitivity of a "local," Richard offers a new conceptualization of ways that immigrants become "Americans."

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