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Nota di contenuto	1. Transforming the legal state of marriage -- 2. The clash of institutional versus individual values -- 3. Changing gender relations and values in marriage -- 4. The neglect of the marriage divide and disadvantaged cohorts -- 5. Government strategies to strengthen marriage -- 6. The contradictory politics of same-sex marriage.
Sommario/riassunto	Marriage is a site of political conflict. It is a controversial issue in the UK, Australia and the US where there is a clash of values between neoliberal governments and diverse groups either strongly opposing or supporting marriage. In the meantime, fewer couples are marrying, while other family forms are more widely accepted. This book explores this disconnect by examining policy issues such as class divides, ethnicity, religion, same-sex marriage, gender relations and romantic expectations. A top down approach explores different government policy responses to marriage. In all three countries, there are differences and similarities in how governments react to the changes in family formations, but values or 'conceptions of the desirable' play a significant role. Enhancing stability and commitment as well as personal responsibility are important for policymakers who aim to keep

'the family' intact and thereby lower the burden on the public purse. It is difficult for political actors to respond to conflicting and changing values surrounding the diversity in relationships or to translate them into policies. There is a strong case to be made for increased policy attention to adult relationships - and a much weaker case for marriage. Rich evidence is drawn from interviews with key stakeholders as well as politicians' speeches, government departmental reports, stakeholders' documents and responses to government policies, and media articles.
