1. Record Nr. UNINA9910456187103321 Autore Doern G. Bruce Titolo Changing regulatory institutions in Britain and North America / / edited by G. Bruce Doern and Stephen Wilks Pubbl/distr/stampa Toronto, [Ontario];; Buffalo, [New York];; London, [England]:,: University of Toronto Press, , 1998 ©1998 **ISBN** 9786612025983 1-282-02598-8 1-4426-7918-2 Descrizione fisica 1 online resource (410 p.) Disciplina 338.941 Soggetti Industrial policy - Great Britain Trade regulation - Great Britain Electronic books. **Great Britain Commercial policy Congresses** Lingua di pubblicazione Inglese Materiale a stampa **Formato** Livello bibliografico Monografia Note generali Description based upon print version of record. Includes bibliographical references. Nota di bibliografia Nota di contenuto Frontmatter -- Contents -- Preface -- 1 Introduction -- 2. The Interplay among Regimes: Mapping Regulatory Institutions in the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada -- 3. Institutionalization and Deinstitutionalization: Regulatory Institutions in American Government -- 4. Regulatory Institutions in the United Kingdom: Increasing Regulation in the 'Shrinking State' -- 5. No Longer 'Governments in Miniature': Canadian Sectoral Regulatory Institutions -- 6. Utility Regulation, Corporate Governance, and the Amoral Corporation -- 7 Modelling the Consumer Interest -- 8. The Theory and Practice of Regulation in Canada and the United States: Opportunities for Regulatory Learning in the United Kingdom -- 9. Resurgent Regulation in the United States -- 10. Regulatory Reform and Relations among Multiple Authorities in the United Kingdom -- 11.

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Sommario/riassunto

The world of regulatory institutions has been in a state of flux for the last two decades, and valuable lessons can be learned from a comparative focus on the nature and causes of institutional change and reform in the regulatory agencies and institutions of United States, Canada and Great Britain. The contributing authors, mainly political scientists and legal scholars but also practicing regulators, make the case for a much broader conceptual view of regulation; that it is increasingly necessary for key regulatory interests - business and consumers - to understand regulation in terms of an interplay among four regions: sectoral, framework, intra-cabinet and international. They also explore inter-regime regulatory institutional relations through case studies to demonstrate how regulatory institutions respond to competing regulatory requirements, and to tensions between sectoral utility regulators and competition and environmental regulators. Other key comparisons are drawn out, such as the independence and autonomy of regulators, implementation, economic governance and different paths towards reform. The essential contrast between the three nations studied shows that institutional change in the UK has been explicitly structural, and that a new "regulatory state" has been more openly and fully rediscovered in that country, while change within a federal structure such as exists in the US and Canada has tended to remain more intra-governmental. The book seeks to provide students of regulation with a work that focuses on the political and institutional that they can place alongside examinations of the economic and legal perspectives.