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Nota di contenuto	Intro -- Contents -- List of Figures -- Introduction -- Part I: Courtship and Marriage in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries -- 1. Neither Single nor Actually Married: Courtship and Betrothal in a Homosocial World -- 2. A Maie Game of Marriage: The Politics of Big Weddings -- 3. Neither Birth nor Portion Shall Hinder the Match: Clandestine Marriage and Sexual Nonconformity -- Part II: Conflict and Change in the Age of Agrarian and Industrial Revolution, 1750-1850 -- 4. The Better Man of the Two: Changing Relations between the Sexes, 1750-1850 -- 5. Time Changes Fau'k an' Manners: Private Marriages versus Public Bridals -- 6. The Last Stage of Their Hope: From the Celibate to the Conjugal City -- 7. Married but not Churched: Common-Law Marriage and the Renewal of Sexual Nonconformity -- Part III: The Era of Mandatory Marriage, 1850-1960 -- 8. Better a Bad Husband Than No Husband at All: The Compulsion to Marry, 1850-1914 -- 9. Love on the Dole: The Ritualization of Courtship in the Twentieth Century -- 10. The Lady Generally Likes White Weddings: Revival of the Big Wedding -- Part IV: Conjugal Myths and Marital Realities, 1960 to the Present --

Sommario/riassunto

Did you know that...The "contemporary" fashion of living together before marriage is far from new, and was frequently practiced in earlier days...Self-divorce, although never legal, was once a commonplace occurrence...Marriage is more popular today than in the Victorian era... Marriage in church was not compulsory in England and Wales until the mid-18th century. These are just a few of the fascinating, and often surprising, revelations in *For Better, For Worse*, the most comprehensive treatment to date of the history of marriage in a major Western society. Using fresh evidence from popular courtship and wedding rituals over four centuries, Gillis challenges the widely held belief that marriage has evolved from a cold, impersonal arrangement to a more affectionate, egalitarian form of companionship. The truth, argues Gillis, lies somewhere in between: conjugal love was never wholly absent in preindustrial times, while today's marriages are less companionate than is commonly believed. Gillis also illustrates, in rich detail, the perpetual tension between marital ideals and actual practices. This social history of the behavior and emotions of ordinary men and women radically revises our perspective on love and marriage in the past--and the present.

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