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Sommario/riassunto

This book argues that whenever we are talking about cancel culture, identity politics, political correctness, antisemitism, conspiracy theories, or the alt-Right, we are dealing with a culture war, which often pits two sides against each other in a split world of good and evil. These political representations rely on a set of unconscious processes best understood through psychoanalysis. As this book argues, if you want to comprehend the rhetoric of the Right, the Left, conservatives, and centrists, it is necessary to see how these ideologies rely on unacknowledged defense mechanisms, fantasies, fears, and desires. In fact, if we do not employ psychoanalytic concepts to examine our political investments, we will be unable to get to the root causes driving these social productions. Each chapter of this book looks at a specific writer's or politician's take on contemporary culture wars. One of the reoccurring themes concerns the way free speech has been weaponized by different ideological formations, and this battle over free expression is often centered on the role that universities play in balancing the demands among competing social interests. This book will not only clarify what universities should be, but it will also help us to move beyond our polarized political world. Robert Samuels is a Senior Continuing Lecturer at UC Santa Barbara, USA. He holds doctorates in Psychology and English, and he is the author of twenty books, including *Viral Rhetoric*, *The Psychopathology of Political Ideology*, and *Freud for the Twenty-First Century* (Palgrave, 2021).
