

One Marriage Under God: The Campaign to Promote Marriage in America (Intersections)

Melanie Heath



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The meaning and significance of the institution of marriage has engendered angry and boisterous battles across the United States. While the efforts of lesbians and gay men to make marriage accessible to same-sex couples have seen increasing success, these initiatives have sparked a backlash as campaigns are waged to "protect" heterosexual marriage in America. Less in the public eye is government legislation that embraces the idea of marriage promotion as a necessary societal good.

In this timely and extensive study of marriage politics, Melanie Heath uncovers broad cultural anxieties that fuel on-the-ground practices to reinforce a boundary of heterosexual marriage, questioning why marriage has become an issue of pervasive national preoccupation and anxiety, and explores the impact of policies that seek to reinstitutionalize heterosexual marriage in American society. From marriage workshops for the general public to relationship classes for welfare recipients to marriage education in high school classrooms, One Marriage Under God documents in meticulous detail the inner workings of ideologies of gender and heterosexuality in the practice of marriage promotion to fortify a concept of "one marriage," an Anglo-American ideal of Christian, heterosexual monogamy.



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