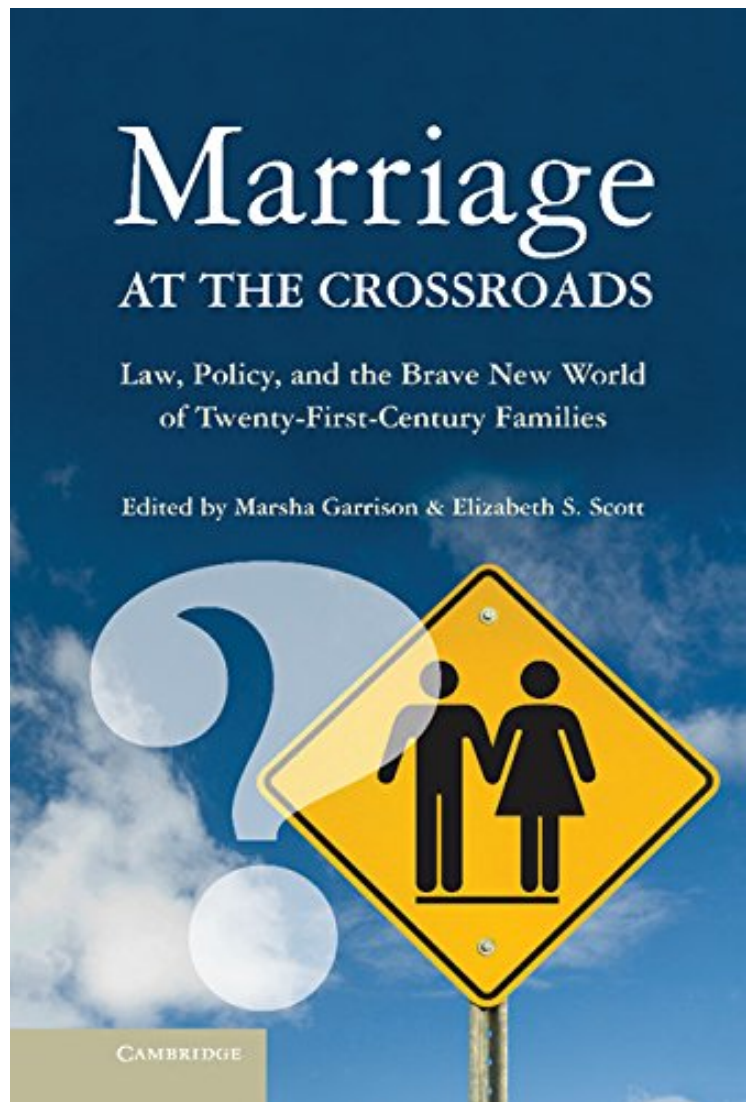


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## Marriage at the Crossroads: Law, Policy, and the Brave New World of Twenty-First-Century Families

*From Garrison Marsha EDT*

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The institution of marriage is at a crossroads. Across most of the industrialized world, unmarried cohabitation and nonmarital births have skyrocketed while marriage rates are at record lows. These trends mask a new, idealized vision of marriage as a marker of success as well as a growing class divide in childbearing behavior: the children of better educated, wealthier individuals continue to be born into relatively stable marital unions while the children of less educated, poorer individuals are increasingly born and raised in more fragile, nonmarital households. Meanwhile, growing numbers of same-sex couples seek access to marriage as an important political and personal goal. These trends have generated political controversy and pose a number of challenges for policy makers: Should access to marriage be extended? Should lawmakers increase or reduce government support for marriage? The interdisciplinary approach offered by this edited volume provides tools to inform the debate and to assist policy makers in resolving questions about marriage at a critical juncture. Drawing on the expertise of social scientists and legal scholars, the book will be a key text for anyone who seeks to understand marriage as a social institution and to evaluate proposals for marriage reform.

About the Author Marsha Garrison is the Suzanne J. and Norman Miles Professor of Law at Brooklyn Law School and Secretary-General of the International Society of Family Law. She is the co-author of *Family Law: Cases, Comments, and Questions* (6th edition, 2007) and *Law and Bioethics: Individual Autonomy and Social Regulation* (2nd edition, 2009). Elizabeth Scott is the Harold R. Medina Professor of Law at Columbia University School of Law. She is the co-author of *Rethinking Juvenile Justice* (with Laurence Steinberg, 2008), which received the 2010 award for the best social policy book by the Society for Research in Adolescence.