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A History and Analysis of Weddings and Wedding Planning

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A History and Analysis of Weddings and Wedding Planning

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Abstract

These days societal expectations set wedding standards very high and it is very common for couples to feel like they have to hire a wedding planner in order to ensure that their special day is the best that it can be. Many articles explain the struggles of planning weddings yourself and the details of all the services that professional wedding planners offer (Han-Chen, H., Cheng-I, H., & Yi-Syuan, H., Blakely, K., Dwyer, L., Herron, D. A., Stafford, L., & Scott, A. M., Patten Sagardia, S., Mendleson, R.). However, there is not much information specifically covering the history of wedding planners in a professional capacity and telling individuals why, unlike so long ago, wedding planners are so invaluable to the planning process. This paper analyzes the history of wedding planning as well as the job of a wedding planner and the difficulties couples may face when planning a wedding in order to answer the question of how weddings and wedding planning has changed over the years. It also addresses changes in society that have affected the industry over the years. I will conduct interviews and surveys to support and go deeper into how weddings in different time periods are not the same. I hope to be able to share my newly found knowledge of what weddings started out as, how they changed with the years and what wedding planners do, with others who may be planning a wedding in the future or with those who just wish to learn more about the industry.

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Introduction

The perfect day. *Your* perfect day. But how are you supposed to make it so perfect? These days societal expectations set wedding standards very high. It is widely portrayed in tv, movies, magazines and other popular culture avenues for couples to have hired a wedding planner in order to ensure that their special day is the best that it can be, but that does not mean that everyone *has* to hire a professional wedding planner. Many articles explain the struggles of planning weddings yourself and the details of all the services that professional wedding planners offer (Han-Chen, Cheng, & Yi-Syuan, 2017; Blakely, 2008; Dwyer, 2009; Herron, 2008; Stafford & Scott, 2016; Patten, 2011; Mendleson, 2011). However, there is not much information specifically covering when wedding planners became such an important commodity for couples planning a wedding, and there is not much information about the history of wedding planning and how it has changed through the years.

Why is it that in the past couples could do it all themselves, but now hiring someone to do it for you seems to be a normal occurrence? What has changed, and with any changes that time has brought to the tradition of weddings, is it ever feasible or desirable to do it yourself or with the help of others and still have a "successful" and enjoyable wedding? This paper will analyze the history of wedding planning, the job of a wedding planner and it will share the difficulties that couples might face when planning a wedding, depending on the method of choice, in order to answer the question of how wedding planning has changed over the years.

This paper will share findings on the political and technological changes that have had an impact on the wedding industry as well as how socioeconomics affect

wedding planning. This paper will also share data that has been collected from interviews and surveys that support and go deeper into the importance and effect that one method of planning can have versus another. The goal of this paper is to be informative as to how wedding planning has changed over the many years in addition to being able to shed more light on the differences that a couples' method of planning can have on their wedding day.

Methodology

In reading this thesis, readers will find that I have used a few different methods to research my topic. I studied the history, politics, sociology and even economics in order to more fully answer the question, "How have weddings and their planning changed over time?" and in doing so I needed multiple research approaches in order to gather all my necessary data. Not only did I study historical accounts by reading articles from websites and magazines online as well as books on wedding ceremonies throughout history, but I also interviewed professional wedding planners and surveyed married couples in order to gather more information on the subject.

I found a very limited supply of scholarly sources regarding this topic, and so I turned to websites and magazines such as The Knot, Brides, Huffington Post, Forbes, and many others. When choosing wedding planners to interview, I wanted to make sure that there would be a wide variety of data to pull from, regarding changes in the industry over the years, so I spoke with wedding planners that had at least 10 years of experience. In my interviews with wedding planners, I asked questions such as "How long have you been working in the industry?" and "What advantages can professional wedding planners offer clients that would otherwise be hard for couples to get?" in order to learn first-hand the experience of the planner as well as what they offer to couples that is unique to a professional (See Appendix A for my full list of interview questions.) For my survey, I had anyone who had been previously married participate and asked questions such as, "What year did you get married?", "How did you plan your wedding?" and "What were some advantages or disadvantages to this method?" in order to learn more about personal experiences (both good and bad) of couples planning a wedding

and how they may have changed based on the year that they got married or based on

their chosen method of planning (See Appendix B for my full list of survey questions).

Limitations

Before reading this thesis it is important to understand that this is a student project written over the span of 10 weeks and as such I have limitations to my study. In conducting my research I was able to get interview responses from only 2 of the professional wedding planners that I contacted, which limits the data that I was able to gather from planners myself. It was hard to get interview responses because the time period that I have been working on this thesis also happens to be an incredibly busy time for wedding planners and so responses were limited. My survey was also limited to the groups of people in the networks of my advisor, myself and my friends and family who were kind enough to share it. I was able to get 93 responses from those networks of people, but having so few groups of people to draw from limits the spread of the data as the people are from only a few different states. I understand that these circumstances put limitations on my findings and work, but they did not prevent me from achieving my goal and answering my question of how weddings have changed over the years, to the very best of my ability.

Chapter One: A Brief History of Weddings (since 500 A.D.-2000's)

and Wedding Planning (since 1930's)

In order to more fully understand how wedding celebrations became what they are today, it is necessary to look at the history of weddings from where they began. As a country that was founded by European immigrants, America's history of wedding planning and celebrations is very much intertwined with and rooted in that of European wedding traditions throughout history. In this section, I focus on major turning points in how weddings were celebrated throughout European history in order to show where these celebrations began and what they have become over years and years or change and growth. I also briefly detail the history of weddings in America. The history of weddings in Europe is more detailed and in depth than that of America, but even still, it is important to look at both locations together as they are closely connected to one another.

Medieval Times (500AD- 1500AD)

There is a long history behind weddings and their planning as people in love have been making a commitment to each other or getting married for hundreds of years. According to Diehl & Donnelly (2011), experts on medieval weddings, "Prior to A.D. 1100, most marriages had no religious ceremony connected to them." Most marriages in medieval times were formalized only by a public announcement and a kiss. Any formal ceremonies were typically held over a local blacksmith's anvil, and it was not until about 1215 that weddings became involved with churches (Diel & Donnelly, 2011). At the time, what we now think of as a "wedding" was typically just a nice feast, not necessarily even one with decorations or special outfits unless the couple was very wealthy, in which case occasionally new or matching outfits would be worn. There was no real focus on specific colors that needed to be worn for the wedding during this time period. As you can imagine, the wealthier the families were, the fancier the marriage feast would be.

Compared to what weddings look like today, formal weddings once they began to gain popularity after the church became involved were quite different. In addition to differences in the ceremony itself, the people who took part in a wedding ceremony were also quite different in medieval times. The best man back then was not the groom's closest friend or relative but instead was the best swordsman that they could afford to hire to stand by them and insure that the wedding went on smoothly. Similarly, the tradition that we see today of a father walking his daughter down the aisle originated as a man walking the bride down the aisle in order to ensure her safety on the way to the groom. Safety was such a key focus in weddings at this time because many times

the marriage was a "marriage by capture" (Doll, 2016). This continued into the 16th century when it was known as "stealing the bride" (Doll, 2016). Members of the wedding party had to be prepared to protect the bride and groom and fight off the bride's family should they come protest the wedding or try to steal her back. The groomsmen, also known as "Bride's Knights" (Doll, 2016), were the ones responsible for assisting in the kidnapping and later keeping the wedding on track and free of interruptions. Interruptions, other than the bride's family, that the groomsmen had to look out for were that "another suitor would try to take her, or she might try to escape" (Doll, 2016). This is why the bride always had someone at her side until the ceremony was underway, at which point the swordsman or best man would move to the right side of the groom, keeping his weapon at the ready, but it is unclear whether this was out of jealousy of the groom or if it had a deeper meaning to the ceremony. After the ceremony the best man would accompany the bride and groom back to their chambers and stand watch outside.

In terms of the way that weddings were paid for in medieval times, both families gave dowries. The bride's dowry was typically the money that was used for the wedding ceremony and feast while the groom's tended to be money for a home or to support them going forward in their life together. The guidelines for who paid for what were laid out in a relatively clear-cut manner back then especially compared to nowadays when the person responsible for paying for a wedding could be any one person or a combination of people involved in the lives of the spouses.

Elizabethan Era (1558-1603)

The Elizabethan Era continued many values and practices from the Middle Ages. Some similarities in the wedding planning and celebration included a formal public announcement of the marriage, a feast following the ceremony and religious affiliation (more similar to the end of the Middle Ages than the beginning). While the Elizabethan era's traditions were very similar to those of the Middle Ages, there were also some key differences that should not be missed.

Some similarities, to the Middle Ages, that should be emphasized are the clothing choices and issue of payment. Similar to medieval times, this was still a time period before the tradition of wearing a white wedding dress became prevalent, and as such brides often had no color restrictions on their clothing. Brides, grooms and guests typically just wore their best clothes without much regards or significance to color. In regards to the method of payment, in these times the bride and her family were responsible for providing a dowry, or in other words, her father was responsible for paying for the wedding ceremony and feast. This was "referred to as her marriage portion" (Alchin, 2012) since the husband was responsible for providing for their family later on in life, after the wedding. In smaller villages, this rule was not as strict and neighbors could have been the ones to provide the feast in a sort of potluck fashion. This practice of neighbors and friends helping to provide for the wedding is similar to that of a bridal shower in modern times and was also often done if the bride wanted to marry someone that her father did not approve of. In order to procure her "dowry", friends and neighbors would ""shower" her with gifts before her wedding" (Doll, 2016).

Just as in the prior time period, the engaged couple made an announcement of

their marriage prior to the day of the wedding. That was, however, where the similarities

ended between wedding announcements in the Middle Ages and the Elizabethan Era.

The public announcement that the couple was to be married was called "Crying the

Banns" and this "announcement would be made in church, three Sundays in a row. This

is different than the announcements of the Middle Ages because in this time period

weddings began to be much more religiously-affiliated." (Knight, 2008) If anyone

married without "Crying the Banns", their marriage would be considered illegal (Knight,

2008). This was done in order to give ample time for any objections or evidence of

something that might affect the couple's union to come to light and be deal with before

the ceremony. Couples, however, could receive a special bond from the bishop should

they need to be married quickly. This was a similar but slightly more formal

announcement than that of the Middle Ages.

Another difference that presented itself in the Elizabethan Era included the

decorations. Flowers in the Elizabethan Era played a much larger role in the wedding.

Bridesmaids were responsible for creating bouquets and the garland of flowers that the

bride held until the end of her wedding when it was placed on her head. At this point in

time, the activities of bathing and washing clothes were considered a luxury and did not

occur often, so in addition to serving as decoration for the bride and the wedding, the

flowers acted as a way to cover up the fragrance of dirty individuals. Pungent flowers

such as fresh rosemary, roses and even garlic stems were used in order to add a more

pleasant fragrance to the ceremony.

Although this era did not bring many big changes to wedding ceremonies, it did

introduce some key aspects, such as the decoration and the announcement formality,

that we see today in many weddings. Decoration is a huge part of wedding ceremonies in modern times, and the Elizabethan Era brought about the beginning of that custom even though at this point in time, the decorations served a dual purpose to cover up lack of hygiene. This also marked the beginning of a more significant notice of engagement and even a longer period of engagement prior to the wedding as a result.

The 16th and 17th Centuries (1600-1800)

In my research, the 16th and 17th centuries in England did not show periods of significant change in the planning and celebration of weddings and as such I chose to omit them from my thesis. This is because my goal in writing this history section is to highlight key changes throughout history in an effort to show where modern day traditions and customs came from and how weddings have changed.

Regency Era (1811-1820)

The Regency Era was a decade of change for wedding celebrations. The biggest similarity between Regency weddings and those eras before it was that crying the "Wedding Banns" (Knight) was still an option, but even that was no longer the sole announcement or validator of a marriage's legitimacy. In addition, the time of day of weddings stayed about the same as it was during the Elizabethan Era. Much like in Elizabethan times, weddings were a morning affair followed by a feast. However, this was an era in which wedding size changed as well as apparel. Additionally, this was an era in which the bride finally got a small amount of say about her wedding day.

Though wedding banns were still used as a popular method to announce a couple's marriage, this era marked the increase of other options to choose from. Couples could either use the method of crying the banns for 3 consecutive weeks in their church, they could obtain a common license for their marriage from a bishop or archbishop, or they could obtain a special license from an archbishop. The difference between the common license and the special license is subtle but important. If a couple obtained a common license, they "had to be married in a church or chapel where either the bride or groom had lived for four weeks" (Knight) whereas if they obtained a special license, they were able to get married anytime and anywhere that they pleased.

Some big changes in wedding ceremonies came during this era. Weddings during the Regency Era were smaller and more private than they had been previously. They were held mostly between a clergyman, family and maybe close, local friends. They were very simple celebrations and the ceremony was "entirely determined by the prescribed service in the Book of Common Prayer" (Grace, 2017). The only thing that

the bride even had a say in was choosing the day (but not the time) that her wedding would be. Even though this was the first part of the wedding process that a bride had some control over, "what she had control over was effectively the least significant part of the process" (Grace, 2018). With weddings being so simple and private there was not much planning involved, especially compared to weddings today, but it is significant that women were starting to be involved in that planning, no matter how small their role was.

Another aspect of the wedding that changed during this era was the introduction of the tradition of wearing white wedding gowns. This was likely because at that time white was a very popular color to wear in general. "White was the most popular color for debutantes, but soft colors such as pink or blue were worn, too." (Dietz). The wedding gowns were not ornate or fancy as they are in modern times, but instead they were simple just as the ceremony itself was.

Though this era was a short one, it showed a lot of advancement and change in wedding planning and celebration. Weddings became less of a public spectacle and more of an intimate gathering of loved ones. This time period marked the beginning of a bride having a say, no matter how small, in her wedding day planning and marked the beginning of the long-standing tradition of white wedding dresses.

Victorian Era (1837-1901)

It was during the Victorian Era that weddings became more detailed and ornate. Weddings became more personalized and colorful while still remaining relatively private. Decorations and significant planning became far more prevalent and important to the celebration and white wedding dresses became more popular after the wedding of Queen Victoria in 1840. The weddings were almost always held in a church, but if not a church then they typically were held at someone's home. This was an era that marked significant change for wedding celebrations and ceremonies.

In this era, there was a greater focus on decorations than ever before. At the beginning of the era, flowers were always used to decorate the churches and homes where the wedding would be celebrated. As the years went on these floral decorations gradually became more elaborate. Typically there was a carpet of flowers down the aisle that the bride was to walk on leading up to the altar. This was "because it was believed that this ensured a happy path to life for the bride" (Victorian Wedding Ceremony, 2018). Servants and even horses would be adorned in flowers to beautify the celebration as well. Roses were commonly used as they represent true love. This was also the era in which brides began to throw their wedding bouquets. In "Victorian ages, the bride originally tossed her bouquet to a friend as she left the festivities to keep that friend safe (by warding off evil spirits, of course) and to offer her luck" (The Knot, 2015). This luck was believed to help the bride's friend, that caught the bouquet, become the next one to get married.

Ushers were in charge of making sure the church and/or home was decorated and prepared properly before the wedding, and bridesmaids were in charge of the

wedding favors which at the time were, "white ribbons, flowers, lace and silver leaves pinned to their shoulders" (Victorian Wedding Ceremony) as they left the ceremony and went to the reception. The "doorways, fireplaces, windows and balustrades were decorated" (Victorian Wedding Ceremony). This was much more decoration than would have been seen regularly in prior eras. Perhaps the duties of these ushers and bridesmaids were the very first glimpse at what the job of a wedding planner would become later on in history.

White dresses may have been introduced in the Regency Era but in the Victorian Era the white wedding gown gained great popularity after Queen Victoria's wedding in 1840. Before the queen was married in white, different colors of wedding dresses were assigned based on the age of the bride. "The teenage brides wore pale green dresses which were a sign of fertility. If the bride was in her twenties, she would wear a brown dress, while older women wore black" (Victorian Wedding Ceremony). Queen Victoria, however, wore a white gown for her own wedding during the time period. This was unusual given that prior to her wedding most brides who wore white were of a lower class and the white "signified that she brought nothing with her" (Victorian Wedding Attire). After Queen Victoria wore white to her own wedding it became the tradition for all brides to wear white and that tradition is still prevalent today. Unlike in the Regency Era, in the Victorian Era wedding gowns were more ornate. The materials used could be anything from lace to cashmere depending on the bride's wealth and preference. In addition to a more ornate dress, brides often wore accessories such as "short white gloves, hanky with maiden name initials, embroidered silk stockings, flat shoes ornate with bows and ribbons at the instep" (Victorian Wedding Ceremony) in addition to a veil

that was not to be removed until the end of the wedding. During the middle of the Victorian era, there was an influx of money to the middle class and so people began to use the ornateness of their wedding dress and jewelry as a way of showing off their socioeconomic status. Bridesmaids, grooms and children would also have been dressed in significantly more ornate clothes than they had been in the past but not nearly as ornate as the dress of the bride.

One aspect of Victorian Era weddings that was particularly unique was the time of year and significance of that time when most weddings occurred. It was incredibly popular for girls to be married in the month of June. This is due to the fact that the month of June resembled the name of the Roman goddess Juno who was said to "bring prosperity and joy to the couples marrying in June" (Victorian Wedding Ceremony). During the Victorian Era, brides were supposedly very superstitious, so they did all that they could to bring themselves "good luck".

The Victorian Era was a huge period of development for wedding celebrations. More serious planning became necessary when more ornate decorating became popular both in regards to clothing and venue. Superstitions put limitations on what couples could or, more accurately, would do when deciding when their wedding would be and what their wedding would look like. This is an era in which connections between weddings then and weddings in modern times are very easily made.

A Brief Summary of Weddings in America

However brief it may be, it is important to note the general progression of wedding celebrations and their planning in America in order to more clearly make the connections between European wedding history and American wedding history.

Prior to the 1800's, weddings in America were strictly transactional. Brides were chosen either for their economic status as a means to have children, or to essentially be "a household slave" (History of Weddings in America) to care for her husband for the rest of her days. Love and religion had little if anything to do with getting married in those days.

Throughout the 1800's, emotion began to be expressed through the act of marriage. In the early 1800's weddings were very private and typically did not include a feast as was seen in Europe. Those that did have feasts were usually the upper-class citizens who had a beautiful cake and dinner to showcase their wealth and celebrate. Later in the 19th century, weddings became larger and brides now custom ordered wedding dresses (History of Weddings in America).

Around the 1920's and 1930's, weddings became much more complex, and as a result couples began to search for people/professionals to aid them in planning their event. The wedding industry made a grand entrance into existence during the early and mid-1900's. Caterers, bakers, dress-makers, photographers and so many other vendors began to make it big in this bride-centered industry (History of Weddings in America, 2016). In the late 1900's, weddings became more personalized and unique. Destination weddings came into existence, and pre-wedding events such as bachelor/bachelorette parties became important.

This history is not as in depth as the prior history sections, but it is enough to give a good idea of how weddings developed to be what they are today in America. This brief history of weddings in America shows a similar timeline of changes as were shown in the more in-depth European history sections. These similarities are key because, as I mentioned in the opening of this chapter, "As a country that was founded by European immigrants, America's history of wedding planning and celebrations is very much intertwined with and rooted in that of European wedding traditions throughout history" (p. 9).

A Brief History of Wedding Planning (since the 1900's)

Much like weddings themselves, the job of a wedding planner has not always been what it is today. Unfortunately, the history of exactly when wedding planning as a formal, professional career first came into existence is not one that is easily tracked down or well-recorded. I was, however, able to make note of certain books and articles that gave details as to a general time period that correlates with professional wedding planners coming into existence.

Though there has always been someone planning wedding ceremonies and celebrations, the formal profession of a wedding planner likely did not come into existence until more recent years. According to expert wedding planner Debbie Quain, huge changes to this industry came after World War 2 when "formal weddings became more popular" (Quain, 2018). This is expanded upon by Karen M. Dunak (2013) in her book *As Long as We Both Shall Love*. Before World War 2, in America, wedding planners were relatively nonexistent. Dunak continues this discussion in her book by explaining how post World War 2 weddings were much more personalized and complex than pre-World War 2 weddings.

It is also worth mentioning that post World War 2, more women began to work, at least part-time, instead of staying at home full-time. Although the 1950's and 60's are widely known as an age of stay at home mothers, "figures reveal that by the early 1960s, more married women were in the labor force than at any previous time in American history" (Women and Work After World War II). This is due to the fact that during the war, when all the men were gone fighting in the war, the women were the ones who were running factories and working to keep things running back at home.

When the men returned after the war, the women were kicked out of many of the jobs to make way for the men to work but this did not stop women from wanting to work and continuing to work, granted on a smaller scale.

This is notable for a few reasons. The first being that if women had less free time to plan their own weddings because they had a job, it may make them more inclined to look for someone to aid them in their planning. This would help them to get everything done with as little stress as possible. The second reason is that women being able to have their own jobs means that perhaps this is when wedding planning became an actual job. After all, if they wanted to make a career out of it, this would be when they finally began to have that opportunity. Keep in mind that those are both educated guesses and not facts because as I said before the history of wedding planning as a career is not one that is well-recorded.

Articles such as "History of Wedding Planning" (2016) and "The History of the Wedding Planner" (2018) mention how wedding planners became necessary when bigger, more public weddings became popular. Author Carol Wallace of the book *All Dressed in White: The Irresistible Rise of the American Wedding* adds to this in her own writing, saying that in the 1800s, "weddings, in those days, were private" (Wallace, 2004). In her book, she explains this practice by noting the few instances that there were extravagant public weddings and the fact that those weddings were thoroughly documented by newspapers since they were so unusual at the time.

Even though there is not much known as to when wedding planning became a legitimate career, these sources show how once weddings became a more complex, cultural occasion rather than a simple ceremony and meal, as was seen in medieval

times, couples began to need or at the very least desire the help of someone who could make the occasion less stressful and overall more enjoyable. This history of wedding planning, however brief, helps to explain how the industry has come to be and evolved over the years however it does not explain what the job of being a wedding planner entails.

Chapter Two: Wedding Planning as an Industry

While history gives a good idea of what has been common in the past and when things came to be, it does not necessarily include the details and specifics of a professional wedding planner. There are many types of wedding planners: full-service, month-of, day-of and destination and these planners are all unique and offer different services. Wedding planners offer these many different services at varied prices that couples should know about prior to deciding on hiring a professional or not.

Along with the joy of getting married and having a wedding comes the inevitable stress of planning everything and meeting your own expectations. It is important to know what wedding planners do in order to understand that they have the means and desire to help make your wedding planning less stressful and to make sure that your wedding day more fully meets your expectations. A mix of journals and consumer magazines discuss this in order to inform potential customers of what to expect (Han-Chen, H., Cheng-I, H., & Yi-Syuan, H., Blakely, K., Dwyer, L., Herron, D. A., Stafford, L., & Scott, A. M., Patten Sagardia, S., Mendleson, R.) In an article in *International Journal Of Organizational Innovation*, professors Han-Chen, Cheng-I and Yi-Syuan (2017) explain the importance of knowing exactly what wedding planners offer as each wedding planner offers couples different services. In an interview with master wedding planner Christine Terezakis, who has been in the business for 13 years, I learned that wedding planners all have different services to offer couples, and they all run their businesses differently and bring different backgrounds and specialties to the table. For example, she explains, "Not all wedding planners are designers and not all wedding designers are planners" (Terezakis). This is a discussion that is also backed up by

Herron (2008) with his interview of Abby Daigle explaining her firsthand experience in the wedding planning industry as well as with Blakely (2008) and her explanation of what wedding planners can do for busy working brides-to-be. All three women explain that wedding planners offer different services to couple and not all wedding planners are the right match for every bride. Finding the right wedding planner is a choice that requires time and research so that couples get the help that they need planning their special day.

There are long lists of stressors that can take away from the joy of a wedding day and the job of a professional wedding planner is to combat such stressors. According to Consumer Reports, "On the wedding sites The Knot and Wedding Wire, we found reports of brides who paid for photos they never received, then couldn't track down the photographers" (*Should You Spring for a Wedding Planner?,* 2016). Articles and journals such as these cover certain situations like shady businesses that will take your money and disappear, which is a very real and unfortunate possibility. One of my survey participants also backed this up saying that their "photographer didn't stick to contract and never responded after the wedding" (Anonymous). Another participant explained that they originally hired a professional to help with planning because they were anticipating 300+ guests but this professional took advantage of them and they ended up having to fire her after 4 months of helping them plan. He said that other couples "reached out to us since then though because this lady talks a good game and collects people's security deposits and then ghosts them before the wedding" (Kallungal, 2018). The situations explained are cautionary tales urging couples to do thorough research when picking their wedding planner or any other vendor if they decide to use one.

Terezakis explained that the wedding planning industry is a largely unregulated

industry. Therefore, some wedding planners can try to take advantage of couples

looking for help. Cramer and Lafreniere (2003) mention other stresses that are

discussed in these articles include managing larger weddings, having a "fast-

approaching wedding date, and having a young fiancée" (Cramer, K. M., & Lafreniere,

K. D., 2003).

One of the many tools that professional planners offer couples planning their

wedding that could help relieve some stress of the big day, is the use of their money

saving connections. In analyzing my survey results, I found that budget was the second

highest stressor of couples planning their wedding. According to Consumer Reports,

"Planners say they can save clients money by sourcing the best and most reliable

suppliers, often at insider prices" (*Should You Spring for a Wedding Planner?,* 2016*).*

This was a statement that was backed up in my interview with Terezakis, who said that

experienced professionals can often save couples money by having access to and

offering discounts for vendors and suppliers that would otherwise be difficult to get,

regardless of that extra initial cost that hiring a planner typically comes with. Even

though this may be true for some planners, couples must be made aware that the

discounts that they may receive do come at an additional cost of the wedding planner

themselves and that not all wedding planners, typically those that are inexperienced,

have access to enough discounts to offset that initial fee.

There are a number of other circumstances and issues that can cause stress to

couples planning their special day. Other top stressors that I found in surveying married

people included not having enough time for planning, meeting with potential venues and

vendors, or just overall time constraints, as well as planning their wedding from far away (another city, state or even country), worrying about venue restrictions, managing emotions/ expectations, and the number one stressor, which was dealing with family drama. These are all issues that wedding planners are equipped to manage in order to make the special day more enjoyable.

Surprisingly, only 3 of the 93 individuals that participated in my survey chose to use a professional wedding planner. Not only that, but only 1 of those 3 responders mentioned choosing this method of planning to avoid the stresses that come with planning a wedding so that they could more fully enjoy the process. This participant stated, "I heard horror stories of people's anxiety and I wanted to do the enjoyable portion like Pinterest, but everything else deferred to the professionals to deal with additional stress" (Anonymous). One of the others mentioned choosing a professional purely out of personal preference, and the last participant said that they chose a professional planner over doing it themselves because they were having a destination wedding.

These professionals take the stress away by using their array of industry specific experience and resources to find venues that meet all your requirements, finding time and planning meetings with vendors and venues or just acting on your behalf and meeting with the vendors them self so that time constraints become less of a worry for busy adults planning their wedding. Wedding planners are also able to act as the middle-man, in a sense, when managing family drama or when planning from far away. They are even able to help manage emotions and expectations because, having more experience, they are very capable of making sure the day turns out just as the client

wants it to. Professional wedding planners have a wide array of skills and background that they can use to help clients have a less stressful or even stress-free planning experience.

Some people think that wedding planning guide books offer enough aid to plan their own wedding and that utilizing these books will decrease stress levels. Although wedding planning books can provide help those who choose to plan their wedding themselves, there are some issues to be aware of when choosing to use a guide over a professional planner. Issues to look out for are included in certain studies such as "Here Comes the Bride: An Ethnographic Content Analysis of Bridal Books" (Besel, Zimmerman, Fruhauf, Pepin & Banning, 2009) as well as "Documentary tools in everyday life: the wedding planner" (McKenzie & Davies, 2010). These articles address issues that may be presented in using a wedding planning book by analyzing guides and how they work. Both articles found that these guides are often sexist or more geared to the women reading them as opposed to addressing both men and women who might be looking for assistance in planning their own wedding. They also note that wedding planning guides tend to oversimplify the steps and tasks involved within planning a wedding. These are good issues to know about when deciding which method of planning you want to use in your own wedding.

All couples who are planning a wedding face the question of whether they should do it themselves, get help from friends and family, or hire a wedding planner. There are many mediums these days in which couples can find tips on how to "DIY" a wedding but that does not necessarily mean that DIY is the right decision for everyone. There are pros and cons to all three methods of planning, and "weddings are not one-size fits all"

(Terezakis). There are not many tools out there specifically designed to tell couples clearly when it is better to hire a professional and what they can really provide, so research is always necessary when making this decision.

In surveying married individuals, I found that the majority of couples chose their planning method due to personal preference (45.2%) with budget being the second largest reason (40.9%). It is a very personal choice as no two people are the same and as such, people will react differently and have different experiences with each method of planning. About 83% of the individuals that I surveyed said that they were happy with how their wedding turned out and that they would use the same planning strategy that they had previously used if they were to ever do it again. There were, however, a few people who said that if they could do it again that they would like to use a professional to relieve some stress of the planning experience. It is not a simple choice but one that can be, in fact, influenced by politics, technology and socioeconomics and as such should be carefully researched.

These articles combined with my interviews and survey give an idea of what stressors may be faced when planning a wedding and explains how wedding planners are able to assist with said stressors, whether it be getting them better deals with vendors using their connections or just helping them to be more organized in their planning, leading up to the big day, in addition to what the costs of these benefits could be. While not all stressors are issues that can be fixed by a wedding planner (i.e. the age of a fiancée, the weather the day of your wedding etc.), most are issues that a professional wedding planner is fully equipped and even expected to assist in. They

work hard to make your wedding plans come to life in a way that lets couples focus more on getting married than planning the wedding.

Types of Wedding Planners

Type of Planner	Duties
Full-Service/ All-Inclusive	They take care of everything from start to finish.Offers step by step assistance for couples from the beginning. Typically handles both design and coordination.
Month-Of	Help with any last-minute details and deal with any unforeseen problems that may arise in the month leading up to the big day.
Wedding Weekend Coordinator	Good for larger weddings. Helps manage guests and take care of non-wedding events (rehearsal dinner, morning-after brunch etc.) the weekend of the event. Makes sure everything runs smoothly.
Day-Of	Oversees the actual wedding day but typically has a handful of meetings/discussions with their client prior to the day to create a game plan. They do not plan any of the wedding themselves but make sure everything runs smoothly and take care of set up and break down.
Destination Wedding	They are a planner who is familiar with or in the location where you are planning your wedding. They help you with the difficulties of planning from a distance. They help you find vendors and venues and give you any important information you may not know about the location that you have chosen.
Vendor Scouting/ Referral	Some businesses will provide you with vendor and venue information/ suggestions even if you do not hire them full time. They can even help you at walkthroughs or meetings if you

	need/want it.
A La Carte Planning	Offers help and suggestions on a need-based level. Typically charge hourly or flat fee for each service that they provide to a couple. Couples pick and choose what services they want help with.
Stylist/ Designers	Focuses more on the aesthetics of the wedding rather than logistics. They help couples achieve the overall look that they want.
Venue Coordinator	These are individuals provided by your venue. They deal with everything related specifically to that location (hotel, resort etc.) but are not responsible for details outside of what that venue provides. They may give you a list of vendor suggestions but that is about the extent of their interaction with outside businesses. They do not design your wedding.
Combination	These planner options are not mutually exclusive. There can be planners who are a combination of any of these and that is why couples should research what a planner offers prior to hiring them.

In this chapter I discussed not only the job of a wedding planner along with the many different types of wedding planners there are but also the wedding industry on a wider spectrum. Now I turn attention towards aspects of society that have changed and, with those changes, affected weddings and wedding planning significantly. This is done in order to give a bit more detail to how the industry has changed so much over time by explaining some of the significant updates to modern society such as marriage equality, socioeconomic status and technology.

Chapter Three: Marriage Equality

A Timeline of Marriage Equality in the United States

Year	By Court Decision	By State Legislature	By Popular Vote	By Supreme Court Ruling
2004	Massachusetts			
2008	Connecticut			
2009	Iowa	Vermont		
2010		New Hampshire, *Washington, DC		
2011		New York		
2012			Maine, Washington	
2013	California, New Jersey, New Mexico	Delaware, Hawaii, Minnesota, Rhode Island	Maryland	
2014	Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Montana, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming	Illinois		
2015	Florida, Alabama (months before the Supreme Court Ruling)			All 50 States but the 13 states that had not already been legalized were Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Nebraska

Politics are an ever-changing part of society and they impact many aspects of life including weddings and the entire industry that surrounds them. Marriage equality (also referred to by some as "same-sex marriage" or "gay marriage") is a controversial topic; although it is legal, not everyone agrees with it. When same-sex marriage became legal in the United States after the 2015 Supreme Court Case Obergefell v. Hodges, there was a shift in the wedding industry. Similar shifts of politics affecting industries and communities can be seen throughout history, as different groups of people (i.e. African Americans, women etc.) gained equal rights, but because the legalization of gay marriage is the most recent change and one most actively affecting the wedding industry, that is the political change that my thesis will focus on. The similar shifts (of individuals gaining rights) in the past would have had a relatively similar set of effects on the wedding industry.

There have been many stories of vendors or venues that have denied services to gay couples because they do not agree with the couple's lifestyle, and while this horrifies many people, others still stand by their beliefs against gay marriage regardless of what the law says. These refusals of service make planning a wedding for these couples incredibly difficult and can force couples to settle for less than what they originally dreamed for their wedding day. In my survey, one individual even mentioned that their biggest struggle when planning their wedding in DC in 2015 after the nationwide legalization was "finding a venue/vendors that welcomed a gay couple" (Anonymous). When businesses refuse to serve gay couples, they lose the business of that one couple as well as potentially losing the business of those who are close to the

couple or even just other couples and individuals who hear of this discrimination and disagree with it.

The change in legality of gay marriage not only brought the change of service refusals but also brought new challenges for the wedding industry as "the wedding industry is very bride-focused: Forms and contracts refer to the 'bride and groom,' vendors say 'bridal party,' people sit on either the 'bride's side' or 'groom's side.' And most traditional 'bridal' magazines portray the norm as one woman and one man." (Willett, 2013). This can be taken by the couple differently depending on their personalities. The couple can use it as an exciting prompt to make their wedding extra personalized, or they could take it as an additional stressor as it does add more work to an already stressful planning experience. These are not stressors or occurrences that heterosexual couples typically have to encounter or worry about.

The wedding process was not the only thing affected by the change in legality of gay marriage in the United States, but it also had and still has an effect on their post-marriage experience (i.e. the honeymoon, traveling in general). Because gay marriage is not yet globally recognized as being legal, couples have a more difficult time choosing the details of a honeymoon. If a couple decides to travel internationally somewhere where gay marriage is not yet legal, their marriage license is essentially invalid "'so they basically have to carry around this extra paperwork [proving their relationship in the case of a medical emergency], which costs thousands of dollars in attorney fees,' Coveney Smith explained" (Willet, 2013). Aside from these negative effects that gay couples must face in light of their newly legal right to marriage, there also come positive changes to the wedding industry.

With the legalization of gay marriage also comes an influx of business for the wedding industry, and more business means more money. The legalization of same-sex weddings means billions of dollars more revenue for businesses involved in weddings such as bakeries, wedding planners, venues, vendors and even honeymoon spots. Mayor Michael Bloomberg and City Council Speaker Christine Quinn announced, one year after New York's legalization of same-sex marriage, that "marriage license fees, local celebrations and wedding-related purchases have boosted New York City's economy by $259 million" (Ellis, 2012). It only makes sense that when a large group of people finally gained the right to be married, there would be an influx of marriages or, at the very least, more weddings than there would have been had their marriages not been made legal. Evidence of this was shown in my survey results. I found that all of the marriages of respondents, that were same-sex occurred after 2014. Although this was a small percentage of my results, it still supports the observation that when same-sex marriage was legalized, more weddings that would otherwise have been impossible were allowed to occur. Business owners who refuse service to these couples are not only causing more stress to people trying to plan their weddings, but they are also missing out on a huge increase in profit and potentially losing even more customers in the process. Though change is at times uncomfortable, it is a necessary part of life, and it is part of what keeps the wedding industry alive and so lucrative.

Chapter Four: Socioeconomics

Wedding celebrations have long been a way to show off status both socially and economically. In the past, a couple's socioeconomic status would decide what kinds of clothes they would wear, what food they would eat and what decorations, if any, that they would have. This has stayed the same in concept although it obviously does not look the same as it did hundreds of years ago. In modern times, a dowry is not typically given in order to pay for the wedding, and the average price of weddings today has increased exponentially from what they were. The concept of socioeconomics playing a major role in wedding planning has not changed much over time, but its physical manifestations definitely have.

Back then, like present day, the more guests and money that you had, the bigger and more elaborate the wedding could be. In some cultures, it is normal and even expected to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on a wedding celebration that spans a few days. These cultural expectations can cause a huge financial burden on families as many people do not want to be looked down upon by not have the elaborate celebration. Weddings offer an opportunity to show off popularity by inviting many guests, and the more guests that are invited, the more expensive a wedding will become. This can then become a way of showing how much money you or your family have and as an extension of that, how fancy of a wedding you can create. However, not everyone has the means to have such large, lavish weddings. While someone from a high socioeconomic background might go big and spend thousands of dollars on their wedding, someone of a lower economic background might skip the whole celebration and just get married in a courthouse at substantially less cost to themselves. These are

obviously the extreme ends of the wedding spectrum, but there are many options in between that couples choose depending on their socioeconomic levels.

In regards to payment of the wedding, much has changed over time. Thousands of years ago, the bride's father was responsible for providing a dowry to take care of the wedding payment. Nowadays, there is really no set rule that determines who pays for the wedding. In surveying 93 married people, I found a wide variety of results when I asked who paid for their wedding. The most popular answer was that a combination of parents and both of the individuals getting married contributed money towards paying for the wedding. About 34% of participants responded this way. About 32% of participants said that only parents were the ones who paid for the wedding, and about 27% said that the wedding costs were split between their spouse and themselves. One responder even said that instead of a parent, themselves or a spouse financing the wedding, a sibling did. As you can see by these findings, these days couples are not limited to the finances of a bride's father but instead have many socially acceptable resources when deciding how to pay for a wedding. This makes it possible for people to cross socioeconomic classes when planning a wedding as a couple is no longer limited by the antiquated social norm of a bride's father being the one responsible for the wedding cost.

Not only does socioeconomic status affect the size and design of a wedding, but it also can have an effect on the location. Most venues cost money, but not everyone can afford the same venues. Someone of a higher status may be able to afford a wedding at an exclusive location such as a country club, historical building or a destination wedding venue but not everyone is able to afford such high-end and

expensive locations. Couples of lower socioeconomic status may have to look at more affordable options such as community centers or even the home of a family member or close friend.

It is typically more expensive to plan a wedding with the help of a professional wedding planner than it is to plan a wedding on your own or with the help of friends and family, and as a result, couples of higher socioeconomic statuses are more likely to be the couples hiring the professional to assist them. Couples of lower socioeconomic status are more likely to do it themselves or crowdsource, but that does not mean that it is impossible for these couples to hire a professional and it does not mean that someone of a lower status has never hired a professional planner. Given that now there are so many different kinds of professional wedding planners, whether it be choosing a day-of planner or a venue that has its own planner included (as hotels often do) rather than hiring a full-service planner, it is more feasible nowadays to hire a wedding planner if you are not of the highest socioeconomic class, than it was even just 15 or 20 years ago.

While all of these aspects of planning a wedding are affected by socioeconomic status, this is not the only driving force when making final decisions on how to plan a wedding. Decisions are also impacted by personal preference and can even be affected by the opinions of others and the availability at the time of the wedding. This means that just because someone is of a higher socioeconomic status, does not mean that they are required to have an extravagant and large wedding. Likewise, someone of a lower status is not required by status to have a smaller, low budget event.

Chapter Five: Technology

Technology is another aspect of wedding planning that, much like politics, is always changing. It may seem strange to us now that there was a time when weddings were not dreamt up in advance on apps like Pinterest and Instagram or, before those even came into existence, when people made collages or collections of ideas and pictures that they liked from magazine clippings to find inspiration for their big day. The reality is that technology such as personal computers and smartphones have only in the past 10 or 20 years become available for consumer use. Emailing did not even become popular until the mid and late 90's. With so many new technologies becoming available, the wedding industry as a whole has been able to change and grow exponentially.

With these changes, wedding planners, venues, florists, photographers and any other businesses that are associated with weddings can now promote themselves via personal websites that can be found with just a quick search on the internet and a simple click of the mouse, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and many other sites. These days, some couples that are getting married even have websites created just for their wedding to simplify communication between everyone involved and promote their big day. This also means that not only has technology made it easier for businesses to advertise their wedding expertise, but it has also become incredibly easier for couples planning their wedding to find assistance as well as the items and services that they may need for their big day.

With the advancement of technology also comes an ease of communication. In the past people may have had to speak in person, over the phone (most likely a landline), or even via handwritten letters, but nowadays people can email, call or text

from anywhere at any time. Contracts can be sent and signed virtually, and plans can be made with very little distance needing to be traveled,freeing up more time for businesses to work on what they need to get done instead of spending so much time trying to get in touch with their client/customer.

Not only has communication become much quicker and simpler, but technology has made it possible to capture every moment of the special day. "Most couples hire a professional photographer, at an average cost of $2,814. And these days, every guest is a photographer too — most of us carry around powerful camera phones in our pockets. After the wedding, many couples struggle with how to aggregate and organize all of these wedding photos and videos together" (Douglas, 2017). This is a problem that has been solved by the many apps made specifically for event picture sharing, such as Eversnap, Capsule and Wedding Party.

These are not, however, the only photography advancements that have been made as drones have become hugely common in today's society. Drones can be used by businesses to advertise their services or locations, but they can also be used by couples to capture their special day from a new perspective. Many wedding photography companies use drones to create video montages of the couple's venue in addition to aerial photos. These photos and videos give couples mementos of their special day from a perspective that could not otherwise be seen. The quality of cameras themselves are also always being improved and with higher quality cameras come higher quality keepsakes. Society has come a long way from paintings, drawings or black and white photos being the only means of capturing a memory in picture form. The addition of drones to the wedding industry as well as the ever-advancing

technology of cameras has meant that the beautiful memories of a couple's special day can be captured more accurately.

A lot of the advancements in technology that affect the wedding industry are used hand in hand. Websites and social media accounts of wedding planners, photographers, caterers and any other vendors are decorated with high quality photos of their past work. This showcases what they are capable of and acts as an advertisement to couples in search of wedding services. This combines photography advancements with technological advertising advancements as well as the rise of the internet and social media sites such as Instagram and Pinterest.

With all these beneficial advancements, however, comes risk. With so many activities done online these days, it is not difficult to be scammed or tricked into thinking that you are getting services that you are not. Couples must be careful when choosing vendors or venues online. They should be sure to do research and even try to meet with the service provider in person if possible to make sure that they are who they say they are. Online reviews and testimonials from other couples can be helpful as well but it is important to research carefully before making a final decision on anyone hired.

Apart from the potential risk of scams that technology has posed, there is so much to be thankful for in seeing how far technology has developed. Technology has made so many sources of entertainment at weddings possible. With the advancement of technology over the years, it is now possible to have DJ's, slideshows, videos and so much more at a wedding. It is amazing how advanced both the wedding planning process and the wedding itself have become with the help of technological advancement.

In analyzing data from the survey I conducted, I looked for trends that reflected technological change. I had originally hypothesized that weddings would become more expensive as technology advanced. Though my survey was limited, I did find that 54% of the responders who had their wedding in 2010 or earlier spent no more than $10,000. I compared this data to the costs that survey respondents listed for their weddings post 2010. After 2010 only 33% of the weddings cost $10,000 or less. Even when splitting the data at the turn of the century (2000) and comparing the two groups prior to the 2000s 59% cost less than $10,000 and post-2000 only 37% cost less than that. While these results may not be conclusive, they do reflect the fact that advancements in technology allow for more money spending opportunities when planning a wedding. Prior to the 2000s, technology was only starting to become available and prevalent in society, and there was not as much technology available that would be helpful or desirable at a wedding. Post 2000, technology such as laptops, smartphones, drones, apps, etc. became much more commonplace in society and so there became more opportunities to spend money in a wedding and wedding planning capacity.

Conclusion

Using a mix of magazine articles, consumer reports, industry websites, surveys, interviews and content analysis of DIY planning books, I have addressed the questions of the history of wedding planning, "What are the issues that may arise with wedding planning?", "What goes into planning a wedding?", "How do people pay for their weddings?" and "What does a wedding planner do?". Then, knowing those details, I was able to more fully address the more specific question, "How has wedding planning changed over the years?". As a baking and pastry student with no event planning experience, I hope that I was able to give a new perspective on this question and bring in some new insights.

This mix of academic journals and commercial websites and magazines highlights the struggles faced when trying to plan a wedding on one's own. In addition, it shows the extent of the job of a wedding planner. These articles indicate that while wedding planners may be expensive, they can provide invaluable aid in making that special day less stressful. My research provided me with information that I needed in order to more fully explain the changes that this industry has been through since weddings first came into existence. In my survey, I asked questions such as, "Did you hire a professional wedding planner?", "Were you happy with the end result of your decision?", "Would you go back and change your decision if you could and if so what would you change and why?" and "What did you/ did you not enjoy about your planning experience?" to married couples and got a wide array of answers. These surveys were done through Google forms and distributed through Facebook and email with help from some friends and family as well as my thesis advisor. I also conducted interviews of a

few professional planners both over the phone and via email. I asked them questions such as "Why do you think it is important to hire a professional planner?" and "What are some services that professionals can provide that would not be possible otherwise?".

Although some of the articles referred to in this paper are limited by their authors or interview subjects due to their own personal biases, when brought together, they provide pros and cons for both hiring a professional and planning a wedding on one's own. This allows for the question, "What is the difference between hiring a professional planner and planning a wedding yourself?" to be more completely answered. In order to completely answer my question of how weddings and their planning have changed over the years, I studied the history of wedding planners to see why the job of a professional wedding planner was non-existent at one point in history and what changed in America specifically that has made weddings and their planning experience what it is today. The wedding planning process and the experience of couples with it is unique.

Appendix A

Wedding Planner Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me a bit about yourself and your background?

2. How long have you been a wedding planner?

3. What inspired your decision to become a wedding planner?

4. Do you think that all couples need a wedding planner? If yes, why? If no, in what circumstances do you think that they may not need to hire a professional?

5. What does being a wedding planner entail?

6. What are the prices of hiring a wedding planner like?

7. What are some advantages to hiring a wedding planner?

8. What services do you offer that would otherwise be difficult or impossible to get (for a bride planning on her own)?

9. Would you say that there are any disadvantages to hiring a wedding planner?

10. When you got married or if you get married in the future do you plan on using a planner? Why?

11. Has the wedding industry changed/shifted at all during your career? How so?

12. How has technology (the internet, social media, etc) impacted the wedding industry/your career?

13. What kinds of trends have you seen come and go? Which have staying power? Any guesses on where the industry might go next?

Weddings: How Have They Changed Over the Years?

I am researching how planning weddings has changed over the years for my senior thesis and any participation in this survey would be greatly appreciated! This survey should take 5-10 minutes to complete. Please proceed to Section 1/6 below.

How old were you when you got married? *

Short answer text

What year did you get married? *

Short answer text

Where did you get married?

How did you plan your wedding? *

○ Professional Planner

○ DIY (Do It Yourself)

○ Crowdsourced (Planning with the help of family or friends/ a group of people)

What is the biggest reason you chose this method? *

○ Personal preference

○ Budget

○ Other...

Optional: Care to elaborate on your answer above?

Long answer text

Financial Decisions

Section 2/6

Who paid for the wedding? *

- ○ You
- ○ Your Spouse
- ○ You and Your Spouse (Jointly)
- ○ Your parents
- ○ Your spouse's parents
- ○ Other...

:::

At the time of your wedding what was your approximate household income? *

- ○ Less than $25,000
- ○ $25,000 to $34,999
- ○ $35,000 to $49,999
- ○ $50,000 to $74,999
- ○ $75,000 to $99,999
- ○ $100,000 to $149,999
- ○ $150,000 to $199,999
- ○ $200,000 or more

At the time of your wedding what was the approximate income of the person(s) who paid? *

○ Less than $25,000

○ $25,000 to $34,999

○ $35,000 to $49,999

○ $50,000 to $74,999

○ $75,000 to $99,999

○ $100,000 to $149,999

○ $150,000 to $199,999

○ $200,000 or more

○ Unknown

Optional: care to elaborate on the answers above?

Long answer text

Approximately how much did your wedding cost? *

Short answer text

Did you think this was a good amount to have spent? *

○ Yes

○ No

Optional: Care to elaborate on the question above?

Long answer text

Cultural and Social Decisions

Did you have cultural requirements that you had to adhere to for your wedding? *

◯ Yes

◯ No

If yes to the previous question, what were those requirements?

Long answer text

Were there any other desires or pressures that impacted your wedding planning decisions? For example, some couples choose certain locations for particular reasons.

Long answer text

Reflecting back on your decisions

Did your method of planning make it easy or difficult to make sure all of your　*
requirements were met in the way you wanted them to be? For example,
some people have expressed that they believed having a wedding planner
would ultimately take away the stress of the day. Others felt that DIY or
crowdsourcing would cost a lot less.

Long answer text

What were any difficulties that you faced when planning your wedding?

Long answer text

What were some advantages to planning your wedding this way?

Long answer text

If you were to do it again would you use the same planning strategy?

○ Yes

○ No

Briefly explain why you did or did not enjoy the planning process that you
chose:

Long answer text

Demographic Information

Section 5/6

How old are you? *

○ 20 or younger

○ 21-29

○ 30-39

○ 40-49

○ 50-59

○ 60 or above

How do you identify racially? *

○ White

○ Black or African-American

○ American Indian or Alaskan Native

○ Asian

○ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

○ Other...

Which gender do you identify with? *

○ Female

○ Male

○ Prefer not to say

○ Other...

What is your current household income? *

○ Less than $25,000

○ $25,000 to $34,999

○ $35,000 to $49,999

○ $50,000 to $74,999

○ $75,000 to $99,999

○ $100,000 to $149,999

○ $150,000 to $199,999

○ $200,000 or more

Optional: Follow-Up Interviews

Section 6/6

If you are open to answering any follow-up questions, please leave your name and contact info here. If not, please just click Submit. Thank you for your participation!

Short answer text

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