

Tradition

Something old, new, borrowed, blue . . .

From Staff Reports

What may be considered normal wedding activities today evolved from primitive rituals, customs and beliefs of our forefathers.

Some traditions that are still observed include:

The wedding dress

Until the 19th century, wedding gowns were rarely bought for weddings. Rather, a bride would wear her best dress or native costume. The color of the dress was significant. A blue dress meant the bride would always be true. Thus the old dictum: something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue. A green dress was believed to display shame. This color further implied the bride had light morals with a predilection for outdoor love-making, for such a grass-stained gown was the natural result.

The white dress was not introduced until the marriage of Anne of Brittany to Louis XII. White was said to symbolize purity and was also said to deter the evil eye.

The best man

During the time of marriage by capture, a man would snatch his wife from her tribe. To capture her, he asked for the assistance of a man he could trust, his best friend or best man.

The maid of honor

In primitive cultures, the bride was thought to be vulnerable to evil spirits and was kept in seclusion during the days preceding the wedding. Originally, the bride's best friend attended

Primitive rituals spark traditions

to her needs during this time.

Bridesmaids and groomsmen

They were an extension of the best man and maid of honor in helping to ward off evil spirits. To outwit these demons, the party dressed alike; thus, it was believed, the demons would not know whom to attack. They believed there was safety in numbers and conformity.

The wedding procession

Many bridal parties walked to the church until the late 19th century. They proceeded in lines of two by two. An old adage was that those who walked to church beforehand will never walk as man and wife.

Rings

The engagement ring, in ancient times, was the symbol of intent to wed. If a woman wore an engagement ring, she was not to speak to any other man except her husband-to-be.

The wedding ring symbolized the "binding union" between the two. Gemmed rings were not the norm until the late 19th century. The choice of a gemstone was contingent on what the stone signified. For example, turquoise was believed to prevent matrimonial argument. A diamond denoted innocence and light. But silvery pearls symbolized tears, and opals were thought to signify fragility and instability. Another superstition was that a wedding ring should never be bought on Friday.

The ring finger on the left hand

Originally it was believed that the third finger's veins led directly to the heart. The left hand, because many people are right-handed, was chosen for convenience.

Veils

The veiling of the bride was two-fold: to ward off evil spirits and to aid the bride in not being seen before the wedding. It was once believed that if a bride allowed a friend to try on the wedding veil, the friend would run off with the soon-to-be husband.

Carrying the bride over the threshold

This custom stemmed from the belief that evil spirits were housed underground. To protect his wife from the demons, the groom would carry her over the doorstep. In some cultures the groom would carry his bride all day.

The "just married" parade

Making noise to drive away evil spirits in older cultures has turned into tying cans on the back of cars and honking horns today.

Throwing rice

The throwing of rice was a fertility ritual. It was believed that seeds were carriers of new life and suitable offerings for brides.

Throwing the bouquet, garter and boutonniere

Originally "flinging the stocking"

was a honeymoon sport. Friends of the couple would throw the stockings of the man and woman, and whoever they hit, tradition has it, would marry within the year.

The wedding cake

There is evidence of the wedding cake's existence in Roman times. The ritual sampling and exchanging of "good things" was thought to spread fortune and fertility.

This story was reprinted from the 1986 Daily Nebraskan wedding supplement.



TOWNSEND
STUDIO

Receive Free 1 — 11x14

candid when you book your wedding with us.

From now until March 1, 1988

Call now 483-4586

6945 Sumner Street

All Brides and Bridesmaids dresses an extra **20% OFF**



Dress may be special ordered and are available in a variety of colors and sizes.

MAURICE'S
The Atrium & East Park Plaza

the closet
SELLERS OF PURE FASHION
GATEWAY MALL

For a perfectly beautiful wedding . . .



Whether you're part of the family, part of the wedding party, or a guest, you'll find perfection in cleaning at Williams.

Williams takes pride in the dry cleaning, shirt laundering, and wedding gown preservation you need for your important day.

464-7447

Williams

PERFECTION IN CLEANING

1209 S. Cotner	27th & 'E' St.	48th & Van Dorn
1501 South St.	64th & 'O' St.	70th & Vine
70th & 'A' St.		14th & Superior
2541 N. 48th St.		27th & Hwy 2