Weddings: a sociology of emotions perspective

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Weddings: A Sociology of Emotions Perspective

by

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ABSTRACT

In this qualitative exploratory study, focused on weddings analyzed from a sociology of emotions perspective, I conducted in-depth interviews with 23 individuals. I discuss how weddings are rituals and as such how they are an excellent forum for exploring the feeling norms, emotional deviance, and emotion management surrounding weddings. I also describe how individuals attempt to balance the ritualistic and unique aspects of their weddings and the role gender plays in influencing activities and feelings surrounding weddings. I conclude by identifying areas that require further research such as how feeling norms are transmitted, enforced, and gendered, and how emotional deviance may be influenced by gender.
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DEDICATION

To Kevin

"The wind beneath my wings"
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**APPROVAL PAGE** ................................................................. ii

**ABSTRACT** ................................................................. iii

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** ...................................................... iv

**DEDICATION** ................................................................. v

**TABLE OF CONTENTS** .......................................................... vi

**CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION** ............................................... 1

- Literature Review ............................................................. 3
- Durkheim And Collins .......................................................... 10
- Positivism ............................................................................. 16
  - Physiological Emotions ....................................................... 16
  - Social Structure and Social Relations ..................................... 17
  - Empirical Frameworks .......................................................... 19
- Critique of Positivism ............................................................. 20
- Interactionism And Social Constructionism ................................. 22
  - Feeling Norms ...................................................................... 23
  - Emotional Deviance .............................................................. 25
  - Managing Emotion ................................................................ 27
  - Definition of the Situation .................................................. 31
- Critique ................................................................................... 33
- Research Agenda ..................................................................... 34
- Summary .................................................................................. 35

**CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN** .............................. 37

- Methodology ............................................................................ 37
- Research Methods .................................................................... 40
  - In-depth Interviews ............................................................... 41
- Sampling Procedures ............................................................... 46
- Characteristics Of The Sample ................................................ 47
- Data Collection ....................................................................... 49
  - Rituals ................................................................................. 50
Feeling Norms ................................................. 50
Emotional Deviance ........................................... 51
Emotion Management ........................................... 51
Data Analysis ..................................................... 51
Logistics Of The Interviews .................................... 52
Locating The Researcher ........................................ 54
Ethical Considerations ......................................... 56

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH FINDINGS ........................................ 58
Rituals ........................................................................ 58
The Reception .......................................................... 66
The Garter and the Bouquet ......................................... 69
Feeling Norms ........................................................... 71
Nervousness ............................................................. 73
Stress ......................................................................... 77
Excitement .................................................................. 79
Happiness ..................................................................... 80
Emotional Deviance ..................................................... 82
Comfort Levels ........................................................... 89
Lapses and Departures ................................................ 90
Emotion Management .................................................. 92
Surface Acting ............................................................ 95
Deep Acting ............................................................... 98
Other Management Techniques ..................................... 100
Balancing The Ritual And The Unique ......................... 103
Gender ...................................................................... 111
The Gendered Division of Labour: Activities ................. 111
The Gendered Division of Labour: Feelings .................. 119
Summary .................................................................... 124

CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSION ............................................. 126
Areas For Further Research .......................................... 126
Transmitting Feeling Norms ........................................ 126
Enforcing Feeling Norms ............................................ 130
Gendered Feeling Norms ............................................ 134
Gender, Emotions, and Deviance................. 136

BIBLIOGRAPHY .................................................. 144
APPENDIX A: Interview Schedule......................... 151
APPENDIX B: University of Calgary Consent Form ........ 155
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This qualitative exploratory study analyses weddings from a sociology of emotions perspective. Building on the theoretical insights of Durkheim and Collins I propose to study weddings as rituals. I argue that weddings are highly ritualized events, not only in terms of the activity or behaviour of the participants, but also in terms of the emotions that accompany them. For this reason weddings are an ideal site for the investigation of the sociology of emotions, the main thrust of my research. Using the interactionist and social constructionist perspectives of the sociology of emotions I focus on three areas: (1) identifying the feeling norms that surround weddings; (2) exploring the deviant emotions individuals may experience; and (3) examining how individuals manage their feelings.

Chapter One consists of a literature review that examines how family sociologists, social historians, and anthropologists study weddings. I then present the theoretical insights of Durkheim and Collins followed by a brief review of the positivist paradigm within the sociology of emotions. I examine the interactionist and social constructionist positions and then present the research agenda for the thesis.
Chapter Two addresses the methodological approach used in the study, including an examination of positivist versus interpretivist-constructionist approaches to interviewing. A more technical discussion of how the data was collected, the sampling procedure that was used, and the logistics of the interviews is also included. Chapter Two concludes with a section on ethical considerations.

Chapter Three presents the findings from the research. Using Collins and Durkheim as a model the ritualistic aspects of weddings are examined and brief discussions surrounding the importance of the reception and the throwing of the garter and bouquet are included. The feeling norms surrounding weddings are then examined, followed by findings of emotional deviance and emotion management. How individuals struggled to balance the ritual and the unique is also explored and the chapter concludes with a section on gender.

Chapter Four is the concluding chapter and it focuses on possible areas for further research. How feeling norms are learned is one area that warrants more extensive exploration. How feeling norms are enforced is another area that needs to be studied in more depth. I also include a brief discussion of gendered feeling norms. The concluding section focuses on gender, deviance, and emotions as a possible area for further research. The literature review of the thesis is presented in the following section.
Weddings occur in virtually every culture in some form or another. They can be elaborate ceremonial occasions or simple civil proceedings. However, whatever form they take they exist and many disciplines have studied them in an attempt to uncover why they are such a powerful cross-cultural phenomenon. Contemporary family sociologists focus on marriages more than weddings. They concentrate on comparing arranged marriages and free choice marriages, the different types of marriages, marital adjustment, and marital stages (Baker, 1990; 1993; Ramu, 1989; White, 1989). These researchers tend to focus on the trends and statistics related to the number of people marrying, divorcing, and remarrying. They also concentrate on mate selection, alternatives to traditional marriages, and the cultural variations in all of these aspects of marriages (Baker, 1990; 1993; Glick, 1992; Ramu, 1989; Shon and Ja, 1992; Taylor et al., 1992; Vega, 1992).

Baker, a family sociologist who does mention weddings, perceives them as "a more universal way of celebrating a change in status to adulthood" (1993:71). This scholar views wedding ceremonies as involving rituals that reflect the purpose of marriage: the transfer of authority, the joining of two families, and fertility symbols (Baker, 1993:114). Baker focuses on the ritualistic dimensions of weddings in North
America and the only other treatment she gives weddings is to look at them in different cultures to see how the rituals are different from North American ceremonies (Baker, 1993:115; 119-128).

I want to study weddings, not marriages and I want to examine more than just the ritualistic dimensions of the weddings. The emotions surrounding weddings must also be examined in order to understand the event and why it is still occurring in its relatively traditional form in a world that is becoming increasingly modernized (Currie, 1993:404). Weddings in Western cultures are emotion-laden events but these emotions (like other aspects of weddings) are also ritualized. Individuals know they are supposed to feel a certain way and this is one reason why the sociology of emotions is a good perspective to use for studying weddings. Another reason is that it is here that "feeling norms"--the cultural rules or expectations governing appropriate displays of emotion--are expressed (Hochschild, 1990:122). The ritualization of weddings brings these norms to the forefront, enabling them to be studied in greater detail. It is also an ideal place to examine how individuals manage their feelings. These are the questions I will attempt to answer and a sociology of emotions framework will provide me with the tools required for such an analysis.
Unfortunately, the majority of family sociologists do not study weddings themselves or at least not within the framework of the sociology of emotions. Albas and Mills Albas (1989), however, do use some elements of this perspective. They discuss feeling rules, feeling work, and labels in their analysis of marriage. They believe “love labels”, such as the idea of romantic love, are created by the settings within which they occur as well as by the larger social and cultural worlds (Albas and Mills Albas, 1989:137). They state that every society has a general set of feeling rules and more specific “love rules” which define acceptable mates. However, they use the sociology of emotions to explain why people fall in love and stay in love. The focus of my research is not why people marry and stay together but the wedding itself and all of the feelings and norms surrounding the ceremony. Therefore, I return to the sociology of emotions framework as my theoretical guide.

Edward Shorter, a social historian, discusses weddings but only within the context of the making of the modern family (1977). Shorter maintains that the premodern family was not the emotional centre it is in modern society because in old-regime Europe family members were constantly leaving the home to be with various peer groups (1977:206). The peer groups made claims on the time, resources, and money of individuals so they spent much more time away from their families than is
the case in modern Europe (Shorter, 1977:209). Not only did peer groups pry individuals from their families but the entire community played a large role in the births, marriages, and wakes of the society, and this permeability weakened family boundaries.

There were many rituals involved in weddings in this period and the community was closely involved in all of them (Shorter, 1977:215). The entire community was invited to the wedding and the youth of the village had a central role in many of the customs. For instance, the youth would fire off "salvos", a burst of gunfire, at all of the processions as a form of merrymaking. They would also construct barricades to stop the wedding party from proceeding to or from the church in order to extort drinking money from the individuals involved (Shorter, 1977:215). On the wedding night the young people of the village would try to find the newlyweds in order to tease them and often to stop them from consummating the marriage because it was believed sexual intercourse between the couple should not commence until three days after the ceremony (Shorter, 1977:216). Country weddings usually had a dance after the ceremony to which the entire community was invited. Often the wedding party would treat the guests to drinks and bread (Shorter, 1977:216).

By being involved in all aspects of the wedding the community was able to control important aspects of the
marriages such as who was to wed, at what age, and what the festivities would be like. The rituals ensured the weddings followed particular formulae. Individuals who deviated from the social norms were subjected to a "charivari"—"a noisy public demonstration to subject wayward individuals to humiliation in the eyes of the community" (Shorter, 1977:218-219). In traditional society the wall between the family and community was still quite permeable and the community was able to control the actions of individuals in the family group.

With the onset of time the walls between the family and the community were built up and the community was pushed aside. The family became an emotional unit that had to be protected with privacy and isolation from the outside world (Shorter, 1977:227). The community no longer played an important role and its ability to control societal members decreased. Shorter's description focuses on the rituals of "premodern" European weddings that are largely gone now, therefore it is necessary to turn to other perspectives in order to study contemporary weddings.

Anthropologists study contemporary weddings and they focus on their ritualistic dimensions. They view weddings as "a focal event, not just for a couple or a kin group, but also for entire tradition[s] which, if [they are] to be maintained, must be systematically transferred to each new generation" (Baskauskas, 1981:227). Anthropological descriptions centre
on the different elements of the wedding: for example, the ceremony, the reception, the music, the attire of the wedding party, and the like. Each part is examined and given an interpretation in terms of its ritual significance. A study done by Newall (1983) on Jamaican marriage customs illustrates this. According to Newall, traditionally the cake cutting was done by an eligible bachelor and an unmarried woman and the significance behind it was that the people involved would increase their chances of getting married, although not necessarily to each other (Newall, 1983:33). However, this custom was changing in Jamaican communities in London with the bride and groom now cutting the first slice of the cake. The tradition was modified but the ritual was still being transferred to the next generation.

Another common way anthropologists deal with weddings is to compare historical weddings with contemporary weddings and analyze the rituals that have changed. Baskauskas (1981) followed this format and compared nineteenth century peasant Lithuanian weddings with contemporary urban Lithuanian weddings in the Soviet Union and United States. Baskauskas maintained there were seven customs unique to traditional Lithuanian weddings but only three remain in the contemporary weddings (Baskauskas, 1981:251). Other changes have also occurred, such as the elimination of matchmaking, of the dowry, and of the assimilation of the bride into the kin group
of the groom (Baskauskas, 1981:247). The celebrations are shorter and romantic love becomes the basis for selecting a mate. However, according to Baskauskas, even with all of the changes, the enactment of various rituals functions to confirm the uniqueness of the group, to preserve group identity, and to maintain group boundaries (Baskauskas, 1981:228). Again, the tradition is being transferred to the next generation even with the various modifications.

Often researchers describe each step of the wedding in elaborate detail. They examine all of the preparations for the wedding, the events on the morning of the wedding, what the bride wore, what the groom wore, what the attendants wore, what the flowers were like, how the bride and groom arrived at the wedding, the service itself, the pictures afterwards, the reception, the dance, the cake, the music, the food, the liquor, and many other things. While such an analysis provides a great deal of description it is often not taken any further. Newall's 1983 study of Jamaican weddings did little more than describe the event and explain why it was such an ostentatious affair--because weddings were regarded as a status symbol by the Jamaicans (Newall, 1983:31). Baskauskas (1981) also provided an elaborate description of Lithuanian weddings but only offered a sparse analysis centering on the ritual symbolism of the wedding and how it transmits "cultural continuity" (Baskauskas, 1981:233).
One problem with these types of anthropological analyses is that they also do not look at how the individual participants feel about the wedding. By focusing on the ritualistic dimensions of the wedding behaviour, they miss the "feeling norms", "emotional deviance"—incidents of inappropriate feelings (Hochschild, 1990:124)—and "emotion management"—learning how to cope with and/or change how one feels or displays emotion (Hochschild, 1983:90)—surrounding wedding ceremonies. Consequently, I look elsewhere for a theory that will help me deal with these issues.

**Durkheim And Collins**

Emile Durkheim was one of the first sociologists to delve more deeply into the study of rituals and to show how rituals and emotions are connected. He studied religion in order to examine what rituals are and how they produced social order or solidarity (Collins, 1988:188). Durkheim divided religious phenomena into two categories: beliefs and rites. For him, rites or rituals could be "distinguished from other human practices, moral practices, for example, only by the special nature of their object" (Durkheim, 1915 [1964]:36). It is not the rite itself but the object that symbolizes the rite that must be distinguished. With weddings, for example, this could be the wedding rings. Rites are the rules of conduct that determine how an individual should behave in the presence of sacred objects (Durkheim, 1915 [1964]:41). By wearing a
wedding ring the individual is telling others that he/she is married and should behave appropriately. The wedding ring may also remind the married individual of the proper way to behave.

According to Durkheim, sacred objects were given properties they did not possess such as exceptional powers and virtues (Durkheim, 1912 in Lemert, 1993:98). The objects were consecrated by "[being] put in contact with a source of religious energy" and it was the rite of consecration that made the objects sacred (Durkheim, 1912 in Lemert, 1993:98). How individuals acted toward the sacred object was what established a ritual (Collins, 1988:190). Rites or rituals, according to Durkheim, could produce a heightened state of emotionality. For Durkheim, being part of a collective group could cause a "state of effervescence" to occur where "vital energies are over-excited, passions more active, [and] sensations stronger" for the individuals involved (Durkheim, 1912, in Lemert, 1993:99). This "state of effervescence" could make individuals feel differently and help in consecrating objects by associating the items used in a rite where effervescence occurred as sacred (Durkheim, 1912 in Lemert, 1993:98; Durkheim and Mauss, 1903 in Lemert 1993:96). Thus, a collective group involved in a rite could create a heightened emotional state or more emotional energy for the group.
Collins reiterates Durkheim's argument about how rituals can produce emotional energy for the group. Collins contends that rituals are "special forms of social action which periodically recreate the feelings of membership and which revitalize the sacred objects that symbolize this membership" (Collins, 1988:192). Participating in rituals gives individuals increased energy and emotional direction. Rituals are a way for individuals to reaffirm their membership in the group and such a reaffirmation provides them with emotional support and renewed confidence in their abilities (Collins, 1988:192).

Collins further expands Durkheim's position by insisting that religion is only one example of a social ritual. He asserts that rituals consist of four common elements that can be found in many different social phenomena, not only religious ones. According to Collins, rituals have the following elements:

1. The gathering of a group of people. The minimum size is two and the larger the group the greater the likelihood of creating powerful ritual effects (Collins, 1988:193; 1990:31). I believe that ceremonial weddings will meet this requirement.

2. The common focus of attention on the same object or activity, and mutual awareness of each other's attention. Ceremonial or formal occasions are significant only because
they are an easy way to focus the attention of the group as is the case with weddings. The critical element is that the actors engage in group activity and are aware of each other (Collins, 1988:193; 1990:31).

(3) A shared emotional state. The emotion itself is arbitrary. The emotion present at the beginning can be used to build up a powerful state of ritual intensity and emotional contagion. The group, by focusing attention on the same thing and by being aware of each other, can become caught up in each other's emotions (Collins, 1988:194; 1990:32). Consequently, the emotional mood intensifies. In the case of weddings this emotion is normally one of joy, happiness, or excitement and individuals will usually leave a wedding ceremony feeling happier than when they first arrived.

(4) “Sacred objects: symbols that represent membership in the group” (Collins, 1988:195). The symbol can be a physical object, a person, gestures, words, or ideas. The symbol used depends on the type of group that produced it (Collins, 1988:195). I believe sacred objects or symbols will be found in wedding celebrations. Collins believes the elements of rituals produce:

(5) “Enhanced emotional energy and confidence for individuals who participate in the ritual and/or who respect its symbols” (Collins, 1988:195). Individuals who participate in rituals receive a new source of emotional energy,
especially those who are the focus of the ritual—the leader, priest, or the couple being married (Collins, 1988: 195; 1990:33). I intend to determine if this is the case. The symbols can also evoke the feelings experienced by the group membership even when the group is not assembled, thereby "reinvok[ing] the spirit of the ritual in private" (Collins, 1988: 195).

(6) "Righteous anger and punishment against persons who show disrespect for sacred objects are also produced by the elements of a ritual" (Collins, 1988:196). Group solidarity compels members to defend and honour the group and its symbols (Collins, 1990:33). Failure to respect the symbols defines the individual as a non-member. The other group members are appalled by this disrespect and their righteousness becomes righteous anger (Collins, 1988:196; 1990:33).

An effective way to reveal what rituals are is to give an example of a non-ritualized event such as eating a meal in our contemporary culture. In our busy society individuals often eat alone. Eating alone cannot be considered a ritual using Collins' formulation since the minimum requirement of two people is not present. However, if we suppose at least two individuals are present it still does not constitute a ritual for the following reasons.

Two persons dining together meet requirement number one. However, even though their focus of attention is on eating
the meal this does not classify as a common focus because they are concerned with their own meal not the common meal itself. The act of eating a meal does not meet the third requirement either. A common emotional mood is usually not generated and even if both of the individuals are happy at the outset there will not be an intensification in the emotion at the end due to the lack of a common focus. The fourth requirement, sacred objects, are not usually present either in the act of dining. Consequently, there is no increase in emotional energy or confidence for the individuals dining together. Meals such as Christmas supper and the like would be an exception,¹ but they are not the everyday meals I am referring to.

Weddings are composed of rituals; they involve distinctive ways of acting and feeling. Due to the importance of the latter, weddings are a good place to examine feeling norms, emotional deviance, and management of emotion—all concepts central to a sociology of emotions perspective.

I wish to turn now to a discussion of the sociology of emotions. I begin with the positivist approach, and then turn to the interactionist and social constructionist positions. The following is a synthesis of the positivist framework within the sociology of emotions, focusing on the work of T.

¹ Meals in some other societies, such as the Hutterite culture, would also be considered rituals due to the religious significance invested in them.
Kemper (1990, 1981), one of the main proponents of the field. Following the synthesis is a critique of the paradigm with the social constructionist and interactionist positions then being presented.

**Positivism**

One of the general tenets of positivism is that there is one "true" reality in the universe and the role of the researcher is to discover what that truth is from his/her research subjects.Thoits, a critic of positivism, states that positivists view emotions as "invariant, automatic, patterned responses to particular classes of social stimuli" (Thoits, 1989:319). Consequently, the positivist perspective of the sociology of emotions retains connections with biology and the accompanying physiology of emotions. It examines the social structure and social relations to discover the "causes" of emotions; and, it offers tangible, empirically supported frameworks for how actors define the situation in order to determine their emotional states (Kemper, 1981:337). Each of these three elements of the positivist approach to emotions will be examined below.

**Physiological Emotions**

Kemper, one of the main proponents of this approach, maintains that different results in power and status relations (to be discussed below) generate different physiological states, which consequently produce different emotions (Kemper,
1981:339, 341). Culture or social relations may temper the strength of the normal relationship between the power and status outcomes and emotions, but it cannot substitute a different emotion for the natural one (Kemper, 1990: 230).

According to positivists, physiological emotions, and their accompanying dependence on biology, must be examined in order to offer a complete explanation of the sociology of emotions.

**Social Structure and Social Relations**

Kemper goes on to define social structure as the vertical organization of individuals relevant to one another within the relational dimensions of power and status (Kemper, 1981:337). He follows Weber's interpretation of power and defines it as "actions that are coercing, forcing, threatening, punishing, and the like, producing thereby a relationship of domination and control of one actor by the other" (Kemper, 1981:337; 1990:211; 1978:32). Status is defined as "the amount of uncoerced, willing compliance, approval, deference, reward, praise, emotional or financial support, even love, that actors accord each other" (Kemper, 1981:337; 1990:211; 1978:33). It is what other individuals do to us and what we do to them--the social relations that form the social structure--that rouse our emotions (Kemper, 1981: 341, 344).

Kemper asserts that most emotions occur as a result of social interaction and that the latter can be characterized in power and status terms. In dyadic interactions these are
relatively simple, according to Kemper (1990:221). An individual's power can increase, decrease, or remain the same; similarly an actor's status can increase, decrease, or remain the same. The same can happen to the other person's power and status (Kemper, 1990: 222).

For Kemper, four basic physiological emotions will occur based on the different power and status relations: guilt/shame, satisfaction/security, anxiety, and depression. Guilt will occur when an actor believes he/she has used excessive power against another individual (Kemper, 1978:34). Shame, a different form of guilt for Kemper, will occur when an individual feels he/she has received more status than he/she deserves. Agency, the individual's perception of who is accountable for the increase or decrease in status, comes into play with this dimension (Kemper, 1978:33). If the other is regarded as the agent responsible for the loss of status the guilt will be turned outward and the resulting emotion will be anger (Kemper, 1978:34; 1990:222). If the self is viewed as accountable for the loss the guilt will be turned inward and shame will be the ensuing emotion.

Satisfaction or an increased sense of security will occur when an individual's power is increased; a decrease in the power of the other will result in the same emotion being experienced (Kemper, 1990:222). A sense of security will also occur if the actor thinks his/her power will decrease and it
does not. An increase in status will lead to satisfaction and if there is no change in status satisfaction can still occur if the individual believed his/her status would decrease (Kemper, 1990:222).

Anxiety/fear will occur when an individual's power decreases or the power of the other increases (Kemper, 1978:35; 1990:222). The emotion may also occur if the actor believed his/her power would increase and it decreased.

Depression will be the resulting emotion if the actor's status decreases, especially if the agent responsible for the loss is believed to be beyond the control of the individual--Fate, Nature, God, etc. (Kemper, 1978:35; 1990:222). In sum, according to Kemper, the social structure--the amount of power and status in various social relationships--determines what physiological emotion will be experienced by the related individual actors.

*Empirical Frameworks*

Kemper's social relational approach attempts to organize a suitable causal explanation for emotions (Kemper, 1990:209). As explained above, the two dimensions of social relational behaviour--power and status--are, in his view, capable of explaining particular emotions. Kemper maintains that his positivist view not only describes the situations actors find themselves in, but makes it possible to predict specific
emotions from particular social relational antecedents (Kemper, 1981:355).

**Critique of Positivism**

Unfortunately, Kemper's argument gives no explanation for why individuals in similar situations may not feel the expected emotions. He gives no explanation for why and how "emotional deviance" (to be explained below) occurs. The interactionists and social constructionists do give an explanation which strengthens their theory. This is one of the reasons why I do not adopt a positivist framework in my analysis.

Another major problem with Kemper's approach is the "universality" assumption inherent in it. Kemper contends that the elements of his theory apply to all social and demographic groups (Kemper, 1990:223). However, his theory ignores differences between different people, groups, societies, and cultures. While he does not consider this a problem, other people do, especially those individuals whose differences are ignored, as it does not provide an adequate account of their lives (Guba and Lincoln, 1994:106). Universalism or grand theorizing attempts to produce broad generalizations and all encompassing social analyses (Jaggar and Rothenberg, 1993: xiii). These authors argue that grand theorizing must be avoided due to its essentialist tendencies.

A third problem with a positivist approach to emotions is
the belief that "true" or "objective" knowledge is possible. Kemper believes science allows us to know the world and explain it, through facts (Kemper, 1990:208). Such a position has been criticized by many theorists, especially the postmodernists. Postmodernist and feminist scholarship has argued that scientific knowledge is constructed and legitimated by those with power (Nicholson, 1990:2). It is thus "interested", not objective. Moreover, it is a social construct used to marginalize certain groups of people, especially those without power. Facts are also problematic since they are influenced by values just as theories are; the two are interdependent (Guba and Lincoln, 1994:107). Facts are only facts within a theoretical framework. Many have argued that "theories are themselves value statements"; therefore, facts are not value-free and neither are theories (Guba and Lincoln, 1994:107).

A final criticism of positivism is that focusing on selected variables "strips" attention from other existing variables that might greatly alter the findings (Guba and Lincoln, 1994:106). Kemper's factor analysis and focus on only two variables--power and status--is an example of this. One-dimensional investigations must be replaced with multiple perspectives that are local and historically specific in order to avoid essentialist and totalizing theories (Jaggar and Rothenberg, 1993:287; Bordo, 1990:139). For other criticisms
of positivism see Guba and Lincoln's article (1994). The positivist approach will not be used in this paper due to these shortcomings. Rather, I will use two other branches of the sociology of emotions known as interactionism and social constructionism.

**Interactionism And Social Constructionism**

Interactionist and social constructionist models differ in how much importance they give to social influence; social constructionists give more importance to it than interactionists (Hochschild, 1990:119). For social constructionists, biology does not enter into the model of emotion. Feelings are formed by social influences. For the interactionists, biological factors do enter into the emotional model (there are hormones, nerves, etc.) but they surface as components that are socially molded (Hochschild, 1990:120). Both perspectives assert that emotions are constructed from social norms or feeling rules that change with time and place (Thoits, 1989:319). They also contend that emotions hinge on definitions of the situation (Thoits, 1989:319). Feelings or emotions are not perceived as automatic reactions to biology but rather are social constructions. Feelings are something individuals do by defining the situation (Hochschild, 1983:27). The social situation is transformed into inner feelings but the origins for the feelings are social.
Feeling Norms

Feeling norms or emotion rules can be defined as “beliefs about the appropriate range, intensity, duration, and targets of private feelings in given situations” (Thoits, 1989:322; 1990:181; Hochschild, 1990:122). Feeling rules tell us how emotional at a certain moment or situation, we ought to feel (Hochschild, 1990: 122). Feeling norms define zones within which one has permission to be free of worry, guilt, or shame with regard to the situated feeling. They regulate the appropriateness of feelings (Hochschild, 1979:565; 1990:123). In essence, feeling rules are social “instructions” or guidelines for the production and evaluation of proper and improper feelings (Hochschild, 1979:566; 1990:122). They also govern the display of emotions by regulating the range, intensity, etc. of the expectations for public displays (Thoits, 1989:322; 1990:181).

Clark (1987) studied sympathy norms and they are an excellent example of feeling rules. People normally assume that they have a right to sympathy during hard times, that sympathy should only be given to the deserving, and that those who receive the sympathy ought to be appreciative and should return the sentiment at a later time (Thoits, 1989:323). Other evidence for feeling rules come from statements such as a relative's death “should have hit us harder” or we “have the right” to feel angry at someone (Hochschild, 1979:565). When
individuals do not act or feel in the appropriate way they are often sanctioned for "misfeeling" and it is here that emotional deviance can be observed.

One of the most contentious examples of feeling rules and possible deviance comes out of the historical literature on the family. Shorter, a social historian, states that old-regime families did not usually see the marital relationship as an occasion for sentiment or feelings (Shorter, 1977:55-65). Marriages were formed based on property and lineage, not affection. Even the death of a wife would not arouse strong sentiments of loss; in fact the death of a horse or cow would be considered more traumatic (in economic terms) than the death of a wife, because a man could always get another wife but livestock was expensive (Shorter, 1977:57-58). Contemporary readers react by questioning this lack of feeling and accuse the historians of "missing something" or of "not looking hard enough". Contemporary readers see such an absence of emotions as very deviant but that is only because the feeling norm surrounding the marital relationship has changed over the last few centuries. In this old regime period only action norms would be enforced, not feeling norms. The community did not care how people felt; they were only concerned with how they acted. Thus, if an individual married someone too old or too young they would be subject to a charivari (Shorter, 1977:218-219). However, it did not matter
if they felt love towards the person they married since romantic feelings did not have an important place in this era. According to Shorter, lack of feeling, at least around marriage, was the norm in the old-regime era.

**Emotional Deviance**

Emotional deviance refers to experiences or displays of emotion that vary from what is expected in certain situations (Hochschild, 1990:124; Thoits, 1990:181). For instance, individuals going through significant role changes may experience emotional deviance. Deviance may also be experienced when traditional roles are being transformed. In both these cases the deviance may occur due to the lack of clarity in the norms and the absence of standardized guidelines telling individuals how they should feel in these shifting situations (Thoits, 1990:188-189).

Normative role transitions such as bereavement or weddings appear to have simple and straight-forward feeling rules: one is to feel sad at funerals and happy at weddings. However, those undergoing these situations for the first time may experience emotional deviance because they are only aware of the emotional ideals associated with these events (Thoits, 1990:188). People may not feel sad at funerals for various reasons (they did not know the person that well, the individual was not a nice person, etc.) but they quickly
recognize their emotional “deviance” and usually try to correct it.

On the other hand, widows and widowers going through bereavement often think their feelings are deviant when they grieve for more than a year because the societal norm says one year is the limit (Thoits, 1990:190). They believe there is something wrong with them even though it is common for mourning to last for three years. Doka (1989) discusses how Western society does not seem to acknowledge or sanction feelings of loss and grief for parents who have miscarried and lost a child (Doka, 1989:6,7). “Disenfranchised grief” is the term Doka uses to describe this type of loss (Doka, 1989:3). In both these cases the feeling rule or norm does not seem to reflect what the majority of people going through bereavement evidently experience and feelings of emotional deviance are the result (Thoits, 1990:191).

Situations characterized by rigid emotional constraints and strong feeling norms enable individuals to recognize emotional deviance quickly due to an increased awareness of the emotions expected of them (Thoits, 1990:189). For example, funerals are characterized by rigid emotional constraints—individuals know they are supposed to feel sad at funerals. Thus, when a person does not feel sad at a funeral they often chide themselves with phrases like “it should
affect me more” or they explain it by saying the death “has not hit me yet” or “has not sunk in” (Hochschild, 1979:565).

**Managing Emotion**

Individuals do “emotion work” or “emotion management” in order to decrease socially unsuitable or increase suitable emotions in themselves and others (Thoits, 1990:181). The management of emotions has piqued the interest of many theorists and perhaps rightly so, for as Finkelstein states:

it is important to focus upon [the]...management [of emotions] because, not only does this reflect how emotions are differentially experienced between peoples, cultures, and societies, but it also highlights the significance of particular emotions within the individual's lived-in world... Emotions are emblematic of the individual's understanding of self, others, and the social milieu (1980:118-119).

Individuals do not want to be ostracized by society and so they try to appear to “fit in”. However, feigning an emotion for a long period of time is difficult, and so individuals try to reduce this strain by changing what they feel or display through the management of emotion (Hochschild, 1983:90).

According to Hochschild, it is through “surface acting” and “deep acting” that individuals manage emotion. Surface acting can be defined as “a change in feeling from the 'outside in’” (Hochschild, 1990:120). Surface acting consists of knowingly changing your outward expression of emotion in order to change your inner feeling. Individuals change their expression which enables them to alter their feelings or at
least to pretend to change their feelings (Gordon, 1990:163; Hochschild, 1983:33-35; 1990:121). If an individual pretends to feel sad at a funeral, sometimes they may actually end up feeling sad. Others respond to their grief and this allows them to experience the sadness even more.

Deep acting can be defined as "a change in feeling from the 'inside out'" (Hochschild, 1990:120). Individuals alter their feelings by changing more than their surface appearance. One type of deep acting involves changing bodily states, through deep breathing and the like. Using the funeral example again, individuals may start to cry, thus making themselves feel sad.

A second type of deep acting involves changing how you feel by prompting yourself to alter your feelings or by narrowing your mental focus to a particular image (talking to yourself). At a funeral, this may involve telling yourself to be sad since it is a time for facing loss (chiding yourself).

A third type of deep acting consists of altering your emotions by consciously visualizing a significant segment of reality in a different way (Hochschild, 1990:121). Using this method, individuals at a funeral who are not feeling grief may think of all the loved ones who will miss the deceased and feel sad because of this. However, according to Hochschild, often this method entails deluding oneself as much as it does deluding others (Hochschild, 1983:33).
Goffman, on the other hand, believes that while people may manage their emotional deviance by “putting on a front” in order to delude others they are seldom being phony. For, as Goffman argues, in order to engage in competent interaction, routine life requires such performances; they are the taken-for-granted work individuals must engage in for successful impression management (Goffman, 1959:6). Goffman states that any interaction between two or more individuals is always about impression management—how to present oneself so that you give the best impression to others and receive the response from them you want (Goffman, 1959:6). In striving for the “correct” impression presentation, individuals may knowingly present themselves in a certain way or they may not realize that they are calculating in the image they are trying to sustain (Goffman, 1959:6). Goffman believes concerted deception is relatively rare and that if actors do deceive the audience, they know they are doing so (Goffman, 1959:35).

“Sincere” performers are certain that the perception of reality they give is the real reality (Goffman, 1959:17). However, it is not necessary for these actors to sincerely believe in their own act in order to give a convincing performance (Goffman, 1959:71). They only have to be taken in by their own performance to the point where they do not sound hollow and false to their audience (Goffman, 1959:214).
Goffman believes that the individual should distance him/herself from the performance so that he/she can cope with any problems during the presentation as they arise (what impression management technique to use, etc.; Goffman, 1959:216). The individual must appear to be emotionally involved in the activity being presented (so the performance does not appear false), but also keep him/herself from getting too involved so that he/she can still put on a successful show (Goffman, 1959:216).

Thus, for Goffman, actors may use deceit but they know they are doing so—it is an impression management technique to get the audience to accept their performance—and it does not occur very often. At the far extreme are the “cynics”—“individuals who do not believe their own act and have no ultimate concern with the beliefs of their audience” (Goffman, 1959:17). For Goffman, cynics may try to convince their audience only as a means to an end; they are not concerned about whether the audience believes their performance (Goffman, 1959:17-18).

Another sociology of emotions theorist, S. Gordon (1990), believes that emotion management may be the result of self-presentation strategies that impart a chosen perception of the individual to other members of society (1990:163). However, emotion may also be governed by following feeling rules or norms that dictate the proper emotion to be
experienced in any given situation (Gordon, 1990:163). It must be kept in mind though, that emotion norms apply to a range of appropriate feelings, not to an exact position. Norms can be ambiguous, sketchy, and inconsistent. Individuals have to assess the situation and choose among competing norms, although not consciously (Gordon, 1990:164). To determine how the social structure affects feeling norms, we must realize that “norms are sometimes complex and unstable, not fixed and explicit rules” (Gordon, 1990:164).

**Definition of the Situation**

Ideologies and institutions prescribe what norms are to be followed and they can also change existing norms (Gordon, 1990:168; Hochschild, 1979:567). Institutions are able to establish the rituals and the feeling rules characteristic of the society (Gordon, 1990:168). Institutions, due to their authority, can take individual, personal emotions and transform them into societal imperatives. For example, our society may regard sexual jealousy as a personal emotion, but in other cultures it is viewed as a societal obligation to preserve property rights (Gordon, 1990:168). It is how the individual or society defines the situation that determines what emotion, if any, is to be experienced.

When an individual changes an ideological stance, he or she may discard the old rules and accept new ones for defining the situation, both physically and emotionally. The feeling
rules are changed as are the sanctions around them. An alternative set of rights and obligations are taken up, thereby allowing individuals to support their new ideological stance and defy the alternative ones (Hochschild, 1979:567). For example, the feminist movement introduced a new set of rules for the work and family life of men and women. A woman can now rightfully become angry over injustices at work (just as a man can) since she has the right to work and hope for promotion in her job (just as any man does). Conversely, a man can be legitimately angry at the loss of custody if he has demonstrated he is the “better” parent (Hochschild, 1979:567). Ideological frameworks guide acts of emotion management by defining the situations where it is appropriate for individuals to express their emotions.

Times of rapid economic and cultural change bring with them increased changes in feeling norms (Hochschild, 1990:129). More emotion management will also occur since individuals still want to maintain social approval (Thoits, 1990:197). However, more of these techniques may fail since there is not a consensus on what the feeling norms are; consequently, the individual cannot manage his or her emotions when he or she does not know what the norms are. The collective or cultural definitions of the situation are obscured, and therefore the individual does not know how to react.
Critique

Interactionism and social constructionism do not adopt the universalism inherent in positivism; rather they adhere to a position of relativism. Realities are understandable through "multiple, intangible mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature, and dependent for their form and content on the individual persons holding the constructions" (Guba and Lincoln, 1994:110-111). Individual or cultural realities are not more or less "true", but simply more or less refined. Relativism acknowledges a variety of positions by allowing the voices of everyone to be heard and not excluding anyone on the basis of not being a member of the mainstream.

However, one of the problems with relativism is that when a situation that demands action is reached some particular perspective must be used in order to guide the proper strategy. Some feminists argue that social activism cannot occur if epistemological relativism is encouraged (Jaggar and Rothenberg, 1993:77). At the extreme, every individual's experience would become the basis for a theory of knowledge and the solidarity essential for liberating oppressed groups would be impossible (Allen and Baber, 1992:6). Relativism can be extremely harmful if it does not carefully avoid any celebration of dissimilarity or uniqueness for its own sake (Nicholson, 1990:10).
Social constructionists maintain that their epistemology is transactional and subjectivist (Guba and Lincoln, 1994:111). The sociologist and the subject are "interactively linked so that the "findings" are literally created as the investigation proceeds" (Guba and Lincoln, 1994:111). The "findings" are value mediated and value dependent and are continually being created in the interactions between the researcher and respondents. I am using the interpretivist-constructionist paradigm to analyze weddings from a sociology of emotions perspective and I discuss the methodology in detail in Chapter Two.

**Research Agenda**

I will focus on three research questions in the course of developing my thesis. I want to identify what feeling norms are, explore deviant emotions, and examine how individuals manage their feelings. Weddings are an ideal place to do this. Weddings are rituals in and of themselves, producing emotional energy and possessing especially strong feeling norms (Thoits, 1990:189). I intend to identify what the feeling norms surrounding weddings are and how individuals know to identify them as such.

Ceremonial occasions or rituals such as weddings are also an ideal place to identify emotional deviance; since the emotions surrounding them are so strong individuals will be more aware of emotions that do not "feel right". The rigid
emotional constraints and the expected normative ideals that do not always occur in reality allow individuals to identify emotional deviance more easily (Thoits, 1990:189).

My third area of interest, emotion management, can also be examined in the context of weddings. When and if individuals experience emotional deviance, it is anticipated they will attempt to manage it so their feelings "come back in line" with how they are expected to feel. It is believed that individuals will be more likely to identify such deviance and management at a wedding since there is a common emotional mood (happiness). If they are not happy they will quickly recognize this and may take steps to remedy the situation.

**Summary**

In this chapter I briefly examined how contemporary family sociologists and anthropologists deal with weddings and concluded that they rarely study weddings themselves and those that do only explore the ritualistic dimensions of weddings that pertain to behaviour. Therefore, I turned to the sociology of emotions as way to examine the emotions surrounding weddings.

I discovered that Durkheim and Collins offered a good explanation for why weddings are rituals and how rituals are tied to emotions. That is, rituals produce emotional energy, apply to many different social situations and differentiate themselves from other ways of acting. Rituals are a good
place to identify feeling rules, emotional deviance, and the management of emotions due to the constraints on any emotion aside from the expected one characteristic of the particular ritual.

I then reviewed the positivist approach to the sociology of emotions but due to its inability to explain emotional deviance, its assumption of universality, its belief in "true" knowledge, and its reliance on one-dimensional investigations, it was rejected.

The interactionist and social constructionist perspectives within the sociology of emotions appear to be the most suitable theoretical frameworks to use in order to answer my three research questions: identifying the feeling norms surrounding weddings, exploring deviant emotions, and examining how individuals manage their feelings.
CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

As mentioned previously, this qualitative research project explores ritualistic weddings from a sociology of emotions perspective. The interpretivist-constructionist paradigm is employed in order to examine the feeling norms, emotional deviance, and emotion management surrounding weddings. In this chapter I describe the methodological approach used in the research, including the research methods and an examination of positivist versus interpretivist-constructionist approaches to interviewing. This is followed by a more technical discussion of how the data was collected, the sampling procedures used, and the logistics of the interviews. The chapter concludes with a section on ethical considerations.

Methodology

As Jayaratne and Stewart define it, methodology refers to "how research is carried out or the broad principles about how to conduct research and how theory is applied" (1991:92). The methodological approach I use is the interpretivist-constructionist perspective. Such a perspective maintains that the goal of research should be to "understand the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it" (Schwandt, 1994:118). Social actors ("those who live it") create their lived experiences by defining the situations
they are in. In order to understand this "world of meaning" one must interpret it rather than explain it (Schwandt, 1994:118).

Interpretivists "celebrate the permanence and priority of the real world of first-person, subjective experiences" (Schwandt, 1994:119). What I utilize from the interpretivist position is the belief that individuals construct social action (Schwandt, 1994:124). Interpretivist-constructionists emphasize "the world of experience as it is lived, felt, and undergone by social actors" (Schwandt, 1994:125). They maintain that what is specified as objective knowledge and the truth is created as a result of a particular perspective. Individuals do not discover the world, rather, they construct it.

Another well-known qualitative approach I could have used is grounded theory. It can be defined as the "discovery of theory from data" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967:1). According to grounded theorists, the goal of research should be the generation of theory. The researcher does this by systematically observing the phenomenon under study (Glaser and Strauss, 1967:2). Once the data is collected the researcher uses it to generate a more general theory. The canons of this perspective are that the product is emergent, the approach is inductive, and the theory emerges from the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The inductive approach of
grounded theory requires general principles to be developed from specific observations.

In the research I proposed to do I had already selected some general principles (feeling norms, emotional deviance, emotion management) to be studied. Therefore, I could not use a grounded theory approach. I encouraged the respondents to tell their own stories but I also had an interest in those stories and my objective was not to totally efface my interests. Rather, I tried to balance my perspective with what the respondents told me in order to understand the phenomenon that was occurring. Thus, the interpretivist-constructionist paradigm was the most conducive one for the issues I wanted to examine.

I thought semi-structured, in-depth interviews would allow me to follow the interpretivist-constructionist methodology. The purpose of my research was to understand the feelings individuals had surrounding their weddings. Semi-structured interviews are often used in order to understand human behaviour (Fontana and Frey, 1994:366). This type of interviewing technique allows the respondent to speak about how he/she sees the world organized. Structured, close-ended interviews and surveys reflect how the researcher sees the world organized. The respondent cannot answer in their own words; their words are chosen for them. Thus, semi-structured interviews would allow me to "understand the complex world of
lived experience from the point of view of those who live it", which is the heart of the interpretivist-constructionist position (Schwandt, 1994:118).

**Research Methods**

Simply using qualitative methods does not ensure they will be used within an interpretivist-constructionist paradigm for methods are only "the particular procedures used in the course of research" (Jayaratne and Stewart, 1991:92). Thus, a researcher who followed a positivist methodology could use a research method such as interviewing. The important issue is to use a research method that will allow the researcher to answer their research questions in a manner consistent with the principles of their methodology (Jayaratne and Stewart, 1991:91). Consequently, I have used in-depth, semi-structured interviews as my research method in a manner consistent with the interpretivist-constructionist methodology.

As indicated previously, one of the main tenets of the interpretivist-constructionist methodology is to understand and interpret a particular phenomenon from the definitions provided by the social actors. In the interviews importance is placed on acquiring descriptions of the topic in the respondents' own words (Lofland and Lofland, 1984:56). This allows the respondents to convey the world as they see it. Thus, the interviewees not only offer their narratives, they also help to organize the meanings they construct (Holstein
and Gubrium, 1995:19). Therefore, I take the respondent's words as they are and do not assume they are hiding something or not telling me the "whole truth". The results of the interviews are my data and this is what I used for my analysis.

However, when interviewing respondents I had to rely on their retrospective accounts of what happened and how they felt. One problem with this is that the respondents may not recall what happened accurately and their recollections may be influenced by their current emotional state. Another limitation is that the individuals may only recall certain events—selective recollection (Brinkerhoff and Lupri, 1992:222). Despite these drawbacks, that affect much of the research into peoples past actions, this approach remains the most fruitful for a study such as this one.

**In-depth Interviews**

Interviewing is a powerful technique used by many social scientists, qualitative and quantitative. The difference between the two lies in the techniques used and the purpose of the research. Researchers whose epistemological stance is more akin to positivism tend to view interviews as a mechanism to study interviewees as objects. Consequently, respondents are objectified and used as mere data (Oakley, 1981:30,33). Researchers from the interpretivist-constructionist paradigm view interviews as a "discourse between speakers" and centre
"on the ways that meaning of questions and responses are contextually grounded and jointly constructed by interviewers and respondents" (Mishler, 1986:33-34). The following section will discuss criticisms of the positivist view of interviewing and explore the strengths of using an interpretivist-constructionist approach.

Traditional interviews or those from a positivist approach tend to objectify interviewees and regard them as "passive vessels of answers" which creates a hierarchy between the researcher and participants (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995:7). The interviewer is placed in a position of authority or dominance relative to the subjects who must answer the questions asked of them but not ask any questions themselves lest they bias the results of the study (Mishler, 1986:117; Oakley, 1981:39). The assumption is that the subjects have the answers to the questions, the trick is how to get the information from them. The interviewer must be careful of how he/she asks the questions so that he/she does not bias the subject in some way. Having an opinion or answering a question the respondent has asked are procedures frowned upon due to their potential to bias the answers (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995:8; Oakley, 1981:36). Many techniques are offered for acquiring the "truth" from the respondents. The key to doing this is interviewer and question neutrality. If the correct procedures are followed the "truth" will be
elicited uncontaminated from the vessel of answers the subject possesses (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995:8).

One of the main problems with this position is the assumption that there is one, universal "truth" to be discovered and that there are unadulterated facts that do not vary. Many theorists have questioned these assumptions on the basis that knowledge is constructed by those with power (Nicholson, 1990:2) and that facts are influenced by values (Guba and Lincoln, 1994:107). The notion that respondents or the interviewer can ever obtain "bias-free" results is also questioned. Holstein and Gubrium state:

Because socially constructed meaning is unavoidably collaborative (Garfinkel, 1967; Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson, 1974 as quoted in Holstein and Gubrium, 1995:18), it is virtually impossible to free any interaction from those factors that could be construed as contaminants (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995:18).

In contrast to the positivist approach the interpretivist-constructionist approach to interviewing adheres to the following beliefs: assumption of intersubjectivity, empowering the respondents, and investing personal identity. The assumption of intersubjectivity between the researcher and the participants allows interviews to be regarded as a collaborative project (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995:50). That is, the interviewer and interviewee are both involved in the mutual creation of data by constructing meanings (Olesen, 1994:166). These meanings
become the data for the researcher to interpret (Olesen, 1994:166). Interviews depend on the interaction between the investigator and the participants (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995:18). Interviews are social encounters, conversations, or "a form of discourse between speakers" (Mishler, 1986:7). As such, both the interviewer and interviewee have a role to play. The interviewer asks questions, indicates topics to be explored and proposes appropriate ways of answering. However, the interviewee can also ask questions and the prompts of the interviewer are considered framing devices rather than absolutes (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995:29). Thus, the interviewee is an active participant in the interview process with a "stock of knowledge" that is reflexive and emergent. The active respondent not only gives answers but in the very process of offering them he/she can add to them, take away from them, and change them (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995:8, 30-31). The respondent cannot bias what he/she is creating, especially since "both the questions and responses are formulated in, developed through, and shaped by the discourse between interviewers and respondents" (Mishler, 1986:52).

Empowering the respondents is a second tenet of the interpretivsit-constructionist interview approach. The asymmetry of power found with the positivist approach to interviewing is problematic due to its potential to exploit the respondents. It also hinders the purpose of the
interview: to find out information about a phenomenon (Oakley, 1981:39). Using unstructured interviews encourages the respondents to speak in their own voices, enables them to regulate the introduction and flow of topics, and invites them to elaborate on their responses (Mishler, 1986:69). Actions such as these encourage a non-hierarchical relationship between the researcher and participants. Such a relationship allows more information to be obtained since the respondent will not feel exploited (Oakley, 1984:41). It also empowers the respondents and that allows them to have more control over the interviewing process and gives them some control over the construction of meanings (Mishler, 1986:118).

The third tenet of this type of interviewing is that the researcher invests his/her own personal identity in the relationship. Recall that in traditional interviews respondents are discouraged from asking any questions. Such an attitude is often detrimental to the rapport between the researcher and participant (Oakley, 1981:49). In fact, answering the respondent's question by citing an experience can help the respondent examine and recount their own actions, and feelings. It provides a "concrete referent on which inquiries and answers can focus" (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995:45). Thus, I answered any questions the participants had about me, my research, or my opinions. Not only would this help in establishing rapport but hopefully it would encourage
the respondents to be as open with me as I was with them. Personal involvement on my part was required if I wanted the participants to admit me into their lives (Oakley, 1981:58).

**Sampling Procedures**

I conducted a qualitative, exploratory study using semi-structured interviewing. I used non-random purposive sampling. Purposive sampling selects respondents with a specific purpose in mind in order to gain a deeper understanding of a certain phenomenon (Neuman, 1994:198). The respondents may or may not represent the population and this kind of sampling is often used in exploratory research. I needed to identify soon-to-be married or married individuals in order to interview in-depth the rituals, feelings, emotional norms, and the like surrounding their weddings. Purposive sampling allowed me to do this. Obviously because the sampling was non-random I cannot make any generalizations about the population. However, it was not my intent to do so; rather I was concerned with exploring in great detail (and in their own words) the feelings people had surrounding their weddings.

I interviewed eleven and a half couples. I interviewed the man and woman from each couple separately in order to facilitate more openness and candour. I felt that they might

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2 The half of a couple refers to the female that I interviewed. I was not able to interview her husband, therefore she is only half of a couple.
feel constrained if their significant other was with them while they were giving the interview. I interviewed six couples (five men, six women) who had recently been married and six couples who were about to be married. By interviewing individuals before and after they were married, I hoped to determine if they perceived the feeling norms to be the same and if they had the same perspective on emotional deviance and management.

The interviewees were referred to me by Ms. Cynthia Sanchez, a pre-marriage counsellor, and the Pastoral Institute in Calgary, Alberta. Ms. Sanchez gave me the name and phone number of individuals she knew who were about to be married or had recently been married. I then contacted these individuals to determine if they would agree to schedule an interview. I also attended pre-marriage sessions offered by the Pastoral Institute and asked for volunteers to participate in the study. Interested individuals were contacted at a later date to set up an interview. All of the participants were selected on a volunteer basis and were informed that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Characteristics Of The Sample

The sample consisted of twenty-three individuals from various backgrounds. The respondents were somewhat heterogeneous in terms of their education level and financial status. Some of the participants were lawyers, engineers,
financial analysts or held some other type of white collar occupation and others had jobs involving physical labour. Some of the individuals owned their own homes while others rented.

The group was fairly homogenous in their racial composition—none of them would be considered a minority. The ages of the respondents were also somewhat homogenous in that they clustered in the mid twenties. I did not interview anyone who was under eighteen nor anyone who was over forty. Only one couple had a child, so in this respect the group was also relatively homogeneous. The majority of the respondents lived with one another before they were married (15 people) and the weddings were first-time marriages for all but one of the individuals (22 people). The respondents were also fairly homogenous in their religious composition. All of the individuals were from a religion based on the principles of Christianity—Protestantism, Catholicism, etc.; no one had an Eastern religion background. However, four of the couples had a non-religious ceremony, thus there were some small differences between the individuals with respect to religious beliefs.

The sample cannot be considered representative of the larger population of married individuals in Calgary, in Alberta, nor in Canada since non-probability sampling techniques were used to produce it. My sample cannot be
considered diverse since all of the respondents were referred to me by Ms. Sanchez or by the Pastoral Institute. The majority of people who attend these institutes are white, middle to upper class individuals, with a Christianity influenced religious background, thus my sample reflects this bias. Consequently, the findings of my study should not be used as an indication of how the larger group of married individuals feel. Rather, it indicates what this group of people felt and suggests further areas that could be explored.

Data Collection

My data was gathered from semi-structured in-depth interviews with twenty-three individuals. As indicated in Chapter One, my main purpose was to study weddings from an interactionist-constructionist sociology of emotions perspective. As Hochschild indicates, this involves the feeling norms, emotional deviance, and emotion management constructed around a certain event (1990). I chose to focus on weddings as a forum to examine these elements due to their ritualistic nature. Ritualized events bring feeling norms, emotion management and emotional deviance to the forefront (Thoits, 1990:189). The following is a discussion of the methodological issues and procedures involved in studying weddings as rituals from a sociology of emotions perspective.
Rituals
Rituals are "special forms of social action which periodically recreate the feelings of membership and which revitalize the sacred objects that symbolize this membership" (Collins, 1988:192). The interview data was used to examine the degree to which the twenty-three individuals interviewed believed this was the case. The interview questionnaire (Appendix A) contained questions about the rituals the individuals incorporated into their weddings, whether they had a ring ceremony (an object that symbolizes membership into the group of married people), and why they incorporated the rituals they did.

Feeling Norms
Feeling norms are the cultural rules or expectations that govern culturally appropriate displays of emotion (see Chapter 1:23-25). The extent to which the twenty-three individuals interviewed felt there were feeling norms surrounding weddings was investigated using the interview data. The interview schedule contained loosely phrased questions about how individuals felt as they prepared for their wedding, how they felt on the wedding day, if they believed they were supposed to feel a certain way (i.e. happy), and whether they believed weddings were happy occasions. The questions were intended to explore the feeling norms surrounding weddings and how aware individuals were of their existence.
Emotional Deviance

Emotional deviance refers to occasions when a person considers his/her feelings as inappropriate for a given situation (Chapter 1:25-27). The degree to which the twenty-three individuals experienced this sensation was explored using the interview data. The questions asked, for example, about circumstances where individuals were unhappy during the wedding preparations and the wedding, and whether they felt their emotions were inappropriate for the given situation.

Emotion Management

Sociology of emotions theorists maintain that individuals manage their emotions by doing emotion work to decrease socially unsuitable or increase socially suitable emotions in themselves and others (Chapter 1:27). This possibility was explored by focusing on issues such as the problems respondents had with planning their wedding and how they dealt with those problems.

Data Analysis

I personally transcribed all of the interviews over a two month period. A thematic analysis of the interviews was done using the transcriptions as the tool to discover the various themes. I read over the interviews looking for examples of feeling norms, emotional deviance, emotion management, and the like. I also discovered previously unidentified themes by reading through the transcribed
interviews numerous times. The examples were then collected under their various themes and the findings are presented in Chapter Three.

Logistics Of The Interviews

The twenty-three interviews took place between March and June of 1996. Four were conducted in March, six in May, and the remaining thirteen in June. Of the engaged participants I interviewed, their wedding dates ranged from being three weeks away to four months in the future. Of the married individuals, some had only been married a month when I talked to them while others had been married almost three years.

The respondents were contacted as I have previously described. Of the respondents referred to me by Ms. Sanchez only two couples or four individuals did not want to be interviewed. One couple was uncomfortable with the interview being taped. The other couple simply felt they did not have the time. They would have liked to have been involved but they were too busy. None of the participants who volunteered from the Pastoral Institute refused to be interviewed.

Before each interview I had the participant read and sign the consent form, made sure they understood it, and asked if they had any further questions (see Ethical Considerations). The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner, using the interview schedule as a guide. Allowing for the interviewees to express their feelings was the whole object of
the interview; therefore, I was not concerned if the exact order and wording of the interview schedule was not followed. The interview questions, as they appear in Appendix A, are fairly structured. However, in the course of the interviews I did not go down the list of questions and ask each one as it appears in the interview schedule. Rather, the interviews were very informal and conversational. I knew the four areas I wanted to explore (rituals, feeling norms, emotional deviance, emotion management) and lead into them through informal conversation. Often I did not have to ask the questions, the respondents answered them in the course of telling their stories. The questions were only used as pointers to cue me and the interview schedule itself was a guide. Thus, the interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner.

Following the interpretivist-constructionist methodology, I answered the respondent's questions in an honest and straight-forward manner and I encouraged them to ask questions throughout the interview. I concluded each interview by asking the respondent if they wished to add anything or if they had any questions. A few respondents did ask about my research, what I had found to that point, and what I wanted to try to explain in the end. I answered their questions as best I could and they were very appreciative of the fact that I did not treat them like "passive vessels of answers".
All of the interviews took place in a location specified by the respondent. These varied from the participants place of work, to coffee shops, to a church. The length of the interviews ranged from thirty minutes to two hours; the average interview was about one hour long.

**Locating The Researcher**

In order to follow the interpretivist-constructionist methodology it is important to locate the researcher as well as the respondents, since the interviews do take place within a particular context, culture, and society (Fontana and Frey, 1994:369). Thus, the gender, age, social class, ethnicity, and the like of the researcher and the respondent are important and influence the results (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994:3; Fontana and Frey, 1994:369). The personal characteristics and personal history of the researcher influences the theory, methodology, and eventual analysis he/she uses. Furthermore, they influence the understandings and interpretations of the world or phenomenon under study. Denzin and Lincoln describe the qualitative researcher as a "bricoleur" (1994:2). The bricoleur, a "Jack of all trades or kind of professional do-it-yourself person" (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994:2), understands that research is an interactive process influenced by his/her personal history and characteristics.
The interviews were conducted by me, a white female student in the Master's program at the University of Calgary. I was a stranger to all of the respondents before the interviews. Through the course of the interview many found out I was recently married. The only individuals who may have known more about me were those referred to me by Cynthia Sanchez. These respondents may have known that I was a recently married, heterosexual, middle class woman depending on how much Ms. Sanchez told them. Generally though, I would say that I was a stranger to the respondents before I interviewed them.

Participants are involved in creating their identity in the research situation. That is, they are aware of and continuously monitor who they are in relation to the interviewer (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995:15). However, ultimately I was the one who decided which of their experiences would be included in the analysis. Thus, I was not simply reporting their experiences but re-interpreting them for my own purposes. As Schwandt states: "to prepare an interpretation is itself to construct a reading of these meanings; it is to offer the inquirer's construction of the constructions of the actors one studies" (1994:118). I acknowledge that I was the one who chose the material to be incorporated, and that the study reflects my interpretation of the participants' accounts.
Ethical Considerations

The research was approved by the Department of Sociology Committee on the Ethics of Human Studies and the University Committee on the Ethics of Human Studies.

Due to the emotionally sensitive topic of questioning the feeling norms surrounding weddings I was prepared to refer any respondents who wanted further counselling on these issues to Ms. Cynthia Sanchez, a self-employed counsellor. I also attended a counselling session with Ms. Sanchez that helped me develop some therapeutic skills in order to deal with any potential problems in the interviews. We discussed various issues such as how to deal with respondents who broke into tears, got angry, had problems in their marriages, and had harmful stress management techniques. The counselling session prepared me for any problems that might potentially arise in the interviews, but happily I did not encounter any problems.

Due to the small scale of the research and the fact that I was interviewing couples separately, I could not guarantee anonymity. I informed the respondents that their significant other may recognize the responses they gave but none of the participants were concerned enough to drop out of the study. Pseudonyms were used in the thesis, the names of the respondents were not released to anyone, nor were they attached to the interview at any time. Participants were advised that they did not have to answer any questions they
felt uncomfortable answering and that they could terminate the interview at any time. None of the respondents refused to answer any question and no one ended the interview early. All of the tapes and transcripts from the interviews have been kept in a secure location along with the interview schedules. Only my supervisor and I have had access to these documents.

All of the interviewees signed a consent form acknowledging their voluntary participation in the project (Appendix B).
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH FINDINGS

Chapter Three presents the findings from my research. Using Collins and Durkheim as a model the ritualistic aspects of weddings are examined. The importance of some rituals such as the reception and the throwing of the garter and bouquet are briefly discussed. The feeling norms surrounding weddings are then examined, highlighting four of the predominant feeling norms. Findings of emotional deviance are presented and "comfort levels" and "lapses and departures" are examined briefly. Findings of emotion management are presented and examples of surface and deep acting are given. How individuals struggled to balance the ritual and the unique is also examined and the chapter concludes with a section on gender.

Rituals

Rituals are "special forms of social action which periodically recreate the feelings of membership and which revitalize the sacred objects that symbolize this membership" (Collins, 1988:192). Rituals are the mechanism that bind a society together or generate solidarity (Collins, 1988:188). Recall that for Durkheim, rites are the rules of conduct that determine how an individual should behave in the presence of sacred objects (Chapter 1:10). The rings would be considered sacred objects in the wedding ceremony. Thus, wearing a
wedding ring informs other individuals that you are married and it reminds you and others of the proper way to behave. As one married man explained,

when you're out for a night with the guys somewhere and you're at the bar and there's a girl at the next table looking at you or something, you look down and see the ring and it reminds you of how much the marriage means to you. It sort of twigs something in your mind. (Greg)

A female respondent expressed it as follows: "the rings are your outward commitment, that's what people can see." (Donna)

For Durkheim and Collins rituals are a way for individuals to feel connected to society and create solidarity. Participating in rituals makes an individual feel involved and it gives them more energy and confidence (Chapter 1:11-13). Collins asserts that rituals consist of four common elements. Let's examine these elements in more detail to determine if the weddings in my study can be considered rituals.

The first element that must be fulfilled is that a group of people has congregated. The minimum size is two and Collins maintains that the larger the group the greater the likelihood of creating powerful ritual effects (1988:193; 1990:31). The weddings in my study ranged in size from seventy-five to three hundred people with the average being

'' not his real name, pseudonyms have been used throughout this thesis for every individual.
about one hundred and fifty people. Thus, the first condition of Collins' formal model of ritual is met.

The second element is a collective focus of attention on the same object or activity, and a shared perception of each other's focus. Ceremonial occasions are an excellent way to direct the attention of the group (Collins, 1988:193). Each of the weddings in my study would be considered a ceremonial occasion because they included the "typical" wedding events (the exchange of vows, rings, etc.) and occurred in a public forum, even those that the couple getting married would describe as contemporary were still typical weddings in this sense. The following excerpt is a good example of the common focus of attention and the mutual awareness of it that occurs at wedding ceremonies.

People look at what you have and what you've done, people are watching the ceremony, watching what we're doing. Symbols are important in everyday life but at weddings it's actually amplified somewhat. (Josh)

Josh recognizes that he and his fiancee will be the common focus of attention for the guests at their wedding and that everyone there will be aware of this. Thus, the second condition of Collins' model is met.

The third component is a shared emotional mood. Collins contends that the emotion present at the beginning of a ceremony can be used to build up a powerful state of ritual intensity and emotional contagion (1988:194; 1990:32). The
emotional mood will consequently intensify. In the case of weddings this emotion is one of happiness or joy and individuals should leave a wedding ceremony feeling happier than when they first arrived if Collins' contention is correct. I asked the participants if this was their experience. The majority of them responded that it was, as the following examples illustrate. One male respondent, Chad, stated, "I'm happy for the couple and to see the expressions on their faces, that helps in uplifting me at the end of the ceremony." A female participant (Audrey) replied in the following way, "yes, it [the wedding] is exciting and I just feel excited. I feel happier afterwards, the ceremony puts me more into the wedding spirit." Another female, Joan, responded, "yes, I feel happier afterwards. I get a little more 'smiley'". All of these excerpts provide support for Collins' contention that the emotional mood will intensify; thus the third condition is fulfilled.

The fourth factor in Collins' model is that there are sacred objects or symbols that designate membership in the group. The symbol used depends on the type of group that produced it and can be physical objects, gestures, a person, or ideas (Collins, 1988: 195). Wedding rings, the unity candle, and the wedding vows are all objects that symbolize membership into the group of married people. One male respondent expressed how he regarded the wedding rings as
symbolic of the event. "The ring is the whole symbol of what we're doing. The ring is the big symbol, the one thing that we'll keep with us" (Ken). A female participant voiced similar sentiments in her statement that "exchanging the rings is the symbol of getting married" (Connie). Other respondents also felt that the rings were symbols of the wedding, as the following examples reveal. Josh stated:

The rings can symbolize a lot. The idea of having a ring that she gave me and wearing it means a lot to me and exchanging those rings in public I think is just as important as having them, because it's part of the whole ceremony, what people know.

Karen had the following to say:

I really, really believe in the rings. I think the whole ceremony of wearing something as a sign of your commitment is just...To me probably the biggest part of the wedding is the exchange of the rings.

Some of the participants were more inclined to regard the vows as symbolic of the wedding. As one groom-to-be, Brian, remarked, "the exchange of vows is probably the most important symbol because that's what a wedding is. It's different from everything else because it's something you're doing publicly in front of everyone else." Other respondents who believed the vows were a symbol of the wedding also talked about the importance of saying the vows in public. As Greg put it:

for probably the first time in your life and hopefully the last, you publicly, in front of everyone in the world who's important to you--your family and friends--in front of all these people you're telling them your most intimate sort of feelings about yourself and the person you're
marrying. You're making a promise in front of all these people about how you're going to behave for the rest of your life.

The remaining participants who believed the vows were sacred objects talked about the promise they were making and how that was important. As one married male stated, "the vows symbolize getting married to me because that's where you promise one another that you're going to love each other for the rest of your life" (Kyle). A married female expressed her opinion in the following way:

I think the vows are what symbolize being married and are the most important. It's a promise and a meaning and it states in sickness and in health. It's just a promise and sharing your love and what your love means to one another and doing it in front of God and everybody else. (Joan)

Thus, the fourth condition of Collins' model is fulfilled, as the above examples illustrate.

"Enhanced emotional energy and confidence for individuals who participate in the ritual and/or who respect its symbols" is the fifth factor in Collins' model (Collins, 1988:195). Individuals who participate in rituals should receive a new source of emotional energy, especially those who are the focus of the ritual--the couple being married (Collins, 1988:195; 1990:33). I did not find this to be the case. Rather, I found that most individuals expressed relief that the ceremony part of the festivities was completed. They did not mention feeling recharged or having more energy. More research needs
to be done in this area to determine if emotional energy is a result of engaging in rituals.

According to Collins, not only are individuals supposed to feel more emotional energy but the symbols can summon the feelings of group membership even when the group is not congregated (Collins, 1988:195). For example, Chad states, "the ring will act as a definite reminder all the time." Greg says, "the ring is a constant physical reminder of what happened on that day. When I look at it, it reminds me of that and it brings back the memories and the feelings I had that day." As we can see, these are excellent examples of how a symbol, the wedding ring, can evoke the feelings of group membership even when the group is not assembled.

"Righteous anger and punishment against persons who show disrespect for sacred objects" are also produced by the elements of a ritual (Collins, 1988:196). Group solidarity compels members to defend and honour the group and its symbols (Collins, 1990:33). Failure to respect the symbols defines the individual as a nonmember. As Josh explains,

people expect traditional things and customs and if they don't get them they're upset. People guard their traditions with their life really and a lot of the time you don't really understand it until you look at it as traditions are really a safety blanket for a lot of people. What they know, they know what is going to happen, they know what to experience, and that's why they like it, no surprises, that's what a tradition is. You accept that, people are comfortable with that and that's fine.
Thus, the conditions of what constitutes a ritual according to Collins' model are met and I can conclude that weddings are rituals. Other evidence that weddings are rituals comes from the common-sense ways people express what a ritual is to them. When individuals talk about how it would not seem like they were married unless certain events occurred, this is evidence that they consider weddings rituals. For example, one groom-to-be states, "if I'm not saying the vows to her or giving her a symbol of a ring it just wouldn't seem like I was marrying her" (Ryan). A bride says, "the vows, exchange of rings, and kiss symbolize getting married to me, probably the kiss more than anything else. I've seen some weddings where they didn't kiss and it just didn't seem like they were married" (Carla).

Another bride expressed it this way:

I had a church wedding because that's what I think weddings are, to get married by a preacher. The church, the white dress and tux, cutting the cake-it was important for me to have those traditional parts because it just wouldn't seem like a wedding without them. (Connie)

A groom also spoke of the elements you expect in a wedding ceremony and how it wouldn't be a wedding without them. He states:

we had a pastor marry us, it was in a church, we were in formal bride and groom clothes--she wore a white dress, I wore a black suit--we had a receiving line afterwards; those were the traditional elements. It was important to have those traditional parts just because through conditioning you learn to expect those things in a certain ceremony and if you didn't have them it wouldn't seem complete. Not that deep down either
of us think that they're really necessary but to make it feel complete in our own hearts we wanted to see all of these things, so that it felt like we were married. (Roy)

In this case, as in some others, the individuals themselves are ambivalent about their wedding but in the final analysis they follow through with the culturally prescribed norms.

One male respondent even came out and stated that getting married was a ritualistic event. He said, "I was raised in the United Church and I'm a Christian, I go to church regularly, and getting married for me was as much a religious oriented act and ritual as it was anything else" (Josh). I think it is safe to assert that weddings are rituals. Not only is the wedding itself a ritual but other events happening on the wedding day also have ritualistic characteristics. I want to examine some of them in more detail to see why people included them in their wedding celebration.

The Reception

Only one couple did not have a reception of some type for their guests. They were unable to do so for economic reasons. However, they did have toasts and a dance. It was important to them to celebrate the occasion in some way.

The remaining couples all had some type of reception. These ranged from cocktail parties with hors d'oeuvres to informal afternoon luncheons to formal sit-down suppers. Some respondents had the reception because that is what you do, it
was tradition, and it was expected. As one groom-to-be explains, "a reception is just a traditional thing for the family to get together... and it's just a fun time. A time to get together and celebrate the wedding" (Ryan). Another groom-to-be states, "I come from a very social culture and it [the reception] has always been a big part of all our celebrations. I think it's a definite possibility that people would have been offended if we didn't have one" (Darryl). Jill explains why she decided to have a reception with the following remark: "I guess partly because it's what is done and partly because it's a time to celebrate with close friends and family." It's not that these individuals did not want to have a reception; they did, but they were aware of the outside expectations influencing their decision.

Other interviewees expressed the desire to have a reception as a personal preference. It was something they wanted to do to make the day special and fun. As one groom-to-be remarked, "it is important to have the reception because it's a time to meet with people, to celebrate; having a meal together always seems like a real good time" (Brian). Greg explained his decision to have a reception with the following:

probably as much importance was placed on the reception as on the actual wedding itself. I've been at a number of weddings where I think that the bride and groom are so caught up doing so many things that they don't seem to have a lot of fun at it themselves. I wanted to make sure that I had fun with my friends. I knew that it would be an opportunity to see family and friends who I had
not seen for a long time and who had travelled a long way just to be there.

A bride expressed similar sentiments as the following illustrates:

the reception was probably the most important part to me because that was a time to interact with everyone who had come out. This was the first chance I had to thank everyone for coming out and all my friends were there so that was great, I was able to spend some time with them. (Amber)

Roy shared the same belief as is revealed in this statement:

I would say it was more important for me to have a reception than it was to have a wedding. We both have very close families and they don't often get a chance to get together and we really wanted it a time where I could meet her family and she could meet my family. Both of our families are just real happy-go-lucky fun people who like to dance, like to eat together, laugh, and joke, and that's not something that happens at a church service. So it was a time when we could actually get around and talk to our family, introduce ourselves and that kind of stuff.

Other respondents believed it was important to have a reception because they had invited people from out of town. These participants felt they had to entertain these guests since they were not from the area and giving them a meal was the appropriate gesture to thank them for coming. One female interviewee explained, "the reception is important, especially because we have family coming from so far away" (Janelle). A male participant states, "well, if you're going to have people coming from great distances you better serve them supper. I
also think it's important that you celebrate and the reception is an opportunity to do that" (Donald). Joan verbalized a similar opinion. She stated:

It was definitely important to have the reception because we invited out-of-town people so we didn't want them to have to leave and go do whatever. We wanted to be able to talk to them or whatever. They came all that way so we wanted to do stuff with them. Plus, we wanted to celebrate with everybody.

Thus, the reception was one of the most important celebrations of the wedding day for many of the couples.

**The Garter and the Bouquet**

Other events associated with weddings, such as a dance, the receiving line, throwing the bouquet and garter, were important to some people and of little consequence to others. It was mainly a matter of personal preference. However, throwing the garter and bouquet were traditions coming under attack on a broader level. These events used to be commonplace at the majority of Western, traditional weddings. They still occur at many weddings but public sentiment towards them is changing. Now many individuals question the meaning behind them and do not want to include these events in their wedding celebration because of what they symbolize. One female explains it in the following excerpt:

it [throwing the garter] symbolizes rape and I'm not quite interested in doing that and I guess with our age, I mean we're not 22 and getting married. It's both our first marriage but it's just one of those things that I feel goofy doing
and besides, who would be there to catch the bouquet--there's no single friends. (Donna)

Two male participants discuss how their respective fiancees are not comfortable with having the garter thrown, therefore they would probably not do it. As one states, "I know my fiancee doesn't really feel comfortable with it and I know it's starting to fade out, so I doubt we'll go through that" (Chad). Karen talks about why she isn't including them due to what they represent and she questions whether the meaning behind them is valid any more. She states:

we're not doing the garter thing or throwing the bouquet because to me they just seem silly. First of all, because it's like, all the single women gather here and if you're lucky enough to catch the bouquet then you get to be the next one to be married. Well, who's to say women in this day and age can't be complete without being married. It's not this socially sought after, be all and end all, that maybe it was in the past and I don't think women should hinge their happiness on whether or not they're married. And the idea of a man taking off a woman's garter and flinging it to his single friends to me is just demeaning. I just find that it objectifies women--all the single men get to grab for this piece of lingerie that was around her leg. It just seems silly.

As I have illustrated, some of the rituals are fading away, thus it is possible to change societal expectations and norms, although the process may be slow. I will come back to this issue and examine it in more detail later in this chapter. From Durkheim and Collins it has been established that the tie to the group is a tie of feeling or emotion. That is, the tie is not rational; it's not just that the
respondents are married, but that they need to feel married and rituals produce this feeling. The importance of the rituals is expressed in the language of feeling. Statements such as, "we felt like we were married", and feelings of completeness, "normalness", rightness, fun, enjoyment, etc. are all examples of the language of feeling. Thus, rituals and emotions cannot be separated. Therefore, weddings are rituals and are thus, a good place to examine feeling norms, emotion management, and emotional deviance, and this is where I want to turn next.

Feeling Norms

As I stated earlier, I do not adopt a positivist theoretical framework that views emotions as innate, automatic, cognitive responses, but rather a social constructionist-interactionist perspective that regards emotions as socially created or constructed (Gordon, 1990:147; Hochschild, 1983:27; Thoits, 1989:319; 1990:180). Thus, the key factors that determine what emotion an individual will experience are sociocultural (Thoits, 1989:320). How an individual defines the situation he/she is in, and the emotional beliefs and emotion vocabularies (words for emotions) of a society all help to construct emotions. These include rules regarding what one should and should not feel and express and these rules can change across time and place (Thoits, 1989:322).
Thus, feeling norms (or the synonymous terms "feeling rules" and "emotion norms") refer to expectations about the appropriate range, extent, direction, and duration of feelings in any situation (Hochschild, 1979: 564; Thoits, 1989: 322; 1990: 181). They regulate the appropriateness of our feelings. However, feeling rules are not simple yes-or-no norms (Hochschild, 1990: 122). Rather, they are more like zoning regulations that determine how much of a given feeling, held in a given way, is acceptable—that is, how emotional in a certain situation we ought to feel (Hochschild, 1979: 565; 1990: 122). They govern how deeply we should feel and for how long. In essence, feeling norms are the cultural rules or expectations that regulate appropriate displays of emotion.

One of the reasons for undertaking my study was to identify what the feeling norms surrounding weddings were. One of the most dominant feeling norms that the respondents identified was a happiness norm. Overwhelmingly weddings were supposed to be happy occasions. Another pervasive feeling norm was nervousness. Many of the respondents believed the bride and/or groom were supposed to feel nervous on their wedding day. The wedding preparations also had feeling norms attached to them—one of stressfulness and an opposite one of happiness or excitement. Some of the participants felt they were supposed to be stressed about the preparations while
others felt they were supposed to be excited. Each of these norms will be explored in detail below.

Another reason I researched weddings was to find out how individuals know to identify feelings norms as feeling norms. It was when I asked a respondent if he/she felt he/she was expected to feel a certain way on their wedding day or preparing for their wedding that the respondent would express the idea of a feeling norm. It was also when I asked how they felt at someone else's wedding that most of the respondents were able to easily identify feeling norms. The respondents would recognize that there was an obligation they had not fulfilled, that they were "supposed to" feel a certain way and when they did not feel this way they realized a feeling norm was in place. There was an expectation placed upon the respondents (by their family, society, or the like) that they were supposed to follow and when they did not conform to this external and constraining expectation they felt their feelings were inappropriate for the situation and that they were violating the feeling norm(s). This was one of the ways they recognized the feeling in question as a feeling norm.

**Nervousness**

One feeling norm that almost all of the respondents had something to say about was nervousness. Either they were more nervous than they had anticipated or not as nervous as they thought they would/should be on their wedding day. It was
those who did not conform to the feeling norm of being nervous on their wedding day that talked about it the most. For example, one male respondent in talking about his wedding day said, "I thought I should have felt more nervous but I didn't" (Roy). When asked why he believed he should have felt more nervous Roy stated,

because everybody does. You hear stories of people saying, "oh man, I was so nervous. I was standing up there and I was just shaking like a leaf." But I wasn't [nervous] and I thought this is great that I'm not nervous.

Another man also recognized that his feelings did not conform to the norm of nervousness. He said, "strangely I wasn't nervous at all that day [the wedding day]" (Greg). When asked why he said strangely Greg responded in the following way.

Well you would expect, I mean, in other aspects of my life when big, important days came up often nerves...on big game days and that sort of thing I would often be quite apprehensive and worried about how I would perform. On my wedding day I woke up and I felt fine and wasn't worried at all. For some reason I knew that everything would go well. I felt confident that I was doing the right thing and that everything would go well.

Many of the interviewees who did not feel nervous on their wedding day explained their lack of emotion as an indication that they were "doing the right thing". For example, one bride explained why she believed she was not as nervous on her wedding day as she had expected to be:

I think I knew it was right and I knew my family was supporting me and my friends were supporting
me. I knew that I had done everything I could to plan it so there was nothing to worry about. I was not nervous about things going wrong in the ceremony, that gets some people uptight, because I thought if things happen they happen. [Getting married] is a life affecting thing and it's a forever kind of thing so people get really nervous about it, which makes sense, but I guess I just...because I felt like it was right, I knew it was right, then that [nervousness] was kind of taken away. (Jill)

Another example is the following excerpt from a bride:

I stood up for a girlfriend of mine a year ago and she was so nervous she was sick to her stomach the whole week before. I didn't experience any of that so I guess there was no nervousness in that I knew I was making the right decision, it's not like I was questioning it. And everything was extremely well attended to so I knew that things, except for those that are out of your control, would go off fine. (Amber)

Two other brides also explained away their lack of nervousness by stating things like, "I know this is definitely what I'm supposed to be doing, I know this is definitely the guy I'm supposed to be marrying" (Carla) or "I know I am doing the right thing" (Jill). Interestingly, when both men and women do not conform to the feeling norm they feel they have to give an explanation for why they feel (or do not feel) the way they do.

One way people identify feeling norms are by using terms like "should", "ought", "should not", "supposed to" and the like. Another indication that a feeling norm is at work is when an individual is told by others that he/she should feel a certain way or feels there is an expectation for him/her to
feel a certain way. All of these techniques were used in identifying nervousness as a feeling norm. For example, many of the respondents stated that they felt there was an expectation for them to be nervous on their wedding day from comments people would make; this is one way the norms are learned. Two brides who talked about these expectations remarked that when they told people they did not feel nervous they were not believed.

Amber, a bride who was also not nervous on her wedding day, sensed she was supposed to feel nervous from comments people would make like, "how do you feel, are you nervous yet?". She never asked herself why she did not feel nervous and when people commented on her lack of nervousness she just said she did not feel that way, did not worry about it at all, and explained it away as knowing she had made the right decision. This is an example of emotional deviance that I will discuss in more detail later in this chapter.

A male respondent also remarked that he got the sense he was supposed to feel nervous as the following excerpt exemplifies:

A lot of people came up and said, "how come you don't look nervous, you're supposed to be nervous." I also heard comments later on from my friends and family that so and so couldn't believe how calm you looked up there and that sort of thing. It seems to be an expectation that the bride and groom are both going to be totally nervous, looking like they are about ready to throw up and I felt that was an expectation. (Greg)
Greg explained away his lack of nervousness with the belief that he was doing the right thing in getting married and marrying the right person. However, he also stated that if he ever felt getting married was not the right thing to do he would call the wedding off, no matter how embarrassing it was for anyone involved. Greg perceived this as a way of alleviating the stress and pressure of getting married and this may have allowed him to feel more confident he was doing the right thing and therefore decrease his amount of nervousness.

Only one respondent (Kyle) felt he was more nervous on his wedding day than he had expected. "I didn't think I would be that nervous. Usually things like that [crowds, being the centre of attention] don't bother me, I'm not that shy, but that day they did." Kyle's feelings were out of line with what he perceived to be the feeling norm but in this case they went to the other extreme and he felt he was more nervous than the situation called for.

**Stress**

One of the norms that came to the forefront for some of the respondents when they discussed their wedding preparations was stress. A number of respondents commented that they felt they were expected to be stressed out while planning their weddings. One bride-to-be remarked,

people often say, "are things going okay, you don't seem stressed out" and the implication is
that you obviously should be or that the preparation stage should be a nightmare. People often say "you're going to get in a lot of fights planning your wedding, it's going to be a tumultuous time and your life is going to revolve around your wedding". For us it has not been that way at all. (Ashley)

Another bride-to-be also stated:

I don't feel stressed though because I feel very in control of everything that is going to happen. But I do feel like I'm being a nag. Like I'm forever doing up job descriptions for people and I just feel like nobody is listening and it makes me feel like a nag, not stressed out though. I think, do I really need to talk to the band guy? Well, yeah, because I want to talk to him about X and he never returns my calls and I'm thinking, am I just being a nervous bride, am I being a nag, am I hounding him, but I don't think so. (Karen)

One explanation for their lack of stress may be because their weddings had not yet occurred. Perhaps as their wedding drew closer they would find the preparations more stressful, especially if they had a lot of last-minute, small details to take care of. Other individuals who were engaged at the time of the interview also felt there was an expectation to be stressed about the wedding preparations and they felt that perhaps as their wedding drew closer they would become more stressed.

One bride also commented that she felt the preparations were supposed to be a stressful time and she got that expectation from books or magazines she would read, people she would talk to, and especially her mother. Jill states:

My mother was very panicky and like, "we've got to do this now and have this done by now" and so
sometimes she would make me feel...I would feel that because she was panicked or stressed I should be but I didn't let it get to me most of the time.

However, many of the respondents did find the preparations stressful but perhaps because their feelings were aligned with what they were supposed to feel--they adhered to the feeling norm--they did not feel the need to comment about it or even realize that it was a feeling norm. Often it is when we have feelings that we believe are wrong that we are more easily able to identify them as feeling norms (Hochschild, 1990:124).

**Excitement**

The other feeling norm that was revealed surrounding the wedding preparations was excitement. It seems that those respondents who did not identify stress as a feeling norm identified excitement instead. In many cases these respondents were very stressed about their wedding plans and perhaps that is why they did not identify excitement as a feeling norm. Thus, these individuals were feeling stressed, one of the feeling norms surrounding the preparations, but consequently they were not feeling excited and so excitement was the norm that they identified more easily.

For example, one bride-to-be remarked, "well you know this is supposed to be the happiest time of our life. Everybody says this is supposed to be the happiest time and I'm not feeling happy" (Karen). One bride stated, "it's your
wedding, it should be all happy and fun but there were some definite tense times" (Jill).

Happiness
One of the most dominant feeling norms surrounding weddings was happiness. People were expected to be happy at weddings, be it their own or someone else's. Of the eleven married individuals, I only interviewed one who said she was not happy on her wedding day (Susan). She stated:

I thought I was supposed to be really happy and enjoying every moment of this [my wedding day], which was not the case. I didn't enjoy a lot of it. I thought a lot of it was onerous and came with a lot of obligations. I always thought the wedding was for the couple getting married but that's not true. It's for all the people that come to have a good party, it's not for the bride. I don't think the bride ever enjoys her wedding. I didn't enjoy the fact that at the reception I was so exhausted but I still had to go around and talk to all these people and thank them for coming. It was important to me that I did that but it was just another obligation on top of so many obligations. People expect you to behave in a certain way and do certain things. I just thought, if I do this any more I'm going to fall over and pass out and people are going to step on me.

However, Susan realized she could not disobey such a dominant feeling norm and so she "put on a good face" so people would think that she was happy and having a good time. Susan was feigning how she felt and gave her guests behavioural evidence of what she wanted them to believe she was thinking and feeling so that it appeared she was following the feeling rule. Hochschild points out that in some cases,
"we may offer a tribute so generous that it actually transforms our mood and our thoughts to match what others would like to see" (1983:83). This may have occurred in this situation, for Susan goes on to say that "I wouldn't change anything about the actual wedding or reception itself. I mean it was really nice. It was a beautiful wedding and I was nervous, anxious, and exhausted, but also happy." Susan appeared happy and in doing so convinced herself she was happy.

The above excerpt is an example of how people manage deviant emotions through a technique termed "deep acting" and I will come back to this issue in more detail later. For now the point to be made is that only one of the respondents admitted to not feeling happy on her wedding day and she realized that she was breaking a powerful feeling norm and "put on a happy face" so she would not offend anyone.

Of the twelve individuals who were engaged at the time of being interviewed none of them could imagine being unhappy on their wedding day and all of them were looking forward to the day. They believed the wedding day would be one of the happiest moments of their lives and did not think it would be anti-climatic since in the end they would be married, which is what it was all about for them.
Emotional Deviance

Emotional deviance refers to incidents of socially inappropriate feelings for a certain situation. When people experience emotions that they believe do not fit with what is expected in that situation they are having an episode of emotional deviance (Hochschild, 1990:124; Thoits, 1990:181). Various situations may lead to emotional deviance. Thoits suggests four conditions under which emotional deviance may occur more frequently: (1) subcultural marginality, (2) multiple role occupancy, (3) normative and non-normative role transitions, and (4) rigid rules governing ongoing roles and ceremonial rituals (Thoits, 1990:188).

Thoits' first condition is subcultural marginality and it applies when individuals are members of two or more subcultural worlds (1990:188). Emotional deviance may occur more often in this situation, especially when the two subcultural worlds have contradictory feeling norms. For example, married couples who "swing" and yet occasionally have feelings of jealousy exhibit an instance of contradictory feeling norms that may lead to emotional deviance (Thoits, 1990:188). To the best of my knowledge none of my respondents were members of a subcultural group, therefore this condition would not apply to my research.

Second, multiple role occupancy can be defined as "when a person holds multiple roles that have mutually contradictory
feeling expectations" and emotional deviance may occur more frequently here (Thoits, 1990:188). Brides who are both a participant and manager or co-ordinator of their wedding are an example of multiple role occupancy that can lead to emotional deviance. As a participant the bride is supposed to smile, relax, and enjoy her wedding day. However, as a co-ordinator relaxing and enjoying the occasion would be unprofessional and virtually impossible. Thus, the multiple roles the bride has to hold may lead to emotional deviance. As Thoits explains,

marginal individuals and individuals holding multiple roles are aware of norms that legitimate their feelings in one role or subcultural context but may view those feelings as deviant from the perspective of another (Thoits, 1990:188).

Third, according to Thoits, normative role transitions may precipitate incidents of emotional deviance because while the appropriate feeling norms surrounding such transitions are well known, the specific conditions of the individual’s change in role may produce feelings that depart from those norms (Thoits, 1990:188). That is, the experience may not fit the clear normative ideals surrounding the event (Thoits, 1990:189). An example of how a normative role transition may lead to emotional deviance is given by one woman. Joan states:

I was angry at my husband’s parents for trying to tell us who to have in our wedding party. I felt like I was right [to be angry] but at the same time I felt like a bit of a cow and maybe I felt a little bit selfish or something—that it was just
me, me, me, my way. I think I felt a bit selfish but I still felt that I was justified in saying it. When I say something to somebody I always feel like I'm being a bit of a cow in saying it to them and how I say it and oh, this isn't the right way, but I feel that I'm justified in saying it.

Joan has never been a bride before. She senses that being angry is not really an appropriate emotion to be experiencing even though she feels justified in being angry (since her husband's parents are interfering). She is not experiencing an extreme case of emotional deviance but by making statements like "I felt like a bit of a cow" she is expressing some guilt; an indication that her feelings are not appropriate for the normative role of the bride (as she defines it). Other examples of normative role transitions and emotional deviance are explored later in this section.

Finally, rigid rules governing ongoing roles and ceremonial rituals may lead to more reports of emotional deviance since feeling norms are especially strong on these occasions (Thoits, 1990:189). Weddings are ceremonial rituals and as such they have rigid rules governing the appropriate roles and ceremonial rituals associated with them. Since feeling norms are especially strong in these situations people quickly recognize when their feelings do not fit the situation and usually take steps to correct their feelings through emotion management (Thoits, 1990:189).
As I have shown previously, one powerful feeling norm surrounding weddings is that people are to be happy. Other feeling norms are that the bride and groom are to be nervous on their wedding day and they should either be excited or stressed with all of the planning. However, many people have feelings that do not conform to the societal expectations and these are instances of emotional deviance.

Many of the people I interviewed gave accounts of times they did not feel happy, either while preparing for their wedding or attending someone else's wedding and these are examples of the rigid rules governing ceremonial rituals. For example, when I asked one male what the main emotion was he experienced at someone else's wedding his reply was not happiness. He replied as follows:

truth be known, if I wanted to be really honest, I would say jealousy. I didn't like weddings because it was something that I wanted and didn't have. I would say that I was a little bitter towards other weddings. (Roy)

A female respondent had the following to say about preparing for her wedding. Her comments give another example of the rigid rules governing weddings. She says,

I was angry at my husband a couple of times....the week before the wedding he went on a little bachelor fishing trip with a friend of his, which is something that I really wanted him to do, but, you know, here he was fishing and here I was planning, so that kind of angered me. It was just really frustrating trying to get stuff done and I never wanted to be one of those brides that ordered people around and insisted that they did that and this. I tried not to do that but I found
very quickly that if you didn't do that then it
wasn't going to get done, so... It was just
awful. It wasn't a fun thing [the preparations].
Several times I wondered even why we were doing
this. I just wanted to pack it all in and elope
but I didn't because it would have killed my
family and my husband's family. (Susan)

Susan attributes strong feelings to the respective family
members and this makes her conform when she's in doubt about
having the wedding at all.

Other respondents reported experiencing emotional
device on their wedding day surrounding the feeling norm of
nervousness. I have examined this norm in detail previously
but here are a few examples of emotional deviance and the
rigid rules governing weddings. Connie said,

everyone asks, 'are you getting nervous yet', so I
think I should be. You hear stories about people
fainting and crying and being really emotional. I
was a bit surprised I wasn't crying. I found it
strange that I wasn't nervous, I was expecting to
be nervous but I wasn't uncomfortable that I
didn't feel that way. I just decided that it must
have been right because I wasn't nervous about it.

For Connie not being nervous was okay. She realized that she
was not conforming to the norm but she was comfortable with
that. This did not nullify the emotional deviance. It is
just an example of how some people have different comfort
levels with emotional deviance and I will come back to this
issue later.
Another bride who did not feel nervous on her wedding day responded in the following way when asked what she did when she did not feel nervous.

It concerned me. I thought maybe I'm not taking this seriously enough or maybe I'm not really ready for this. I didn't really do anything about it though. I felt inside like I knew it was okay and it was time but you kind of start to think about it and have second thoughts and think maybe we're rushing into it, or you know... (Jill)

The above excerpt is an example of emotional deviance but it is not an extreme example because Jill is comfortable with her inappropriate feelings; she does not do anything about her feelings of emotional deviance, she is not really troubled with feeling the way she does and is able to ignore the rigid rules governing the wedding and how she is supposed to feel.

As stated earlier, emotional deviance may also occur when individuals are going through a normative role transition such as moving from being single to being married (being a groom or bride) for the first time. Individuals who have never been married before may experience emotional deviance because they are only aware of the emotional ideals associated with weddings (Thoits, 1990:188). For example, one female respondent had this to say about her wedding night.

I had these ideas that my hair was still going to be beautiful and I was going to be fresh smelling and not sweaty and hot and mad or uptight and not tired. So when we got to our accommodations the first thing I wanted to do was have a shower. We were going to shower together but I had all this makeup on and I felt gross. So, it was like turn around, don't look at me, I'm going to take this
off, run into the shower, wash my face, and then I'll let you come in. The low point was not feeling very beautiful and you think your wedding night is going to be a certain way and then you're telling him not to look at you and you feel so gross and greasy and dirty. (Joan)

Joan experienced emotional deviance because her wedding night did not live up to the ideals she had about it. Another bride, Susan, had ideals surrounding the wedding preparations and when they were not realized she experienced emotional deviance. She stated:

getting engaged was the wonderful, romantic, idealistic stage. It was great. I was very excited and very happy. I was at that point really looking forward to planning this lovely, beautiful wedding and isn't this going to be fun. But when I started planning it, it was awful. I hated every minute of it. It was very stressful and very frustrating.

One bride-to-be I interviewed explained how she was not enjoying planning her wedding at all. She states, "I really don't want it [the wedding]. Some days I think about it and I think it's just too much. But it has to be done and probably the day of the wedding I'll enjoy myself and if we cancelled it we'd regret it" (Nancy). The feeling norm surrounding weddings states that she should be excited or stressed during the preparation stage. Nancy is not experiencing these emotions; rather she feels unhappy and not satisfied with how things are going. There is another norm affecting her that states if she does not have the wedding she will regret it in the future. Nancy attributes feelings (regret) to herself (in
the future) and ties it to the issue of feelings of guilt and doubt and this prompts conformity to having the wedding.

Emotional deviance is not always a negative thing. For example, Jill felt that she would be more nervous than she was. She said, "right before the wedding I was in a little room with my bridesmaids and we were just running around the room chasing each other and goofing off and here I thought I'd be sitting there sweating." Jill was more relaxed than she thought she would be, so her emotions did not conform to the feeling norm, therefore she did experience emotional deviance, but it was not a negative experience.

Comfort Levels
As I mentioned previously, some individuals are more comfortable with emotional deviance than others (Hochschild, 1990:124). Some people are quick to recognize an inappropriate feeling and agonize over how to correct it while others can accept long periods of emotional deviance (Hochschild, 1990:124). One male participant did not feel nervous on his wedding day and when asked if he found that odd he replied, "at times, yeah. I thought, why am I so relaxed, I'm supposed to be something else" (Roy). The arrival of his best friend caused him to get a bit emotional and that alleviated his sense of emotional deviance somewhat.

Susan, the bride I interviewed who was constantly stressed over her wedding preparations and was unhappy the
entire time, remarked that she was uncomfortable being unhappy and angry during that time; Susan could not tolerate deviant feelings for very long. She managed her emotions by talking to people. She stated:

I went and talked to my doctor, she's a really good family doctor who would just sit and listen to me vent for an hour. It was good talking to a totally neutral person who would say, "calm down". I'd just vent.

Other individuals I interviewed also stated that they felt uncomfortable being angry or unhappy while planning their weddings. Again, this indicates that they were not comfortable with emotions that deviated from the feeling norms surrounding weddings.

However, most of the respondents were not bothered by feelings of anger or unhappiness; they were able to tolerate long periods of emotional deviance. This may have been because the incidents occurred during the planning stage and not on their wedding day. Perhaps they had more leeway to feel unhappy because the process takes months; they are not expected to be happy all of the time.

Lapses and Departures

Those who were unhappy or angry on their wedding day did not let it ruin their day. They were able to tolerate temporary deviations because almost any feeling norm makes room for "lapses and departures" (Hochschild, 1983:61). Joan talks about how she was annoyed on her wedding day because
some people came to the wedding that were not invited. She talks about how she managed her annoyance so that she was able to continue having a good time and not let it ruin her day.

I didn't really say anything. I think I might have mentioned something to my husband like, you just don't show up when you're not invited. Or I might have said something to the bridesmaids just to get it out. But I never went to talk to the uninvited guest or anything, you just kind of ignore it. I think I spoke to my maid of honour and said, "what are they doing here, it's so rude"...But it was still a fun time. (Joan)

Another example of a "lapse and departure" is exemplified in the following excerpt reported by one groom.

My mom was late [for the reception] so that kind of annoyed me but I'm used to it. I got a little pressure from my wife's family because they are very time conscious and that bothered me but I told them, "look, it bothers me too but that's my mom and I don't want to let it ruin my day". But it still did bother me. When she got there I was like, "what could be so important that you're late", but it wasn't a big deal. I got over it. She knows how I feel so I just decided not to depend on her. We were actually going to start and if she had not been there she would have missed some stuff. (Rob)

Again, the groom in this case did not let his temporary feelings of anger spoil his day and he was able to do this because lapses and departures from the feeling norm are allowed.

A third example is given by the following female participant:

I went to get my hair done and I came back to the house and I was supposed to meet my Mom and sister at the house so they could help me get ready. I had to be at the church by one because the wedding
was at two and by twelve, quarter after, twenty after, nobody was there. I still didn't have my makeup on because I don't wear makeup and so I don't know how to do it and I didn't have anyone to help me into my bustier or dress, so I was in a panic then. I thought, "great, isn't this the typical thing, before you go to the wedding your Mom and sister are supposed to fluff over you and the whole thing, and well, no one is here to fluff over me." I was panicked and then got a little pissed off and then I went, well, just forget it, I'm going to do it. And I went and put my makeup on. I couldn't get dressed though because I needed help with that. Then they got there and explained that they were going to get me dressed at the church to ensure that I didn't get mud all over my dress. So we hopped in the van and went to the church and then it was fine. I had a whole bathroom full of women fluffing over me and I thought, "okay, this is fine, I can handle this, never mind that they weren't there for twenty minutes, I can handle all the women fluffing". So it worked out better. (Carla)

Carla was angry on her wedding day but it was temporary. She was able to enjoy her day because she could tolerate a short deviation from the feeling norm.

**Emotion Management**

Individuals want to receive social approval from others; therefore, they try to manage their emotions so they conform to the feeling norms of their society (Thoits, 1990:197). According to Gordon, we manage our feelings by deliberately presenting emotions that are different from our inner feelings or by presenting a neutral expression (Gordon, 1990:163). Hochschild states that we control our emotions through "emotion work"--the act of trying to change in type or intensity an emotion or feeling (Hochschild, 1979:561).
Individuals do emotion work or manage their feelings because they want to impart a certain impression of themselves to a social audience. People also *evoke* or *suppress* their feelings (do emotion work) in order to adhere to the feeling norms of their society in a given circumstance (Gordon, 1990:163; Hochschild, 1979:563). Whatever the reason for managing the emotions though, it is done in response to feelings of deviance or non-conformity. Individuals manage their feelings because they want to conform or fit in.

The comments of one bride I interviewed exemplify how individuals manage their emotions. While preparing for her wedding Jill would argue with her mom or fiancé about something to do with the wedding and she remembers feeling uncomfortable that she was angry. She commented that she was uncomfortable with those feelings because "you think, it's your wedding, it should be happy and fun, but there were some definite tense times". Jill managed her feelings of discomfort by looking at the whole picture and realizing the problem was "not that big of a deal" or by compromising with whoever she was having the problem with. She realized that her feelings of anger did not correspond with the feeling norm surrounding wedding preparations--they were supposed to be a fun, happy, exciting time. Therefore, Jill quickly took steps to resolve the issue so she was no longer angry--she was doing emotion work.
Another woman I interviewed also engaged in emotion work. For Donna getting engaged was a time of conflicting emotions. She was excited (the appropriate emotion according to the feeling norm) but she was also angry with her fiancé for taking so long to propose. She states:

I was really excited but on the other hand I was thinking, why the hell did it take you so long, I was a little miffed. I thought, you know, you could have done this a couple of years ago, I mean I wanted to get married before I was thirty.

Donna had to work through her feelings of anger and after doing so she was able to be excited about her engagement.

Donna also had to engage in emotion work over her engagement ring. Her fiancé had the ring made for her but it was not what she would have picked out for various stylistic reasons. Thus, she was struggling with whether she liked it and she also felt she had missed out on part of the process of getting engaged because she had wanted to go and look at rings. Donna said,

the ring has been an on and off thing. Are we going to melt it down and re-do it or not and it's very difficult because it is very symbolic. I wanted to go out and pick out my ring so I thought that part of the process of getting engaged was taken away. But I felt guilty that I felt that way because he took the initiative to do something really wonderful and surprise me, yet I felt that I missed that. So, I don't know quite where I am at with that, I feel like a bad kid, ungrateful, so I think I've resigned myself to keeping the ring and getting wide wedding bands.
She realizes that she should be excited during her engagement and that she should be happy her fiancé had the ring made, that he considers her so special and unique. Donna experiences an episode of emotional deviance and manages her feelings (by planning what the wedding bands will look like) so she ends up resigned with the ring and her emotions are made more appropriate for the situation.

According to Hochschild, it is usually when a person's feelings do not fit the situation--when they experience emotional deviance--that they engage in emotion work (1983:43). The person senses this lack of fit as a problem and turns his/her attention inward and asks whether or not he/she should be acting and tries to make their emotions come back in line with the prescribed ones for the situation (Hochschild, 1979: 563; 1983:43). This is when individuals are most likely to manage their emotions and they do this either through surface acting or deep acting.

**Surface Acting**

In order to manage our feelings we all engage in a certain amount of acting. Surface acting involves concealing what we feel, or pretending to feel what we do not in order to appear as though we are following a prescribed feeling norm (Hochschild, 1983:33). Unlike Goffman, Hochschild believes individuals do deceive others about how they really feel. Individuals can and do intentionally change their outward
expression of emotion in order to change how they feel (Gordon, 1990:163; Hochschild, 1983:33-35; 1990:121). Hochschild appears to believe that individuals engage in deliberate feigning quite often (Hochschild, 1983:33) whereas Goffman argues that such feigning is rare and is usually not deliberate (Goffman, 1959:6, 35).

One woman I interviewed engaged in surface acting at a wedding she was attending. Karen was a bridesmaid but she was not happy at the wedding because she felt the bride had been treating her badly in the months preceding the wedding and there was tension between the two of them. However, since she was a bridesmaid she felt it was expected of her to be happy; therefore she made herself appear happy. Karen states, "I told myself I had to be happy because everyone was watching me, watching the wedding party and I had to be happy, happy, happy." She appeared happy to everyone else but that did not make her happier. This is an example of surface acting because Karen pretended to be happy in order to adhere to the feeling norm that weddings are supposed to be a happy occasion.

Other respondents explained how at some weddings they felt they were not happy enough because they thought the couple getting married was not right for each other or were not good together. However, they pretended to be happy but
this did not make them more happy; it was just a front. For example, Janelle stated:

I've been to weddings where the situation was I wasn't very happy because I knew what was going on between the couple--he was very jealous. I faked it, it wasn't a good feeling. I was always smiling, said congratulations so no one caught on that I was faking it.

Another female interviewee, Nancy, remarked:

I went to a cousin's wedding and he's younger than me and he just had a little girl and I kept thinking he's too young to get married and so that's why I wasn't very happy. In the back of my mind I thought they were doing the wrong thing.

Again, she never let on how she was feeling and just put a smile on her face and acted like she was happy.

Another example is the following:

I was maybe not happy enough at my brother's wedding. I was too into myself at the time, I couldn't deal with it. I was in a rebellious stage, I was really frustrated. Instead of coming to his wedding in a more celebratory mood I was coming in there with a more critical eye--picking apart stuff. So I think I was less than happy but I didn't come across as being unhappy. (Brian)

Again, Brian engaged in surface acting by pretending to be happy.

Joan remembers feeling not happy enough at a wedding because she did not have enough money to buy a new outfit. She was unhappy with the way she looked and was concerned about whether her boyfriend at the time found her attractive. However, Joan kept up the facade of being happy at the wedding. "I just went through the day feeling ugly and hating
what I was wearing and stuff but just not letting anybody know, still smiling and stuff."

Quite a few of the interviewees said they felt they were not happy enough at a wedding when they did not know the couple that well. One woman tried to convince herself to be more happy with the following technique:

just thinking that this was supposed to be a happy occasion and I should be happy for these people. A lot of the times it was people I didn't know that much or it was just a really dull wedding and I'd get kind of critical of the actual ceremony. I wasn't able to convince myself to be happier though. (Jill)

However, other individuals were okay with feeling they were not happy enough at these weddings because they did not know the people that well. As Darryl explained, when he is not close to the couple being married he cannot share in what they are feeling and he feels ambivalent and perhaps not happy enough but he is okay with that.

**Deep Acting**

Deep acting goes beyond surface acting. In deep acting the actor does not pretend to feel but actually convinces him/herself that he/she feels that way. The individual expresses a genuine feeling that has been self-provoked (Hochschild, 1983:35). The individual may deceive oneself as much as he/she deceives others. Deep acting has an advantage over surface acting in its ability to convince—even the actor
him/herself comes to believe the feeling is authentic (Hochschild, 1983:33).

One example of deep acting is evident in the following excerpt:

I've been to a few weddings where I wonder why the couple is bothering to get married. It's their decision and they are going to have to live with it but I felt I was not happy enough at the wedding. I appeared to be happy and congratulated them. I tried to keep myself in a light mood, I didn't seem to be bothered by it or anything and that seemed to work in making me happier. (Kyle)

Here Kyle appears to be initially detached and cynical but eventually makes himself happy by deep acting--convincing himself to be happy.

A female respondent engaged in deep acting in the following situation. She felt unhappy at a wedding because a good friend of hers was getting married and she felt like she was losing a friend. "I just tried to forget about that [losing the friend] and concentrated on telling myself to be happy and smiling" (Ashley). By the end of the night Ashley was happy--she had convinced herself to be happy through deep acting. These individuals had used deep acting in the course of trying to feel what they sensed they ought to feel or wanted to feel--happy at the wedding (Hochschild, 1983:43).
**Other Management Techniques**

Other techniques that the respondents mentioned using for managing their emotions were talking, making lists, compromising, fighting, and contemplating eloping.

Many of the respondents indicated that when they felt unhappy, frustrated, angry, and/or stressed they would talk with their mate, friends, or family about the issue and work it out. For a great number of the respondents talking really helped them to work through their feelings of unhappiness and arrive at a state of happiness and harmony again. For instance, Darryl states, “we discuss it [the problem] every time and eventually it helps alleviate those feelings of unhappiness.” Other individuals state very similar sentiments as the one just described.

Some people who started to feel overwhelmed by all of the preparations made lists as a technique for managing their feelings. Karen states, “to make it [the preparations] less overwhelming what I find is calming for me is to commit everything to writing.” For Donna it was “just...making our lists of the baby steps--this weekend we will go and see three more hotels, this weekend we will do this, by a certain date we will have our reception site, etc.” that helped her relieve some of the stress over the preparations.

Other individuals would make compromises so their emotions adhered to what was expected--that they were happy.
For example, Kyle had this to say about his wedding preparations: "there were some times when we were not agreeing on the same things and we'd compromise so we were both happy." Josh explained why he compromised. He states:

I realize that we have two different perspectives, that we're not going to change our perspectives and I realize that we have to make sacrifices and we have to compromise. I have to remind myself of that a lot, knowing that things are important to you but some things are more important than others. So kind of trying to prioritize those and communicating to my fiancee what's very important to me, what's not so important, what we'll change; it's a matter of compromising.

By being aware of the importance of compromising Josh was able to work through the times he was unhappy and manage his emotions so they were appropriate to the situation--he was happy he was getting married.

Fighting was another technique some respondents used for managing their emotions. For instance, Karen explains that she dealt with the stress she was experiencing over planning the wedding by fighting with her fiancé. She states, "I just got really, really upset and accused my fiance of leaving all this [the preparations] to me and we fought. Fought and screamed and cried. It wasn't very good but we always worked it out." Joan dealt with her stress by complaining to her mate, voicing her opinion and fighting over the issue. It helped her to alleviate her stress and the issue was eventually resolved.
For those individuals who were really pushed to the limit and felt they could not cope with all of the stress for much longer thinking about eloping helped to calm them down. For instance, Susan explains, "several times I wanted to pack it in and elope, but I didn’t because it would have killed my family and my fiancee’s family. I mean they just would have been devastated, they would have lost it.” Josh states, “a number of times I thought I should have called my parents, called my fiancee’s parents and we should have all gone somewhere to get married. One wedding finished, over and done with.”

Another bride, Carla, said that they too contemplated eloping when the pressure from her fiancé’s family to do things a certain way got to be too much. It got to the point where things were so tense that the bride and groom contemplated eloping without their parents. However, they didn’t elope for the same reason as the other individuals: weddings are for families. Carla explains it in the following way:

we didn’t [elope] because it was important for us to have our family and those that cared about us to stand up and say at the wedding that they would support us. If we were to go away we wouldn’t have those people standing up and saying they were going to commit to us.
Balancing The Ritual And The Unique

Weddings are rituals and as such they have certain required elements—a bride, a groom, a marriage ceremony, and the like. The social beliefs and practices of a culture dictate what the wedding should be like. However, it is becoming equally important for many brides and grooms in middle-class, Western culture to have a wedding that is unique and reflects their personal tastes and beliefs in some way. Thus, many people are caught in the bind of trying to balance the ritual and the unique.

When an individual tries to assert his/her beliefs and wants against the goals of the culture, he or she is attempting to strike a balance between the ritual and the unique. It is often difficult to do this because social beliefs and practices cannot be modified by an act of will. Producing change in a society requires strenuous effort due to the resistance it meets and it cannot always be overcome (Durkheim, 1985:74). The community or society tries to constrain individuals through "social facts" that assert themselves as soon as an individual tries to resist them (Durkheim, 1985:66, 68).

Social facts are "ways of acting or thinking, recognizable by the distinguishing characteristic that they are capable of exercising a coercive influence over individual's consciousness" (Durkheim, 1985:66). People obey
the social facts or beliefs and practices of their culture because they have a moral force and modifying them is very difficult. People are forced to acknowledge them and changing them is very hard since they share in the "material and moral supremacy that society exercises over its members" (Durkheim, 1985:67).

The following excerpts reveal the importance of the community in weddings. As one male respondent exclaimed, "I believe that the wedding is not really for you anyway, it's for your friends and family" (Ken). Another male respondent expressed basically the same opinion except he found it frustrating that "it's more a wedding for everyone else than for my fiancee and me" (Darryl). A female participant also realized that the community had an important role to play in her wedding but she was not very happy with having to take a back seat to the wants of the community. Nancy states:

This wedding isn't just for my fiance and me. I'm the only daughter so it is a big wedding for my side of the family and it's the first wedding in my family so it's a big deal. I sometimes think this [the wedding] isn't even for us any more and I wonder what does this day mean. Inviting somebody who was friends with my parents for years means nothing to me if they don't know me or if I don't know them, so you're inviting your parents friends and not yours. So finally I said, "I'm inviting my friends". That's probably the reason why the wedding got so big, because we sat down with our parents first and they told us who they'd like to invite and there were some friends of ours that we didn't so I invited them afterwards because I thought, it is my wedding.
Nancy tried to assert her wants for the day by finally inviting her friends but this only increased the size of the wedding which is one of the things she was unhappy about in the first place--she felt her wedding was too large. She realizes that her wants were secondary to the wants of her parents and to her larger extended family or the community but she is still quite bitter about it.

Often individuals would include certain elements in their wedding such as the cake cutting, throwing the bouquet, and throwing the garter because of societal expectations or “social facts”. As Amber states,

we did the cake cutting, so we did some of the formalities that people expect. Bouquet and garter we did but there wasn't much thought put into them. It was just kind of everyone else seems to expect it so we just went ahead and did it.

Kyle expressed a similar opinion:

we had a cake cutting ceremony. It wasn't important to us but we did it because it was just kind of expected. It's a tradition passed down, you're supposed to do it. I don't really understand the meaning behind it, but...

Roy, in discussing why they had the cake cutting ceremony, realizes that his guests had expectations about what should be included in his wedding celebration and he adhered to these community wants to a certain degree. He states:

we had a cake cutting ceremony but it was really elemental, we could have cared less. We did it because people like to have pictures of you cutting the cake. It was more a let's do it for the consideration of those people who want to have that; it wasn't really for us.
Parents also place a great deal of pressure on their children to adhere to the social norms in planning their wedding. In explaining why she decided to have a receiving line Jill illustrates how parents can pressure their children. She states:

we had a receiving line because it was important to my Mother to have it, (sighs). We wanted to be in contact with our guests but we had other ideas of how to do it, like give the people their cake when they came through but that was just important to do it the traditional way to my Mom, so...

Another bride also talks about the wants and expectations of her family, specifically her Dad. She included many traditional elements in her wedding—the formal sit-down dinner, a traditional wedding party, etc.—but she did not want those traditional aspects. She included them for the following reasons:

I had them because I'm the oldest child and the oldest daughter and I was the first one to get married and my Dad really wanted a big thing. It wasn't that I didn't want it, but I hadn't really decided what I wanted at that point so I thought well if that's what he wants, I'll do it. I wanted to wear a white dress but I wanted more of a cocktail dress and more informal, but it just ended up that he preferred a more formal thing and he was paying the bill, so, that's what I had...(laughs). (Susan)

Susan modified her wishes to accommodate her father's, even though doing so did not simplify things for her, it actually caused her more stress in the long run.
A male participant also talks about family expectations and how it is difficult to try and accommodate their wishes and still have a wedding that reflects who you are. He states:

There were expectations from our parents, there's no doubt in my mind. I know that my mother wanted a traditional wedding for her last child and this was my wife's parents first child so of course they had some expectations too. So we chose to consider all of those people and all those people had the same expectations, whether through conditioning or whatever. So, we chose to satisfy everyone's need for that type of tradition but there were a few things that we did that were really untraditional too. (Roy)

It was by including the untraditional that Roy was able to make his wedding unique and ensure that it reflected his personality.

Even though it is such a struggle to try and balance the ritual with the unique, nineteen of the twenty-three individuals I interviewed strove to make their wedding unique in some way. They did this in various ways. For some it was the decorations they had; for others it was the location or time of the wedding and reception. Still others made their wedding unique through their attendants--by having men and women on each side. The colours, the music, the vows, the photographer, and the theme of the wedding were all used to make the wedding unique and to reflect the personality of the couple involved. Whatever the technique, the result was the
same--the respondents believed that their wedding was unique in some way.

It was very important for these individuals to have a wedding that was different in some respect--however small--from other weddings they had been to and that reflected who they were in some way. Many of the respondents expressed the following sentiment, "when people were sitting there watching us I wanted them to say, 'yes, this is them'. I wanted it tailor-made, customized to reflect who we are". Others stated something along the following lines:

"it was important to me to be unique because traditional weddings didn't appeal to me. There are a lot of things [in traditional weddings] that didn't say much about me as a person, whereas the changes that we've made reflect more of what we are."

A paradox occurs here in that these individuals still want the community to validate what they are doing (only now it is their uniqueness they want validated). In order to be really unique these people would have just dispensed with the whole notion of getting married in front of their community (or getting married at all).

Joan had the following to say about why it was important to make her wedding unique in some way.

"Because I wanted to have my own ideas and I didn't want to copy anybody else and I didn't want to be pressured by family or friends... It's our day, we wanted to do it our way. We didn't want to be controlled and we wanted to make sure that we didn't have any regrets afterwards."
Joan states that she did not want to be controlled and it was her day. To a certain extent this may be true, however, she fails to recognize that the community does control her and what her day will be like to some extent. Perhaps Joan is a "victim of an illusion, which makes us believe that we ourselves have produced what was imposed on us from outside" (Durkheim, 1985:68).

Two individuals I interviewed recognized the balancing act they were performing. One male respondent stated, "we've tried to make it as unique as we can" (Chad). Donna had the following to say:

It can be hard to have a unique wedding. I mean you're going to have a bride and a groom and some attendants and family and flowers and tissues, you know, the whole bit, so I wanted something that was unique but not getting married in grass skirts or anything, that was too far.

These individuals realized that while they wanted to have a unique wedding it is hard to do because a wedding is after all a ritual and as such it comes with certain required events, ceremonies, and participants. However, the requirements are not as strict as they were in the past. Couples are now allowed and even encouraged to select their wedding customs based on their personalities and taste (Currie, 1993:418). As Karen states,

we can hang on to the traditions we like and scrap the ones we don't like. We're going to cut the cake together because we both like the symbolism of that--we're breaking bread together as husband and wife for the first time and we like that.
Thus, social facts can be changed even though the process is long and difficult. For change to occur several individuals have to come together; one individual does not have the power to change things. Change is also more likely to occur in a society characterized by organic solidarity\textsuperscript{2} rather than mechanical solidarity\textsuperscript{3} because there is more room for expressing individuality in an organic society. The force of the collective conscience becomes weaker and more abstract in organic society so the whole is more permeable and change can occur, although it is a slow process (Durkheim, 1984).

Out of the twenty-three individuals I interviewed only four stated that they were not trying to make their wedding unique in some way. They stated that making it unique was not really important to them and one individual explained that, "for me, I wasn't trying to be different, I was just wanting to get married" (Donald). For these individuals there was no need to strike a balance between the ritual and the unique;

\textsuperscript{2} Organic solidarity occurs in more specialized and differentiated societies. The division of labour is what keeps the society together and differences are celebrated because of the function they perform (Durkheim, 1984:85).

\textsuperscript{3} Mechanical solidarity occurs in small societies and in societies based on similarities (Durkheim, 1984:60). The society is held together by its similarities and emphasis is placed on the collective conscience. There is little individuality in a society characterized by mechanical solidarity; to allow for any would result in the breakdown of solidarity and thus the demise of the society, therefore, any deviance is harshly and precisely quashed through repressive sanctions (Durkheim, 1984:61, 84).
the ritual was just fine the way it was. Actually, all of the respondents were still doing what the community expected of them—they were getting married in public to a member of the opposite gender—and the majority of them included the required elements for a wedding. It was after they met the community expectations that they then included the unique. Yet the individuals in question still wanted and/or needed the unique elements of their wedding to be sanctioned and validated by the community, further testament to the strength and importance of the latter.

Gender
With respect to analyzing gender and the role it has in the sociology of emotions, two types of division of labour can be identified—activities and feelings. The division of labour surrounding activities governs what each individual does—the type of work they should do, the decisions they can make, etc. The division of labour surrounding feelings governs how an individual should feel and the emotions they should express.

The Gendered Division of Labour: Activities
The traditional division of labour separates activities on the basis of gender. There are activities that are culturally defined as appropriate for women (housework, childrearing, shopping, etc.) and activities that are defined as appropriate for men (major decision-making, mowing the
lawn, "breadwinning", etc.). Thus, in the case of weddings, females might be expected to be involved in doing all of the work associated with weddings, the "leg work", and make the smaller, less important decisions such as what the colours should be. The male, if the traditional division of labour is followed, reserves the right to veto any decisions and makes the important decisions that the woman then carries out. The division of labour for domestic issues follow this same separation--women are left with the implementation of household decisions and the male retains his right to veto specific procedures (Szinovacz, 1987:653). A few of the individuals in my study followed the traditional division of labour in which the male is the major decision-maker, as the following excerpts exemplify.

As far as discussing how things are going to go, that's equal. I don't make a decision without making sure that my fiancé agrees to it. (Audrey)

I can make decisions about the wedding and then my fiancée will carry them out. I have some say. I have a lot of say actually. I've been treated very good actually, I've been treated like a king. (Ken)

Most of the physical preparations probably were done by my wife, most of the decision-making was probably done by me. (Roy)

Thus, often the groom has the right to veto any decisions surrounding the wedding plans (Currie, 1993:415). Traditionally it was the husband who assumed the decision-
maker role and had more power and influence in the marriage (Doyle, 1983:269; Franklin, 1984:107). Although this phenomenon is changing the above excerpts reveal that it has not vanished.

In most of the cases I studied the female did the majority of the activity-work in preparing for the wedding and the male "helped out" to a lesser extent, which reflects the traditional division of labour for domestic relations—the female is responsible for most of the household tasks and the male helps out (Blood and Wolfe, 1960:63; Lash-Hesselbart, 1987:539-541; Szinovacz, 1987:681). As Jill states, "I would say my Mom and I have done most of the preparations. My husband just helped out with major decisions that had to be made but he didn't help out with a lot of the detail kind of things." Nancy had the following to say:

there are two kinds of preparations: there's the big ones—getting the florist, getting the DJ—and then there's the little things. And I think I've done most of the little things. I've been more just taking care of details but my fiancé has helped—he's gone with me to the photographer and stuff.

One groom-to-be made the following comment:

I'd say she [my fiancée] has taken a lead in the preparations and we've been involved together in most of them. She definitely consulted with me before we made any decisions. We went and picked out the invitations together, this is the best example. She found the place, she found out when they were open, but we went there together. We chose it together, after we chose them then I typed up what we wanted the script to be but she brought it down, she dealt with the lady, she
picked them up afterwards. So she did most of the leg work even though we were both involved. (Josh)

For most of the respondents how the labour was divided and who did most of the preparations was not a problem area. The following examples reveal individuals who were satisfied with how the work was divided up. As Kyle states,

My wife did most of the preparations because she's more organized than I am. I don't wish I had been more involved, I did my part. I made sure I looked after what had to be done. I wanted to be involved.

Kyle wanted to be somewhat involved, but only on his terms. He would look after what was important ("what had to be done") and the implication is that what his wife did was trivial or at least not as important as what he was doing. She looked after what did not have to be done while he looked after what had to be done. Kyle's statement is reminiscent of the old "I can't cook and clean as well as my wife can" argument used to explain why the wife does the majority of housework in a home, even if she has paid employment.

One female participant also expresses her satisfaction with the traditional division of labour surrounding her wedding preparations. Janelle remarks,

When I was nannying I had access to a phone so I did a lot of the phone calling and setting things up and now that I'm unemployed I have time during the day to do stuff. I haven't done a lot. My fiancé thinks I've done a whole lot, but really I haven't. We've made decisions together, so just because I made a few phone calls doesn't mean I've done a lot of work. (female)
It was often the case that the work would be divided on the basis of who was the most interested in doing it. Brinkerhoff and Lupri also found that primary interest could determine who would make the decisions (1992: 224-226). As Joan stated, "I did most of the preparations because that's what I like to do. I think I just kind of took charge and I would tell my husband things here and there and he'd be like, 'yeah'." Audrey had the following to say:

I've done more of the doing. I work out of the home so I can call around and do stuff all day. As far as decorations and stuff, I want to do that and certain things I want to have and I don't think my fiancé cares about doing crafts whereas I enjoy that.

However, keep in mind that according to the traditional division of labour women are supposed to be more interested in their wedding; it is considered a feminine interest (Brinkerhoff and Lupri, 1989:224)

Two other women did the preparations because they wanted things done a certain way. As Connie remarks,

I did most of the preparations because I like things done my way. I'm very independent and I wanted to do it myself. My husband helped some. I didn't want him more involved or less involved. It was his day too so I wanted his opinion.

Amber was so definite on what she wanted that her husband was excluded from the process all together. She said:

I did all of the wedding preparations. My husband did not help at all--he showed up. But that was fine because I was so defined on what I wanted and the odd input that he tried to give me I pretty
much said, "no"; so he pretty much said, "you do your thing." So it was fair, so that was fine.

It's interesting to point out that in each of the above examples it is the woman who is doing the work, although she claims to enjoy doing it in each case and in some cases may even be striving to protect her turf (parallel to the "get out of 'my' kitchen" ideology).

One couple claimed that they reversed the roles of the traditional division of labour. In this case Karen was the decision-maker and the male did all of the "leg-work". They came to this arrangement as a compromise since neither one of them wanted to plan the wedding. Karen states,

it took a long time for us to establish the parameters of who was going to do what and he knew from the beginning that I didn't want this big wedding and we were having it anyway and here he was leaving me to do everything. One day he made the comment, "that's what women do and women like that kind of thing, don't they?". And I said, NO, I don't particularly enjoy it. I have a high pressure job and I don't really have time or the desire to be phoning round and doing all of this stuff. And he made it clear that he didn't want to do it either. Great, so neither one of us wants to do it so let's run away. "Well no," he'd say, "I want to have a big wedding." Well then, you have to do half and half. I would give him things to do and he would be totally inept....Now we have a good understanding. I do everything and I reserve the practical things for him to do--pick things up, deliver things--and that works.

The above excerpt is very interesting because Karen states at the beginning that she does not want to plan her wedding at all, then she says the work should be divided
equally between herself and her fiancé, and then she ends up doing all of the work herself (because her fiancé was "totally inept" at doing the tasks). Therefore, whether a true role reversal really occurred has to be questioned.

Changes are occurring to the traditional division of labour, though. One of the male respondents expressed concern about his level of participation in planning the wedding and his feeling that he was not doing enough work. He states:

There was one day in particular where my fiancée felt that my involvement in the preparations wasn't at the level that it could have been and so obviously there was a miscommunication there and that came to the surface. And understandably I didn't feel too good about the situation. So, I got more involved. (Darryl)

However, Darryl's involvement was prompted by his fiancée's complaint. His concern was initiated by her. Thus, the norm may be changing somewhat but the changes are very slow.

Then there are other male participants who are content to let the existing division of labour remain as it is. Ken was not that concerned when his fiancée told him he was not doing enough of the work. In fact, he brushed her anger off as her needing to release steam and not as a reflection on his level of participation. He says,

With the preparations I thought my fiancée would do most of the work and she has. She gets pissed with me sometimes for not helping out enough but in a lot of the cases she doesn't want my help, she just wants someone to bitch at every once in a while.
One bride remembers feeling very frustrated because her husband did not help her with the preparations at all and he did not even participate in the decision-making process. She states,

My husband said to me when we got engaged, "look, I am not interested at all in the wedding. I don't care. The important thing to me is to get married, not to have this big thing. So, don't come to me and ask me anything, I don't want to know." So that was very frustrating in that I never got any kind of assistance from him. And I mean he told me, he doesn't want to do it, he didn't like doing it, and that was fine, but I mean it was pretty difficult to do it. (Susan)

Out of the eleven males I interviewed only one removed himself voluntarily from the decision-making process and turned planning the wedding totally over to his wife. Greg states:

I pretty much turned control over to my wife at the outset and said I would be happy to do so and I think I stuck to that. To me I didn't really have an idea in my head of what I wanted or anything. To me a lot of that sort of trimmings that go along with the day were not all that important to me. I knew who I wanted to be there and just that I wanted to get married. As to how it happened and what everybody looked like and wore and stood and said, I didn't really care.

This is unusual because usually the groom wants some say in how his wedding is going to be even if he does not help in doing the actual work planning it involves (Currie, 1993:414-415). Greg, the groom in this example, is adhering to the activity norm that states it is not necessary for him to help;
it is not an area he has to concern himself with because planning the wedding is "woman's work".

As we have seen, some of the male respondents did not help with the wedding preparations very much. However, there were some who believed they shared equally in doing the preparations and this is another reflection that the traditional division of labour is changing. For instance, Chad said,

I would say the two of us have shared equally in doing the preparations. We've both been very involved in picking out the reception site, picking out the church, the photographer, etc. We've had a lot of fun.

Another male respondent had the following to say:

We did a lot of stuff together--like we picked out invitations and went and looked at reception sites together, and picked the meal together and the guest list we kind of brought our two lists together. I think we did a lot of the stuff together. (Rob)

However, Rob went on to say that his wife did most of the details and planned the ceremony and picked all the music but he still felt that they worked on it together.

The Gendered Division of Labour: Feelings

Who does what (the division of labour: activities) has received a lot more attention from sociologists than has who feels what (the division of labour: feelings). However, feelings are gendered and normative just as activities are. Thus, in the case of weddings, traditionally men are not
supposed to have any feelings about their wedding at all. Perhaps it might be acceptable for them to feel nervous but they are not supposed to take an interest in planning the wedding. Women are supposed to be thrilled at all times and they are supposed to derive immense pleasure out of planning their wedding.

Until the last few decades it was not appropriate for men in our society to express their feelings. Males were not to verbally or physically express their feelings (except aggression) nor show much affection or tenderness. This type of behaviour is known as "male inexpressiveness" (Balswick, 1981:111; Sattel, 1989:374). Males become inexpressive "not simply because our culture expects it but because our culture expects little boys to grow up to become decision makers and wielders of power" (Sattel, 1989:376). Being inexpressive is a way for males to show and consolidate their power. Male inexpressiveness is the normative way men are to feel and one of the male respondents in my study adhered to this feeling norm. His comments indicate an emotional detachment:

To me I didn't really have an idea in my head of what I wanted or anything. To me a lot of that sort of trimmings that go along with the day were not all that important to me. I knew who I wanted to be there and just that I wanted to get married. As to how it happened and what everybody looked like and wore and stood and said, I didn't really care. (Greg)
However, some men have begun to question this feeling norm. For example, a few males in my study wanted to be involved in planning their wedding even though it has traditionally been regarded as a female activity. These men deviate from the societal norms that say males should not be involved in feminine activities. However, these norms, including feeling norms, have come under attack from various segments of society and are starting to change. Thus, the male role and the division of labour is also starting to change and be re-defined and this may be why men are now allowed to express interest in planning their wedding (Boyer, 1981:158; Franklin, 1984:107). Ryan states the following, "I have my input and I want to have a say in it too. A lot of guys I know couldn't care less about the wedding and the planning but I do."

Brian states,

I trust her judgement and everything—like if she were to go out and pick my tuxedo for me that would be okay but I would rather pick my own. Not that I wouldn't want her to say anything about it but I want a say too.

These respondents are not bothered by the fact that they are interested in their wedding, even though other males they know might not be. They are comfortable with the changing division of labour surrounding feelings.

Other respondents were also aware that they were breaking societal norms but it did not seem to bother them too much.
either; they did not seem to care if they appeared "odd".

Chad states,

I don't know, I think I'm a little different than some of the guys that I know. Work people and what not seem to fall into the category of male/female really strongly, whereas my fiancee and I, I feel that we're almost in the middle more. So, I've had fun with the preparations, I've enjoyed them, and I don't think a lot of guys feel that way.

Roy expresses a similar opinion. He says,

I consider myself a pretty strange male because my wedding day is something that I have dreamed of for years and most males aren't like that. For most males the wedding day is something that happens. But for me it was like, no, I knew exactly what I wanted and it was amazing that my wife and I were so like-minded and that we both wanted the same things. And so this dream or this vision of what it would be like just came true and more.

Traditionally, men were not to show any emotion and they were certainly not supposed to cry but some of the males in my sample did not conform to this traditional division of labour surrounding feelings. They were prepared to go against tradition and express their emotions. For instance, Rob started to cry at his wedding. He states:

during the ceremony I was overcome with emotion and I didn’t expect that...I kind of started crying a bit and it was funny because she [his wife] was fine during the whole wedding and I was kind of like stumbling through my vows.

Rob is surprised that he is the emotional one and he implies that he thought it would be his wife who was emotional. So, while he still adheres somewhat to the stereotype that women
are more emotional than men, he is comfortable with the fact that he started to cry and became emotional himself. Another male respondent was also comfortable showing his emotions and expressing how excited he was about his wedding, even though the traditional division of labour would frown upon such a display of emotion. Roy states,

by the time the wedding day arrived there was a lot of excitement. We [my wife and I] were both so much looking forward to it. We were just going, wow, this is so cool, two more days, one more day, you know, that sort of thing.

Other men in the sample are caught in the middle—they do not conform to the old feeling norm of inexpressiveness but they also are not ready to embrace the new feeling norms of expressiveness. These individuals do not appear to be guided by any norms; there is an absence of standardized guidelines, thus, they do not know how to feel and are experiencing an instance of “normlessness” (Thoits, 1990:188-189). For example, Josh states:

I have no indication of how I'm supposed to feel with the preparations. If you go by the stereotypes I should be completely aloof and not give a damn really, but that's not the way I wanted it. From the beginning I wanted to have some sort of involvement in it.

Josh may have no indication of how to feel because the norm of male inexpressiveness is changing (Franklin, 1984:104, 107). Men are being told that it is okay to feel, to cry, and to show their emotions. However, changes in the norm occur
slowly and thus, many individuals have confused and anxious feelings about how they should behave, as the above excerpt illustrates (Boyer, 1981:159, 163).

The changes in the feeling norms seem to be just as important as the changes in the division of labour (activities) for men and both are relevant to gender equality, not just the activities that people engage in. I will come back to the implications of this in the next chapter.

**Summary**

In summary, weddings are rituals and as such have certain expectations attached to them. Feeling norms can be easily identified at weddings due to their inherent ritualistic nature. Four feeling norms were identified—happiness, nervousness, stressfulness, and excitement. Each of these norms were explored in detail. The existence of feeling norms allowed me to identify instances of emotional deviance and emotion management. Individuals managed their emotions through surface and deep acting.

The ritualistic nature of weddings also makes it difficult for individuals in a modern world to make their wedding unique. Having a wedding that reflects their personality was becoming more and more important to many individuals. The result was an attempt to balance the ritual and the unique. The final section of the chapter looked at gender. Specifically, it examined the division of labour
with the wedding preparations—who is doing what and how the respondents felt about it. It also explored the changing societal norms regarding how men were to behave, act, and feel at weddings. The changing status of this norm resulted in some confusion over how to behave but hopefully the norms will be relaxed somewhat so that men are allowed to be emotional on their wedding day too.
CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSION

My last chapter does not provide a summary of my findings, rather, it pursues several issues that emerged from my thesis that can be the subject for further research. Thus, I believe my study has made a contribution to the discipline of sociology by identifying new areas to explore. The first area I am going to address is how feeling norms are transmitted. The second is how feeling norms are enforced. The third area for further research is gendered feeling norms. The last issue I address, gender and deviance with respect to feeling norms, is a new topic that requires exploration.

Areas For Further Research

Transmitting Feeling Norms

One area that warrants further exploration is how feeling norms are transmitted or learned. My study revealed a few mechanisms for transmitting these norms, but additional research is required. One way feeling norms are learned is through informal conversations. Many of the respondents in my study indicated that different people had asked them if they were nervous yet and from these comments they realized that nervousness was a feeling norm surrounding weddings. It is through informal conversations where people hear stories about how nervous others were on their wedding day or how
stressed they were planning their wedding that feeling norms are transmitted.

For instance, Darryl, a groom-to-be stated, “people keep asking me if I’m nervous yet and I’m not so that’s a little bit strange.” He responded by stating that he didn’t feel nervous yet but he probably would on his wedding day. After all, the individuals who are asking if he’s nervous yet are already married, so they should know better than he does how he’s supposed to feel. There is an expectation that he is supposed to feel nervous and the message is being transmitted that on his wedding day he should feel nervous and if he doesn’t then he is “abnormal”.

By being asked, “do you feel nervous yet”, the individual (man or woman) is made aware, albeit informally, that marriage is a serious occasion in Western society and should not be entered into lightly. Informal transmissions such as this are one way people learn the feeling norms. Other examples of this have been mentioned previously in the paper; Roy, the groom who said that he felt he should have been more nervous on his wedding day because “you hear stories of people saying, ‘oh man. I was so nervous I was shaking like a leaf up there’”, is an example of how the feeling norm that you should be nervous on your wedding day is transmitted.
Feeling norms are therefore learned through stories that are passed along. The individuals may not speak directly with those the story is about, but the feeling norm is transmitted nonetheless. For instance, Connie remarked, "you hear stories about people fainting and crying and being really emotional ... so I think I should be." Brian said, "you always hear about getting cold feet but I don't feel that yet, maybe because my wedding isn't for a few months yet".

Another way feeling norms are transmitted is through books, magazines, movies, and the like. Popular culture in our society is a very powerful influence over what people believe they should feel in certain situations. Ashley said she believed she should be stressed out over her wedding preparations and she got that idea from different books and magazines she read. Another woman remarked,

I was just the smiling bride, I did what I was supposed to do... talk to your guests. I wasn't really interested in some of the ladies, they were older ladies who were invited because it was an open church ceremony, they all say, "oh what a nice dress" and stuff and I was like, yeah, whatever. You had to be polite and smile and be gracious and so beautiful or whatever and I would rather be sitting somewhere else having a beer, or whatever. (Joan)

When asked where she got the idea that this was how she was supposed to behave she did not have an answer. Joan may have sensed she was supposed to feel this way from observing how individuals acted at other weddings she had attended. She
may also have been influenced by movies or television shows she watched where the bride is always smiling, happy, polite, gracious, and the like. Wherever she got the idea Joan knew that she had to act in the appropriate manner (as the smiling, gracious bride) even though she was tired, hot and sweaty.

Feeling norms are also transmitted through the family. Families are one of the primary areas for socializing individuals about the norms in a society. Many of the respondents (men and women) remarked that they altered their wedding to satisfy their parents wishes and that various members of their family would influence how they felt or believed they were supposed to feel. Jill indicated that she thought she was supposed to be stressed making all of the wedding preparations because of how her mother was acting. She said, "my mother was very panicky and so sometimes I would feel that because she was panicked or stressed I should be".

The above examples are just a few illustrations of how feeling norms are learned. Further research is required on how feeling norms are transmitted in order to discover all of the various mechanisms used in the transmission. More exploration is needed in order to identify the impact popular culture, the family, and informal conversations have on
transmitting feeling norms and whether the type of mechanism used varies depending on the gender of the individual.

**Enforcing Feeling Norms**

Norms regulating activities are a mechanism of social control. That is, they teach and enforce the appropriate ways to act in different social settings. For instance, boys learn at an early age that playing with dolls is generally not an acceptable activity in our society. Various techniques may be utilized, such as the child's peers teasing him, calling him a sissy, and the like, in order to prevent the incident from occurring again. The child's teacher and/or parents may subtly inform the child that such an activity is not appropriate.

**Feeling** norms, emotional deviance, and emotion management are also used to control individuals. They guide people about how to feel in different situations. Thus, social control or regulation occurs at the level of feelings or emotions too and these feeling norms are just as powerful as activity norms.

Hochschild defines the enforcement of feeling norms as "rule reminders" (Hochschild, 1983:57). Hochschild recognizes that while feeling norms are very powerful some mechanism to enforce them needs to exist in order to ensure they continue to exist as a feeling norm. Some of the "rule reminders" Hochschild mentions are "private mumblings to
ourselves", other individuals (peers, family, co-workers, etc.) who ask us to account for why we feel a certain way (i.e. "Why do you feel depressed? You’ve just won the prize you’ve always wanted"), claims others make such as, "you should be grateful after all I’ve done for you", and sanctions ranging from cajoling to shunning (Hochschild, 1983:57-59).

Another term for "private mumblings to ourselves" is self-policing and it is an effective mechanism for enforcing feeling norms. For instance, Susan mentioned that she did not elope, even though she supposedly wanted to, because "it would have killed my family and my husband’s family. I mean they just would have been devastated, they would have lost it." Susan attributes strong feelings to their families which helps her to conform when she is in doubt about the importance of having a large wedding. She feels she will let people down if she elopes, therefore she conforms.

Sanctions are another effective mechanism for enforcing feeling norms and while I do not have any evidence of such mechanisms in my study I would speculate that some of the men who expressed an interest in planning their wedding may have been subject to some degree of chiding and teasing from their male peers. Sayings such as "you’re already a hen-pecked husband" or "you’re whipped" are forms of ridicule these men might have been subjected to as a way of letting them know
their feelings were inappropriate. As previously mentioned, the feeling norm with reference to how men are supposed to feel about planning their wedding is in the process of being changed, however, some people may feel it is still not acceptable for men to express an interest in their wedding. These expressions of ridicule are one way to let those individuals know that they are not conforming to the existing feeling norm and they should change their feelings accordingly.

Another way people are brought back in line when they do not conform is through “non-recognition” by others/society of the feeling they are experiencing. “Disenfranchised grief” is defined as a situation when “a person experiences a sense of loss but does not have a socially recognized right, role, or capacity to grieve” (Doka, 1989:3). “Non-recognition” is a similar phenomenon only it is applied to all emotions, not just grief. An example of “non-recognition” is a man telling one of his friends that he is really enjoying planning his wedding and he did not realize how enjoyable the experience would be. When his friend responds by staring blankly at the individual and giving no recognition that he understands what the individual means he is using “non-recognition” as a sanctioning technique. Actually that individual may not understand if he has never experienced that feeling (never been married or did not experience that feeling when planning
his wedding). The lack of recognition informs the "offender" that he is not experiencing a typical feeling and is therefore not conforming to the existing feeling norm (that men are not supposed to be interested in planning their wedding, let alone enjoy it).

For many individuals feeling norms are so deeply entrenched that it is difficult to do anything but conform. Thus, even though the men and women interviewed in the study are moving into a new role in society (that of the bride/wife or groom/husband) they already have a fairly good idea of how to act and how to feel due to self-policing and other mechanisms of social control. The social role itself has an established performance that must be followed, more or less (Goffman, 1959:27). The individual does not have the power to create a new front, only to choose from already existing fronts or performances (Goffman, 1959:28).

Goffman argues that when individuals present themselves before others, their performances will tend to include and illustrate the mainstream values and beliefs of the society (Goffman, 1959:35). The need to conform may be so deeply ingrained in some individuals that even when they are alone they may uphold types of behaviour they do not believe in, including emotional displays, because they are so terrified of what would happen if they did not conform. Some may even go so far as to believe "there is an unseen audience present
who will punish any deviations from the standard” (Goffman, 1959:81).

The overall function that feeling norms serve is to keep order, ensure social rules are followed, and guarantee people behave appropriately. For the actor, feeling norms help him/her to know how to behave in different social situations. They are a security blanket, so to speak. People can face new situations and be confident that they will behave in an appropriate manner due to being taught various feeling norms. For society, feeling norms ensure social order does not break down and result in chaos and anarchy. If individuals are taught the appropriate feeling norms and the social sanctions for breaking those norms are enforced then social order will remain.

*Gendered Feeling Norms*

Gendered activities have been well researched in the past few years. However, gendered feeling norms have not been researched at all and as my findings reveal, more research is needed in this area. There are feeling norms for women and feeling norms for men surrounding weddings. Some of these norms overlap, such as the "nervousness norm" and some are enforced more for women than for men (the "happiness norm"—women are supposed to be happy planning their wedding at all times; men are allowed to be disinterested). More research needs to be done in order to clarify the feeling
norms that are applicable to women and the feeling norms that are applicable to men in our society and how it came to be that different feeling norms were created based on gender.

The findings revealed that the feeling norm of male inexpressiveness has started to change in the last few years. Not all of the males in the study adhered to the male inexpressiveness norm, the fact that some of the men cried at their wedding or found the preparations “fun”, reveals that the existing norm is coming under attack and is slowly being changed. More research needs be done in order to identify when this feeling norm started to be questioned and what new feeling norms, if any, are replacing it.

The male feeling norm of disinterest in the wedding preparations was also identified as a powerful gendered feeling norm. The males in the study seemed to fall into three categories: those who adhered to the traditional feeling norm (of disinterest), those who rejected the norm, and those who were somewhere in the middle (not sure how they were supposed to feel). The results show that the traditional feeling norm of disinterest has begun to be rejected by some individuals. More of the males in the study expressed interest in their wedding than those who said “I could care less”; an indication that the norm is changing. The males that were caught in the middle give further evidence to the changing status of the traditional norm,
often when norms are undergoing changes individuals in the society will be confused or unclear about how to feel since there is no longer a clear set of feeling "guidelines" (Hochschild, 1979:74). Further research is needed to clarify when the norm started to change, which individuals adhere to it, which reject it, and how many are caught in the middle, and to reveal what, if any, new norm is emerging in its place.

**Gender, Emotions, and Deviance**

The sociological literature on gender and deviance maintains that when women are in a situation where they have to manage their emotions they tend to internalize the situation, say "it's my fault", and try to change themselves (Greenglass and McDonald, 1982:242-243; Schur, 1984). Women tend to blame themselves for their own unhappiness. When men are in a situation that requires emotion management they focus on external factors, say "it's the world's fault", and try to change or ignore the situation (Greenglass and McDonald, 1982:242-243). Men hold external factors responsible for their "deviant" feelings, not themselves. Thus, women tend to end up in psychiatric institutions while men tend to end up in jail (Greenglass and McDonald, 1982:214).

The above described model is quite apparent when one examines the field of psychiatry and how patients are treated
differently based on their gender. Doctors and psychiatrists tend to view the problems faced by a woman as psychological in nature and as something wrong with her (Smith, 1975:7 and Stoll, 1974:171 as quoted in Schur, 1984:199, 195). The emphasis is on an individual solution to whatever ails her, rather than a collective solution to the problems women face on a societal level (Chesler, 1972:108). Men, on the other hand, usually do not seek help from psychiatrists, therefore there are fewer male patients and the standard definition of mental illness excludes many of the disorders that affect men (Greenglass and McDonald, 1982:214). The problems faced by men are viewed as stemming from social pressures and not as something wrong with him (Greenglass and McDonald, 1982:211). Women are more likely to be diagnosed as neurotic, while men are more likely to engage in antisocial behaviours (Greenglass and McDonald, 1982:214).

The above model does not have to be restricted to the area of gender and deviance, it can also be applied to the sociology of emotions field. My findings reveal some evidence for the tendency of women to internalize and try to "fix themselves", and of men to externalize and try to change the situation when exposed to situations that require emotion management. One woman I interviewed, Donna, tried to "fix herself" so she was happy (or at least not disappointed) with the engagement ring her fiancé selected. She experiences an
episode of emotional deviance surrounding the issue. Donna says,

I wanted to go out and pick out my ring so I thought that part of the process of getting engaged was taken away. But I felt guilty that I felt that way because he took the initiative to do something really wonderful and surprise me... so, I don’t know quite where I am at with that, I feel like a bad kid, ungrateful, so I think I’ve resigned myself to keeping the ring and getting wide wedding bands.

She manages her feelings by "fixing herself" through changing how she feels about the ring.

Another woman I interviewed, Jill, also "fixed herself" by changing how she felt. When she would argue with her mom or fiancé about the wedding she would be uncomfortable with her feelings of anger. Jill remarked that she was uncomfortable with those feelings because "you think, it’s your wedding, it should be happy and fun, but there were some definite tense times." She manages her deviant feelings by changing how she feels and how she looks at the situation—she looks at the whole picture, realizes the problem was "not that big of a deal", or compromises with whomever she was having the problem with. Jill takes steps to fix herself by changing how she felt.

In another instance she seems to combine elements of both models. Jill did not feel nervous on her wedding day like she expected to, therefore she was somewhat concerned with her lack of appropriate feelings. She states,
I thought maybe I'm not taking this seriously enough or maybe I'm not really ready for this. I didn't really do anything about it though. I felt inside like I knew it was okay and it was time but you kind of start to think about it and have second thoughts and think maybe we're rushing into it, or you know...

At first Jill contemplated "fixing herself" but she decided that she could handle her deviant feelings and more or less accepts or ignores the situation of not feeling nervous enough. Thus, she is not typical of the female "fix herself" model nor of the male "accept/ignore the situation" model.

Another woman I interviewed also does not perfectly fit the "fix herself" model. On her wedding day Joan was mainly happy but there were times when she had to be the "smiling, gracious bride". She performed this role early in the day (right after the ceremony), as she explains, "all these people want to talk to me and I don't really want to talk to them, I wanted to get on with my friends, so I was just the smiling bride, I did what I was supposed to do". However, by the end of the night, when she was tired, hot, and uncomfortable, she was no longer the "smiling, gracious bride" and she was okay with that. Joan says,

at the end of the day I didn't care about my dress and stuff, I knew that I was shy and I felt uncomfortable talking to people so I just never did it and I thought, "I'm probably being rude but I don't care, it's my day".
Joan is able to ignore the situation and how she’s “supposed” to feel. She does not feel impelled to fix herself, thus she does not really fit the above described model.

As previously mentioned, generally men do not try to fix themselves; they either try to change or ignore the situation. One man I interviewed provides an excellent example of how men look at the external factors rather than internalizing a situation. Josh says,

I dealt with my anger by knowing it [the high price mark-up with anything associated with weddings] made me more angry but I knew there was nothing I could do about it. I was angry about it but then I realized this is the way society is run, there will be a thousand more weddings after mine and they [the companies/shop-keepers] are going to do the same thing to all those people, and there’s no real way to change it. So, the way I deal with it is if I sold flowers I would sell them at a normal price, I wouldn’t charge people an arm and a leg but there’s really not much you can do to control other people...you realize you can’t do anything about it, you just go on with it [planning the wedding].

Josh accepts how the world operates and while he does not like it and would change it if he owned a shop, he does not internalize the feeling and wonder what is wrong with him for being angry while planning his wedding; Josh accepts his emotions as they are.

Another man I interviewed both ignored certain situations and also tried to change the situation. Darryl was talking about how frustrated he was that the wedding was more for everyone else than it was for him and his fiancee.
He was not sure if he had a way of dealing with that frustration but he goes on to say,

there's not much you can do. You either have to find some way of making your feelings known and doing something about it or finding a way to just not let it bother you and I think I've probably done a bit of both.

In another instance Darryl talks about how maybe he should have been happier at a wedding he attended but he was not upset about his lack of feeling and he did not try to change how he felt so his feelings were more appropriate for the situation. Rather, Darryl ignored the situation in this instance and accepted how he felt. He explained that he was not close to the couple getting married, therefore, he could not share in what they were feeling and while he perhaps was not happy enough in that situation he was okay with feeling that way.

Another good example of how men tend to ignore or change the external situation comes from a groom who said he was not nervous on his wedding day. Greg explained that on other important days in his life he had been nervous but rather than wondering what was wrong with himself because his feelings were not in line with the feeling norm (as the woman in an example above did), he interpreted his lack of feelings as an indication that he had made the correct decision in marrying his wife. Greg says,

On my wedding day I woke up and I felt fine and I wasn't worried at all. For some reason I knew
that everything would go well. I felt quite confident... I was doing the right thing and that everything would go well. I was looking forward to it.

Greg felt there was an expectation for him to be nervous and people would come up and ask him about it and he would respond by stating he did not feel he had anything to be nervous about. When asked how people responded to his statement he said,

everybody just sort of laughed. Some people said they actually expected that because that’s sort of my known personality, being quite a calm, easy-going, laid back individual. They said if they ever expected to go to a wedding where the groom wouldn’t be nervous it would be mine.

At no time does Greg try to manage his feelings so they adhere to the “nervousness” norm (he does not feel he has to fix himself). Rather, he ignores the situation and is comfortable doing that.

Greg’s response is pretty typical of how the men in my study who were not nervous on their wedding day responded. These individuals never thought that their lack of nervousness was an indication that they were not taking “it” (getting married) seriously enough. They interpreted their lack of nervousness as an indication that they had made the correct decision and were doing the right thing. More research needs to be done on the two gender models and the “lack of fit” examples cited above are one of the main reasons further exploration is required.
In conclusion, I believe my research has contributed to the sociology of emotions field—it has expanded how feeling norms are identified, and identified the feeling norms that surround weddings in our society. It has explored incidents of emotional deviance surrounding weddings and how individuals dealt with their "abnormal" feelings. In addition, it has opened the door for further investigation into the area of gender, deviance, and emotions.
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APPENDIX A: Interview Schedule

Part I: Rituals

1. When was your wedding? Why did you decide to have it then?

2. What type of wedding will you have? Why?

3. Why did you choose to have a church wedding?

4. Describe a traditional wedding.

5. What aspects of your wedding would you say were traditional?

6. Why did you choose to have them?

7. Describe a contemporary wedding.

8. What aspects of your wedding were contemporary?

9. Why did you include them?

10. Did you try to make your wedding unique or your own in some way? How?

11. How large was your wedding? Why did you choose that size?

12. How many attendants did you have? Why?

13. What was your gown/tuxedo like? Why?

14. What did you attendants wear? Who picked their outfits?

15. Did you have a reception? Why or why not?

16. Did you have a dance? Band or DJ? Why?

17. Did you have a cake cutting ceremony? Throwing of the bouquet and garter? Why or why not?

18. Did you have a gift opening? Why or why not?

19. Did you go on a honeymoon? Where? How long?
Part II: Feeling Norms

1. How would you best describe your feelings as you prepared for the wedding?

2. How would you best describe your feelings on the wedding day?

3. How would you best describe your feelings during the ceremony?

4. How would you best describe your feelings after the wedding?

5. Did you sense you were supposed to feel a certain way? How?

6. What did you do if you did not feel that way?

7. Why did you decide to get married?

8. Has it been everything you expected? Explain.

9. Did things go the way you expected they would? (Before the ceremony; after the ceremony; the night before; on the wedding day). Can you give me some examples of how you felt?

10. When you attend a wedding what's the main emotion you feel?

11. Have you ever thought you were not happy enough at someone's wedding? Too happy?

12. What did you do about those feelings?

13. After you attend a wedding are you usually happier after it is over than you were when it began?

Part III: Emotional Deviance


2. Did you feel uncomfortable with these feelings? Explain.

3. What did you do to make yourself comfortable again?

4. How long did it take you to prepare for your wedding?
5. Did you expect it to take that long? Explain.

6. Did you find the preparations overwhelming? Give examples.

7. What did you do to make it less overwhelming? Give examples.

8. Who did most of the preparations? Why?

9. Who helped with the preparations?

10. How involved was your spouse with the preparations? Would you have liked him/her to be more involved? Why or why not?

11. Were your parents included in the planning? Why or why not?


Part IV: Emotional Management

1. Did you feel you were in control of planning your wedding? Why or why not? Who was?

2. Do you feel your wedding took on a life of its own? Explain.

3. What is the biggest problem you had with planning your wedding?

4. How did you cope with it?

5. Was your wedding different at the end than what you originally had in mind? How?

6. How do you think that happened?

7. What did you do if and when you did not feel happy?

8. Did you find your wedding to be stressful? Why or why not?

9. How did you deal with that stress?
**** If you were to write a story about your wedding what would the chapters be about?
what would be the high point?
what would be the low point?

**** How would you describe your wedding plans as proceeding: smoothly or with lots of bumps?

**** What is the most controversial issue you've had to deal with so far with your wedding plans?
tell me about it
how did you resolve it
how did you feel

**** What's the happiest moment you've had surrounding your wedding?
tell me about it
APPENDIX B: University of Calgary Consent Form

Research Project Title: Weddings: A Sociology of Emotions Perspective

Investigator: Janine Smith

This consent form, a copy of which has been given to you, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, please ask. Please take the time to read this form carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The purpose of this research project is to study individuals who have recently been married or are about to be married. As someone who fits this description, your candid reflections on this experience are of great interest to the project. I am requesting your participation in this research study as a partial requirement for fulfilling my Master's degree for the Department of Sociology.

I am requesting an interview with you of about an hour's length. I shall be asking you about such matters as your wedding, where it was held, the rituals you used, what your feelings were surrounding your wedding, how you managed your emotions, and other questions. The questions may cause some discomfort in that they will require you to probe into your feelings surrounding your wedding. Please realize that at this stressful time in your life the interview may prompt you to re-evaluate your relationship with your significant other. If you feel the interview has raised any troubling issues that you want to delve into more deeply I can refer you to a counsellor.

I hope you will permit this interview to be audio taped, so that I will be able to concentrate on talking with you during the interview, rather than having to take notes on your comments. If you feel uncomfortable with a taped interview, however, I am prepared to take notes instead. The interview material will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in my office and only myself and my supervisor, Dr. Leslie Miller will have access to it. I do not plan to destroy the materials once my thesis is completed since I would lose 'so much valuable information that could be used for future publications. However, strict storage procedures will always
be maintained in order to ensure your confidentiality is not compromised.

Please be aware that due to the small sample size and the fact that you and your spouse will be interviewed separately, your anonymity cannot be guaranteed. Once my thesis is completed it will become a public document and there is the possibility it may be published. Consequently, your spouse may recognize what you have said as yours in the thesis, especially with such a small sample size. If you are not comfortable with this you can refuse to participate in the research.

I would like to make it very clear, however, that what you have to say will be held in the strictest confidence, only I and my supervisor will see or listen to your interview. Your name will never be attached to the interview material at any point, and you will be identified in the thesis I will write only as Ms. A. or Mr. B. You may refuse to answer any question that makes you uncomfortable, and you may of course end the interview at any time. Finally, I will be happy to share the results of the study with you after it is finished if you so desire.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation. If you have further questions concerning matters related to this research, please contact:

Janine Smith, Graduate Student
Department of Sociology
289-1220 (h) or 220-3214 (w)

If you have any questions concerning your participation in this project, you may also contact the Department of Sociology and ask for Leslie Miller, 220-6501 or the Office of the Vice-President (Research) and ask for Karen McDermid, 220-2281.
A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.