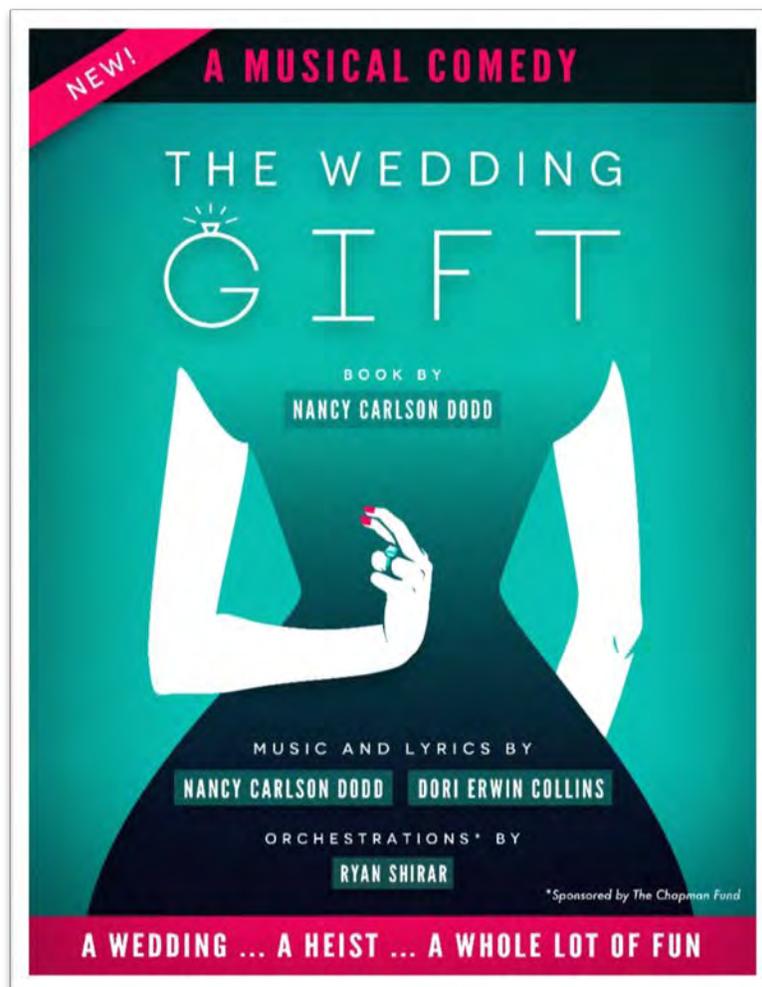




Fort Wayne Civic Theatre
IN THE WINGS
Arts-In-Education Program
Study Guide



Book by Nancy Carlson Dodd
Music & Lyrics by Nancy Carlson Dodd & Dori Erwin Collins

Compiled & written by Paul R. Faulkner

The Artistic Team

NANCY CARLSON DODD (Book, Music & lyrics) is a native of Fort Wayne, graduate of South Side High school and a member of their Hall of Fame and Speech Hall of Fame. She is a graduate of Indiana University, Bloomington. While in college, during her senior year, a musical she wrote was produced by the Theatre Dept.

Her lifelong interest in theatre has led her to appear in over 37 productions, many of which were at the Fort Wayne Civic, First Presbyterian, and Arena Dinner Theatre, winning acting awards in 8 of those productions. Playing the leads in both *On Golden Pond* and *Driving Miss Daisy* were the culmination of her acting career.

After graduation from I.U., Nancy lived for 7 years in California and 7 years in Colorado, returning in 1976 to Fort Wayne where she retired in 2004 as a Senior Loan Officer with Ruoff Mortgage. Samuel French of New York published her musical for children, *The Magic Pebble* in 1996, which she co-wrote with Betsy Waterfield Chapman. She has also written 4 other musicals for children which are periodically produced throughout the U.S.

Nancy moved to Springfield, Illinois in 2004 to be near her daughter Mary Byers who is a professional speaker and bestselling author of a book for Associations, however God had other plans. Each year, she returned to Indiana to rent a cottage near Angola, and in 2009, shopping at Meijer, in the potato chip aisle, she encountered George Dodd whom she had not seen in 15 years. Discovering that both were single, they dated long distance and were married in 2010.

Nancy is mother of 3 children, grandmother of 7. That is an accomplishment which took the most work, the most labor, and the most reward.

In 2010, she won first place in the first ever Northeast Indiana Playwright Festival, sponsored by the Fort Wayne Civic Theatre, with the play *The Ladies in Cabin 10*. She again won that contest in 2013 with the play *The Wedding Gift*. These plays were both produced by the Civic, and *The Wedding Gift* is now at the Civic as a musical!





DORI ERWIN COLLINS (Music and Lyrics) is a Chicago actor, composer, and writer. Chicago acting credits include *Copenhagen* (Margrethe) with Etopia, *Netta at Ninety* (Louise) with Women's Theatre Alliance, *One Flea Spare* (Darcy) with Ghost Light Productions, *Both Your Houses* (u/s Miss McMurry) with Remy Bumpo, *Far From Heaven* (u/s Mrs. Leacock/Mona) with Porchlight Music Theatre, and *Cabaret* (u/s Fr. Schneider) with Theatre at the Center. Dori is an on-air host of the Annual AID Telethon, and has appeared as

the headline vocalist in Chicago area benefit concerts. Other work includes industrial film, and the recently released award-winning short feature film, *Unorthodox*. As well, Dori has a catalogue of published work, including over 40 songs and recordings in addition to various articles in scholastic theological journals.

Dori is ever so grateful for the delightful partnerships with Nancy Carlson Dodd and Ryan Shirar that led to this production, and she wishes to thank Phillip, Eunice, and the entire cast and crew at the Fort Wayne Civic for so beautifully bringing *The Wedding Gift* to life with such sparkle, enthusiasm and heart.

RYAN SHIRAR (Orchestrator) is a New York City-based pianist and musician, whose range of talents include conducting, music directing, arranging, composing and teaching. His repertoire ranges from classical to pop to Broadway. Shirar has performed at venues including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Aspen Music Festival, New York's Town Hall, and Feinstein's/54 Below and with orchestras including Austin Symphony, Harrisburg Symphony, Columbus Symphony, and Cleveland Pops. Shirar made his Broadway debut in 2015 as pianist for *The Visit* and is currently the music director and orchestrator for the international performing group, *The Four Phantoms*. He also performs with SpotOn Entertainment and Manhattan Concert Productions.



As orchestrator, Shirar has collaborated with Stephen Schwartz, Sheena Easton, Brian Stokes Mitchell, Mickey Thomas, MercyMe, Tri: The New Irish Tenors, The

Broadway Boys, Lincoln Center Gala, Virginia Opera, and The American Pops Orchestra.

Shirar serves as music director for singer Maxine Linehan. He co-produced, arranged, and performed on her album, *Beautiful Songs* and made his international orchestral conducting debut at the Theatre du Chatelet with Linehan's show, *What Would Petula Do?*



PHILLIP H. COLGLAZIER (Director) has worked for the Fort Wayne Civic Theatre for more than twenty-five years. He has directed and choreographed over 66 productions for the Civic Theatre since 1993. He was honored at the Indiana Arts Leadership Awards as the 2008 Arts Administrator by the Indiana Coalition for the Arts. Phillip has served as the Fort Wayne Civic Theatre's Executive/Artistic Director since 2000 after serving one year as the Managing Director of Edyvean Repertory Theatre (E.R.T.) in Indianapolis. Prior to ERT he worked at the Fort Wayne Civic

Theatre as Interim Executive Director, Development/Education Director, Guest Director and Choreographer.

Phillip performed professionally as an Actors Equity Member for twelve years in musical theatre and television. He appeared in a Broadway Revue in Seoul, Korea under the direction of Baayork Lee (the original Connie Wong in "A Chorus Line"). While in Europe he performed under the direction of Gillian Lynne in the Vienna, Austria's company of "CATS" and with RAI UNO's television program "FANTASTICO 5" in Rome, Italy. Phillip earned his membership into the Actor's Equity Association by performing the roles of Paul in "A Chorus Line" and Chino in "West Side Story" at Beef-N-Boards Dinner theatre in Indianapolis.

As a playwright, Phillip has written *Best Intentions*, *The Marquee Quest* and *...before I wake...* He obtained a Bachelor of Science in Speech Communication and Theatre from Ball State University. Phillip is native of Fort Wayne and got his start on stage at the Civic Theatre at the age of 15.

The Show

Cast of Characters

Flossie Marvel – Ingénue, pretty, age 22-35, nice figure (legit soprano, G3-G5)

Cynthia Marvel – Flossie’s mother, simple but lovable (mezzo)

Arthur Marvel – Flossie’s father, common man, caught in a bind (baritone, B3-E4)

Grant Livingston – Over-the-top, wealthy Texan, age 30-35 (robust bari-tenor, Bb3-G4)

Austin Austin – Wealthy, capable, bookworm, age 30-35 (lyric tenor, Bb3-G4)

Daphne Austin – Austin’s mother, elegant (soprano)

William Austin – Austin’s father, successful businessman, non-pretentious (baritone)

Randolph – Stereotypical, stiff English butler, middle aged or older (C3-D4/E4)

Wanda – Stereotypical, English maid, middle aged or older (mezzo, G3-D#5)

Melody Rutherford – Friend of the Austins

Thomas Rutherford – Married Melody, speaks in alliteration

Raymond – Austin Chauffeur, middle aged or older

Meter Man/Ensemble – The Austins’ meter reader, energetic (baritone or tenor)

Western Union Messenger/Ensemble – Male, singing telegram guy, maybe opera singer wannabe (C3-D4)

Fiona/Ensemble – Female, florist (mezzo)

Tennis Friend – Female, Austin Country Club Friend

Tennis Crowd – Entire Cast except Randolph, Wanda, Grant, Raymond

Tennis Line Judge – Cameo solo, can be tracked with Raymond, or a v/o

The Musical Numbers

ACT ONE

Overture
A Big Texas Wedding”
“The Unexpected Things”
“God Save the Queen”
“The Sport of Sports”
“Single Children”
“Single Children” Reprise
“Love-Nothing”
“In My Warm Embrace”
“Love-Nothing” Reprise
“Love-Nothing” Proposal Montage
“The Unexpected Things” Reprise
“Best Wishes”

ACT TWO

Entr’acte
“What a Surprise”
“Nobody Likes a Loser”
“Ev’ry Summer With You”
“If I Only Had a Brother”
“Best Wishes” Finale
Curtain Calls



Story Synopsis

By Nancy Carlson Dodd

The Wedding Gift is set in the more innocent years of the 1950's. In those days, big announcements of engagements and weddings appeared on the Society pages of the newspapers, with elaborate photos of the bride to be. The wedding gifts were brought or sent to the home of the bride, and there they were unwrapped and displayed with great effort and pride in the bride's home. Friends dropped by to view the gifts and to "ooh" and "aah" over them. Because of the publicity surrounding the wedding date, many parents would hire a guard or policeman to guard the gifts during the wedding ceremony and reception, because the whole town knew where and when it would be, and the extravagant gifts would be vulnerable to thieves.

Set in this era, Cynthia and Arthur Marvel, with the help of their daughter, Flossie, run a neat scam. They travel to an unknown town, find out who the rich, eligible bachelors are, and arrange to meet one of them and his family, introducing their beautiful, single daughter to the eligible bachelor. When the bachelor falls for Flossie, a hurried wedding is planned and gifts come pouring in. Then, just days before the wedding, the Marvels declare they have to leave just for a short while to accommodate some crisis in the family, but assure everyone they will be back quickly. They leave ... claiming to ship the gifts somewhere "temporarily." In truth, they ship them to a gift shop they run in Main. The Marvels leave and are never seen again. They make a wonderful living this way. The large engagement rings themselves bring in a hefty price.

The play begins as Flossie is just leaving her current fiancé, a rich oil barren cowboy from Texas to whom she is engaged. Flossie pretends that she's flying back to Chicago, where her aunt is waiting to buy her a very special wedding dress. She promises to be right back. Once again, Flossie and her parents disappear with the gifts.

She and her parents have already planned whom their next victim will be... a rich bachelor who lives in the wealthy Hamptons. This family is Daphne and William Austin, and their bachelor son, Austin Austin. He is briefly home from his job in the family business in London. The Marvels manage to meet the family at a Tennis Tournament, celebrating the million dollars the Austins have just given the Country Club for new courts. They wheedle themselves to the cocktail party after the tournament, and thus Flossie's romancing of Austin begins.

Ensuing scenes show the romance of Flossie and Austin. She is an aspiring gym teacher and is very good at sports. He teaches her how to play tennis, and they engage in many different, fun athletic games. Finally, they are engaged (rather hurriedly...because he has to return to London). Gifts are pouring in, and the Marvels are delighted, knowing how much new inventory this will give their gift shop.

And, so this is where the fun really begins! Many surprises occur due to the situation. Friends from the Country Club become involved as do the chauffeur, the butler, a maid, and good friends. What happens next? What humorous complications add to the conflict? We get to know Raymond the Chauffeur, Randolph the Butler, and Wanda, one of the maids, as they dance around each other in a complicated relationship... We get to know Austin's best friends... We get to see Flossie deal with her conscience as part of the scam.

Since this is a musical, the plot is highlighted by many charming songs. In "The Unexpected Things" the Marvels sing of how the unexpected events in life keep people on their toes and alert to life! Romantic songs like "In My Warm Embrace" and "What a Surprise" will echo of the songs from the musicals of the 1950's, and it is the writer's desire that some of the songs will linger in the heads of the audience members. "Nobody Likes a Loser" will resonate with many for its humor and true look at life, and people's attitudes towards those who lose.

When the final curtain falls on *The Wedding Gift*, it is the writer's desire that you ask yourself, in the end, exactly what was the 'wedding gift'? She hopes you realize what the true wedding gift was ... and if you can't figure it out, she will be glad to tell you.



Taken from the original 2013 Civic Theatre production of the play version

A Production History of *The Wedding Gift*

It is often said that a great musical is not written. It is *rewritten*. All sorts of classic hits have found that level of fame because of a last minute change here or the addition of a song there. Sometimes all the issues are sorted out “on the road.” Sometimes a production opens first on Broadway, only to find out it has a lot of work to have done. A production that opens without needing much fixing has often been worked over and over and over again without the audiences knowing it. *Phantom of the Opera* was originally going to use only excerpts from classic operas with new lyrics. Then it was reconceived as a campy rock musical akin to the *Rocky Horror Picture Show*. You can even find a music video produced during this time with soaring electric guitars. The Phantom’s great romantic ballad was originally written for Sarah Brightman, Andrew Lloyd Webber’s lover at the time. Only then he was married to *another* woman named Sarah. And the song was titled “Married Man.” Small wonder his divorce lawyers advised against releasing the song. The score was shoved into a drawer for future use, potentially for *Aspects of Love*, a show he’d been kicking around since the early 1980’s. But then while working on *Phantom*, he realized he needed a song for the title character. Dusted off “Married Man,” became “The Music of the Night.”

Then there are the productions like *Jekyll & Hyde* or *Martin Guerre*, which no matter how much is put into them, they never seem to quite get “there,” wherever “there” is. Sometimes, such a show makes it to Broadway, just to close and go out on tour, vowing to “get it right,” this time. Sometimes it works. Sometimes it doesn’t. And if the production team had any idea why, they would bottle the stuff and make millions.

Thus the magic and mystery and everything else associated with the *world premiere* of *The Wedding Gift*. But if you have been around the Civic for 5 or 6 years, you would say, “but didn’t the Fort Wayne Civic Theatre already have this production?” Well, no. But also sort of yes. Confused yet? Let’s start at the very beginning....

Somewhere around 1980, Nancy Carlson began writing what is now called *The Wedding Gift*. She started out calling it *Flossie*. She would sit at her piano, hear the music in her head, and pick it out note by note on the piano. She would then go over to her friend, Betsy Waterfield Chapman's home, where Nancy would play and sing the songs. Betsy would then write a more sophisticated piano part. Without modern compositional computer software, if Betsy made a mistake, she would start over from scratch.

Unrelated to her work on *Flossie*, Nancy had won the 2010 Northeast Indiana Playwright Festival with her play *The Ladies in Cabin 10*. The Executive Director for the Fort Wayne Civic, Phillip H. Colglazier, encouraged her to enter another play in 2013. All that Nancy had as a possibility was *Flossie*, but the competition did not accept musicals. With Phillip's suggestion, she removed the music and songs from the play. Nancy changed the title to *The Wedding Gift*, and consequently won the competition again. The play was directed by Gregory Stieber.

Throughout this time, Nancy had various "readings" both with the songs and without. These readings began with local Fort Wayne theatre friends and were principally to get feedback and make some changes.

In 2015, Nancy accepted her niece, Dori Erwin as a collaborator. Dori had written numerous hymns and also several musicals for children. Dori rounded up some actor friends from Chicago and had a reading with the songs in her studio in Batavia, IL. They then hired Andrew Blederman to make a professional piano arrangement, loosely based on what Nancy, Betsy, and Dori had already done. During this same time, they worked with a Chicago area artist to make a logo for the musical.

The following year, a formal reading with professional actors and singers from Equity was held in Chicago. The Royal George Theatre was rented, and the stage reading was directed by Jane Drake Brody. Nancy invited many theatre friends to come along to offer their thoughts and critiques. Phillip Colglazier from the Ft. Wayne Civic also attended this reading.





Over the following year, there were many meetings held. Each time Jane Brody, Doug Post, or Sherri Coons was consulted, it cost \$200. At the same time, the authors began to seek funding to hire an orchestrator. They won a grant from the Chapman Fund of the Waterfield Foundation. Soon thereafter, Ryan Shirrar was hired to orchestrate the music.

On October 9, 2018, a sitzprobe was held in Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Batavia, IL, just outside of Chicago. Sitzprobe is a word of German origin, which literally means “seated rehearsal.” At the sitzprobe, the singers and the orchestra rehearse together for the first time. Ryan Shirrar flew in from New York to serve as the music director. Six professional musicians were hired to play the score. Meanwhile, Phillip H. Colglazier had given copies of the script to the Fort Wayne Civic Board members. They voted to produce the play, premiering it for the 2018-2019 season.



Original 2013 production, The Wedding Gift

A Short History of Giving Wedding Gifts

By Erika Adams

For guests, deciding what to wear isn't the only stress-inducing part of attending a wedding. They also have to figure out **what to give the happy couple**, a decision that involves a variety of factors (How much money to spend? How well do you know them?). Gifting wasn't always a concern, though. In fact, before **Macy's invented the gift registry in the 1920s**, guests weren't expected to bring anything to the table. From marriage chests to key baskets to china patterns, Racked traced the history of wedding gifting from the very beginning. It's not hard to see why we've ended up with so many creative ways to just ask for cash.

Wedding gifts originated from the notion of a bride price or dowry that was paid to the bride's family. It usually included land, animals, money, and other forms of historical wealth. The first recorded dowry was exchanged in **3,000 B.C.**

Fast forward a couple thousand years and the Renaissance came through, bringing with it the idea of **ornate marriage chests**. These chests held all the bride's future wife goods, which she would then take to her groom's house. It was the early form of a **hope chest**, which unmarried women used to collect all the linens and things they would need to embark on married life.

400 years later, the idea evolved into something more symbolic. In the South especially, it was common for American brides to be gifted a **leather key basket** that represented her new role as mistress of the house. It would be filled with keys to unlock doors, chests, and cupboards in her new home, symbolizing her new status.

As the idea of marriage slowly unwound itself from status and ritual, so did wedding gifts. In 1924, Macy's unveiled the first wedding gift registry. Other department stores were quick to jump on board. In the earlier days of gift registries, **crystal, silver, and china** were very common things to gift a bride. Picking out the right china pattern was an essential component of making a gift registry.

In the current era of gift giving, guests are more apt to go off registry to get something more personal, or skip the presents altogether and just gift money. Due to increasing numbers of couples living together before marriage, kitchen appliances, linens, and flatware aren't as popular as gifts. Instead, modern couples are finding creative ways to celebrate their day, including setting up charity donations or just asking for cash (politely, of course).

Important Events from the Mid 1950's

- October 30, 1953 - The Cold War continues in earnest when President Dwight D. Eisenhower approves a top secret document stating that the U.S. nuclear arsenal must be expanded to combat the communist threat around the world.
- December 30, 1953 - The first color televisions go on sale.
- April 22, 1954 - Joseph McCarthy begins televised Senate hearings into alleged Communist influence in the United States Army. Later this year, on December 2, the U.S. Congress votes to condemn Senator McCarthy for his conduct during the Army investigation hearings.
- May 17, 1954 - Racial segregation in public schools is declared unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court in *Brown vs. the Board of Education*. The ruling of the court stated that racial segregation violated the 14th Amendment's clause that guaranteed equal protection. The Monroe School in Topeka, Kansas had segregated Linda Brown in its classes.
- July 17, 1955 - Disneyland, the brainchild of Walt Disney, whose father had worked at previous world's fairs and inspired his son to build the iconic Magic Castle and other exhibits opens in Anaheim, California, with the backing of the new television network, ABC
- December 1, 1955 - Rosa Parks, an African American seamstress, refuses to give up her seat on the bus to a white man, prompting a boycott that would lead to the declaration that bus segregation laws were unconstitutional by a federal court.
- September 4, 1957 - National Guard called to duty by Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus to bar nine black students from attending previously all-white Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. He withdrew the troops on September 21.

Set Design from the 2019 Civic Production



Original Set from the 2013 Wedding Gift, designed by Robert Shoquist



Quiz

1. Around what year was *The Wedding Gift* first conceived?

_____ 1970

_____ 1980

_____ 1990

_____ 2000

2. Who initially conceived *The Wedding Gift*?

_____ Phillip H. Colglazier

_____ Nancy Carlson Dodd

_____ Dori Collins

_____ Eunice Wadewitz

3. With what first play did Nancy Dodd win the Northeast Indiana Playwright Festival?

_____ The Wedding Gift

_____ The Boys in the Gymnasium

_____ The Ladies in Cabin 10

_____ The Kids in the Dorm

4. Who directed the original play version for the Fort Wayne Civic Theatre?

_____ Greg Stieber

_____ Phillip H. Colglazier

_____ Christopher Murphy

_____ Jane Drake Brody

5. Who collaborated with Nancy Dodd to compose the music and write the lyrics?

_____ Dori Erwin Collins

_____ Tim Rice

_____ Eunice Wadewitz

_____ Elise Ramel

6. From what language does the word "sitzprobe" come?

_____ German

_____ English

_____ Italian

_____ French

7. What is the literal translation of "sitzprobe"?

_____ "with orchestra"

_____ "with full chorus"

_____ "seated rehearsal"

_____ "no set"

8. Which character in The Wedding Gift has the same first name as last name?

_____ "Randolph Randolph"

_____ "Grant Grant"

_____ "Austin Austin"

_____ "Flossie Flossie"

9. Near what major city did a group of professional actors and singers first perform in a sitzprobe with the orchestra?

_____ Fort Wayne

_____ New York

_____ Chicago

_____ Los Angeles

10. The first recorded dowry was exchanged when?

_____ 3,000 B.C.

_____ 2,000 B.C.

_____ 1562 A.D.

_____ 1701 A.D.

11. The Renaissance brought with it an early form of what?

- guest book
- gift receipt
- gift card
- hope chest

12. 400 years after the Renaissance, it was common for American brides, especially in the south, to be gifted:

- new house
- chickens
- cows
- leather key basket

13. In 1924, what store unveiled the first wedding gift registry?

- Weddings R Us
- Sears
- Macy's
- Wolf & Dessauer's

14. In early days of gift registries, crystal, silver, and what were common things to gift a bride?

- glassware
- maternity clothes
- cash
- china

15. Due to what reason are gifts like kitchen appliances, linens, and flatware not as popular to give these days?

- rising costs
- lack of interest
- meals not made at home
- couples living together before marriage

Discussion Questions

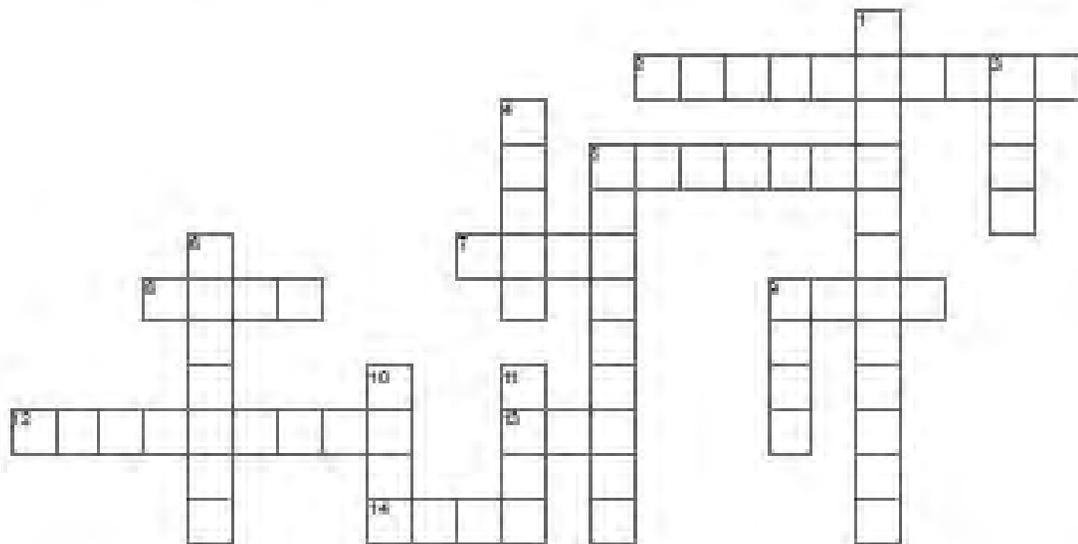
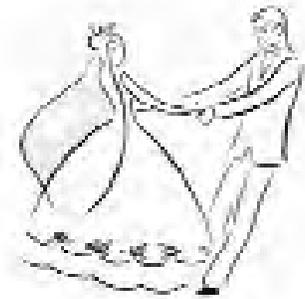
1. In recent years, especially amongst upper-middle and upper class couples, the idea of a “post-nuptial” between couples has gained more and more acceptance.

- Do you see the value in having one?
- Why or why not?
- Would you be offended if your fiancée asked you to sign one?
- Would it have precluded crimes like those seen in *The Wedding Gift*?

2. The same theatre has presented two versions of this same play. One without music and one with music.

- Do you think the music helps propel the story or slows it down?
- Are there places with songs that you think would better served in dialogue?
- Conversely, are there any scenes with only dialogue you think would be better as a song?
- Pick a song from a favorite musical and re-write the scene to happen without a song.

Bridal Shower Crossword



ACROSS

2. A young girl who carries flowers at a wedding.
5. Groom upon saying I do.
7. A dress worn by the bride at a wedding.
8. A solemn promise, pledge, or personal commitment.
9. "You may now _____ the bride"
12. Luxurious automobile where the Bride gets a ride.
13. Words said before a kiss.
14. A profoundly tender, passionate affection for another person.

DOWN

1. Party held for a bride-to-be in anticipation of her wedding.
3. Wedding commitment symbol.
4. A small gift given to the guests.
5. A trip or vacation taken by a newly married couple.
6. A group of flowers that are picked and often tied together.
9. Fastening made by tying together.
10. A length of cloth worn by women over the head.
11. Bride upon saying I do.

Resources

<http://allfreeprintable.com/cont/cw/img/printable-bridal-shower-crossword-puzzle.jpg>

www.americasbesthistory.com/abhtimeline1950.html

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sitzprobe>

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/fwcivictheatre/sets/72157634213067993>

www.racked.com/2014/6/12/7592833/wedding-registry-history-chest-dowry

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Thanks to Elise Ramel for tracking down the artistic team bios and photos.