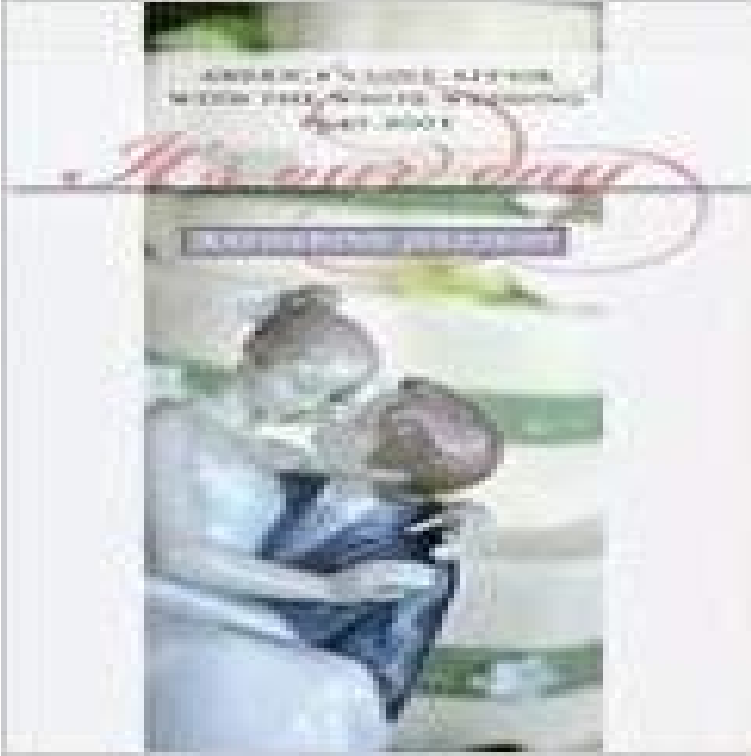


Its Our Day: Americas Love Affair with the White Wedding, 1945-2005 (Cultureamerica) (Culture America (Hardcover))



Whats white, costs billions of dollars, and embodies the American dream? For years, a white-gowned bride, multi-tiered white cake, and shiny gold rings have been the central icons for a grand American tradition that remains vibrant despite changing times. Now Katherine Jellison gives us a comprehensive cultural history of American weddings since World War II, examining the development of our precise and expensive standards for celebrating weddings and the staying power of this phenomenon in the face of enormous social, political, and economic upheaval. Jellisons book is the first to examine wedding culture in the context of postwar cultural change, analyzing the mechanisms that disseminated, updated, and sustained the specific tradition of the white wedding. Tracing the ritual back to the rise of consumer culture in the postwar boom, it also examines how Americans guaranteed the survival of the white wedding into the twenty-first century by amending the ideology that supported it and reinterpreting the functions it served. Jellison examines the ways the bridal business, the media, and consumers responded to new norms that expanded the notions of who was an appropriate white-wedding bride. She particularly examines the key influences that have sustained this cultural phenomenon for sixty years the bridal-wear industry, celebrity weddings, movie weddings, and media coverage of the weddings-next-door to show that the white wedding has become a unifying experience that crosses gender, class, and racial lines. Here are the mystique of the perfect white wedding gown, a cavalcade of iconic brides from Grace Kelly to Carolyn Bessette, and the proliferation of reality weddings in magazines and on television. Jellison draws on pro-wedding writings of contemporary feminist authors, as well as oral histories of bridal couples from diverse backgrounds,

and examines contemporary issues such as the legalization of same-sex marriage and its backlash and the post-Katrina Hurricane Brides project. Engagingly written and lavishly illustrated, Its Our Day tells how a fantasy event survived counterculture movements and organized feminism to become a multi-billion-dollar industry supporting clothiers, caterers, jewelers, and florists. But more than an exposé of commercialism, it is a testament to the flexibility of the dream it represents.

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