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Wedding as Text: Communicating Cultural Identities Through Ritual (Routledge Communication Series)

Wendy Leeds-Hurwitz

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A wedding serves as the beginning marker of a marriage; if a couple is to manage cultural differences throughout their relationship, they must first pass the hurdle of designing a wedding ceremony that accommodates those differences. In this volume, author Wendy Leeds-Hurwitz documents the weddings of 112 couples from across the United States, studied over a 10-year period. She focuses on intercultural weddings--interracial, interethnic, interfaith, international, and interclass--looking at how real people are coping with cultural differences in their lives.

Through detailed case studies, the book explores how couples display different identities simultaneously. The concepts of community, ritual, identity, and meaning are given extensive consideration. Because material culture plays a particularly important role in weddings as in other examples of ritual, food, clothing, and objects are given special attention here.

Focusing on how couples design a wedding ritual to simultaneously meet multiple--and different--requirements, this book provides:
*extensive details of actual behavior by couples;
*an innovative format: six traditional theoretical chapters, with examples integrated into the discussion, are matched to six "interludes" providing detailed descriptions of the most successful examples of resolving intercultural differences;
*a methodological appendix detailing what was done and why these decisions were made; and
*a theoretical appendix outlining the study's assumptions in detail.

Wedding as Text: Communicating Cultural Identities Through Ritual is a distinctive study of those who have accepted cultural difference into their daily lives and how they have managed to do so successfully. As such, it is suitable for students and scholars in semiotics, intercultural communication, ritual, material culture, family communication, and family studies, and will be valuable reading for anyone facing the issue of cultural difference.

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