

Making the commitment in college

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"Marriage is best done in the best of times," says Joseph Lowman, an associate professor of psychology who counsels young married couples.

For some students, the "best of times" is now. Eleven percent of the entire student body is married, according to Joanne Kucharski, assistant registrar for computer operations. While 97 percent of undergraduates are still single, 33 percent of graduate students and 19 percent of post-baccalaureates (students in law, medicine and dental schools) have chosen to walk down the aisle.

Tying the knot

"Some young undergraduates get married so they won't have to feel guilty about their sexual relationships or because they want to move in together," Lowman says.

Making the final commitment also could be a way to keep a relationship growing. "Many students get married because they're in a long-term relationship, and it's the next step," explains Janice Ryan, a clinical social worker in the mental health section of Student Health Service.

"They may not want to delay that step for several years until they finish school," Ryan added.

Don and Teresa Mace are one couple who just couldn't wait. After 18 months of high phone bills and weekend trips between Asheville and Chapel Hill, Don decided to propose.

"It was just so hard being apart — 250 miles is too far," he says.

The couple met at work, became friends and later started dating. Last year while Teresa, a sophomore pharmacy major, started her freshman year at UNC, Don, a junior math education major, was already a student at UNC—Asheville. The couple got married last July.

Don transferred to UNC this year so he and Teresa could finally be together. "We thought about if he

hadn't been accepted here, we still would have stayed together," Teresa says. "We would've withstood the distance somehow."

Another couple, Trent and Pam Beach, also married as undergraduates. Trent, a senior pharmacy major, thought four years was too long to wait. At the end of his sophomore year, they were married. "We thought it was easier to get married than to have a long engagement," Trent says.

Other students choose to marry while in graduate school. Ted Clark, a dental school student, and his wife Becky married last May after dating four years.

"It would be more of a problem if we weren't married," Ted says. "Dental school takes a lot of time. If I had to drive to see her, it would cut out on time."

However, some students are more cautious about walking down the path toward matrimony. Andrea Wells, a senior psychology major, and her fiancé, a 1988 UNC graduate, have dated nearly four years. They considered marriage several times, but decided to put it on hold until after her graduation. "I thought it would be better to stay in school and have my degree to fall back on," she says. "We wanted to be financially stable and get started on a good foot."

Andrea claims a long engagement has its benefits. "You learn so much about them when you date for such a long time," she says. "Now I'm 100 percent sure he is the right one."

Parents often encourage the more cautious path. Don says the main concerns of his parents were the couple's age and financial situation. "At first they didn't like it," Don says. "They thought we were making a mistake. They wanted us to have enough money to support ourselves."

Teresa adds, "But we convinced them we'd be happiest."

Ted agrees that parents have influence on the marriage decision. "We have more of an opportunity to

do things together," he says. "Before, there was pressure from parents to do this or do that. We're more open now."

Keeping it tied

Married couples agree that consideration, communication and cooperation are vital to a successful marriage.

"Once you say 'I do,' you did," Don says. "It's a commitment then. It takes cooperation and patience."

"And love," Teresa adds. A good marriage also needs time sharing and romance, according to Don. After seven months of marriage, both say they are still going through their "honeymoon period."

Mutual support is another necessary element. Clark says his wife helps ease academic pressure. "She gives me added support when I'm down," he says. "It works the opposite for her. I give her support when she needs it too."

Married couples have to be willing to adjust their social lives. According to Lowman, they will probably have less time to spend with friends but should be careful not to spend too much time together. "It will hurt the relationship if you suffocate each other," he says.

Don says couples sacrifice part of themselves when they get married. "So much of your independence you have to give up for the other person," he says.

Teresa explains that couples must be considerate. "You just can't jump into something without thinking of the other person."

Losing some of the independence that college students grow accustomed to is definitely a part of getting married, Trent says. Instead of "going uptown" with his friends at night, he spends time with Pam. But being together doesn't mean they have no social life — the couple goes to parties at Trent's pharmacy fraternity, Phi Delta Chi.

Married couples also must deal with added financial responsibility, often finding it necessary to support



themselves by working as well as studying. One such couple is Don and Teresa — he tutors privately in the math department, while she works as a research aide.

Don says one of the hardest lessons to learn while married is how to manage money. "It's not just mine or hers — it's ours," he says. "We didn't have bills before. You have to make an adjustment."

Others find it impossible to work and study at the same time. When Trent and Pam married, Pam quit

school to work full time. Trent continued school, but he has to work part time also.

Advice for couples

A dating relationship is hard enough, but marriage brings added responsibility. Couples thinking about getting married need to take a good look at their relationship. Ryan says, "Look at what brought you together — do you have common goals and interests?" he says. "Look at how you communicate and

deal with conflicts and what you want for the future. Do you meet each other's needs?"

Don also advises: "Really do some soul-searching with each other. Make sure it's what you want to do and don't let anything stand in your way. If the love's there and the trust is there — go for it!"

Even though marriage causes extra difficulties for undergraduates, they can overcome the obstacles, Lowman says. "Being married is wonderful."

Something new: The perfect gown

Traditional, trendy fashions walk down the aisle in '89

By MYRNA MILLER
Assistant Features Editor

Here comes the bride — all dressed in white. Or is that pink?

Most people still choose the traditional white wedding gown, but this year fashion trends include pink, pale green under white, peach under white and ivory gowns, said Millie Martini, associate editor of Bride's Magazine.

"There is a great deal of variety in the color, texture, and length of wedding gowns," Martini said.

"All kinds of lengths and styles are popular — very long formal dresses, short dresses and even strapless dresses with capes or jackets."

Modern wedding gowns also have a great variety of textures, she said. They are being made of fabrics that are flocked, quilted and puckered. Some dresses are made of fluid materials such as chiffon and crepe, while others are made of crisp materials, such as organza and taffeta, she said.

Martini said pique and glazed fabric were especially popular this season. Glazed fabric is a cotton or chintz that has a lacquered look.

Every bride-to-be knows that veils, headpieces and trains are almost as important as the wedding dress, and buying these pieces separately is a new option. Headpieces range from the very simple to the elaborate, which may include beading, lace, flowers and sometimes even porcelain, Martini said. Wreaths are the most popular headpiece, with tiaras coming in a close second.

The train of a wedding gown is one lasting tradition many brides still consider important. Martini said that although the popular lengths vary, the majority of brides choose the Chapel Train, which is three to four feet in length.

These national trends seem to be rapidly catching on in Chapel Hill. Pink gowns are on moderate demand although white and ivory

are the most popular, said Patti Hutzler, owner of Mordecai Bridal-Formal-Tuxedo in Chapel Hill. "Ivory wedding gowns have been worn for years because some people just don't look good in white," she said.

Although a few people want tea-length wedding gowns, the floor length and long train are the most popular in this area. "We still sell a lot of floor-length dresses with the cathedral train," said Jackie Croteau, owner of Bridal Elegance in Durham.

While ruffles and full dresses are definitely still in style, many of the strait, silhouette dresses are becoming more popular this year. "One favorite is the mermaid style, which goes strait and flairs out below the knees," Hutzler said.

The normal trimming on wedding dresses has been the frilly lace. Recently beads and sequins have become extremely popular, Hutzler said. Some dresses only have them in a few places around the bodice and back, while other have them practically from head-to-toe.

Today's bride not only has many choices in style — she also has a large price range. Local stores have wedding dresses ranging from \$240 to \$2,500, with an average price of \$700.

Although the groom has a much smaller selection of style and colors in a tuxedo, modern fashions are becoming both more traditional and more elaborate, said Sherry Tyndall, vice president of Tyndall's Formal Wear. Black is the most popular color for tuxedos, but grey and white still make occasional appearances. Most changes aren't in the tuxedos themselves, instead, the cummerbunds, vests, and bow ties are becoming more outrageous, she said. "Patterns include paisley and hound's tooth checks."

Bridesmaids dresses are also an important consideration for any wedding. Martini said one of the most popular new ideas was the



Donna Van Trigt models a popular beaded gown

floral print. "Roses are especially popular, and tulips and lilacs." Other trendy colors are teal, rose, cherrise, black and white.

A new style for bridesmaids dresses is the high/low hemline

dress, which is higher in the front and longer in the back. Taffeta is now one of the most commonly chosen fabrics, Croteau said. "Bridesmaids dresses start at around \$84 and go from there."

Counting the high costs of being a couple

By MYRNA MILLER
Assistant Features Editor

Couples ready to "tie the knot" need to check their bank balances before setting a date for the big event.

Although most people know a wedding is expensive, they don't realize just how expensive until they actually try to plan one. Florists, caterers, photographers and wedding clothes are only a few of the major expenses involved.

A marriage license is the first (and probably the least expensive) thing a couple who wants to get married will have to pay for. In Chapel Hill, couples go to the Registrar of Deeds to pick up their \$20 wedding license.

Once the date is set, a couple will probably want to send out invitations. The cost of wedding invitations varies depending on the amount and style, said Sally Johnson, owner of Peacock Alley.

"The price depends on whether the invitation is printed, done in thermography or engraved," Johnson said. "Thermography looks like engraving but is actually raised printing." The invitations can cost \$1 to \$5 each, and the more you order, the cheaper each individual invitation is, she said. Most people spend \$60 to \$70 on invitations.

The cost of floral arrangements also varies according to the elaboration desired by a couple, said Kevin Chesson, manager of Montgomery's Florists in Durham. "An average wedding will cost between \$500 and \$1,000, a small wedding from \$250 to \$750 and large weddings are well over \$1,000," he said.

Other florists charge by the flower and bouquet. A bride's bouquet can range between \$50 and \$100, said Bea Miller, owner and manager of Floral Dimensions. "Brides trying to conserve money should probably go with sweetheart roses, carnations or

astroemeria — which comes in all kinds of colors," she said.

For those who have more money to spend, Miller recommends stephanotis, also known as orange blossom, roses and orchids. "Bouquets aren't always white anymore; they often have some color," Miller said.

Once the floral arrangements are made, some brides may choose to have their wedding reception catered. The wedding cake will usually cost about \$1 a slice, and finger foods run around \$400, said Betty Wilson, wedding consultant for Bridal Elegance.

The time of day is an important factor in the price of a reception, said Marie Fischer, owner of the Catering Company of Chapel Hill. "There are luncheon weddings, afternoon weddings and dinner weddings," she said. The afternoon weddings are usually the least expensive to cater.

"The average reception with light finger foods costs \$10 per person," she said. "It is very possible to do it for less — we just are more creative." In Chapel Hill, most couples opt to have champagne and wine at their receptions, rather than hard liquor, which is more expensive, she said.

Two extras most people choose to have are a photographer and more recently, a video producer. "Although the cost can be as low as \$450, it often is between \$800 and \$1,000," Wilson said. To have someone do a video production usually costs around \$250.

The few items mentioned don't include the cost of the wedding gown, which can range from \$250 up into the \$2,000s, as well as numerous other expenses. However, the cost of the average wedding will be between \$2,000 and \$3,500.