

Ephemerality and Dress Traditions  
A Qualitative Investigation of Wearer-Object Attachment in  
Participatory Dress Traditions

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## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick and her descendants, without whom this research could not exist.

### **Abstract**

This qualitative study sought to understand how dress traditions are formed, cultivated, and maintained by their networks of participants. The research sample used detailed interviews and material analysis to collect information on use of a bridal dress tradition from a single extended family. Using Attfield's theory of ephemerality as applied to activity theory, data were collected and analyzed for ephemeral attachment activity. This research indicates that dress traditions create a strong feeling of connection with others. Key findings illustrate how traditions are formed, maintained, and cultivated over time, affirming the role of traditional objects as an ephemeral mediation aid.

**KEYWORDS:** dress, tradition, participation, ephemerality, activity theory, heirloom, bridal tradition, wedding dress, family

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## Chapter 1 – Introduction

This narrative study seeks to examine the manner in which traditions of dress are cultivated by the individuals and groups who participate in and develop individual dress traditions. As such, the purpose of this narrative is to understand and describe the concept of dress traditions, and to explore their formation and role as objects of emotional attachment and signifiers of group membership through avenues such as participation, custody, and visibility. By employing the qualitative methodology approach of a narrative, this researcher will study the experiences and stories of participants within a single dress tradition to explore the phenomenon for this project and for further study. Participants of this study are drawn from a single dress tradition employed by a small network of people in order to provide an accessible tradition available for deep exploration, with the goal of revealing transferable findings for use with other forms of dress traditions.

### *Terminology*

In the field of apparel studies, the phrase “traditional dress” often indicates a cultural or ethnic form of dress. Within the overall field, this phrase is indicative of a specific or highly recognizable form of attire, such as the role and use of kimono in Japanese dress, or wooden clogs as an aspect of traditional Dutch attire. To those outside of apparel studies, these garments might be seen as elements of a so-called national costume. However, this study seeks to describe, explore, and understand a different kind of traditional dress which exists outside of these cultural and societal levels for both

ceremonial and traditional purposes, with a focus on micro-level dress traditions as opposed to the macro scope of traditional dress.

The phenomenon under study, which is referred to as a “dress tradition” in an effort to differentiate from culturally-based traditional dress, is drawn from wedding attire. Many traditions and rituals are involved in preparation for a wedding, particularly with regards to dress. It is now seen as traditional for western brides to wear a white or similarly light-colored dress, a Victorian convention which has become an enduring part of western wedding culture (Foster & Johnson, 2003, p. 2). Some of these traditions may be disseminated and used across a cultural level, as with the popularity of white wedding gowns in western culture, while others might see much less use or belong to a much smaller group. In order to study these smaller dress traditions, a working definition and theoretical framework must first be developed to answer the question of how dress traditions are developed between members of a group, and what those resulting traditions mean.

### *Context*

In order to achieve this goal, a single example of a dress tradition has been selected for study. The dress tradition in question was drawn from within the larger pool of traditions followed by the researcher’s extended family. This tradition uses a specific item of clothing, an antique shoe fancy, as a component of bridal attire for the women of the family. This tradition has been followed since 1925 and used by over four generations of women to date. In 2013, a pilot study was carried out at the University of Minnesota focusing on three of these women as participants in a dress tradition and their unique

experiences as such. The pilot study, which focused on the role of participation in a tradition as a signifier of group identity, revealed the context of the dress tradition within the broader history of a large extended family. This project intends to build on the knowledge gathered during the pilot study by expanding the interviews to include a larger sample size of participants in the tradition from each possible generation.

This dress tradition first came to the attention of the researcher in 2008, when the shoe fancies were presented to the researcher's sister-in-law for her to wear as a part of her bridal attire. Subsequently, the shoe fancies have been employed by several cousins and their spouses in their weddings. The researcher learned that in the past, the shoe fancies were employed at the weddings of the participants' parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and other members of the extended family. The pilot study of this dress tradition focused on the role of the dress tradition in forming group identity in part because the use of these fancies is not limited to those members of the family who are born into it, but is also offered to any woman marrying a member of the existing family. As a result, initial studies were focused on the use of the shoe fancies as a single object helping to create emotional and familial bonds not only across the generations of a family, but also across the family as it expanded and welcomed new members. These initial studies have been expanded into a deeper examination of the ephemeral bonds formed between the participants in the shoe fancy tradition and the shoe fancy itself.

The initial study of the shoe fancy tradition revealed tantalizing glimpses of its history. The first consideration is the name of the tradition, which features a matched pair of shoe fancies. Within the family, this tradition is known as the shoe fancy tradition,

shoe buckle tradition, or shoe clip tradition, and the objects in question are thus referred to as shoe fancies, shoe buckles, or shoe clips. In this research, the term shoe fancy or shoe fancies will be used by the researcher to encompass all of these colloquial terms for the objects, which may be referenced by other names in the words of the participants.

The shoe fancies were handcrafted in 1923 by Mary Bishop, a matriarch of the greater family, for use in her May Queen ensemble at Purdue University in Lafayette, Indiana. Mary was enrolled at Purdue in home economic studies when she was named May Queen. She proceeded to create her entire May Queen ensemble by hand. The decorations for her shoes were rosettes of Chantilly lace adorned with sprigs of wax orange blossoms. These shoe fancies were sewn to her shoes and visible below the hem of her handmade dress (see figure 5, page 103).

In 1925, Mary reused her May Queen ensemble as her wedding dress when she married Frank Kirkpatrick in Arcadia, Indiana. Following her wedding, Mary Kirkpatrick loaned these shoe fancies to other members of her family for use in their own weddings. Subsequent generations of women, both the descendants of Frank and Mary Kirkpatrick and those who were marrying their descendants, have used the shoe fancies as a piece of their wedding ensemble, recording their names and wedding dates on a paper registry which is stored with the shoe fancies (McKinney, J. J., *Shoe fancy registry*). However, a complete, written history of the shoe fancies has yet to emerge, and as such is one of the goals of the current research. By examining the roots, foundation, and subsequent development of the tradition, additional light may be shed on the formation and use of other, disparate dress traditions.

By studying the shoe fancy and the participatory experiences of the women of the Bishop-Kirkpatrick family who have worn it for their weddings, this narrative study seeks to explore the ephemeral bond between the object and those who have kept and maintained this tradition. This exploration will include the manner in which this tradition developed, an analysis of the physical shoe fancies and their trappings drawn from material culture studies, and the way in which the tradition has been maintained. Through the study of the tradition's chain of custody, the way in which it has been kept, maintained, changed, and recorded across multiple generations, further evidence of ephemeral connections and attachments to the shoe fancies may be brought to light. In addition, recording the narrative stories of past participants in this tradition illustrates the potential for a single object to serve as a central hub for discussing the stories, connections, and identities of the people who harbored attachment to this object. By describing the tradition, learning more of its formation and use, and exploring the narratives of participants in the dress tradition, the understanding of dress traditions as a whole will be furthered, and the potential for transferability and further research will be revealed.

### *Research questions*

In order to address the way in which traditions of dress are developed between members of a group, and the overall impact of these traditions' use, a list of research questions was developed at the outset of this project. These questions were further clarified and reordered based on peer feedback for early research interview protocols. The initial scope of the study was widely focused on the intersection of dress traditions

and identity. Per peer feedback, the focus of the study was refined to clarify their relationship with the bridal tradition under review, and as such examines the establishment of dress traditions, including custody and knowledge, and the experiences and feelings of the participants in the dress tradition.

1. Why did these individuals adopt such a dress tradition?
2. How did these individuals adopt or learn of such a dress tradition?
3. Did these individuals change or adapt their dress traditions to suit their personal preferences?
4. How do these dress traditions change? (or “Do these dress traditions change?”)
5. How are dress traditions such as these formed?
6. What role does custody of tradition play in the development of such dress traditions?

In this way, all six questions continue to inform and guide the overall direction of the research with priority given to the experiences of the participants in this dress tradition. This strategy allows for the most holistic analysis of participants’ responses, and permits the use of the questions in further research. By understanding why an individual might choose to participate in a ritual of dress, and what feelings this participation has elicited, the intention is to develop a greater understanding and description of how traditional or heirloom objects play a role in the lives of those who interact with and maintain these objects and their surrounding rituals.

*Research Design Overview*

The research strategy identified at the outset of the project requires a narrative approach. In the narrative research tradition, the participants, their words, stories, and surroundings are of utmost importance to any findings generated by research. This approach has been guided by the social constructivism paradigm. In social constructivism, multiple truths, realities, or opinions exist side-by-side as factual truth. This paradigm was selected due to the focus on individual experiences within a larger group, leading to the likelihood of multiple truths.

While aspects of this research are focused on the narrative and grounded theory approach, due in part to the influence of this approach on the writings of Bloomberg & Volpe (2008), analysis into the data provided by participants and researcher materials is guided by the theory of ephemerality/attachment as activity, as modeled in the second chapter. This theoretical framework allows for the ephemeral bond to be traced throughout a participant's use of the traditional object under study.

Additional information will be collected from family archives of the participants as needed, primarily in the form of letters, photographs, and documents pertaining to the shoe fancy tradition. Included in this step of research and data analysis is a material culture study of the shoe fancies in their current state, with photography and full descriptions of the shoe fancies and all accompanying artifacts. Of note is one particular document which came to light during the pilot study for this research, a paper registry which is maintained by the custodian of the shoe fancies. This registry lists the names, wedding dates, and locations of every confirmed participant in the shoe fancy dress

tradition, and is the principal source of information on potential research participants (McKinney, J. J., *Shoe fancy registry*). The artifact analysis and document review will allow for participants to be identified and contacted for prospective interviews.

### *Role of the Researcher*

The researcher's background in apparel studies originates in the field of theatrical costume design. One of the primary goals of these design efforts was always to further the depth and realism of a play by anchoring a character's identity and history in their attire. This foundation led to the principal assumption of this body of research: that our choices in dress help to build and cement identity. The pilot study demonstrated the researcher's specific interest in the relationship between attire and identity and the intersection between these relationships in smaller groups. It is the intent of this new research to explore the emotional intersection between dress, participation, and tradition formed by the attachment between individuals, groups, and the objects at the center of their dress traditions. A close examination of these ephemeral bonds allows for the exploration of dress traditions and the manner in which these attachments to ritual objects changes over time, which may play a role in the further development of emergent traditions.

The example chosen for study is the aforementioned shoe fancy dress tradition drawn from the researcher's extended family. This choice provides several benefits for this study. First, the researcher was a known quantity to the pool of possible participants before the study began, permitting a privileged level of participant access for research. Due to the time constraints of this research, the choice to utilize a tradition drawn from



within this family was made in order to reduce any tension or misleading information which might be generated by interviewing participants who were less familiar with the researcher and research goals, or who might be less willing to share details of their participation in very private and personal rituals of dress. These aspects were important considerations as one of the goals of the study is to determine the role of emotional attachment to objects, and the role these emotional attachments play within groups utilizing these traditions. Additionally, this research could provide information about how dress traditions are formed and change over time. This research may offer additional insight and reflections for traditional and ceremonial dress as they are typically studied in this field, as it is often hard to trace the full historical origins of a longstanding, culturally encoded form of dress.

Prior to the genesis of this research, limited information about the dress tradition was available for study. Three past participants in the tradition provided the researcher with their knowledge of the tradition in the pilot study, including their use of the shoe fancy as a component of the “bridal rhyme” tradition, but research constraints involving participant age and time available for study prevented a definite history of the dress tradition from being compiled. Although this research has a very narrow focus, understanding more about this particular dress tradition has implications outside of the family where the tradition originates. New insights and questions regarding the creation of dress traditions and what, if any, impact they have on the people who choose to follow these traditions may emerge from the overall body of work. Developing an understanding

of the history of the dress tradition, its custody, and its transmission is thus a key component of the overall research.

Due to the intimacy of the connection between the participants and the researcher, considerable thought and effort has been devoted to bracketing researcher biases. The researcher's preexisting knowledge of this dress tradition first emerged during preparation for a family member's wedding, when the shoe fancy was brought out and offered to the bride, and its history very briefly explained. Although the researcher is female, as are all of the past participants in this tradition, her unmarried status has excluded participation in this dress tradition to date. This exclusion prevents the existence of any personal familiarity with the artifact and the ritual, which will help prevent an overly subjective view during data collection and analysis. Despite this safeguard, there is still a level of familiarity and interest with the tradition which must be bracketed during research.

Additionally, the researcher's unmarried state must be considered as a possible bias given the nature of this dress tradition, which is intrinsically linked to marriage; the subject of the research is not marriage itself, or the nature of relationships within the larger family network, but rather the way in which the dress tradition and its use have developed over time. While the emotions of the participants come into play due to the study of attachment and ephemerality, the nature of relationships within the larger family is not a major consideration of this study. The principal form of bracketing these biases is the use of a highly structured research protocol which prevents deviation from

preselected interview questions during data gathering, with additional assistance provided by peer review.

Since the focus of this research is the participants' emotional connection to and use of this dress tradition, the research emphasizes learning the thoughts, feelings, and opinions of the participant group. Putting aside any biases drawn from a shared family history or differing stages of life or relationship status is a crucial component to the objective analysis of any data generated through research of this dress tradition. This research is not meant to change or in any other way impact the relationships between these individuals, but rather to study one of the methods through which the bond between these disparate individuals may have formed. Only by acknowledging and then putting this shared history aside can the impact of this tradition upon the participants' personal lives and group membership be fully studied.

#### *Anticipated outcomes*

Past study into bridal dress and dress traditions has shed some light on the shoe fancy dress tradition, allowing for a more narrowly defined set of potential outcomes from this research. These assumptions relate to the manner in which the tradition was formed, the norms of the tradition which have been enforced over a near-century of use, and the emotional attachment or ephemeral bond between participants in this dress tradition and the central object, the shoe fancies.

First, it must be noted that a pilot study carried out at the University of Minnesota in the spring of 2013 involved interviews from participants in this dress tradition. A basic understanding of the history of the dress tradition has thus been formed, and the first

anticipated outcome is that this history will be further detailed and confirmed by work with participants in the current body of research. Despite this assumption and previous investigation into the shoe fancy tradition, no physical analysis of the shoe fancies and their trappings has been carried out to date. It is known that the fancies do not travel alone, but are kept in a box with other keepsakes, including a registry of names of past participants. This registry, in addition to being the source of names for participants in this research, is thus considered to be an important part of the dress tradition, and its relationship to the shoe fancies and the experience of the participants will also be examined. From the disclosure of past participants, signing this registry is one of the final activities involved in the typical use of this dress tradition.

The second anticipated outcome of this body of research involves the completed history of this dress tradition. Due to the aforementioned registry of brides who have participated in this tradition, the researcher anticipates being able to identify each bride who employed the shoe fancy tradition as a component of their wedding attire. While several are known to be deceased prior to research, including the dress tradition's founder, family members and friends may still be able to provide information in the form of photographs or memories of these events.

Due to prior interviews with past participants, the third anticipated outcome of this research is evidence of a growing ephemeral connection between the participants and the central dress object. Past participants came from the two most recent generations of women to employ the shoe fancy as a part of their wedding attire, and all three expressed an emotional connection to the object and to their family through the ritual use of the

dress tradition. As such, it is expected that any changes made to the tradition or to the condition of the shoe fancies will suggest a continuation of this emotional bond between participants and the dress object. The role of visibility in this emotional bond will also be investigated in order to determine whether the use of the shoe fancies as a public object as opposed to a private object may have bearing on the emotional resonance between the wearer and the shoe fancy.

## Chapter 2 – Literature Review

### *Overview*

The purpose of this research is the examination of dress traditions, in particular a single tradition carried out by more than twenty individuals who are members or friends of the extended Bishop-Kirkpatrick family. In order to study how this tradition has developed and undergone further cultivation, both by the larger group and by individual participants, a critical review of literature related to the areas under study was necessary. Sources of key interest to this study were those relating to tradition, object attachment, ephemeral transformation of objects, and identity. This review occurred throughout all stages of the research process, with a particular emphasis given during the phases of data gathering, data analysis, and synthesis.

From a pilot study carried out in the spring of 2013, the likelihood of emotional attachment to the traditional dress object by participants is already known. Due to this knowledge, critical study was focused on two key research areas: object attachment and tradition, with additional information drawn from the study of identity. Object attachment was further divided into the study of attachment and ephemerality. The study of attachment provides insight into the way in which people interact with and preserve objects which fulfill an important role in their history or identity, while ephemerality illustrates the nonvisible emotional bonds created through interaction with an object, and the object's potential as a transitional bridge during times of change. Literature related to tradition provides the context necessary for understanding how an object made for a single purpose can be transformed and made to fulfill a greater purpose through the

development of ritualized interaction. This research path is dictated by the findings of the pilot study and the relative youth of the tradition, which at the time of writing has existed for only 89 years. By focusing on the attachment to the object and the development of the traditions surrounding it, insight may be provided into the history and context of dress traditions and the individuals and groups which value these rituals as a part of their identity. This context, in turn, provides the basis for understanding the narrative histories gathered from past participants in the dress tradition under study.

Multiple sources of information were consulted in order to conduct this literature review, including online resources, books, and journals. Digital sources were accessed through MNCAT, JSTOR, and the Berg Fashion Library. Source age was considered during the process, but no restrictions were observed for this research due to the importance of historical knowledge of the evolution of tradition and emotional attachment. The potential for these historical insights was significant and thus necessary for inclusion as part of an open time frame.

Apparent gaps and omissions in the available body of literature were highlighted and discussed throughout this process. Each section of the literature review concludes with a summary of the researcher's interpretation of the literature as it relates to the study and to the development of the conceptual framework. The chapter concludes with the framework as developed through the synthesis of available literature.

### Tradition

As the scope of this research is narrowly focused on the concept of dress traditions, the establishment of a working definition of a dress tradition is crucial. By

establishing the meaning of tradition as a whole, the research process can illuminate the unique characteristics and ephemeral capacity of dress traditions. In this way, we can establish not only the history of the family's dress tradition, but also facilitate discussion of what dress traditions mean within the larger scope of apparel studies.

Understanding the invention of new traditions is the cornerstone of defining dress traditions. The tradition under examination, the use of a family shoe fancy by brides at their wedding, began with a single individual's use of a specific piece of clothing which was appropriate for the time, place, and circumstances of its use. The growth of this tradition from 1925 to 2014 allows the opportunity to study a tradition spanning much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century from its roots to its present use, and the ability to track changes and differences in the employment of the tradition by subsequent generations of women. Though focused on the use of traditions within the sociopolitical context of the emergent British Empire and subsequent United Kingdom which is known to us today, Hobsbawm and Ranger's *The Invention of Tradition* (1983/2012) provides insight into the way in which traditions are formed, maintained, and changed over time.

To examine the research questions, it is necessary to understand where traditions come from as a whole. In his essay on the invention of traditions, Hobsbawm stated that traditions were formed through repetition which helped cement present practices and values to those in the past (Hobsbawm in Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983/2012, p. 1). Yet repetition alone is not enough to create and sustain an emergent tradition, such as that of the shoe fancies within the extended family. Rather, Hobsbawm suggests that to be classified as a tradition, something must remain relatively unchanged by the passage of



time. By creating or inventing traditions, we evoke a connection to the past and to certain core truths, values, or beliefs which may render them more resistant to the fluid changes made to the world around us (Hobsbawm in Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983/2012, p. 2). It is the exploration of changes made to traditional rites or objects that sheds the greatest light on the present definition of tradition:

‘Tradition’ in this sense must be distinguished clearly from ‘custom’ which dominates so-called ‘traditional’ societies. The object and characteristic of ‘traditions’, including invented ones, is invariance. The past, real or invented, to which they refer imposes fixed ... practices, such as repetition. ... The decline of ‘custom’ inevitably changes the ‘tradition’ with which it is habitually intertwined. (Hobsbawm in Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983/2012, p. 2-3).

One problem with this definition of tradition becomes readily apparent when viewing apparel traditions through a broader historical lens. To further use the example of wedding attire, it is now customary to wear a white or off-white dress when marrying, a practice which was popularized by the decision by Queen Victoria to wear white on her wedding to Prince Albert in 1840 (Nordtorp-Madison, 2005). However, it is only the color of the young monarch’s dress which has been implemented as a customary aspect of traditional weddings, not its shape, dressmaker, or other trappings of style. If this custom, the white dress, were to decline, it by no means suggests in and of itself that dresses would no longer be worn for weddings. Indeed, the addition of the white color as

a desirable and later near-mandatory choice for bridal apparel itself presented a break in previously traditional wedding costume.

Rather than exclude the possibility of change from allowing a ritualized act which otherwise fits the definition of a 'tradition' to be included in that category, the researcher proposes that change be seen as a welcome aspect of a tradition in good health. Allowing the flexibility for change to be made to a tradition in some small way offers greater likelihood that the core trappings of a tradition will remain otherwise unchanged. At the time of Queen Victoria's wedding, it was customary in western societies to dress in long gowns which are today viewed as far more formal than the clothing we customarily wear for similar functions. The wedding gown is one of the few long, formal dresses which many women will wear in their lifetime, a tradition which harkens back to less changeable times while simultaneously evolving in adaptations of style and color. The hemline has similarly changed with the times, moving up and down in length as present aesthetics both societal and personal have evolved, yet the core of this tradition, a piece of finery denoting the simultaneous solemnity and celebratory nature of the occasion, is still marked as a component of bridal tradition.

Without this ability to adapt to and accept change, no matter how microscopic, many commonly accepted forms of tradition must be reclassified as the customs to which Hobsbawm refers, thus hastening the demise of many rituals otherwise classified as tradition. By allowing for change to occur on the surface layers of a given tradition, we open the tradition to deeper inclusion on a broad societal level, allowing for it to remain healthily employed, maintained, and cherished in a rapidly changing world. This

classification of tradition as agents which can and must accept gradual change allows our personal and societal ties to such traditions to deepen, and helps to reclassify short-lived custom from traditions, which gain a longer lifespan through the embrace of change.

To aid in the study of the specific shoe fancy tradition or phenomenon, a working definition of a dress tradition has thus been established. For the purpose of this research, a dress tradition will be defined as a ritual, custom, or tradition of dress which has seen use by more than one person, or on more than one occasion. Because dress traditions are seen as different from “traditional dress”, it is important that the dress tradition be of a micro scale (belonging to a smaller unit, such as a small group, a family, or a subculture) as opposed to a macro culture (belonging to or encompassing a larger unit, such as a nation or culture). For this research, a dress tradition should demonstrate shared aspects across each use without requiring strict adherence to the same methods of use in every circumstance in which the ritual, custom, or object is employed. When changes are made to the ritual, customary, or traditional trappings of the dress tradition, it is important for this research that those changes be observed. The observation of changes can thus inform the research not only into dress traditions, but into traditions as a whole.

### Ephemeral attachment

#### *Ephemerality*

One aspect of emotional object attachment utilized in this study is that of ephemerality. In ephemeral attachment, objects are physically transformed through the bonds of attachment formed between an object and the person or persons who use it. Judy

Attfield put forward the theory of emotional attachment as a specific agent of ephemerality, transition, or change in her book *Wild Things*, suggesting that

[T]extiles present a particularly apposite object type to illustrate how things are used to mediate the interior mental world of the individual, the body and the exterior objective world beyond the self through which a sense of identity is constructed and transacted within social relations. (2000, p. 123)

Attfield's chapter on the ephemeral nature of artifacts or 'things' focuses on cloth as a transitory object, subject to change by its very nature. Of particular relevance was the example of D.W. Winnicott's transitional object, a baby blanket, as a metaphor for transition between life stages (Attfield, 2000, p. 121-132). In this sense, the baby blanket serves as an anchor securing the child to its familiar surroundings even as it moves out to explore the greater world. Both Winnicott and Attfield emphasize the importance of the child eventually discarding its blanket: "[t]he act also transformed it once again, but this time into a reliquary that was put away and eventually forgotten" (p. 131).

The examination of the baby blanket as the transitional object provokes images of similar textiles used as agents of change at other stages of life. This argument can thus extend the traditional western wedding dress into a metaphor for movement from the original home or family environment into that of a newlywed's new family unit. In this sense, the dress acts as an agent to secure the bride's connection to her past while she moves forward into a new world, one which may be filled with uncertainty and change, just as the world we explore as infants is new and wholly unknown.

Unlike Winnicott's baby blanket, most modern wedding gowns are not used or worn until they fall apart or are put aside as a forgotten object. Some brides reshape their wedding gowns, using the textile as a bridge which emphasizes a specific emotional or physical connection from the original wearer to the new wearer: a dress repurposed into a christening gown from a mother to a child, or the use of a mother's wedding gown for a grown daughter's wedding ceremony. Other brides choose to preserve their wedding dress in its original form and condition following the conclusion of this rite of passage. In this sense, the artifact fulfills its initial purpose of transition without moving forward as an agent of change.

#### *Attachment*

Part of the study of material culture is the attachment, both physical and emotional, which people develop with meaningful objects from their lives. This emotional resonance has been studied in the past by a number of researchers, including Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Eugene Rochberg-Halton in their book *The Meaning of Things: Domestic Symbols and the Self*, whose work provides an invaluable study for those interested in material culture.

Wedding attire is viewed with a particular sense of emotional attachment by its owners. This is particularly apt with regard to women's wedding attire, as western societal norms reflect personal ownership of women's wedding attire where men's attire is frequently rented. This unique relationship between women and wedding attire, and the attachment felt by brides to their wedding gowns, is reflected in museum collections. Museums that collect historic dress often have a large collection of wedding gowns, or

are offered wedding attire by donors on a regular basis. These items are not necessarily offered because the wedding attire itself is of historical or aesthetic significance, though these objects may possess both qualities. Rather, many donors offer up wedding attire because the meaning and attachment of these objects has invested them with great importance to the donors, who may wish to see that importance curated and preserved in a museum setting. Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton state that

When a thing “means something” to someone, it is interpreted in the context of past experiences, either consciously, or unconsciously in the form of habit. The emotion that things evoke is also an interpretation or inference, a sign or symbol of one’s attitude. The development of symbols – or signs whose relation to an object is based on convention rather than on a qualitative or physical resemblance – in a cultural tradition meant that people could compare their actions with those of their ancestors to anticipate new experiences. (1981, p. 21)

How, then, do these preserved wedding gowns serve the function of the ephemeral textile when they are neither used for change, nor forgotten, but preserved as they were at the precise moment of transition between one phase of life to the next? Can the collection of the memories and emotional attachment invested in the dress objects or textiles donated in these states of preserved ephemerality aid museums in choosing which objects to accession and subsequently provide deeper meaning when using these objects in exhibitions or for study by providing new understanding and avenues for exploration? Do these objects serve as an ancestral reference, as suggested by Csikszentmihalyi &

Rochberg-Halton, or do these “things” take on a life and meaning all their own? It was this material culture phenomenon of the preserved wedding dress which led the author to select her own family as a subject for study.

*A case study of preserved ephemerality*

Initial examinations into the relationship between Csikszentmihalyi’s object attachment theory and the development of ephemerality as a unique investiture of attachment to textile objects were carried out in the fall of 2012 at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus. In Attfield’s study of ephemerality, the examples given were of textiles which were worn out or used up over time, or else objects which were put away as objects of memory. It was the concept of ephemeral objects put away as opposed to being used to pieces which better suited the study of wedding attire. Some modern brides do reshape their wedding gowns, using the textile as a bridge which emphasizes a specific emotional or physical connection from the original wearer to the new wearer: a dress repurposed into a christening gown from a mother to a child, or the use of a mother’s wedding gown for a grown daughter’s wedding ceremony. However, other brides choose to preserve their wedding dress in its original form and condition following the conclusion of this rite of passage. In this sense, the artifact fulfills its initial purpose of transition without moving forward as an agent of change.

The wedding dress selected for research into this fluctuating state of ephemerality was worn by the researcher’s mother, Deb, in 1979. The first step of this study was to perform an abbreviated analysis of the artifact itself, following portions of the methodology proposed by E. McClung Fleming in 1974. Of particular interest for this

study were the steps of identification and evaluation, wherein the item is described, authenticated, and assessed (Fleming, 1974, p. 156-157). The wedding gown was found to be in a preserved state, illustrating no signs of major changes, reuse, or repurposing.

During an interview, Deb disclosed that her mother's family has a long tradition of preserving, keeping, and otherwise maintaining textiles, particularly wedding dresses (McKinney, D. L., December 1, 2012). At the time of the interview, Deb knew about the preservation of her mother's wedding dress from 1949, as well as her grandmother's wedding dress from 1924; subsequently, a wedding trousseau dating to 1897 was located in storage at Deb's home in Iowa (McKinney, D. L., December 5, 2012). When asked about the apparent tradition of maintaining wedding dresses in their original form, rather than permitting the garments to be reused for alternate purposes, she stated that

“... I wanted to keep my dress. I loved the fact that I was able to see and try on my mother's dress, even though I couldn't wear it for my wedding. And I always thought that was a really cool thing. So I wanted to do that.

...

I mean I would be happy for it to be repurposed for something now, but, who knows?” – Deb

Although Deb expressed a willingness to consider repurposing the dress for other uses, she was uncertain what those purposes might be. Her statements suggest that she was eager to preserve the dress as a ritual artifact linking her generation to that of her children, possibly to be utilized just as an object to try on prior to either of her children choosing to marry. However, her son was married in 2008, and her daughter, the author,



remains unmarried. Given that Deb's children are both adults, some of her attachment to the physical shape of the garments may have waned without lessening her overall emotional connection to the textiles themselves. When asked if she had ever considered wearing her mother's dress, Deb responded that

“I would have chosen to wear her dress, but I was a lot taller, and at that point in time I was a lot less...plump. [laughter] I mean, she was more a shorter, rounder figure to begin with. I was the taller, thinner figure in those days. So it was going to be hard to make it all make sense.” – Deb

In light of Deb's statements, the act of dressing in her mother's wedding gown is something which she considers to be an ephemeral rite of passage. The act of dressing in her mother's wedding gown, and seeing herself as an adult through the meanings imbued in the textile, was of such significance that she preserved her own wedding dress in hopes of sharing that meaning with her children.

Though Deb's wedding dress, and that of her mother, both retain their original form (wedding dresses which have not been repurposed or discarded), the function of both dresses has changed with time and circumstance. Both wedding dresses have taken on a state of what might be termed “preserved ephemerality” wherein the dress acts as an agent of change precisely *because* it retains its original shape. Though the physicality of the dress remains unchanged from the time of Deb's wedding in 1979, the emotions invested in the garment have undergone multiple transitions and, in so doing, changed the dress itself.

The most dramatic change that Deb's wedding dress has experienced relates to the death of her mother in 2006. Deb's mother constructed the wedding dress Deb wore by hand. When asked to explain her current emotional relationship with her wedding dress, Deb stated that the dress was

“... very representative to me because that was the biggest sewing project that I ever knew she undertook. She did it for me, she believed in me enough to, you know that kind of thing, to do it. She sacrificed to do it, that kind of thing. There are other things that make me think of her or remind me of her, but that's probably one of the biggest physical items.” –

Deb

Although Deb has expressed a willingness to see the dress change its physical shape or purpose, she has not acted on that impulse. This may be due to the changing meaning of her wedding gown, which has turned into a reliquary of memory, connecting Deb and her deceased mother in a deeply personal manner. The other items described by Deb as memorial connections were made for others, particularly her children, while the wedding gown in its current shape remains her own.

To date, Attfield's study of textiles as agents of ephemerality has largely depended upon the textile object changing its shape after fulfilling its original purpose. The transformation or shape-changing aspect is described in Winnicott's theory as explored by Attfield, which illustrates the ephemeral textile or dress object as an object which is used to ease a moment of transition and then used up, transformed and repurposed, or occasionally put aside and forgotten (Attfield, 2000, p. 131).

Although in many ways Deb's wedding gown conforms to the basic model of a textile or textile-based dress object as an agent of change, no evidence of any physical alterations beyond the normal effects of aging was found throughout the study of her wedding dress. Though put aside following her wedding ceremony, it was not forgotten. In place of a physical transformation, the dress has become a center of emotional memory.

In this capacity, Deb's wedding gown remains an object of "preserved ephemerality" while in a static physical state, thus linking the theories of Winnicott and Attfield to those of Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton. By transforming from a physical object of emotional transition into a vessel for emotional memory, the gown has fulfilled its purpose as an agent of change and made a final transition, becoming a cultural-ancestral symbol for Deb and her family.

To further test the concept of preserved ephemerality with relation to wedding attire, the focus of study was shifted to the shoe fancies created by the author's great-grandmother during her studies at Purdue University in the 1920s. This allowed for a greater range of living participants in a ritual or tradition of wedding dress to be interviewed. By shifting focus to the shoe fancy, a single artifact of dress utilized by multiple participants over a broad time span, a wider range of interconnected family relations and the role of those relationships can be explored as a component of dress traditions and their use.

## Conceptual framework

Conceptual and theoretical frameworks for this study were developed through the pilot study carried out in spring 2013, and through associated projects carried out as student research at the University of Minnesota. This research explores dress objects on an intimate or micro scale by focusing on a small number of artifacts (the shoe fancies and their trappings) used by a relatively small network (the extended family from which the tradition is derived).

The object in question, a family heirloom, was made by the researcher's great-grandmother while a student at Purdue University in 1923. These fancies were worn by Mary Bishop at her wedding in 1925, and subsequently employed as a ritual part of bridal dress by her daughter, granddaughters, and great-granddaughters by birth and by marriage. The shoe fancy represents several possibilities for research, and may require the use and development of multiple theories and frameworks in order to provide full holistic understanding of the object. Aspects of the shoe fancy tradition under research for this study include the definition or classification of tradition, the transference of traditional artifacts, and their custody; the emotional resonance of dress objects; and the way in which we develop and maintain dress traditions such as the shoe fancy tradition in order to inform and shape our identities as individuals and groups. By exploring these facets of the shoe fancies, greater understanding of how traditional objects can be used as a hub for storytelling in a museum setting may also be attained. Each aspect under study provides the opportunity to illustrate a different story, enhancing the versatility of use for

an object from a museum's collection by transforming it into a hub for improved understanding, exploration, and discovery.

To aid in the study and analysis of the shoe fancies and the narratives of participants and custodians of the dress tradition under research, a theoretical framework has been developed to support interaction between tradition, object, custodian, and participants. This framework applies the understanding of dress traditions, object attachment, and ephemerality, discussed above, to the activity theory proposed by L. Vygotsky and A. N. Leontiev, and subsequently modeled by Engeström in 1999 (p. 19-21). By using this model, the theory of ephemerality can be tested as an offshoot of the theory of attachment, activity, or an amalgamation of both.

### *Background*

The theory of ephemerality explores the ephemeral links we form with objects and is described by Attfield as being particularly apt for textiles and other cloth objects (2000, p. 123). Objects, especially textiles, are often used as anchors of emotional security during times of transition, and this theory helps to explain and understand the way in which these objects function. By incorporating the activity theory, the researcher's goal is to understand and explore how these objects are active participants as mediators during times of heightened emotion.

The activity theory is drawn from the field of psychology, although it has been used in a number of other fields. Though drawn from the work of Vygotsky and published by Leontiev, the researcher's chief interest is in the modeling of this theory by Yrjö Engeström in *Perspectives on Activity Theory* in 1999 (p. 31). The reasoning for this

is twofold: one, the wish to use Engeström's model of activity theory specifically, and two, the desire to test the theory of ephemerality with Engeström's model to see if it can more accurately capture the active role of the object, which has no voice to speak for itself. Instead of drawing on an ephemeral bond with a textile or clothing object as an aspect of the theory of attachment, the activity theory allows for the object to be seen as a contributing actor.

*Origin and sources of the theory of ephemerality*

Two previous investigations into the theory of ephemerality have examined the emotional attachments we form with textiles and artifacts of dress. The first of these studies was focused on artifact analysis and material culture methods, while the second was a pilot study for this research utilizing qualitative methodology. The goal of this prior work was to determine if a static object, one which was not changed, destroyed, or put out of mind, has experienced metamorphosis on an emotional rather than physical level, where the physical object contained the emotions placed there by the user. This emotional metamorphosis can be seen as one aspect of an heirloom textile object, a concept currently under exploration in sustainability and fashion. However, the emotional metamorphosis does not signify active change or active practices of sustainability in an heirloom, only the potential for sustainable practices to be encouraged using this emotional bond.

As such, the goal of the present work is to study this model of preserved ephemerality and to test it against the shoe fancy tradition employed by the extended family. This work will be informed by the theories of attachment as set forth by

Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton, and the theory of ephemerality as set forth by Attfield, in addition to observations drawn from prior work.

*Origin and sources of the activity theory model*

The model for the activity theory being used to develop a framework and model for understanding the development of ephemeral attachment was first put forth by Engeström in 1999 in *Perspectives on Activity Theory*. This model uses what Engeström refers to as triadic representations of action (1999, p. 30) as building blocks for the overall modeling of the theory. These building blocks represent how three aspects of action or interaction can result in a unified outcome. By stacking three of these building blocks into a larger triangle, Engeström's model illustrates how several sets of action or interaction lead to an overall outcome drawn from multiple factors and sources.

By modeling the theory of ephemerality on the Engeström model of the theory of activity, the researcher seeks to develop a framework of how these emotional bonds with textile objects are formed. By developing a greater understanding of how we come to value an object emotionally, or even why we value specific objects of dress and material culture, we may further our ability to understand, explore, and describe the concept of heirloom dress. Further understanding of this topic may allow other research questions pertaining to this research, such as the issues of heirloom custody and transference, to be examined. Additionally, developing a greater understanding of how ephemeral attachments are formed as an aspect of activity theory creates the potential for developing sustainable practice models related to issues of sustainability and dress.

*Exploring the theory of ephemerality through the activity theory model*

The focus of Attfield's theory is the way in which we use textiles and textile-based objects as emotional constructs to guide us through periods of change. This could mean a baby's first soft toy or blanket, which could serve as a stand in for the emotional anchor of the presence of the baby's mother as it begins to explore the world, or a wedding dress used to physically illustrate the joining of a woman to a second family. The theory calls for the object to physically change – a baby might shred their blanket or a wedding dress might be repurposed – and to then be set aside or destroyed, as in the case of the shredded baby blanket (Attfield, 2000, p. 131).

The researcher's interest is in applying this theory in reverse to the activity theory model in order to develop a greater understanding and a visual model of how ephemeral bonds are formed with textile objects. While this is implied in Attfield and Winnicott's work, as in the baby who clings to the blanket, we only see that the baby *does* cling to the blanket for a short time; we do not necessarily understand how the blanket was first introduced, or the nature of any bond with the blanket which existed prior to the child's first exploration of the world. Attfield's study of Winnicott's work suggests that her theory of ephemerality is drawn on a preexisting emotional bond with a blanket, and then the waning or change of that emotional attachment (2000, p. 121-132).

The scope of the theory of ephemerality is a micro, or narrow focus, scope. The current formulation of the theory focuses almost exclusively on textiles or garments as an agent of transition from one state of life or emotional state to another. This theory is centered on the experiences of a small group of people due to the nature of the research



and testing from which the theory is drawn. This theory is applicable to larger groups and can be formulated to cover micro, mid-range, and macro uses from a wider range of material culture artifacts, and that understanding the theory of ephemerality as it intersects with both the theory of attachment and the activity theory to be crucial to extending its formulation; the concept which the researcher refers to as preserved ephemerality.

*Developing a framework for the activity theory of ephemerality*

As Engström's model of the activity theory uses triadic building blocks, with six major components, the first step toward developing a framework and model of the theory of ephemerality as seen through activity theory is to identify these main components. Engström's model uses subject, object, tools, rules, community, and the division of labor as its principal components.

Working backward on the model of the activity theory, the final product of the model is the outcome, as seen in figure 1.1 (page 95). As the starting point of the theory of ephemerality is the emotional bond between the individual and the textile is an ephemeral bond, it becomes apparent that the outcome on an activity theory model of ephemerality must be that ephemeral bond. By modeling the activity theory to produce an ephemeral bond, the subject becomes the individual, and the object becomes the textile object or artifact. The activity of the wearer working through the emotional event with the mediation of the dress object results in an ephemeral bond between the wearer and the dress object which resonates with the emotional event, as seen in figure 1.2 (page 96).

However, under the existing parameters of the theory of ephemerality, there are no clear signifiers of other categories. The activity theory model incorporates two additional building blocks consisting of the relationship between the subject, community, and the rules, as well as the object, the community, and the division of labor necessary to achieve the outcome via the activity being modeled. The theory of ephemerality lacks these necessary signifiers of activity theory. In order to complete the framework of ephemerality as a theory which begins as an activity theory and results in attachment modeled by the attachment theory, more information is needed.

*Modeling the theory of ephemerality as activity leading to attachment*

In order to develop a more concrete example using both the activity theory model and the theory of ephemerality, it is necessary to employ an actual example object that is both ephemeral and subject to the activity theory in general. The goal of developing this framework is twofold: one, to see if the theory of ephemerality can be expanded to include the activity which causes the ephemeral bond to form with the textile object, and second to highlight the missing elements from the theory of ephemerality that would allow the theory to not only encompass the emotional bond, but the activity of developing the bond. While these goals are very closely related, both may not be possible to accomplish in the scope of this project. It is considerably easier to see the places where the theory of ephemerality does not have the necessary ingredients for use in a complete model of the activity theory than it is to formulate the possible theoretical components that would fill those gaps.

The object selected to demonstrate and test the theory of ephemerality as applied to the activity theory model is that of a pair of shoe fancies from the Bishop-Kirkpatrick family. Developing a complete written history of the shoe fancies and its use are a component of the current research, but enough basic information about these shoe fancies is known to test the theory of ephemerality and the activity theory model. These theories will be tested in conjunction with one another by moving through the steps of the activity theory model using the process of forming an ephemeral bond with each of the subsequent participants in the shoe fancy tradition.

The first triangular building block of the activity theory model is that of the subject, object, and rules or instruments. This block sits at the top of the pyramid model, as illustrated in figures 1.1 (page 95) and 1.3 (page 97). Without further distilling the theory of ephemerality, this is the only block which can be completely identified under the delimitations of the current form of the theory. In the case of the shoe fancy tradition, the subject is the bride or participant in the dress tradition which employs the shoe fancies at family weddings, while the object is the shoe fancy itself. The rule or instrument as modeled in the theory of ephemerality applied to the activity theory model is the formation of the emotional bond. In the case of the shoe fancies, a pilot study indicated that the formation of this emotional bond is partially demonstrated in the ritualized ceremony of presenting the shoe fancies to the bride, at which point she signs her name to the list of brides who have worn the fancies. While not all brides have participated in this aspect of the ritual, enough have to consider it an important component for developing the ephemerality theory as an activity theory. After the fancies

are presented, it is sewn to the underskirt of the bride's dress or a similarly appropriate location. Following the wedding ceremony, the fancies are carefully removed (as it is now quite old and in poor physical condition) and placed back in its protective storage chest along with the list of brides, now with a new name added to the bottom of the list.

Each of these aspects of the ritualized dress tradition work as tools or instruments of the ephemeral bond, as they are metaphors for the emotional event which the fancies help the bride to navigate. The fancies are presented in much the same manner as an engagement ring, as an offering to a woman who is either metaphorically joining or leaving the immediate family of her birth to create her own new nuclear family unit. When the fancies are accepted, the bride signs her name to the list much as she and her husband would sign their marriage certificate, and the needle and thread are used to physically join the fancies to the bride's attire. These actions help to bridge the emotional event by using the shoe fancies (the textile object) as the mediating factor, illustrating in a tacit manner the steps that the woman is mentally or emotionally taking as a part of her wedding day. Then, when the ceremony is complete, the fancies are removed to storage; by surrendering the dress object which served as an emotional mediator of the event, an important step in the existing theory of ephemerality, the bride and her extended family physically signal that the event is complete and that the mediation provided by the object is no longer necessary.

The next step in the activity theory, and a step not currently covered by the theory of ephemerality, is that of negotiating the relationship between the subject, the community, and the rules. The subject has already been identified for the shoe fancy

tradition as the bride who wears the shoe fancies. In this tradition, the community is also very clear: the extended family from which the tradition is drawn takes the role of the community. However, it is also important to include other, specific members of the community: the spouse who is either a member of or marrying into the family; the custodian who keeps the shoe fancies and ensures that they are delivered to and included in each family wedding; the immediate family of the bride, and the overall culture. In the case of the originator of this tradition, who wore the fancies as visible ornaments on her shoes beneath a dress that was not floor length as many modern bridal gowns are, it would also make sense to include members of the wedding party or guests at the wedding in the community of those impacted by the shoe fancies, but they have been left off of this model as many modern brides now wear the fancies underneath their dress, where they are essentially invisible.

With regards to the rules of the tradition, there are a number of potential sources which could provide norms or rules for consideration and study. One aspect which cannot be ignored is that of aesthetics. The fragility of the shoe fancies dictates their use underneath the bride's skirt, where they will not be seen or appreciated in an aesthetic manner by wedding guests. This also satisfies any aesthetic conflict between the age and deteriorating physical state of the shoe fancies and whatever choices the bride has made with regards to how she wants her wedding to look and be aesthetically consumed. Even if the fancies do not fit with other visual themes or characteristics of the wedding, their norm or rule of placement out of sight allows a bride to participate easily in the tradition without altering the look or feel of her wedding ceremony.

It is also important to consider that the fancies have been used as a borrowed or old object as a component of the bridal rhyme for several of the women who employed them, thus adding bridal traditions to the list of rules or norms of the tradition which were revealed in the pilot study. Family practices also have a place in this building block, as it is a family rather than cultural tradition which dictates the use of the fancies. Finally, knowledge of the tradition must be considered as a component of the rules or norms. For those members of the family who are aware of the tradition and have employed it as an aspect of their weddings, the choice *not* to use the fancies might go against an expected rule or norm within their greater social group.

The third and final building block is that of the community, the object, and the division of labor. While this is the last building block of the activity theory model's pyramid, it also creates a fourth block by the nature of its placement. On the original model, this block joins the subject, the object, and the community in a fourth, inverted triangle. This relationship is necessary to consider when filling in the last component of the activity theory model, and must also express important aspects related to the formation of ephemeral bonds between the subject (wearer/user) and the object (textile/dress object). In the case of the shoe fancy tradition, the division of labor is fairly clearly divided between the subject (the bride), who must decide whether or not to wear the fancies, and then carry the fancies through the day as a mediating object; the custodian of the fancies, who must present the fancies to the bride as an option and as a physical object used for mediating the emotional event; the spouse of the individual carrying the fancies, who is either joining the family or who is being joined by the

family; and finally the family, from whom the shoe fancies and their emotional meaning are drawn, transferred, carried, and negotiated by the couple who are marrying, using the dress object as a physical mediator of the emotionally charged event. This final model can be seen in figure 1.4 (page 98).

*Implications of the applied activity-ephemerality model*

By applying a concrete example of an ephemeral object in use, the possibility of the theory of ephemerality being used as both an example of activity and attachment theory becomes clear. However, there are many questions and implications yet to be resolved. While the activity-ephemerality model works in the case of this single example of a specific phenomenon, it is not widely generalizable. The analysis of the possibility of activity-ephemerality as opposed to attachment-ephemerality suggests that *certain* ephemeral objects may fit both models, but others (such as Winnicott's baby blankets) either lack concrete information about possible rules or norms, communities, and the division of labor, or else do not appear to require or provide appropriate information to conclusively discern a base model for the activity-ephemerality theory model.

At the same time, the ability to apply a single concrete example to a merged activity-ephemerality theory model suggests that there is potential for certain objects to fall under both theoretical headings. The shoe fancies are an excellent example of this. Until the researcher's first attempt to model the theory of ephemerality, and the subsequent realization that it had similarity in shape to activity theory model developed by Engeström, it was not apparent that the theory of ephemerality did not take into account all of the aspects of the activity necessary for the ephemeral bond and the use of

the ephemeral object. Nesting the micro-level theory of ephemeral attachment within the framework of the macro-level activity theory demonstrates one of the ways in which the concept of dress traditions can be nested within the larger activity or field of traditional dress.

### *Conclusion*

The theory of ephemerality is a useful tool in the discussion of emotional attachment to dress objects, including heirlooms. By extrapolating this theory into a framework and model that correlates with the activity theory model, however, holes in the theory begin to emerge. The current theory only explains the phenomenon that is observed from a very narrow perspective, leaving out aspects, groups, and categories which play important support roles in the overall outcome of a given action. By combining the two theories, a stronger model of ephemerality and its use in mediating textile objects emerges. Further work is still required in order to fully model the rules or norms, communities, and division of labor on the theoretical level, but analysis from a practical level drawing on both ephemerality and activity theory suggests there is significant potential for the merger of the theory of ephemerality from an attachment theory to an attachment-activity theory. This model would easily work as a short form guide for exploring an object's potential as an ephemeral hub of storytelling in a museum setting, or for exploring the ephemeral attachment to an object and the ways in which these sentiments might be employed and cultivated to encourage the heirloom aspect of sustainable dress. This hybridized theoretical framework was beneficial in the case of the shoe fancies as a tool to explore the development of ephemeral attachment to an object of



clothing, including the guise of preserved ephemerality wherein an object is not deliberately or significantly physically altered but rather is changed on an emotional level as a sociocultural symbol.

## Chapter 3 – Research Methodology

### *Purpose*

The purpose of this narrative is to understand and describe this concept of dress traditions, and to explore their formation, purpose, and ephemeral evolution. In order to explore the phenomenon associated with this purpose, that of dress traditions, a research methodology has been developed from qualitative research traditions utilizing the narrative approach as informed by social constructivism. Social constructivism was chosen as a paradigm due to its ability to acknowledge multiple truths or realities centered on the experiences of individuals; in this case, the research participants, all of whom employed a shared familial dress tradition in their weddings.

### *Research Sample*

The nature of the research question prompted the use of a specific dress phenomenon from the extended family. The selection of this specific phenomenon necessitated the use of criterion sampling for participants in this qualitative narrative project. Criteria for participation were defined as follows:

1. Participants are female.
2. Participants are age 18 or older.
3. Participants are available for interviews via online interviewing methods using audio-visual programs or e-mail, or are otherwise available for personal interviews at locations of their choosing which are accessible for research.
4. Participants have previously taken part in a specific, longstanding, ritualized wedding dress tradition within an extended family network.

The criteria for eligibility and project assessment were reviewed by the University of Minnesota's Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to data collection. Based on the IRB's internal review process, this body of research was determined to not require further oversight, investigation, or review from the IRB at the University of Minnesota. Consideration was still given to participant privacy and other participant rights often assured by the IRB out of respect for the participants, their time, and their willingness to share their experiences with the researcher.

Based on the criteria for eligibility, and on consultation with the registry of confirmed past participants in the shoe fancy dress tradition, a list of 20 past participants was compiled (see figure 2, page 100). Of these past participants, seven were deceased prior to the beginning of the research, and an eighth left behind no known contact information. The remaining 12 participants in the dress tradition were contacted, and 10 of this sample agreed to participate in qualitative interviews. Eight of these interviews were completed in full, with queries for the remaining two interviews left unanswered.

Of these eight total participants, three were previously employed as research participants in the form of interviews for the pilot study, and their interviews from that pilot study were used as a supplement to the present data. The three participants in the pilot study also granted permission for their transcripts to be preserved and re-analyzed for this research. One interview was carried out in person at the participant's home in rural Indiana, while the remaining seven were carried out over e-mail as the participants' preferred method of contact. These e-mail or digital interviews were conducted in precisely the same manner as the face-to-face interview, with questions distributed to

participants one at a time in the manner of a conversation rather than as a survey with all questions distributed to a participant at a single time.

Consideration was given to interviewing participants who did not employ the dress tradition as a part of their wedding ceremonies, but who were otherwise eligible for use of the shoe fancies during their wedding ceremonies. This field of potential participants would include not only married members of the family who did not use the fancies in their weddings, but also eligible future participants, including those who are not yet married but otherwise meet all criteria for employing the dress tradition in the future. As such, two more potential research participants were identified by their eligibility to wear the shoe fancy at their weddings. Three other possible candidates, those who are eligible to wear the shoe fancy but are as yet unmarried, were identified for possible interviews, with a fourth perspective offered by the researcher. Ultimately, considerations of time, communication, and the research focus of this project determined that these participants' experiences may be sought for future study of the artifact as opposed to the current research.

Research participants were informed at the outset of the interviews that their participation in the shoe fancy tradition was a central factor of the research, but were not given further details about the focus and purpose of the research. This step was taken to avoid leading participants into giving answers that the researcher wanted to hear, as opposed to their own thoughts and feelings. By avoiding mention of the study of the emotional bonds between participants and the ephemeral bond participants may or may not have formed with the shoe fancy through its use in their weddings, the goal and

intention of the research was to allow participants to freely discuss any and all dress traditions they participated in as a part of their weddings. This allowed for a more holistic view of dress traditions to develop, along with a greater understanding of how one dress tradition (such as the shoe fancies) might fit into a larger tradition as was revealed during the pilot study (such as the bridal rhyme tradition).

Additionally, this prevented participants from being led into revealing an exaggerated emotional tie to the use of the shoe fancies as a component of their wedding attire; though participants were aware of the focus on the traditional use of the family shoe fancies, due the nature of the questioning and the subject matter of the study, the specific area of study (attachment) was not revealed. This step was taken to allow a more natural view of the varying levels of emotional investment in the shoe fancy to develop throughout the data gathering and analysis process.

#### *Data Collection Methods*

For this narrative case study, a total of eight complete interviews were carried out. Three of these interviews were supplemented by participants' previous communications for the pilot study after attaining participants' consent for reexamination. These interviews provide the bulk of the data for analysis. Additional data sources include documents from family archives and a material analysis of the shoe fancies, accompanying documents, and the decorative box in which the shoe fancies are stored. Of the eight interviews, one interview was conducted in the participant's home in Tipton County, Indiana, and the remaining seven were conducted via e-mail at the request of the participants and their scheduling needs. Supplemental information was provided by

further e-mail correspondence with participants, in addition to letters, telephone calls, face-to-face contact, and material from the pilot study. Communication was maintained between the researcher and the participants throughout the data gathering and analysis processes in order to ensure participant triangulation of data, and the preservation of the participants' authentic voices.

After each interview concluded, a text transcript of the questions and answers from the interview was prepared. A transcription of the in person interview was provided by the University of Minnesota's Interpreting and Captioning Unit. The e-mail interviews, which were generated in a text-based format, were compiled into individual transcripts listing only the questions and answers to obscure participants' direct contact information. These interview transcripts were directly copied and pasted into transcript documents from the participants' e-mail messages to the researcher.

The secondary text transcripts of the e-mail interactions were prepared to ensure the preservation of the participants' privacy by removing data such as e-mail addresses, names of non-participants, and other identifying factors which could otherwise be employed by outside parties in order to contact research participants. No changes will be made to spelling or punctuation, but aspects of font size, color, and selection will be manipulated in adherence to standard APA guidelines. Names within the transcripts will not be changed, but will be reduced when possible to a first-name only basis to preserve participants' privacy. The goal of these changes is not to create a sense of false anonymity, as participants are aware of each other and their past participation in the shoe fancy tradition, but rather to ensure that as much as possible, participants are able to

preserve their privacy outside of the extended family. In the case of photographs or other information provided by participants which might identify them beyond a first name basis and their general relation to the researcher, no identifying information will be used without participants' informed consent.

Each interview transcript was compiled into a separate document for individual analysis. These transcripts preserved, as much as possible, the interaction between the interviewer and research participants, with each voice noted and identified. Data were triangulated with participants during and after the interviews to ensure that participants' words, experiences, and narratives were accurately recorded. All of the data gathered in these interviews and other data sources was coded and analyzed using a highlighting method (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008, p. 102).

#### *Analysis & synthesis of data*

Following transcription, the data generated by the interviews, documents, artifact analysis, and researcher observations underwent a thorough analysis process. The steps for the data analysis were guided in part by data analysis procedures proposed by J.W. Creswell for use in analyzing qualitatively gathered data for use in a narrative (2013, 184-193) and by Bloomberg & Volpe (2008, 98-106). The initial step of data analysis involved thoroughly reading each transcript in order to begin data immersion and begin identifying emergent codes.

These initial codes generated by preliminary data immersion (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008, 99) consisted of three key words relating to recurrent categories present in the data: tradition, attachment, and ephemerality. After the development of these initial

data codes, the data sets were highlighted for words, phrases, and sections corresponding to these codes, including the emergent ‘other’ code to draw attention to contradictory or otherwise unusual information within the data. Next, the data were analyzed with respect to the theory of ephemerality as modeled on the activity theory, focusing on codes of emotion, group or family, objects or things, nostalgia, and tradition. Two additional codes were included in this step of data analysis: the emergent ‘other’ category, and a code for surprises or unexpected information found in participants’ data. This process involved rereading the data sets multiple times while reviewing the data analysis plan, the research questions, and feedback from peers in order to remain within the delimitations of this small narrative study. The data sets were triangulated with participant groups in order to preserve the participants’ words and the themes that emerged with strong impressions from the interviews.

During the coding process, certain codes were expanded to allow for a more holistic view of the data which thoroughly preserved the importance of certain experiences and emotions expressed by the participants. For example, the family code was expanded to include “group” with reference to friends and other persons close to the participants who were involved in their weddings or mentioned as a part of the interviews. Likewise, the object category was created from an initial data code referencing only the shoe fancy, as many participants mentioned other objects which comprised an important component of their bridal attire and the landscape of ephemeral attachment-activity involved in their wedding attire and ceremonies. The traditions code was also expanded to include stated departures or rejection of tradition, as the ability of



participants to reject traditions or aspects thereof is considered an important component of the dress tradition's history. The choice to omit the focus on the emotional attachment to the shoe fancies was made to avoid leading participants to change, alter, omit, or otherwise censor their reflections upon their personal experiences, or to overstate the importance (if any) that the shoe fancies had to them. The minor modifications to the data codes reflect this prior decision.

### *Ethical Considerations*

The principal ethical consideration for this research has been the preservation of participant privacy. The project proposal was evaluated as low-risk research with little concern for ramification against participants in the research process, with the primary focus being placed on personal experiences which partially transpired in a semi-public or public sphere at the participants' weddings. Due to the nature of the researcher's relationship with the participants, their identities can be easily discerned by members of the researcher's greater extended family and by other participants. All participants were informed prior to their consent to interview that other participants would be able to identify them, and all participants consented to the use of their first names and a vague idea of their relation to the researcher (such as "cousin" or "aunt") being disclosed in the final documentation. Every effort has been made by the researcher to obscure other details which could otherwise be construed as an invasion of participants' privacy. The primary check against these ethical concerns is to consult with participants before any data which may be construed as personal is revealed in the process of data analysis, writing, and publication.

Before consenting to interviews, participants were made aware of the possibility of identification to ensure their full awareness and informed consent. Only participants who indicate their willingness to continue providing data for research, and who have indicated their awareness that members of their extended families or communities who have knowledge of the tradition could identify them, will be interviewed. To minimize this possibility, data pertaining to the identification of the participants may be redacted or hidden behind pseudonyms at the request of participants.

#### *Issues of trustworthiness*

The principal issue of trust in this research is in the form of the preexisting relationship between the researcher and the participants. Although this relationship is not the primary focus of the research, it is a consideration in selecting participants and analyzing data. On account of this prior connection, peer review is an important consideration of trust during data analysis and interpretation.

Due to the homogenous nature of the sample, consisting of women of similar racial and socioeconomic backgrounds from the same family, this research is not intended to be generalizable but rather transferable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Transferability is defined as the way in which the discoveries about the phenomenon being studied can be transferred to a different context. In order to ensure transferability, detailed descriptions of the phenomenon, the participants, and the data will be provided.

In order to confirm data and finding accuracy, limited triangulation with participants was carried out in the form of verification during and after interviews. Data were summarized and repeated back to participants, who were able to confirm or correct

these summaries. Finally, an audit trail will be provided by the researcher following the guidelines established by Lincoln & Guba (1985).

### *Limitations*

The chief limitation of this study is the nature of its sample and sample size. Only twenty names of participants appear on the registry of brides who employed the shoe fancy dress tradition in their wedding. Even if every eligible candidate for the tradition were added to the participant pool, only twenty-six possible participants would exist, and of these twenty-six, eight were deceased or had no contact information available at the genesis of research. With a limited number of confirmed participants in the tradition, this can be seen as a major obstacle when attempting to confer findings onto a broader population. This is particularly true with regards to the first two generations of participants. The only known participant from the first generation of the tradition, Mary Bishop, is deceased, as are many of the second generation participants who belonged to social circles or extended family connections of Mary and her daughter, Judy. This lack of early participants who are available for interview has proven a significant handicap in data gathering, analysis, and the ability to triangulate findings with focus groups of qualified participants from these first generations.

## Chapter 4 – Material Analysis of Shoe Fancies

The first piece of data collected for this research was gathered in the form of an artifact analysis of the shoe fancies. This analysis followed the model proposed by E. McClung Fleming in the Winterthur Portfolio of 1974 (Fleming, p. 153-173), as illustrated in figure 3 (page 101).

### *Artifact analysis*

The first step of the analysis was to acquire the shoe fancies for study. This step proved somewhat arduous, as the shoe fancy is a relic of high emotional value within the greater extended family network whose members use it as part of a dress tradition. As a result, the shoe fancy needed to be hand couriered as opposed to shipped via conventional means. This step involved transferring the shoe fancies from the eastern seaboard of the United States to the family farmstead in northwestern Indiana, and from Indiana to the research space in Minnesota.

The shoe fancies are generally kept by the daughter of the tradition's founder at her home in rural Indiana. As the custodian of the decoration, she maintains not only the object itself, but also a series of artifacts which travel with the decoration and play a role in the development of the tradition. The first of these objects is the box in which the shoe fancies are stored and carried in (see figure 6, page 104). The box, which is made of dovetailed wood with a hinged lid, is light in color. The lid and the front of the box bear a handpainted motif of dogwood blossoms. The box has also been sealed with a clear sealant, presumably polyurethane, on the top and sides of the lid and box. The bottom of the box bears an address label of the shoe fancies' custodian, Julia McKinney, and a

penciled inscription in the top left corner reading “Camp Cullom” in one corner and “to Mother” in the top right corner.

The role which this simple box plays in the shoe fancy tradition becomes apparent as soon as it is opened (see figure 7, page 105). Inside the lid, which has been sealed to match the outside of the box, is a painted inscription from the fancies’ current custodian: “Here lie your jewels, Symbols sweet, Of dear memories & dreams, Shining out of the past. Love, Judy.” The simple act of opening this box thus draws potential participants and other family members into the dress tradition of wearing the shoe fancies, and helps to tie together the disparate women who have incorporated these family heirlooms into their wedding attire.

Nestled into this lid is an old black and white copy of a photograph of the tradition’s progenitor, Mary Bishop, and her husband Frank Kirkpatrick on their wedding day (see figure 5, page 103). This photo, the only known wedding photograph of the couple (McKinney, J. J., 2013), provides the greatest insight into the original appearance of the shoe fancies, which are visible on Mary Bishop’s shoes. In this small photograph, which is recorded as “wedding day 1925, June 14. Bride’s home lawn – Arcadia, IN. Mary A Bishop and Frank A Kirkpatrick”, the fancies appear to be very full and vibrant, and draw the eye against the dark background provided by the lawn and Frank Kirkpatrick’s attire. The size of the photograph prevents any detail of the shoe fancies from being gleaned, beyond that they appear to be round and full. The photograph shows Mary dressed in a pale dress with lace sleeves and an upstanding lace collar, with a skirt of some fullness featuring six rows of trim at the hem. The hemline is above her ankles,

allowing for her seemingly white, low-heeled slippers to be seen in addition to the shoe fancies.

The photograph is now the only object to be carried loose in the box. A paper list or registry of brides who have previously participated in the shoe fancy tradition was previously stored in the box along with the decorations and photograph, but was removed in the fall of 2013 due to its deteriorating state and fragility. A series of photocopies of this registry were instead provided for research purposes, bearing the names, wedding locations, and wedding dates of the women who have participated in the tradition (see figure 11, page 109). A variety of handwriting samples appear on the registry, suggesting that some women signed the registry themselves, where others had the custodian or another person sign the registry with their information on their behalf. Some brides have complete information listed, such as specifics of the date and location of their wedding ceremonies, where others have only the year and name recorded. Additionally, an interview with the current custodian of the shoe fancies revealed that this list has only been maintained since the 1950s or 60s, as opposed to when the tradition was first developing; this list was created by the present custodian, and she and the tradition's originator both believed that some names were missing from the registry (McKinney, J. J., 2013).

The remainder of the contents have been carefully wrapped in archival tissue paper to minimize any potential harm or damage during travel and periods of storage between family weddings. The pair of shoe fancies is kept within this box in a small white lace bag which appears to be made of a mixture of cotton and synthetic fibers (see

figure 8, page 106). The lace has a floral pattern and scalloped edges at the top and bottom of the bag. A drawstring of thin, light blue satin ribbon is present at the top of the bag, and features a small white satin rosette as a decoration. The back of the bag features a safety pin, presumably for ease of attaching the shoe fancies to a bride's attire, where previously the decorations would have been sewn or tacked to the bride's dress or shoes.

Even before removing the shoe fancies from this bag, their age was visible in the stark contrast between the bright white color of the lace bag and the much deeper, stained and aged appearance of the shoe fancies through the open structure of the lace. Due to the fragility of the fancies and their great importance in the family tradition, only one shoe fancy was removed from the bag in order to minimize the potential for damage to the artifacts. The decoration was thoroughly measured and documented using the Fleming model for artifact analysis (see figure 3, page 101), including physical measurements, physical descriptions, impressions of the researcher, and color photography (see appendix 1, page 114).

This description of the shoe fancies is derived from the more intact of a matched pair, and is based purely on their condition at the time of this writing as opposed to their original design. The shoe fancies, also referred to as "shoe clips" or "shoe buckles" within the circle of participants, consist of Chantilly lace, a wreath of wax orange blossoms, and a small puff of tulle mounted on an elevated satin pad (see figure 9, page 107).

The pad on which these textiles and artificial flowers are mounted is quite hard, but as the satin is intact, no efforts were made to investigate whatever stiffening agent or

filler is covered by the satin. From the feel of the satin through the cotton gloves used to handle the artifact, the interior of the satin pad may consist of leather. Viewed from the back, the satin pad is primarily rounded, but tapers to more of a point toward the topmost edge of the rosette. The satin has worn in places and its weave has been pulled out of alignment, but despite small runs or missing yarns, there are no indications that this pad was ever mounted on a clip or a buckle. The terminology referring to these rosettes as “clips” or “buckles” is therefore presumed to be vernacular to describe the original function of the object (decorations for shoes) as opposed to the actual mechanical features of the rosettes. From this back view of the rosettes, only the lace is visible, and a very small scrap of tulle. The pad is tapered in height, but does have a rise allowing the decoration affixed to its face to be more prominently displayed against the surface of the shoe.

The front or face of the shoe fancies, hereafter referred to as rosettes, is a layering of textiles and artificial flowers (see figure 10, page 108). The largest of these layers is a fan of Chantilly lace, yellowed and browned with age. In a few places, the lace appears to be cream in color, but it is not known if the rosettes were originally white or cream in color; this cream shade may be a result of a less severe aging process in protected areas of the textile. The lace has a scalloped edge. In several places, pieces of thread, browned with age, are visible, as are small pieces of the wax orange blossoms which have broken off over time. In other places, less aged thread is visible, white in color; these loose threads correspond to the tradition of stitching the rosettes to a bride’s attire as something other than a shoe fancy.



At the bottom center of this lace fan is a 1 inch diameter wreath of wax orange blossoms. The flowers have badly deteriorated with time, and in many cases small pieces of the flowers have broken off. One somewhat intact flower is visible on the right bottom side of the rosette which was examined for this analysis, its petals crushed open against the lace. In the bottom center of the orange blossom wreath is a small poof or gather of tulle. While handling the rosette, there was an immediate correlation between the delicate folds of this small piece of gathered tulle and a gentleman's cravat of the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The tulle, as with the lace, has browned with age and feels very crisp and fragile to the touch. The tulle also shows a cream color in many places, but the color of the original wedding gown (and the original color of the shoe rosettes) is unknown, as the only existing image of the objects in their original state is black and white.

Viewed subjectively, there is an undeniable presence to the shoe fancies when being handled, fueled in part by the nature of the conditions under which the rosettes were studied: against a backdrop of archival tissue, with white cotton gloves and a carefully sterilized environment for the unwrapping and unboxing of the rosettes, their importance to the custodians and participants is difficult to ignore.

Likewise, the significance of the hand-painted chest, adorned with dogwood blossoms, and the verse emblazoned on the inside of the chest impart the emotional significance which has been invested in these relatively small and aged decorations. While the physical condition of the decorations is far from superb, the care with which the rosettes and their packaging are now handled imparts an emotional weight and

provides greater insight into their importance and beauty past the point of aesthetic norms and present wedding customs.

There is a beauty to these objects, as fragile and yellowed as they are, and to the formation of the lace and the delicate pattern edging the small poof of tulle at the center of the rosette. This quality comes less from the physical materials, though the pattern of the lace is pleasing and the textile is not crisp to the hand, but from the emotional weight carried by the rosettes and their place in a tradition which, with their accompanying artifacts, is immediately imparted upon opening their small wooden traveling case and studying the artifacts within.

## Chapter 5 – Presentation of Findings

### *Purpose*

The purpose of this narrative study is to understand and describe the concept of dress traditions, and to explore their formation and role as objects of emotional attachment and signifiers of group membership through avenues such as participation, custody, and visibility. The use of qualitative methodology, and in particular the narrative approach, allows this research to center on the experiences and stories of participants within a single dress tradition to explore the phenomenon for this project and for further study. Participants of this study are drawn from a single dress tradition employed by a small group of people in order to provide an accessible tradition available for deep exploration, with the goal of revealing transferable findings for use with other forms of dress traditions. By focusing efforts on a single example of dress traditions, the goal was not to deliver generalizable information, but rather to provide the grounds for a detailed exploration of the meaning of these traditions and the way in which they have fostered ephemeral attachment, thus improving the description and understanding of dress traditions and the relationship between ephemerality and textile objects as a whole.

All findings were obtained through thorough analysis of the data collected, which included interviews with eight participants, each of whom previously engaged in the use of the shoe fancy tradition within their extended family. Additional sources of data included a material analysis of the shoe fancies, their storage chest, and the photograph of Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick which travels with the fancies, and supplemental information provided by materials gathered from three of the eight participants during the pilot study.

Finally, the ten participants in the tradition who agreed initially to interviews, including the two participants with whom interviews could not be completed, provided photographs of their weddings and permission to use the images for research purposes, comprising a final source of data.

Each of the findings developed from this preliminary research correspond to a single research question, and have been organized with the most conclusive findings first. Five key findings emerged from this holistic examination of the preliminary research questions, interview transcripts, and data sources including archival materials and a copy of the bridal registry.

1. The majority of participants stated that use of this dress tradition created a strong feeling of connection or unity with other participants.
2. All participants indicated that their use of this dress tradition was initiated by previous followers of the shoe fancy tradition.
3. Dress traditions are altered over time to suit the changing needs of the participants and the traditions themselves.
4. The formation of a dress tradition is a staged process that is not always fully understood or known by its adherents.
5. The emotional connection formed by participants in a dress tradition may involve other rituals in addition to wearing the traditional dress object.

A discussion of the findings and their interpretations follows in the analysis and interpretation section. In this accompanying section, each finding is explained and further supported through the use of quotations drawn directly from the participants' data.

*Finding 1: The majority of participants stated that use of this dress tradition created a strong feeling of connection or unity with other participants.*

When asked about their experiences as participants in a dress tradition, the research participants overwhelmingly indicated a sense of connection to their larger family, from whom the traditional use of the shoe fancy as an object of wedding attire is drawn. Six of the eight participants made statements to the effect of a feeling of unity or belonging. This finding directly correlates to the first research question (why did these individuals adopt such a dress tradition?) and confirms findings in the pilot study for this research.

In the pilot study, one fourth-generation participant indicated that she had the shoe fancies sewn on to the underskirt of her wedding dress next to a pendant from her maternal grandmother, and felt that the two objects united her family.

“I had one from like each side of the family, which was really special and I just felt a sense of unity and like, connection ... I liked that they were both in the family for you know, like, decades. ... it just creates the sense of unity and the fact that they were sewn in next to each other I think is something special.” –  
Carrie

When interviewed a second time for the present body of research, Carrie elaborated on her feeling of connection, stating “... I felt very united and accepted just by wearing this little shoe accessory. It is a small item, but really impacted the union of [husband] Kevin and I.” This sentiment was echoed by her mother-in-law, Deb, who explained, “I think over the years I have become more nostalgic toward the traditions we

employed. I like how they tie us to other generations.” This sentiment echoes Deb’s statements from the earlier pilot study, where she related

“The shoe buckle tradition was something I liked the idea of as it tied me to my husband's family. ... Five years ago my daughter-in-law wore the shoe buckles when she married my son ... That intensified the feeling of family that I had when I wore them nearly 34 years ago.” – Deb

Other participants also emphasized the importance of the tradition as a direct link to other family members. Participant Lynn “personally pinned the shoe fancies to [daughter] Annie’s slip for her wedding in 2011,” and founder Mary Bishop’s granddaughter Carol experienced the use of the dress tradition as “...[A] great feeling. I felt a great sense of family and support and belonging.”

“[I]t was nice to be part of a family tradition, to think about family and have something with me (shoe fancies) which had been worn by a lot of women who created good families before, on a day which is about forming a new family.” – Annie

In addition to this sense of unity between living participants, the use of the shoe fancy dress tradition provided some participants with a link to family members who had passed away or were unable to physically attend their wedding ceremonies. Mary’s granddaughter, Becky, explained the connection to her deceased grandmother during the pilot study:

“Just before I went out the door, mom knelt in front of me and pinned on the shoe clips my grandma made for her wedding in 1922. ... She read the list of all the

brides who had worn them before me, including herself and all my sisters-in-law, and we both got a little teary. It was like having my grandma there with me. ... I guess I felt like I was part of a circle much bigger than me.” – Becky

Other participants who were interviewed or provided wedding photographs for this research explained that their mothers, who were past participants in the tradition, personally pinned or sewed the decorations to their daughters’ wedding gowns as a part of the immediate act of dressing and preparing for the marriage ceremonies. For several, this sensation of unity or interconnectedness was carried with them down the aisle.

“...the “shoe fancies” were something that, on my wedding day, made me feel like I was sharing in something special with all the other women in several generations and branches of my family were a part of. And that feels really cool to be a part of. ... It made me feel like I was involved in something special -- sort of like I was carrying with me generations of marital wisdom as I walked down the aisle and began my own married life.” – Brooke

*Finding 2: All participants indicated that their use of this dress tradition was initiated by previous followers of the shoe fancy tradition.*

In the course of the interviews, all of the participants indicated that they had chosen to adopt the group dress tradition of the shoe fancy due to the influence of past participants in the same tradition. This finding directly relates to two of the research questions:

2. How did these individuals adopt or learn of such a dress tradition?

6. What role does custody of tradition play in the development of such dress traditions?

While the emotional reasons for participating in the shoe fancy dress tradition were enumerated under the first finding, participants had to discover the tradition's existence prior to their weddings in order to determine their acceptance or rejection of the use of the traditional objects. All participants stated that a past participant had been the one to inform them of the existence of the dress tradition, and to invite them to participate in this tradition at their own weddings. This suggests that knowledge of dress traditions is transmitted by previous followers or participants in the tradition to those who are eligible for its continued use. In many cases, the shoe fancy tradition specifically demonstrated that the custodian of the tradition was the one who informed participants of their eligibility and assisted them in gaining access to the traditional object. This also reflects the sixth research question involving the role of custody in the development of traditions, as the custodian's active involvement allowed the tradition to propagate.

Carol, the granddaughter of founder Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick, first heard of the tradition from the current gatekeeper/custodian, Mary's daughter Judy. "Aunt Judy told me about the shoe buckles and sent them to me to wear," she explained. "I know my Mom did not wear them (she and Dad eloped), but I thought it was neat to wear something that belonged to my Grandmother." Judy, in turn, learned of the tradition from her mother, who had shared her shoe fancies with friends and family through the tradition's undocumented years in the 1920s and 30s.



The role of the custodian in informing eligible participants of the tradition and offering it to them for use in their weddings was elaborated by Mary's great-granddaughter Brooke. "[Judy]'s the current "keeper" of the shoe fancies and ... a lover of family tradition." Carrie was brought into this tradition by a relative of her husband's, when the shoe fancies were presented to her on her wedding day. "I do remember [my husband's aunt] saying it's tradition that the bride has it on her somewhere and I know I was putting [my maternal grandmother's] pendant underneath the skirt, so we added it right next to it," she explained in the pilot study.

Deb's introduction to the shoe fancy tradition also came from a member of her husband's family, her mother-in-law, who suggested the use of the fancies as either a borrowed or old item to fulfill the bridal rhyme tradition of "something old, something new, something borrowed, and something blue." The shoe fancies were incorporated into the bridal rhyme tradition by at least five of the eight women interviewed, who utilized the fancies as either the "borrowed" or "old" component of the rhyme.

For Becky, things were different; as the daughter of the current custodian, she had grown up with the tradition, but was still exposed to it through another relative who had used the fancies in the past. Becky related that she "...grew up on that story, so it seems I'd always known I would wear them one day."

During the interviews for the pilot study, participants were also asked to name sources of additional information about the bridal traditions they used for their weddings. Two of the three participants confirmed that family members would be a good source of information about the traditions they employed for their weddings, not only for the shoe

fancy tradition, but for other bridal traditions as well. This fits with the position of a senior member of the family as the custodian or gatekeeper of the dress tradition under study.

*Finding 3: Dress traditions are altered over time to suit the changing needs of the participants and the traditions themselves.*

No single participant had a definitive history of the shoe fancy dress tradition, including the changes made to this tradition from its inception in 1925 through its use today in 2014. However, the perspectives offered by the numerous participants in this research allowed the development of a general concept of the changes which have been made to this tradition over time. This finding relates to the third and fourth research questions. This finding confirms initial discoveries from the pilot study, but the present body of research has greatly expanded on the foundations of this finding with additional knowledge and a much broader picture of the overall history of the changes made to the shoe fancy tradition.

3. Did these individuals change or adapt their dress traditions to suit their personal preferences?
4. How do these dress traditions change? (or “Do these dress traditions change?”)

Of the eight participants interviewed for this research, only one, Judy, the current custodian of the shoe fancies, had utilized them as a decoration on her shoes for her wedding. Although she wore the fancies on her shoes, Judy explained that they were not visible to her wedding guests, as “... [M]y wedding dress was long so nobody saw them.”

As the custodian, and the only member of the shoe fancy tradition's second generation of participants to be interviewed for this research, Judy provided the greatest insight into how the fancies were put to use in the earliest weddings.

“So in the 50s I think, in the 40s I think those girls probably basted them on. But when they become so fragile about the 70s, you couldn't sew them on any longer. So they would put 'em in a bouquet with their wedding flowers. Or finally had to just put 'em [in] that little lace bag.” – Judy

The first participant known to have worn the shoe fancies sewn to her dress instead of her shoes was Deb, who was married in the 1970s. This was due in part to Deb's reservation about fastening the antiques to her shoes.

“I had smooth satin pumps dyed to match my dress, so I was hesitant to tack the shoe fancies onto my shoes as in those idealistic youthful days I honestly thought I would wear the pumps again ... So, my mother tacked the shoe fancies onto the underskirt of my wedding dress.” – Deb

The shoe fancies continued to see use as a non-visible component of wedding attire throughout the third generation of the tradition's participants, as expressed in their interviews. Lynn “...honored the Kirkpatrick family tradition of wearing the shoe fancies (by pinning them to my slip).” Other participants in the tradition considered wearing the fancies on their shoes, but ultimately chose to continue the modification of the tradition by wearing them as a component of their gown or dress. “I think I did not actually wear the shoe clips (I was afraid they would fall off my shoes) but pinned one to my dress,” Carol explained. Her cousin Becky came to the same conclusion, stating that “I'm not

sure who last wore as actual shoe clips. Today, they are more suitable for under the dress.”

This change or modification to the tradition was continued into the fourth generation and the weddings of Mary’s great-grandchildren. This continued until 2011, when Lynn’s daughter, Annie, was married. “I think they used to be worn on shoes, but since they are old now, they are in a small lace bag. I pinned them to the inside of my dress,” Annie explained. When the shoe fancies were removed from their storage chest for artifact analysis as a part of this research, they were still stored in the lace pouch which Annie and her mother Lynn added to the tradition, and were presumably used in the lace pouch from 2011 to the point of study in 2014.

*Finding 4: The formation of a dress tradition is a staged process that is not always fully understood or known by its adherents.*

In the pilot study, responses from the participants indicated differing levels of knowledge regarding the formation of the shoe fancy dress tradition. These differing accounts were confirmed during the current research process, as no one participant was aware of the full history of the tradition and its use. Research and interviews with the current custodian of the shoe fancies, Judy, revealed that the names of every participant in the tradition are also unknown, particularly those who participated at an earlier date, between 1925 through Judy’s wedding in 1953.

“... [W]e didn’t write down the names of the brides until 1950, which was over 25 years later from when my mother made ’em. And I wrote down all the names she could remember. ... [W]e knew of two girls during the Second World War

that wore them with their dresses. But in 1950 when I started asking mother we couldn't remember. Or I didn't know who all her friends who had worn them.” –

Judy

While further information was revealed through the research process about what changes were made to the tradition at what points in time, this full account is still outside the body of knowledge of any single participant. This finding helps to answer the fifth research question, how are dress traditions such as these formed, in addition to assisting in the fulfillment of a research objective: the creation of a comprehensive history of the shoe fancy dress tradition.

This finding is specifically focused on the overall history of the dress tradition, as opposed to the changes made to the tradition over time, including those made to the visibility of the shoe fancies. Each participant was able to provide a basic understanding of the shoe fancy tradition, but none of these accounts fully reflected the history of the tradition as set down by each participant in chronological order.

Of the three participants in the pilot study, Deb knew only that the shoe fancies came from her husband's grandmother and coordinated with his grandmother's wedding dress. She gained more information about the fancies later, when her son's wedding employed the same tradition.

“My husband's grandmother wore a flapper wedding dress in the 1920's when she was married ... My husband's sister brought the shoe buckles and tacked them onto the underskirt of the dress. She recounted the story behind them to my

daughter-in-law's female relatives and attendants at the bridesmaid's luncheon." –

Deb

For Carrie, the origins of the shoe fancy tradition were less clear. She was not certain which of her husband's relatives had begun the tradition, although she was aware that the tradition had been in use for several generations. Other participants explained the tradition in more general terms.

"[The shoe fancy tradition is] [t]he passing down and sharing of a special piece of a wardrobe to remind us all of our lineage and where we come from as we leave our families and join another in marriage." – Brooke

"It is a cute tradition that does not involve too much. Nothing humiliating or garish. Easy tradition to carry out by just pinning them to something. Wearing them on the shoes though, would have been more difficult as they were very fragile." – Lynn

Mary's granddaughters, Carol and Becky, specifically emphasized the emotional aspect of the tradition, and the way in which its history ties them to members of their family.

"I know my grandma, Mary, designed them for her wedding dress ... As was typical at that time, she sewed them onto her shoes and then removed them afterward, probably to be worn again at other opportunities. She loaned them to several cousins when the[y] were married ... and then to family friends ... They have been in every wedding of Frank and Mary's grandchildren and great-grandchildren." – Becky

“It is very special to have a family tradition that has touched so many of the family members ... I’m very happy that Grandma Kirkpatrick started this beautiful tradition.” – Carol

The compilation of these joint accounts and archival materials left behind by past participants in the dress tradition, including those maintained by its present custodian, Judy, can help in the creation of a larger picture of the shoe fancy tradition’s history. While of aid to the current research and its goals, more noteworthy at this point in the research process is that the absence of a complete history does not appear to impact participants’ opinions or experiences of the apparent emotional importance or attachment to the tradition itself.

*Finding 5: The emotional connection formed by participants in a dress tradition may involve other rituals in addition to wearing the traditional dress object.*

Initially, this dress tradition involved the use only of the shoe fancies. According to Judy, from the 1920s through the 1950s, many brides wore these decorations on their shoes after being loaned the objects by the tradition’s founder, Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick. Some participants may have used the shoe fancy as a part of their bouquet, or otherwise carried the fancies in some fashion, but no participants were found who could confirm this oral history. This finding relates back to three research questions:

4. How do these dress traditions change? (or “Do these dress traditions change?”)
5. How are dress traditions such as these formed?

6. What role does custody of tradition play in the development of such dress traditions?

In the 1950s, the present custodian of the tradition created the registry of brides who have participated in the tradition, in addition to making the box for the shoe fancies, registry, and photocopy of Frank and Mary Kirkpatrick's wedding photo. The creation and inclusion of these objects thus transformed the tradition to the point that recent participants in the tradition mention the trappings – the photograph, registry, and box – as objects which carry emotional weight in addition to the ephemeral connection forged with the shoe fancies themselves. This addition of the shoe fancy's "trappings" in the form of the wooden box, registry, and photograph are reflected in the pilot study as well as in present research.

"It was a shoe buckle and she had it in a nice wooden box with a piece of paper of all the brides that had worn it underneath their dress as well ... as soon as that day was over, they clip it and they put it back in the shoe box or whatever it comes in; the little cedar chest." – Carrie

The registry of brides who have taken part in this longstanding family dress tradition was mentioned several times by participants as a particularly significant memory of their past use of the shoe fancy tradition (see figure 11, page 109). "It's also fun to know that so many family members have participated," Lynn explained. Judy's granddaughter Brooke added, "I am so grateful to [Judy] for teaching me about [the shoe fancies] and keeping the tradition going." Carol agreed, stating that "Seeing the list of



brides that have worn the shoe fancies makes me smile and appreciate our wonderful family.”

An additional discovery was made while interviewing Judy, a change in the manner through which the tradition is passed down from generation to generation. Judy expressed that her mother “probably mailed [the fancies]” to a cousin who borrowed the shoe fancies for her wedding in Pennsylvania during the Second World War. When the fancies were incorporated into the first wedding of one of Judy’s grandchildren, however, they were hand-carried from Indiana to Iowa. The full history of the transportation of the shoe fancies is not yet known, but these two examples confirm the finding of evolving rituals related to the custody and transmission of the shoe fancies.

## Chapter 6 – Analysis & Interpretation of Findings

### *Purpose*

The purpose behind this narrative research is to understand and describe dress traditions as a concept, to explore the formation and subsequent evolution of dress traditions, and to describe the role of objects as a simultaneous component of dress traditions and as a vessel for emotional attachment. Areas under study with regards to dress traditions and traditional objects included participation in traditions, custody of traditional objects, and visibility of traditional objects. To achieve this goal, a list of six research questions was generated at the outset of the research.

7. Why did these individuals adopt such a dress tradition?
8. How did these individuals adopt or learn of such a dress tradition?
9. Did these individuals change or adapt their dress traditions to suit their personal preferences?
10. How do these dress traditions change? (or “Do these dress traditions change?”)
11. How are dress traditions such as these formed?
12. What role does custody of tradition play in the development of such dress traditions?

The five findings associated with these research questions help develop a holistic definition of dress traditions, including their formation, reasons and manner of use, and their role as agents of emotional attachment. The data were coded and analyzed in accordance with the theory of ephemerality as modeled on activity theory, discussed in

the second chapter of this thesis, and then by categories and themes emergent through the immersion and highlighting methods (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008, 98-102). More information is needed in order to fully answer each of these research questions as they relate to the overall concept of dress traditions, but the findings in the preceding section lay the groundwork for future research by thoroughly illustrating these concepts through the application of the theories, data coding, analysis, and synthesis of the research into a single dress tradition, that of the bridal shoe fancy.

*Adoption, perpetuation, and custody of dress traditions*

One of the principal findings of this research was the sense of connection or unity with others created by participation in a dress tradition, as in the case of the shoe fancy tradition. One interpretation of this finding is that the use of dress traditions among small or closely connected communities may increase or enhance preexisting ties and assist in the formation of new emotional ties between participants and the groups from which the dress traditions in use are drawn.

As the shoe fancy tradition is intrinsically linked to a preexisting social network to which participants in the tradition either already belonged or were being invited to join, the tradition allows the shoe fancies to act as a physical reminder of the invitation being issued, allowing a bride to forge deeper connections with her predecessors in the dress tradition. Regardless of whether or not these past adherents to the shoe fancy tradition are considered blood relations of the current participant, this connection was sensed and elaborated on by participating brides. Of the eight past participants who assisted in this research, five were descendants of the tradition's founder, Mary Bishop

Kirkpatrick, while the remaining three married in to the tradition. This sense of connection was still strong enough that the majority of participants mentioned experiencing a strong sense of connection.

Through the act of using the shoe fancy as a component of their bridal attire, the women who have employed this tradition in their weddings were helping to create and cement the same family bonds which they experienced as an emotional component of their wedding day. This family connection has grown deeper over time, with no participants reported in the third or fourth generations of brides to date who were friends of Mary Bishop's descendants, as opposed to direct descendants of the tradition's founder.

These growing family ties are also demonstrated in the second finding of this research, wherein all participants indicated that their use of the shoe fancies was initiated by past adherents of the tradition. Two participants from the most recent generation reported that their mothers, in each case a past adherent of the tradition, personally pinned or sewed the shoe fancies to their wedding dresses shortly before their marriage ceremonies. This act creates a deeper tie and more direct family link between the use of the tradition and the sense of connection or unity with the broader family from which the tradition is drawn, while intrinsically linking the shoe fancies to marriage rites. This deep connection between family members is a slight departure from the customs of the tradition in the first two generations of use, where friends of the founder of the tradition and friends of the founder's daughter were also invited to participate in the use of the shoe fancy at their wedding ceremonies.

Part of this shift toward a deeper family connection in the third and fourth generations of the tradition from the friends and family tradition of the two preceding generations of participants may be due to shifting aesthetic standards. Statements by participants regarding the physical and aesthetic qualities of the shoe fancies demonstrate that the use of the fancies is primarily due to this connection as opposed to the great physical beauty of the objects so central to this dress tradition. To members of Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick's family, both old and new, the shoe fancies are a physical reminder of the unity of the family and the many individuals who have come together to create it. As such, the fancies possess a certain appeal that comes from the knowledge of the artifacts' age and their emotional value to the members of the family who have previously employed the tradition.

From a purely aesthetic standard, however, the fancies may not appeal (see figure 12, page 110). As revealed in the analysis of the artifacts, the shoe fancies are old, fragile, and yellowed past the point of physical prime; the delicate wax orange blossoms have badly deteriorated, and though in possession of a certain charm, they do not adhere to modern standards of beauty. In addition, the shoe fancies can no longer fulfill their original function; their fragility means it is unlikely for a bride to sew the satin pads to the tops of her shoes for use as a decorative element there, and the lack of a physical clip or buckle attached to the pads means it is more difficult to physically sew these decorations to the shoes than it is to keep them safe in their lace pouch, where they can easily be incorporated into a slip or tulle underskirt with something as quick and easy to operate as a safety pin.

At the same time, the size and scale of the artifact chosen for use as a traditional object must be added into the consideration. The shoe fancies have been employed for nine decades of use in weddings throughout the continental United States (see figure 4, page 102). It is not known why Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick, the tradition's founder, chose the shoe fancies as the artifact of her wedding dress and May Queen ensemble that she wished to share. However, the small size of the artifacts and the increasing ease of use – from wearing them sewn to shoes to tacking them quickly to an underskirt to simply pinning a lace bag to the bride's dress before she walks down the aisle – appears to lend itself to the tradition's continued use over a larger pool of participants than would be possible with a bigger or more difficult artifact such as Mary's wedding dress.

The proliferation of this tradition and its shift in focus from friends and family to just family may also be related to the changes in the broader culture from which the shoe fancy tradition is drawn. The current custodian of the tradition, Judy, specifically mentioned the economy as a factor in the weddings of many past adherents who were not direct members of Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick's family.

“[B]ack then a lot of girls didn't have a wedding dress. You borrowed or you wore just a regular dress to get married in, in the 20s. 'Cause that was recession time in the agricultural field.” – Judy

Over time, many of the customs and rituals surrounding weddings have gained aesthetic emphasis. Proof of this aesthetic consideration of weddings can be found in many forms of media, including television shows, specialty magazines, and websites devoted to helping a bride create the perfect look for her wedding day. This emphasis on

the planning and physical qualities of a wedding is a departure from the roots of the shoe fancy tradition, where entire communities were involved in weddings and their preparations.

“He[r husband] was in the Navy all during the war. And he got leave to come home for the weekend. So real quickly somebody got a parachute and a friend made the wedding dress out of that nylon and then probably mother just offered them. It was a big wedding but it got arranged and carried out within just a few days.” – Judy

With this shift in mindset from the community being involved in the wedding to a bride and her family, there may be fewer opportunities for a past adherent of a tradition that is primarily based in family lines to invite their friends, or friends of their children, to make use of the traditional object.

Another consideration to the ephemeral attachment-activity and the use of the shoe fancy dress tradition in family lines is that of custody. The tradition has existed for 89 years at the time of publication, but has spanned only two custodial periods: that of founder Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick, and her daughter, Judy McKinney, who has been responsible for the tradition in recent decades. Further evidence of the matrilineal nature of the custodial role in the shoe fancy tradition was offered by Judy’s daughter, Becky, who intends to take up the responsibility of serving as custodian in the future.

“At some point, I imagine I’ll take over the role Mom plays in keeping these clips. I’ll make sure they are available for all the weddings of Frank and Mary’s descendants, and that they’re returned for the next wedding.” – Becky

Given the limited number of custodians or gatekeepers of this tradition over the years, it is difficult to anticipate what changes may be made to the tradition in the future. During the interviews, the family connection and the desire to see the tradition continue to see use within the family was demonstrated by participants, but no mention was made of expanding the tradition to its roots by involving close friends. When asked if other family members might use the shoe fancy tradition, Brooke explained, “Yes. My younger sister, and hopefully my own daughters, when the time comes (many years from now!).” Carol, a third-generation participant, agreed with the sentiment. “I look forward to seeing my children (and their wives) wearing the shoe fancies, just like their great grandmother.”

With so much emotional meaning invested in the fragile and aged shoe fancies, additional venues less susceptible to damage from use and the passage of time have been added to the tradition. This is directly representative of the fifth finding, wherein the emotional connection formed by participants in a dress tradition may involve other rituals in addition to wearing the traditional dress object. Adding customs to the overall tradition allows brides to continue to participate in the creation of the ephemeral attachment-activity bond while decreasing the physical handling and vulnerability of the artifacts at the heart of this tradition.

“As far as the shoe clips, I remember seeing them in a glass box on Grandma’s desk when I was a little girl visiting. She kept a list in the box of all the brides who’d worn them, with the date of the wedding.” – Becky



“I personally pinned the shoe fancies to Annie’s slip for her wedding in 2011.

They seemed so fragile, I put them in a lace pouch first.” – Lynn

Lynn’s daughter, Annie, was the most recent bride interviewed, though she is not the most recent bride to use the tradition as a part of her wedding. As such, it is unknown if any subsequent brides have opened the pouch or even have an understanding of the physical appearance of the fancies. As their physical appearance and physical manifestation becomes less visible and less well known, other artifacts such as the pouch, registry, and chest can thus take precedence, and potentially take the place of the destroyed, consumed, or set-aside artifact from Attfield’s theory of ephemerality. This is particularly true of the lace pouch in which the shoe fancies are now kept, as the theory of ephemerality notes the specific mediation capacity of textile objects over other types of physical artifacts (Attfield, 2000, p. 123).

Ultimately, the shoe fancies are still the basis and heart of the tradition, nearly ninety years after the genesis of the dress tradition. The shoe fancies themselves provide the direct link to Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick and the many friends and family members who have participated in this tradition throughout the majority of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. As such, even when the decorations are concealed from view within a lace pouch or a decorative chest, the fancies are still invested with the weight of the ephemeral attachment and the largest portion of the ephemeral mediation role of guiding and stabilizing a transition through a period of heightened emotion.

*Foundation, evolution, and history of traditions*

Interpretations of the findings related to the foundation, evolution, and history of traditions are tied directly to three of the principal findings of this study. The first of these findings is that all participants indicated their use of a dress tradition was initiated by previous followers of that tradition. While the impact of the direct transmission of the tradition from one participant to another has already been discussed in light of its role in the potential ephemeral attachment-activity of a dress tradition, this finding also has a strong bearing on how dress traditions are founded and evolve over time. The relationship between this direct transmission and the way in which traditions change was most clearly demonstrated when participants were asked to explain the history of the dress tradition.

As discussed in the fourth finding, wherein adherents of a tradition do not always fully understand or know about the staged process of the tradition's formation, only Judy, the custodian of the shoe fancies, had a holistic view of the history of the dress tradition.

“For a few years the first people basted them on their shoes because that was the tradition in the 40s and 50s. ... [W]hen wedding attire went from the long satin dress with the long train, which is what I wore, back to the shorter dress, the flapper type dress like my mother wore – then once again shoes become popular.”

“[My] husbands (sic) side of the family has a long running tradition of pinning the vintage shoe clip underneath your wedding dress.” – Carrie

Since the shoe fancy dress tradition relies on this transmission and recruitment of new participants by past adherents, and is chiefly an oral tradition, this means that new participants' understanding of the tradition's history is supplied by those who recruit

them into the shoe fancy dress tradition. Unless recruited directly by a custodian, gatekeeper, or historian of a given dress tradition, this means that participants will pass their understanding of the customs, rituals, and actions of a dress tradition which were employed by their recruiter on to others as factual history.

This analysis also relates to the third finding, in that dress traditions are altered over time to suit the changing needs of the participants and the traditions themselves. By accepting the necessity of change and the ability for the truth of a dress tradition's history, rites, and customs to be somewhat flexible based on the knowledge of its adherents, a wider vision of how and why traditions are changed can be explored.

In relation to the previous examples, Carrie was under the impression that the shoe fancy had always been worn underneath the dress (specifically, sewn to a slip or other inner garment; see figure 13, page 111). This aspect of the tradition appears to have been jointly started by Judy, the keeper of the tradition, and Deb, the first bride documented to wear the shoe fancies in this manner. This change was instituted by Deb due to a desire to keep her shoes in good condition for future use, and encouraged by Judy due to the changing state of the artifact at the heart of the tradition, the shoe fancy, and its increasing fragility and yellowed appearance. In this manner, the change suited the tradition in that the change encouraged the tradition to continue with a slight modification; the participant, in that it allowed for the use to meet her particular personal needs; and finally the artifacts themselves, which were used in a manner providing less physical strain than by sewing them to a bride's shoes. While this decision to move the fancies from their original purpose, decorating shoes, to serving as an ephemeral

ornament on a bride's skirt does represent a change, it was the change which fostered the continuation of a tradition that might otherwise have ceased to be.

Further evidence of the way in which these changes allow for multiple truths, multiple histories, and multiple customs or rites to exist simultaneously within a tradition can be found in the recent adoption of the lace storage pouch for the shoe fancies. By the time the fourth generation of adherents interviewed were employing the shoe fancy tradition in their weddings, it had become traditional to wear the fancies attached to their skirts, beneath the outer layer of their wedding gowns. As a result, it was not a considerable jump from what was already traditional (wearing the fancies beneath the skirt, pinned or sewn) to what has become traditional since 2011 (wearing the fancies within a lace pouch that is pinned or sewn to the skirt; see figure 14, page 112).

This act of adopting the lace pouch has also served the needs of the custodian, participant, and artifact, by furthering the tradition for the custodian, lessening any sense of anxiety or concern over the deteriorating physical state of the artifact for the participant, and protecting and preserving the artifact while allowing its continued use. An additional implication of this change from the sewing or pinning of the fancies to the sewing or pinning of the fancies in a lace pouch is that by attaching a large safety pin to the bag, any expectation that the fancies must be sewn is eliminated, providing greater ease of participation for the bride and those assisting her in the use of this dress tradition.

This interpretation is not meant to suggest that every proposed alteration to a given dress tradition might be acted upon. One example of this is provided by Becky, who was considering having the shoe fancies either remade or reworked for her wedding,

but ultimately decided against this possibility. “I thought about having them re-done for my wedding to wear as shoe clips, but Mom pointed out that they are so fragile there is really not much to work with,” she explained.

It is possible that future adherents from the fourth generation of brides onward may choose to have a replica of the shoe fancies constructed, or to otherwise preserve the shoe fancies in some other manner, as conceived by Becky in the early 2000s. It is nonetheless important to illustrate that while every proposed change need not be accepted, participants feel some freedom through the transmission of a dress tradition to institute small changes which may or may not be accepted as truths by future adherents. This suggests that even traditions which are well documented, as in the case of the shoe fancy dress tradition, evolution is an ongoing process which is not always fully understood – and perhaps more importantly, it is not necessary to understand, document, accept, or reject every aspect of a tradition in order to achieve its goals or to comprehend its truth or truths. Ultimately, changes rendered to a given tradition matter less than its ability to achieve the goal at the heart of the tradition: in the case of the shoe fancies, to foster bonds of friendship and family between participants.

## Chapter 7 – Conclusions

The purpose of this research study is to understand and describe the concept of dress traditions, and to explore the formation and subsequent evolution of dress traditions. This research involves the understanding of objects and their role as a simultaneous component of dress traditions and as a vessel or participant actor in the ephemeral attachment-activity theory. Areas under study with regards to these dress traditions and ephemeral objects included participation in tradition, custody of traditional objects, and the visibility of traditional objects while in use. To achieve this goal, a list of six research questions was generated at the outset of the research process, resulting in five independent findings for analysis and interpretation. The following conclusions are thus drawn from the research questions, findings, and subsequent interpretation of the data gathered throughout this research process.

*Conclusion 1. Studying ephemerality in the use of dress traditions can reveal unintended, nonphysical functions of known artifacts*

This conclusion directly relates to the first finding of the research, wherein the majority of participants stated that use of dress traditions created a strong feeling of connection or unity with others. Using dress traditions in small or close-knit groups may increase or enhance their existing ties, and assist in the formation of new ones. The physical act of using the traditional object can function as an invitation for new members to join, or to demonstrate the increased depth of ties to existing members. In the case of the shoe fancies, this conclusion illustrates the way in which a physical object (the shoe fancies) intended for a specific function (the decoration of Mary Bishop's shoes) have

changed over time, and how only by studying the ephemeral use of the dress objects were the new functions of these old artifacts revealed.

The use of the object as an invitation allows the participant, the object, and the group or community to which the dress tradition belongs to form the central foundation of the tradition in association with the emotional experience of forging or sensing emotional ties. Evidence of this phenomenon, wherein the participant, group, and object form as actors, can also be seen in the ephemeral attachment-activity model. In the model, the participant in the dress tradition (the bride), the traditional object (the shoe fancies), and the group or culture from which the tradition is drawn (the extended family) form the central pyramid to which all other building blocks of the theory are attached (see figure 1.5, page 99). While other blocks on the activity model might change, this remains the core tenet. This confirms the use of the ephemerality attachment-activity model as a tool for evaluating dress traditions such as that of the shoe fancies.

*Conclusion 2: Traditions may evolve in unexpected ways*

The second finding in this research indicated that all participants were brought into their use of the shoe fancy by previous followers or adherents of the dress tradition. This allows the participant, the object, and the group or community to which the dress belongs to form the central foundation of the tradition, and the central block of the ephemeral attachment-activity theory, as discussed above. This also creates a deeper tie and more direct family link between the tradition and the sense of connection or unity demonstrated previously. This finding contributes to the departure from tenets of the original tradition, where friends of founder Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick and her descendants

were invited to actively participate in the tradition. While the deepening of the family connection to the tradition and its participants does not refute the possibility that friends of Mary's descendants will be brought in to the active use of the tradition in the future, the increasing mother-daughter link through subsequent generations of participants may be a factor in the direct family continuation as opposed to the initial use of the shoe fancies by a mixture of family and friends.

Although the change in focus from friends and family members to just descendants of the founder of the shoe fancy tradition is appreciable, there is no rule stating that only those who claim descent from Mary and her children are eligible for use of the shoe fancies in their wedding ceremonies. This is demonstrated in the use of the shoe fancies not only by those who are direct descendants of Mary Bishop, but also the invitation for the shoe fancies to be used in the weddings of the founder's grandsons and great-grandsons. This convention first appears in the third generation, when the shoe fancies were offered to the fiancée of one of Mary's grandsons. The fancies have since been employed in the weddings of at least five of Mary's male descendants, and as such help to cement new as well as old family ties through the use of the shoe fancies as an invitation and mediation object assisting new members of the family in navigating, creating, and sustaining emotional ties with their husbands' families.

Supplementary proof of these unexpected changes in traditions is visible in the fifth finding, where the emotional connection formed by participants in a dress tradition may involve other rituals in addition to wearing the traditional dress object. Adding in other rites or customs on the surface of the tradition can protect the artifacts at the core of



an object-based dress tradition, such as the shoe fancy tradition, by taking the place of the destroyed, consumed, or set-aside artifact from Attfield's theory of ephemerality as discussed in the analysis and interpretation chapter (Attfield, 2000, p. 131).

These additional rites and customs can also fulfill other aspects of a tradition which appear to otherwise be set aside, as is the case in the shoe fancy tradition. At the outset of this research process, the visibility of the shoe fancies and their use in family weddings was to be tracked, with the expectation that as the fancies moved from their initial function as shoe fancies toward a more private ornamentation attached to undergarments supporting the wedding dress, the tradition itself would become more private than public in nature. Instead, research revealed that outside involvement in the tradition and awareness of the shoe fancies is still visible in the most recent generation of participants.

Three participants indicated through interviews and photographs that the shoe fancy tradition is still visible even when the shoe fancies are concealed beneath a wedding dress. In the case of the three most recent participants in the tradition, bridal photographs were staged or taken of the traditional objects being sewn or pinned into place by members of their family. While these photographs remain less visible and more private than the act of publically displaying the artifacts in a manner where every wedding guest might see them, it still suggests a desire to share the tradition with those who are outside of the immediate family (see figure 15, page 113).

*Conclusion 3. The application of qualitative research paradigms aids the study of dress traditions by focusing on participants over artifacts*

The third finding states that dress traditions are altered over time to suit the changing needs of the participants and the traditions themselves. Accepting the possibility that dress traditions are altered over time to suit the changing needs of their core tenets, including the participant, custodian, and artifact, allows a wider exploration of traditions. Additionally, allowing for traditions to change makes it easier for a larger number or group of people to participate in a given tradition, therefore allowing it to perpetuate.

These findings led me to conclude that the study of traditions may benefit from the application of qualitative research paradigms, such as social constructivism. In the case of the shoe fancy tradition, the application of social constructivism and its core knowledge that multiple truths or realities can exist side-by-side allows for a factual history of a tradition to be developed alongside the truth of each participant's experience without invalidating any of these disparate histories. This ability to acknowledge multiple truths and the tradition's capacity to withstand changes in favor of achieving a goal of ephemeral unity also suggests that paradigms previously applied to qualitative research, such as social constructivism, may play an analytical role in the understanding of disparate traditions of dress.

The application of qualitative research paradigms also fits with the fourth finding, wherein the formation or foundation of a dress tradition is a staged process which is not always fully understood or known by its adherents. Knowledge of the history of a

tradition's foundation is limited, often to core participants such as those with direct ties to the keeping of the tradition or to the tradition's founder. In the case of the shoe fancy tradition, these roles are combined in the person of the custodian, Judy, who is also the daughter of the tradition's founder. Due to the ephemeral attachment-activity and capability of a dress tradition to foster a sense of unity, connection, participation, or group membership, the facts on which a dress tradition are based are of less importance than the tradition's ability to serve its goals, as in the case of the shoe fancy tradition, where the goal is to promote, create, and sustain an extended family over time and distance. Therefore, the fact that knowledge is centered in one or two individuals does not matter as much to the adherents of a tradition as much as their participation in what is seen as a longstanding, unbroken, or otherwise meaningful tradition. It is the act of participation as opposed to knowledge of the history of the tradition which creates the ephemeral attachment-activity bond, which lessens the overall importance of a fully realized factual history of a given tradition or custom.

#### Recommendations for further research

It is the researcher's strong recommendation that further research be carried out in order to fully understand dress traditions and their overall role in dress. These findings, while transferable, cannot be generalized to suit the needs of every category of dress tradition. The researcher's personal recommendations are thus as follows.

1. Additional dress or textile-based traditions are recommended for testing against the theoretical framework and models developed through this research.

While this model works for the shoe fancy tradition, its wider applications

have not been tested. Additional testing could shed new light on the relationship between macro-scale, culturally based traditional dress and micro-scale, small group based dress traditions, and enable the testing of emotional attachment to traditional forms of dress on any scale.

2. Secondly, the specific links formed by recruitment into dress traditions are recommended for further study. While the use of some traditions, such as the bridal rhyme tradition, do not have an active recruitment base, others, such as the use of the shoe fancy as a traditional bridal object, require participant recruitment due to the specificity of the customs, rituals, and artifacts involved in the tradition. A comparative study between these passive versus active recruitment methods may provide greater insight and understanding into the way in which dress traditions are adopted and preserved by past participants as a whole.
3. Additional research should be conducted into the use of research paradigms into the application of traditions, rituals, and customs of dress as opposed to limiting research to fact-based paradigms. Particular emphasis on these alternative research paradigms should be given to small-scale customs of dress, such as the micro-level shoe fancy tradition under study, as qualitative research traditions have been developed to assist researchers in furthering the voice of participants who might otherwise be denied a voice in academic study due to issues of non-conformity. Opening up the definitions of acts such as tradition, ritual, and custom to the potential of multiple truths or alternative

paradigms will allow for greater diversity in thought and understanding of the highly individualized act of dressing.

4. Further research should be carried out into traditions where knowledge is more concrete or less centralized into a small percentage of participants in order to determine the role of definitive or factual truth in the creation of emotional connections between participants in a given dress tradition. This research could further the understanding of the potential of dress traditions to foster and encourage the development of ephemeral attachment-activity bonds without reliance upon alternative paradigms, thus conclusively proving or disproving the importance of these alternative paradigms to the concept and the body of research.
5. Due to the role of unexpected adaptations of customs, rites, and tenets of the shoe fancy tradition, it is recommended that the further study of dress traditions include all trappings and accompanying customs and rites used by participants to foster a greater understanding of how components of a tradition change over time by taking on new manners and methods of expression.

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- [Photographs of Julie McKinney wedding]. (ca. 1982). Courtesy of McKinney, J. A.
- [Photographs of Rebecca Thompson wedding]. (ca. 2001). Courtesy of Thompson, R. J.

Figure 1.1 – Simplified Activity Theory Model.

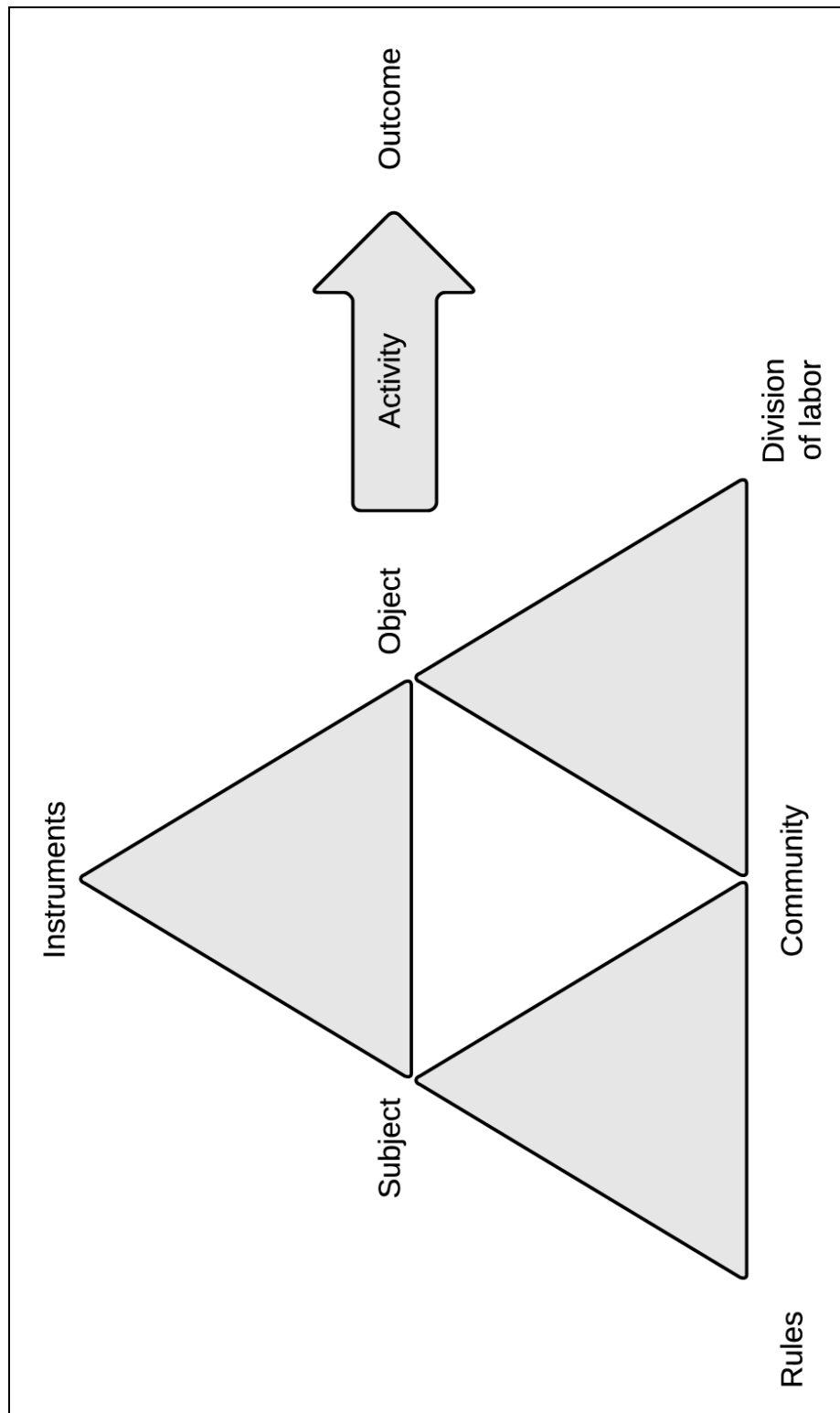


Figure 1.2 – Theory of Ephemerality as applied to a building block of the Activity Theory Model.

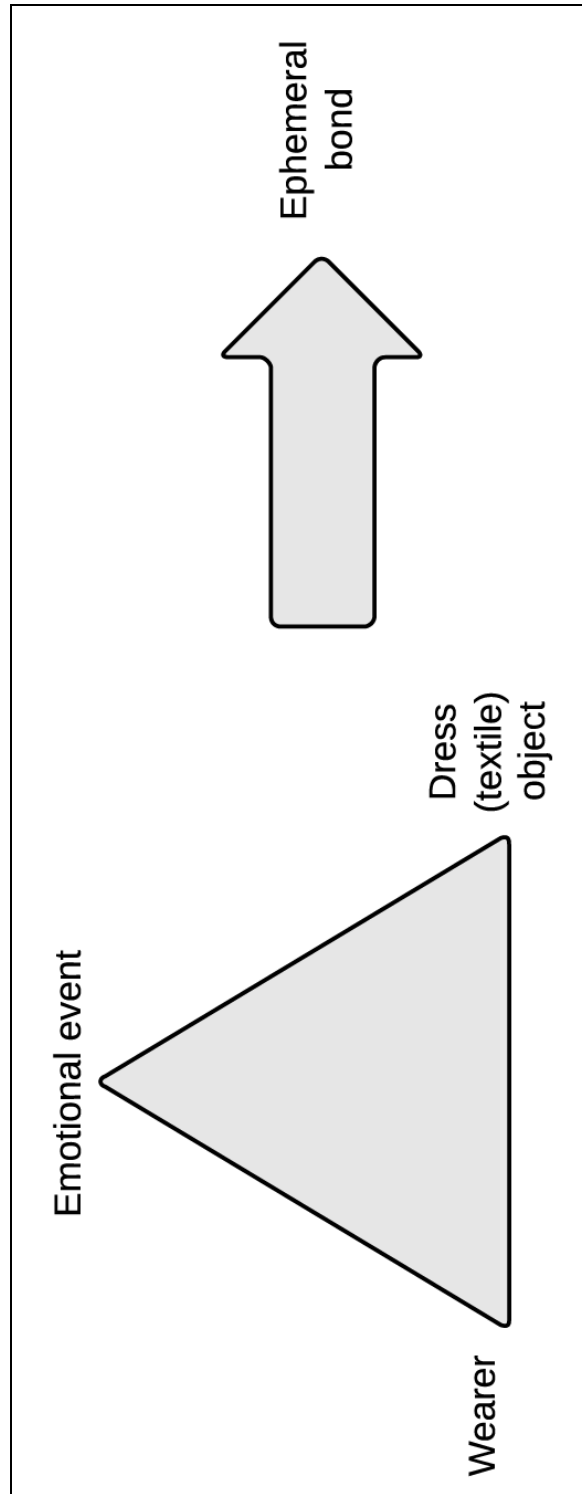




Figure 1.3 – Theory of Ephemerality as applied to the Activity Theory Model, with missing components.

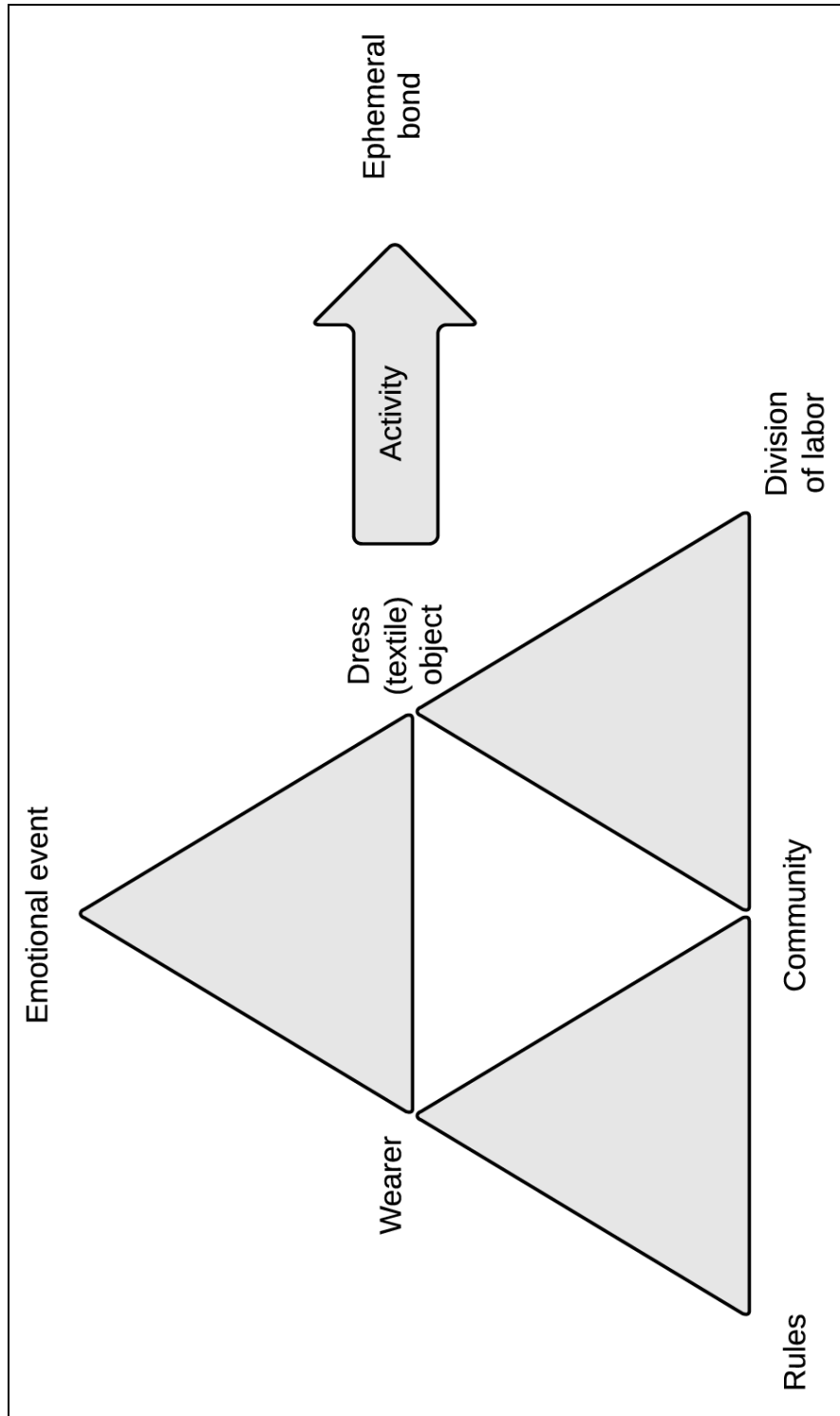


Figure 1.4 – Theory of Ephemerality as applied to the Activity Theory Model using the shoe fancy tradition.

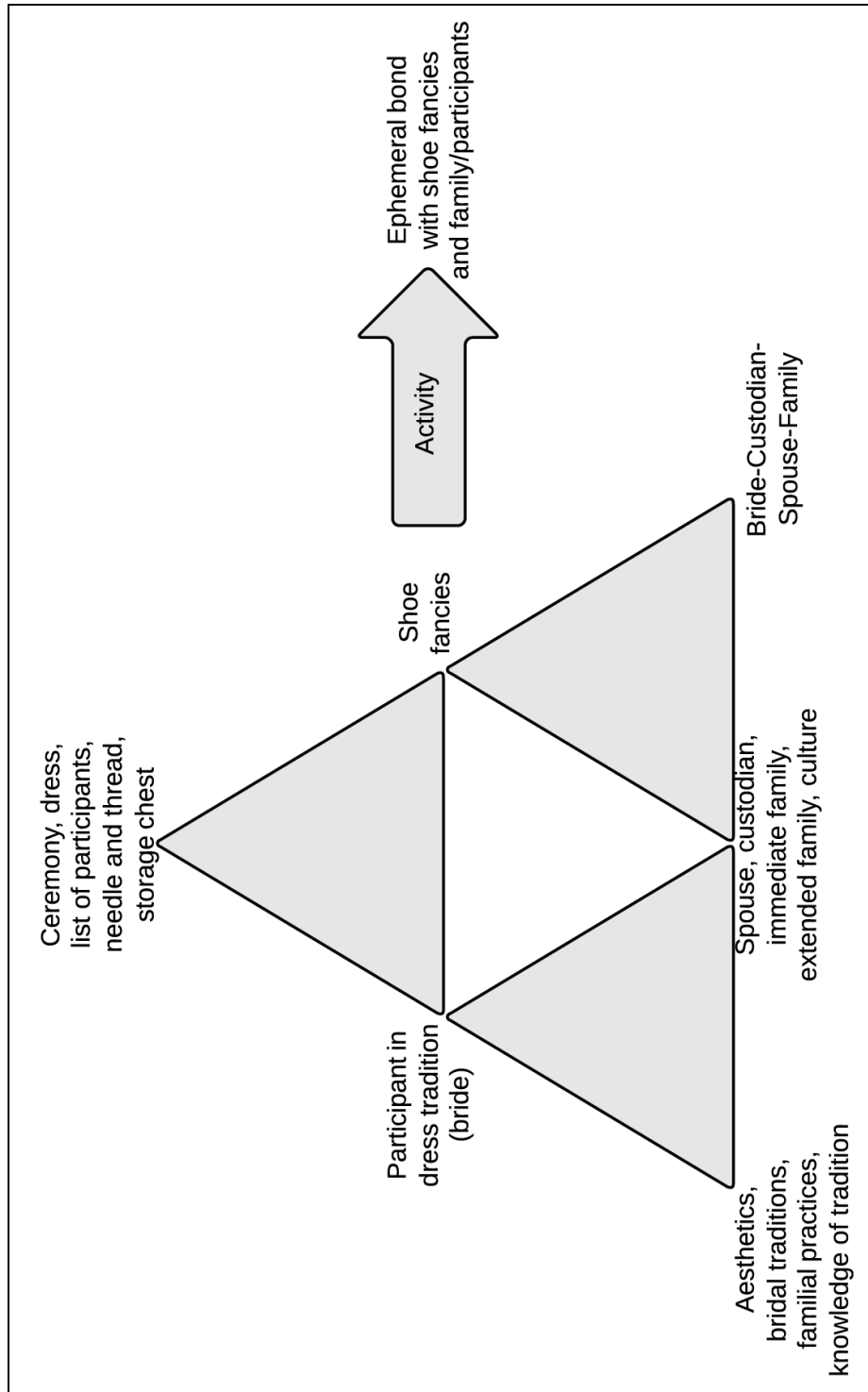


Figure 1.5 – Theory of Ephemerality as applied to the Activity Theory Model with central block displayed.

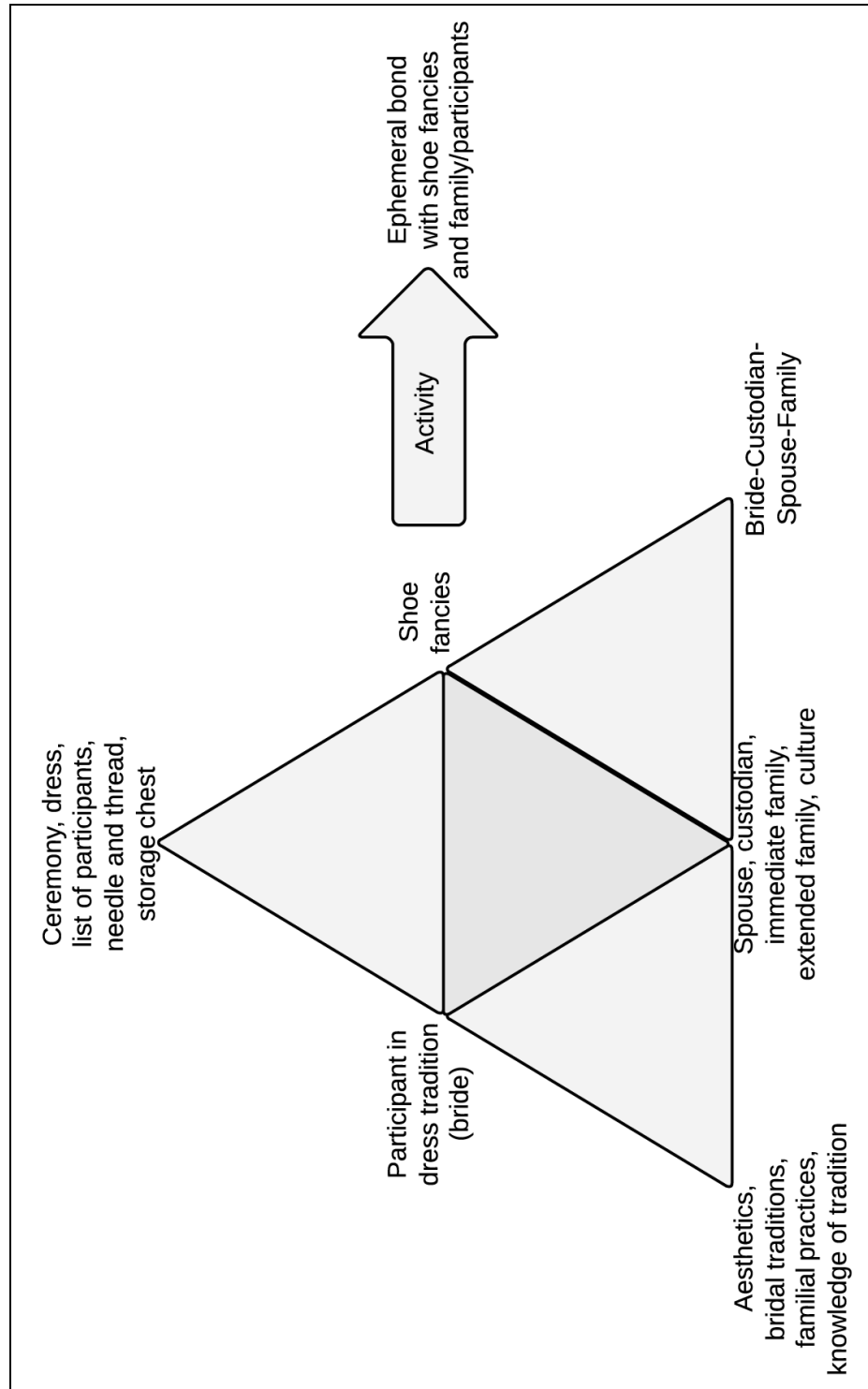


Figure 2 – Chart of known/confirmed participants in dress tradition.

Participant Name	Year Married	Location Married	Relationship to Tradition	Status
Mary Adeline Bishop was elected May Queen at Purdue University, 1923, and wore “shoe fancies” as part of her ensemble. The following participants have worn those “shoe fancies” as a part of their wedding attire in the years since:				
Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick	1925	Indiana	Founder	Deceased
Judy Evans	194?	Indiana	Close friend of daughter of founder	Deceased
Virginia Waters	1952	Pennsylvania	Cousin of founder’s husband	Deceased
Sandra Johnson	1953	Indiana	Church friend of founder’s	Deceased
Patricia Orr	1953	Indiana	Close friend of daughter of founder	Deceased
Julia McKinney	1953	Indiana	Daughter of founder	Living
Ann Agnew	1954	Indiana	Close friend of daughter of founder	Living
Mary Nance	1954	Indiana	Close friend of daughter of founder	Deceased
Deb McKinney	1979	Indiana	Married founder’s grandson	Living
Julie McKinney	1982	Delaware	Married founder’s grandson	Living
Lynn Kirkpatrick	1982	Michigan	Married founder’s grandson	Living
Carol Jackman	1988	Michigan	Granddaughter of founder	Living
Terry Haskett	1992	Texas	Neighbor of founder	Unknown
Rebecca Thompson	2000	Michigan	Granddaughter of founder	Living
Gretchen Kirkpatrick	2001	Michigan	Married founder’s son	Deceased
Carrie McKinney	2008	Iowa	Married founder’s great-grandson	Living
Brooke Klinker	2010	Indiana	Great-granddaughter of founder	Living
Anne Breithaupt	2011	Michigan	Great-granddaughter of founder	Living
Katherine Kirkpatrick Bos	2012	Michigan	Great-granddaughter of founder	Living
Kristie McKinney	2013	New York	Married founder’s great-grandson	Living

Figure 3 – E. McClung Fleming model for artifact analysis (Fleming, 1974, p. 153-173).

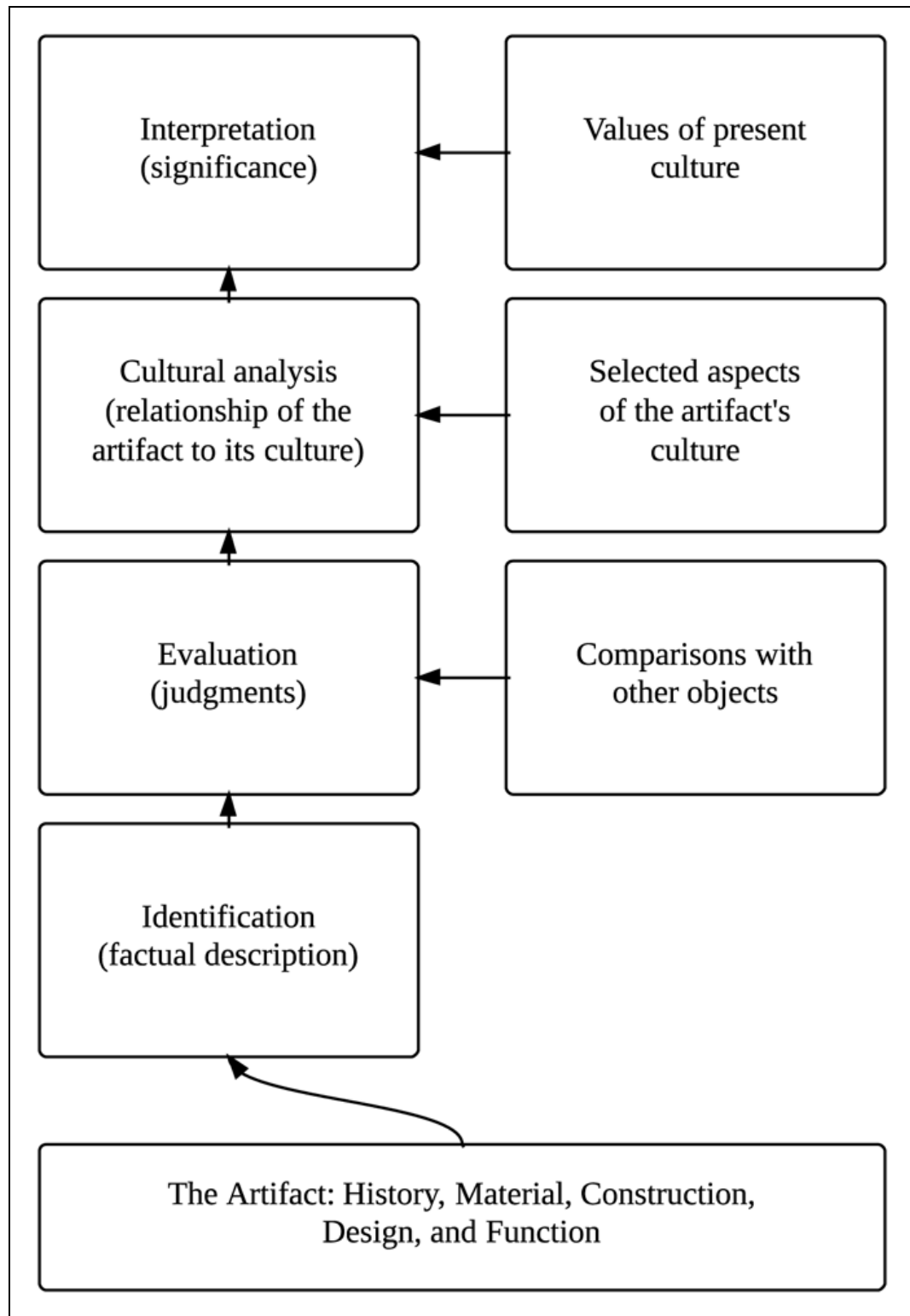


Figure 4 – Shoe fancy tradition map illustrating density of use by state, 1925-2014.

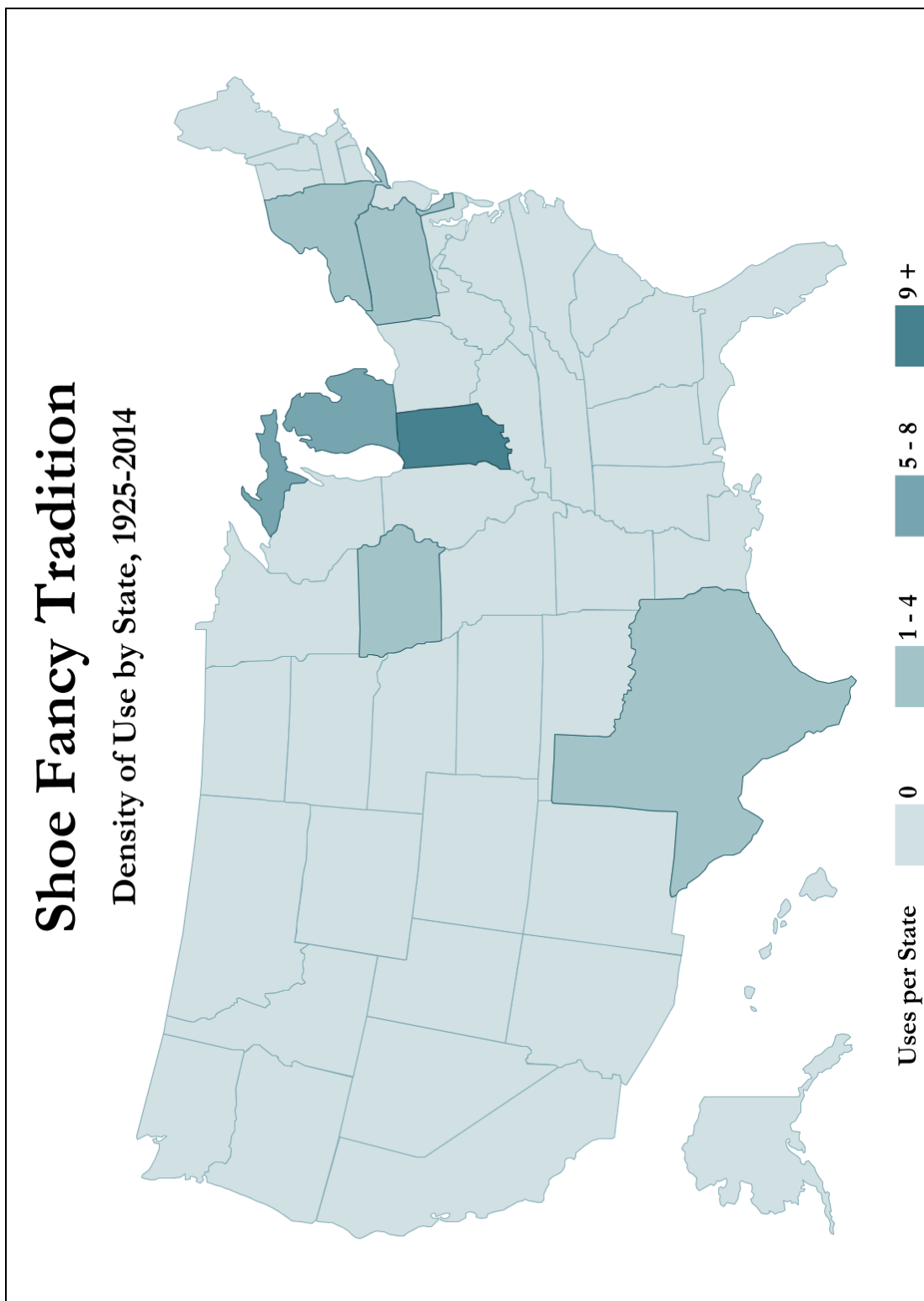


Figure 5 – Frank and Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick on their wedding day.



Figure 6 – Wooden storage chest for shoe fancies, closed.





Figure 7 – Shoe fancy box with verse, open lid.



Figure 8 – Shoe fancies in lace bag prior to participant’s wedding. Photograph courtesy of A. Breithaupt.




Figure 9 – Back of shoe fancy



Figure 10 – Single shoe fancy viewed from front, with tulle, lace, and crumbling wax orange blossoms



Figure 11 – Photocopy of the registry of brides as of late 2013. Photograph courtesy of J.J. McKinney



Be it Hereby Known

that these shoe decorations  
have adorned the following brides:

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1. Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick, June 14, 1925 Arcadia, Ind.
2. Judy Sloan Evans, 1943 Frankfort, Ind.
3. Virginia Farrand Waters June 1952 Pittsburgh, Pa.
4. Sandra Johnson July - 1953, Kempton, Ind.
5. Patricia Rusk Orr, Aug. 27, 1953 Huntington Ind
6. Judy Kirkpatrick McKinney, Dec. 20, 1953 Frankfort Ind.
7. Ann Alter Agnew, June 13, 1954 Frankfort, Ind.
8. DEBRA LYNN GISA MCKINNEY, AUGUST 11, 1979 TIPPIDO, IND.
9. Mary Agnes Starr Nance 1954 Frankfort IND.
10. Julie Ann Fisher McKinney June 26, 1982 Wilmington, Delaware
11. Lynn Gayl Fisher Kirkpatrick Oct. 2, 1982 Bloomfield Hills, Mich.
12. Carol Suzanne Kirkpatrick Jackman May 28, 1988 Bloomfield Hills, Mich.
13. Terry Haškett June 14, 1992 Dallas TX
14. Gretchen Hitch Kirkpatrick June 9, 2001 Bloomfield Hills, Mich.
15. Rebecca Jane McKinney Thompson April 1, 2000 Battle Creek, MI
16. Carrie Jayne Walters McKinney July 26, 2008 Waterloo, Iowa
17. Brooke Allison McKinney Klinker July 3, 2010 Indianapolis IND.
18. Anne Elizabeth Kirkpatrick Breithaupt May 7, 2011 Northville, MI
19. Katherine Mary Maureen Kirkpatrick Bos sept. 2012 Charlevoix MI
20. Kristie Bouyea Barrett McKinney June 29, 2013 Plattsburgh, NY

Figure 12 – Photograph of better-condition shoe fancy, 2014



Figure 13 – The shoe fancies are sewn to Carrie’s skirt in 2008. Photograph courtesy of C. McKinney.



Figure 14 – The lace pouch with shoe fancies is pinned to Annie’s skirt. Photograph courtesy of A. Breithaupt.





Figure 15 – Third-generation participant Julie pins the shoe fancies to Brooke's dress. Photograph courtesy of B. Klinker.



## Appendix 1 – Artifact Analysis

This artifact analysis is carried out using the “identification” step from Fleming’s model for artifact analysis in the Winterthur portfolio, with the intent for further steps from Fleming’s model to be applied (particularly in relation to the object and the culture, in this case the shoe decorations and the participants in the shoe decoration bridal tradition) as a part of analysis of data from interview participants.

Identification:

1. What is it?
  - a. Family heirloom consisting of:
    - i. Painted and inscribed wooden box
    - ii. Wedding photograph
    - iii. White synthetic machined lace drawstring bag with pale blue grosgrain ribbon, white satin rosette, with safety pin
    - iv. Shoe decorations (two)
      1. Small satin pads to which fan-shaped rosettes of Chantilly lace have been hand-stitched. A central circle on the rosette is formed by a small wreath of wax orange blossoms. The center of the rosettes features a small puff of tulle, long since tangled in the orange blossoms and remaining thread from past brides’ use of the rosettes
      2. The pads and lace have significantly yellowed, and little remains of the wax orange blossoms. Only one rosette was in suitable condition to withdraw from the bag. The lace, satin pad, and wax orange blossoms have faded to brown and feel crisp as opposed to soft beneath the hand, suggesting a lack of moisture in the storage environment. The second rosette remained in the bag, but visual inspection revealed small pieces of the wax blossoms which had broken off and sat separately in the small lace bag from the other shoe decoration.
  - b. Function
    - i. Shoe ornaments c. 1923-1925. Made to be tacked or otherwise sewn onto shoes.
  - c. Material
    - i. Chantilly lace
    - ii. Wax orange blossoms
    - iii. (Presumably white or cream) tulle
    - iv. Small satin pads onto which the rosettes of lace have been sewn; the pads in turn would be sewn to the shoe, allowing the lace to sit slightly elevated from the shoe
  - d. Construction
    - i. Handmade by Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick in 1923
2. Authentication: is the item genuine?

- a. Certified as genuine by past participants and current custodian, Julia (Judy) McKinney
- b. Date: made in 1923 by Mary Bishop at Purdue University. Worn in 1923 for May Queen and 1925 for wedding in Arcadia, Indiana.
- c. Authorship: Handsewn by Mary Bishop.
- d. Material: Chantilly lace, tulle, and wax orange blossoms for the decoration, all mounted on a small satin pad (stiff)
- e. Construction: Hand-sewn
- f. Description:
  - i. Measurements of box:
    1. 4 inches from front of box to back of box, outer measurement
    2. 5.5 inches from side of box to side of box, outer measurement
    3. 2.25 inches from top of box to bottom of box, outer measurement
  - ii. Description of box:
    1. The box is made of a light-colored wood. The side corners are dovetailed. The lid seems to be made in two pieces, with an upper slab of wood that forms the top of the lid. The bottom of the box shows similar construction, where the bottom piece of wood was originally separate from the sides. The lid is secured at the back side of the box with two small metal hinges.
    2. The top of the box has been painted with a pair of dogwood blossoms, a cream-tan in color with brown markings and green and brown centers. These blossoms are painted with four petals each. Five green leaves and a single brown stem have also been painted onto the lid, with the stem traveling down the front of the box. A second green leaf and a third, partial blossom have been painted onto the front side of the box. The top of the box and all sides have been sealed over the paint with a clear sealant, possibly polyurethane.
    3. The bottom of the box has not been sealed, stained, painted, or otherwise finished, although the edges have been stained with the sealant featured elsewhere on the box. A pencil inscription in the top left corner reads "Camp Cullom" and a second pencil inscription in the top right corner of the bottom of the box reads "to Mother". An address label has been affixed to the bottom of the box as well, bearing the name and current address of the box's custodian, Judy McKinney (address withheld to protect participant's private information).

4. The inside of the box has also been sealed. The inside of the lid bears an inscription in brown ink or paint, with a faint pencil draft of the same verse visible in places behind the more permanent lettering:
    - a. “Here lie your jewels  
Symbols sweet  
Of dear memories + dreams  
Shining out of the past.  
Love, Judy”
  5. The inside of the lid measures 5.125 inches from side to side and 3.5 inches from the front of the lid’s interior to the back of the lid’s interior. The inside of the lid is 0.5 inches deep.
  6. The inside of the box has also been sealed. It is slightly over 1 inch deep, and measures 5.125 inches from side to side and 3.5 inches from the front of the interior to the back of the interior.
- iii. Measurements of photograph:
1. 3 inches wide
  2. 5.875 inches tall – the top edge of the photograph is torn and irregular, so this measurement is not consistent across the entire dimension
  3. The actual photograph printed on the piece of paper measures 4.25 inches tall and 2.875 inches wide. The remainder of the width measurement is taken up by white space surrounding the image, while the remainder of the height or length measurement is taken up by a handwritten inscription.
- iv. Description of photograph:
1. The photograph is printed on white copier paper. The top edge of the piece of paper is torn in what appears to be a deliberate manner, with the appearance that it was folded and torn from a larger sheet of paper. The left edge has also been folded under, but not torn. The paper is creased in two locations, with one crease running from the top of the paper to the bottom of the paper, through the photograph, and a second well-worn crease along the bottom of the photograph, allowing the hand-written inscriptions to be folded under. These inscriptions appear to have been written in the same hand but at three separate occasions, or at least using three separate pens. All three inscriptions are in ink. The topmost inscription reads “wedding day” in heavy black ink. The second inscription, immediately

below, reads “1925” in blue ink. The third inscription, in thin black ink, reads

- a. , June 14  
Bride’s home lawn.  
Arcadia IN

Mary A Bishop + Frank A Kirkpatrick

2. The photograph depicts Frank A and Mary A B Kirkpatrick on their wedding day, as per the hand-written inscriptions. The photograph is black and white, so no determinations of color can be made. The bride and groom stand with the groom to the bride’s right, on the left side of the photograph as we view it. The groom is wearing a single-breasted suit with three buttons visible, the middle of which is fastened; his coat has a breast pocket with a pocket square, and two pocket flaps at hip level. His lapel is wide and bears a single notch, with rounded as opposed to sharp corners. The sleeves do not have any visible cuffs or decoration, and his shirt sleeves are not visible. His suit pants are creased and reasonably long, with fullness in the calves, and have a cuffed hem of what appears to be at least two inches. His shoes are dark and appear to be polished, and are presumably leather. His shirt beneath the suit coat appears to be white, with a pointed collar on the shirt fastened with a bow tie; other details of his appearance are difficult to discern due to the age of the photograph and its size. His face is largely in shadow.
3. The bride stands on the right side of the photograph as we look at her. Her hair is short, but the details of its style are difficult to discern as her hair is dark in the photograph, and she is depicted partially in shadow and slightly blurry. It appears to be a bob of some sort, but may be longer hair which has been pulled up in a manner that is not visible. Given the era, a bob seems more likely. She wears a simple single-strand necklace that fits close to the base of her neck, possibly pearls, though the level of detail is hard to discern. There is no visible jewelry on Mrs. Kirkpatrick’s wrists or hands, nor are any earrings visible. Her gown has a straight neckline approximately two inches below her collarbone and is partially obscured by her bridal bouquet, but appears to be loose in the waist, possibly a drop waist. The collar of her gown is further ornamented by an open standing lace collar reminiscent of the halo-like sheer lace rebatos or open lace ruffs depicted in Elizabethan artwork. This collar may be separate from the dress and worn as part

of a lace bolero, as it appears to be made of the same lace which forms the open, kimono-like sleeves of Mrs. Kirkpatrick's wedding gown, while the dress below appears to feature inch-wide shoulder straps. The skirt has some fullness from the hips, as there is a loose quality to the fabric, which falls not quite to her ankles and is trimmed in six horizontal rows of trim at the hemline. From the way in which Mrs. Kirkpatrick is standing, it is reasonable to believe the skirt might be to the base of the shin. She wears white slippers which appear to have low or no heels visible, with ornamental shoe clips or decorations of some sort at the top of the foot, an inch or two back from the toes. The slippers have rounded toes but are otherwise hard to discern in the photograph.

v. Measurements of shoe decorations:

1. It must be noted that the decorations, being quite old, are very fragile. To minimize any potential damage to the shoe decorations, only one was withdrawn from the cloth bag in which the decorations are stored and attached to tradition participants. Thus, these measurements and descriptions only reflect one of a matched set of vintage shoe decorations.
2. Shoe buckle is 3 inches long from the uppermost point of the Chantilly lace fan at the top of the rosette to the tulle emplacement at the bottom of the rosette.
3. The wax orange blossom wreath at the center of the rosette is 1 inch in diameter.
4. There is a puff of tulle at the base of the wax orange blossom wreath. It measured 0.5 inches in height. Due to fragility, as the tulle and orange blossoms were rapidly deteriorating beneath the cotton gloves used for handling the artifact, the width of the tulle at the point where it is joined to the Chantilly lace and the wax orange blossoms was not measured.
5. The shoe decoration also measures 3 inches across from the widest point to the widest point, but it is not perfectly round in shape (see photographs).

vi. Description of shoe decorations:

1. It must be noted that the decorations, being quite old, are very fragile. To minimize any potential damage to the shoe decorations, only one was withdrawn from the cloth bag in which the decorations are stored and attached to tradition participants. Thus, these measurements and descriptions

only reflect one of a matched set of vintage shoe decorations.

2. This description of the shoe decorations is derived from the more intact of a matched pair, and is based purely on their condition at the time of this writing as opposed to their original design. The shoe decorations, also referred to as “shoe fancies”, “shoe clips”, or “shoe buckles” consist of Chantilly lace, a wreath of wax orange blossoms, and a small puff of tulle mounted on an elevated satin pad.
  - a. The pad on which these textiles and artificial flowers are mounted is quite hard, but as the satin is intact, no efforts were made to investigate whatever stiffening agent or filler is covered by the satin. From the feel of the satin through the cotton gloves used to handle the artifact, the interior of the satin pad may consist of leather. Viewed from the back, the satin pad is primarily rounded, but tapers to more of a point toward the topmost edge of the rosette. The satin has worn in places and its weave has been pulled out of alignment, but despite small runs or missing yarns, there are no indications that this pad was ever mounted on a clip or a buckle. The terminology referring to these rosettes as “clips” or “buckles” is therefore presumed to be vernacular to describe the original function of the object (decorations for shoes) as opposed to the actual mechanical features of the rosettes. From this back view of the rosettes, only the lace is visible, and a very small scrap of tulle. The lace protrudes approximately 0.5 inches from the top of the pad to the outermost point of the lace. The pad is 2 inches across and between 2 and 2.125 inches in length. The pad is tapered in height, but does have a rise allowing the decoration affixed to its face to be more prominently displayed against the surface of the shoe. This measurement is no more than 0.25 inches at its deepest.
  - b. The front or face of the shoe decorations, hereafter referred to as rosettes, is a layering of textiles and artificial flowers. The largest of these layers is a fan of Chantilly lace, yellowed and browned with age. In a few places, the lace appears to be cream in color, but it is not known if the rosettes were originally white or cream in color; this cream shade

may be a result of a less severe aging process in protected areas of the textile. The lace has a scalloped edge. In several places, pieces of thread, browned with age, are visible, as are small pieces of the wax orange blossoms which have broken off over time. In other places, less aged thread is visible, white in color; these loose threads correspond to the tradition of stitching the rosettes to a bride's attire as something other than a shoe decoration.

- c. At the bottom center of this lace fan is a 1 inch diameter wreath of wax orange blossoms. The flowers have badly deteriorated with time, and in many cases small pieces of the flowers have broken off. One somewhat intact flower is visible on the right bottom side of the rosette which was examined for this analysis, its petals crushed open against the lace.
- d. In the bottom center of the orange blossom wreath is a small poof or gather of tulle. While handling the rosette, there was an immediate correlation between the delicate folds of this small piece of gathered tulle and a gentleman's cravat of the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The tulle, as with the lace, has browned with age and feels very crisp and fragile to the touch. The tulle also shows a cream color in many places, but the color of the original wedding gown (and the original color of the shoe rosettes) is unknown.



Artifact Analysis Figure 1: Shoe buckle box exterior.

Box appears to be hand-crafted by current custodian, Judy McKinney, daughter of founder Mary Bishop.



Artifact Analysis Figure 2: Shoe buckle box interior with inscription from Judy McKinney.

Photograph and archival tissue-wrapped rosettes still in place.



Artifact Analysis Figure 3: Interior of shoe rosette travel box, with archival tissue package containing rosettes removed; photograph of tradition founder to the left.



Artifact Analysis Figure 4: Photograph of dress tradition's founder, Mary Bishop, and her husband Frank Kirkpatrick on their wedding day.

Box with rosettes in tissue visible behind photograph. Inscription reads: "wedding day. 1925, June 14. Bride's home lawn - Arcadia, IN. Mary A Bishop + Frank A Kirkpatrick."



Artifact Analysis Figure 5: Rosettes in lace bag.

The lace bag was adopted at some point after 2008 as a means of pinning the rosettes to a bride's attire without requiring the delicate rosettes to be stitched to each bride's skirt, and represents the continuing evolution of the tradition.



Artifact Analysis Figure 6: Rosette, front view.

The lace has browned considerably over time.



Artifact Analysis Figure 7: Rosette, front view (detail). Tulle “poof” with finished edges. Orange blossoms visible immediately behind the tulle.

Lace is out of focus (see next image).



Artifact Analysis Figure 8: Rosette, front view (detail 2). Quarter included for visual scale.

Note the scalloped edges of the lace and the pattern of the lace along the edges. Somewhat-intact orange blossom visible at bottom center of photograph, in focus.





Artifact Analysis Figure 9: Rosette, back view.



## Appendix 2 – Photographs courtesy of Judy McKinney

*1. Mark and Judy McKinney.*

Appendix 3 – Photographs courtesy of Deb McKinney

1. Mike and Deb McKinney wedding party.



2. Mike and Deb McKinney wedding (couple).



3. *The bride with her mother.*



## Appendix 4 – Photographs courtesy of Lynn Kirkpatrick

*1. Lynn and Dave Kirkpatrick.*

2. Lynn and Dave Kirkpatrick with wedding party.



## Appendix 5 – Photographs courtesy of Julie McKinney

*1. Julie McKinney with her father.*



Appendix 6 – Photographs courtesy of Carol Jackman

*1. Carol and Ed Jackman with wedding party.*



## Appendix 7 – Photographs courtesy of Becky Thompson

*1. Becky Thompson on wedding day.*

## Appendix 8 – Photographs courtesy of Carrie McKinney

*1. Becky Thompson sews the shoe fancies onto Carrie's skirt.*



2. *Becky Thompson sews the shoe fancies in place beside heirloom objects from Carrie's maternal grandmother. The shoe fancy chest is visible on the floor at bottom left.*



3. *Carrie and Kevin McKinney.*



## Appendix 9 – Photographs courtesy of Brooke Klinker

*Third-generation participant Julie pins the shoe fancies to her daughter Brooke's skirt.*



2. *Brooke and Ben Klinker with Brooke's family*

Photograph includes third-generation participant Julie (Brooke's mother, to Brooke's left) and second-generation participant Judy (far right, custodian and second-generation participant).



## Appendix 10 – Photographs courtesy of Annie Breithaupt

*1. Shoe fancies in lace bag.*



2. *Third-generation participant Lynn pins the lace pouch with shoe fancies to Annie's dress.*



3. *Annie and Nate Breithaupt.*



Appendix 11 – Photographs courtesy of Katherine Kirkpatrick Bos

*1. Katherine Kirkpatrick Bos and Nick Bos.*



## Appendix 12 – Interview with Judy McKinney

**Interviewer:** So to begin with, if it's alright, I'd like to start by talking with you about your wedding -- what you wore when you were married. I know you wore the shoe fancies as a part of your wedding attire. Is that correct?

**Judy:** Yes, we basted them on my [inaudible] satin flat white slippers and a satin dress. For a few years the first people basted them on their shoes because that was the tradition in the 40s and 50s.

**Interviewer:** All right. And were you the last person to wear them on your shoes or one of many?

**Judy:** I don't know, because we didn't write down the names of the brides until 1950, which was over 25 years later from when my mother made 'em. And I wrote down all the names she could remember. But when wedding attire went from the long satin dress with the long train, which is what I wore, back to the shorter dress, the flapper type dress like my mother wore – then once again shoes become popular. So in the 50s I think, in the 40s I think those girls probably basted them on. But when they become so fragile about the 70s, you couldn't sew them on any longer. So they would put 'em in a bouquet with their wedding flowers. Or finally had to just put 'em [in] that little lace bag.

**Interviewer:** Sure. So your mother made the shoe fancies when she was at Purdue?

**Judy:** When she was a senior.

**Interviewer:** And that was in the 20s?

**Judy:** She graduated in 1923 and she made them that spring.

**Interviewer:** And she was May Queen I think you said?

**Judy:** Yes, in the 20s that was still a big deal at a Big Ten University. [laughing]

**Interviewer:** You've mentioned before that she wore the same dress as well – for being May Queen and for her wedding. Is that correct?

**Judy:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Do you know what that looked like by any chance?

**Judy:** There were pictures of it. It was silk chiffon. She made it 'cause she was a home ec teacher and a science teacher. And my niece Carol [name] has it. In the 20s dresses were

below the knee or just above; the flapper era. And it was a straight sheath-type dress with corded band at the waist and corded at the hemline.

**Interviewer:** That's a lot of fun. So going back to your wedding, you said you wore a long satin dress with a train. And what else did you wear? You mentioned shoes – flat slippers.

**Judy:** Just flat white satin slippers.

**Interviewer:** And you basted the decorations on?

**Judy:** Right on the top of 'em.

**Interviewer:** What about jewelry? Did you wear any jewelry for your wedding that you can recall?

**Judy:** I don't know. I don't think so. Back then dresses were more high collar V-neck, long-sleeved with a point over the hand I don't think I wore – Just a bouquet of gardenias is all.

**Interviewer:** Did have a veil or any headwear with your dress?

**Judy:** Um-hmm. Mother made it. Silk illusion on a little pearl band.

**Interviewer:** Okay. And did I miss anything else that you can recall wearing at your wedding?

**Judy:** No.

**Interviewer:** You said you basted the shoe fancies onto your shoes. Is this something you did before the wedding or was it part of preparing?

**Judy:** I expect Mother probably basted them on 'cause I was in school till Friday. It was my senior year at Purdue. Mark flew in from the military base, I don't know, Thursday or Friday. She had them at home. And my dress was at home. I didn't have it there. So I expect Mother basted them on.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So were you one of the first people involved in this tradition? I have a list that says some of your friends also wore these.

**Judy:** Yes. During the war we knew of two girls during the Second World War that wore them with their dresses. But in 1950 when I started asking mother we couldn't remember. Or I didn't know who all her friends who had worn them. But back then a lot of girls didn't have a wedding dress. You borrowed or you wore just a regular dress to get

married in, in the 20s. 'Cause that was recession time in the agricultural field. It hit American farmers from 1920 till 1940.

**Interviewer:** I have a list here of some of the people who participated. And I actually had some questions about that, I was curious to know how some of these people become involved in the tradition. And it may just be that I didn't recognize names. Judy [name] Evans. Could you tell me a little bit about her?

**Judy:** Her little sister was my best friend. And Judy's husband got leave. He was a Navy – He was in the Navy all during the war. And he got leave to come home for the weekend. So real quickly somebody got a parachute and a friend made the wedding dress out of that nylon and then probably mother just offered them. It was a big wedding but it got arranged and carried out within just a few days.

**Interviewer:** Wow! That's incredible. How about Virginia Waters, is she a cousin, I think?

**Judy:** Virginia Waters. Her mother was my dad's first cousin and very close.

**Interviewer:** Okay. And she was married all the way out in Pittsburgh, is that right?

**Judy:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** So were the buckles carried there by your mother?

**Judy:** No, mother probably mailed 'em. 'Cause back – I don't know if that was war years. I forget when she was married. Her husband was from Korea. But he was also from the tail end of World War II. But they would have mailed them.

**Interviewer:** Okay. And then Sandra Johnson?

**Judy:** She was a girl from [town]. And Mother and Daddy were real active in the [town] Methodist Church. And I expect it was through church.

**Interviewer:** Okay. And then it looks like the last one that I have for a question is Mary [name] Nance. Mary [names] Nance.

**Judy:** Yes. She was a friend of mine in my Girl Scout troop. And her mother was a columnist for a paper, and mother was – they were good friends. So probably mother offered them.

**Interviewer:** Wonderful. Thank you so much. That'll help a lot. So on the next question I have is I know you say that these fancies, wearing them is traditional for you. Were there

any other traditions that you participated in as a part of your wedding that you can think of?

**Judy:** I, um, well as far as dress, no. The ones they still do. The bouquet. I don't think the garter – I don't remember wearing a garter back then, but – But the normal traditions were more with – In those years somebody tied a bunch of tin cans to the bumper of your car 'cause there were bumpers on cars then. And usually they'd try to put soap on the windows you know. But because we were leaving that night to honeymoon in Florida, Mark, I think he hid his brother's car in a barn somewhere near where we lived so nobody could find it and decorate it.

**Interviewer:** [laughing] That's a lot of fun! So how did you find out about the shoe fancy tradition? Was this something you always knew about?

**Judy:** Mother had a – It wasn't a picture on the wall, but I had seen her picture. And I had a copy of the picture of them at their wedding. And she kept her wedding dress in a box. We had seen it. And a beautiful ivory comb. So I had seen those things and I guess just, you want to do what your mother did or you want a wedding when you get married. So – [long pause]

**Interviewer:** And did you ask to wear the buckles or was it some other way you decided to wear those at your wedding?

**Judy:** Well by that time friends of mine had borrowed them and worn them. You just wanted to. It was a privilege to even see them. You know, something from that long ago.

**Interviewer:** Let's see. Where there any other ways that you incorporated the buckles? Did they make you feel more connected in some way?

**Judy:** Well, see my wedding dress was long so nobody saw them. And they're made on a little padded satin pad so that they can be sewn. 'Cause satin slippers, the top of them was fabric. It wasn't leather. So any housewife could sew them on. And you – you just feel privileged at that stage in America that your family is there and everybody is alive. My brother got leave to come home for the wedding. So you're grateful for those very basic things.

**Interviewer:** Sure. So how do you think that your feelings about the shoe fancies have changed since your wedding? Have they changed at all?

**Judy:** It's kinda neat. 'Cause Mother was very outgoing and everybody that knew her loved her and thought it a privilege to use those.

**Interviewer:** And I understand that your daughter and daughters-in-law and now your grandchildren are starting to wear it. The fancies. As well as nieces and great-nieces. Does that add to how you feel about them?

**Judy:** It's neat.

**Interviewer:** Wonderful. So going back to what you wore for your wedding. Do you have any photographs of what you wore for your wedding? And would it possible for me to get a copy at some point?

**Judy:** Sure. We can copy it right here.

**Interviewer:** Wonderful. Let's see. The other question that I had is: For others who use this tradition, if I don't have contact with them, would you be willing to help me make contact with them to talk to them about these?

**Judy:** Sure.

**Interviewer:** Wonderful. Thank you. The last question is kind of an open-ended question. Is there anything else that you want to tell me about this tradition or the way things go with this tradition?

**Judy:** About the tradition itself? No, if don't think of anything else.

**Interviewer:** Alright. And were there any questions that you thought of while I was speaking with you that maybe I should have been asking but wasn't?

**Judy:** No, you did a good job preparing.

**Interviewer:** And do you have any questions for me about this?

**Judy:** No, you've seen them? There still in a little bag. Are they still together? I haven't seen 'em for – [long pause]

**Interviewer:** I think so. I'm going to very carefully look at them and maybe take some photographs of them that we can put with the fancies so others can see what they looked like.

**Judy:** That's good.

**Interviewer:** We'll see what we can do with that. Wonderful. Thank you so much. I appreciate it.

**Setting note:** *The remainder of the transcript has inaudible portions and no notes, as the research participant was relating further information while walking around her home in search of photographs of past participants in the shoe fancy tradition. Her son, Mike,*



*and daughter-in-law (and past participant) Deb are assisting participant Judy in this endeavor.*

**Judy:** [rising and walking away] You've got the picture of mother and daddy at the wedding?

**Interviewer:** [following Judy] I do. I don't know. If they publish my thesis, I may need to get back in touch and have you fill out paperwork – [laughter] and see if I can get a higher resolution scan of that.

**Judy:** I don't know where the original picture is. Charlie and I are the only ones that have it. And I have that one on our wall in the bedroom, but – [long pause]

**Mike:** Of?

**Judy:** Of mother and daddy. It was just a quick snapshot of when they were married out in the yard. And I don't know where the original is. I don't remember seeing it. I just remember it in a little book mother had. You want me to make – I'll get that picture of our – You'd probably rather have a picture of – You want the bride and groom?

**Interviewer:** That would be fine, or however you want to do this.

**Judy:** Ya 'cause the one in the frame in there is just me.

**Interviewer:** Okay, well there's – [long pause]

**Judy:** [inaudible] I'm still not putting my Christmas-- This is the only picture I've ever had. And it's the one from which I made your, um—That show her shoes.

**Interviewer:** Oh how wonderful!

**Judy:** And your picture is probably as clear as any of 'em. But if you want me to take that out—

I don't know where the original—See, this is just a snapshot.

**Interviewer:** Well, I'm going to be contacting the others as well so maybe it's with the dress, perhaps.

**Judy:** What?

**Interviewer:** It might be with the dress at Carol's.

**Judy:** The shoe fancy you have.

**Interviewer:** No, the photograph, perhaps.

**Judy:** Oh! I've never seen one. And Charlie never had either. They didn't— [turning to Deb] Did you have pictures from the 20s? A professional photographer?

**Deb:** I'm thinking. Umm.

**Interviewer:** A few.

**Deb:** A few, yes. But not many.

**Judy:** Well most people didn't have cameras.

**Deb:** There was professional photograph of my dad and [uncle] when they were little.

**Judy:** Yeah.

**Deb:** And there was a professional photograph of mom and [my uncle] when they were little, but there weren't snapshots. I mean— [long pause]

**Judy:** You didn't have a camera.

**Deb:** It was later. There might be one snapshot that someone had taken.

**Judy:** I've seen [name] family photos I think. Because that guy in [town] was their uncle. The only photographers in [town]. His name's on 'em. In fact if don't think I've seen any photographs of my grandparents till [inaudible], you know. Cause nobody, I didn't have a camera. Did you?

**Deb:** Well, yeah, but—[long pause]

**Judy:** Cameras were more popular, or available, I guess.

**Deb:** My dad got one through the service; you know when he was traveling in the service.

**Judy:** [inaudible] Yeah, those guys. We did see [inaudible] shoe from John here that's beautiful [inaudible]. There's me and Annie [name]. In fact is Jane [name] on your list?

**Interviewer:** I don't believe she is...although... [long pause]

**Judy:** [holding photograph] That would give you pictures of some other brides. It's the same one.

**Mike:** Is that your maid of honor, matron of honor?

**Judy:** Um-hmm.. Maid. Maid of honor. And Pat was—Pat Rusk. I don't—I sent you that clipping where the [inaudible] and the striped—[long pause]

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Judy:** I guess that would be the best picture. If you want multiple—You've got the copy of mother's—[long pause]

**Interviewer:** I do.

**Judy:** And that shows. You can see 'em on the—Look, they were more puffy in 1925 than they— [long pause]

**Interviewer:** They probably were fluffier [laughing]. Sure if you don't mind sharing, that would be wonderful to have.

**Judy:** Our album – There was a style – Our album was about twice as big and they don't make [inaudible]. Make a copy of that. That may be—Yeah, that's before the hooks were there. Because when we were gonna be married mother and--Or daddy and Walter put in the front steps on the sidewalk. So that would be before— [long pause]

**Mike:** See, this was the crib before your dad put in that elevator.

**Judy:** Can you imagine him coming from what he had at [town] to this big old-fashioned farm.

**Mike:** Not really in [town]. [inaudible] on the property.

**Judy:** That shower—I'm trying to think if I had any pictures of those girls.

**Interviewer:** Well if not, I do have other ways of contacting them. I just want to try as much as possible to create a visual timeline of who some of the people who wore the fancies and how they might have worn them.

**Judy:** You are not as lucky as we are to have – [long pause]

**Deb:** I have a wedding picture of Becky. That would save—[long pause]

**Judy:** Where'd I put that? I should have a wedding album for each of our kids.

**Interviewer:** Well, I have to interview them too, so don't strain to try and find them.

**Judy:** No, but my friend are not well—Well some of them I don't want to ask them to do that work. I can make a copy of their—We've had a lot of funerals this year. Okay, you pick out one you want your dad to copy. And that's Becky's album. Okay. [inaudible] can pick out other family. And they didn't all wear them on their shoe. A lot of 'em just carried 'em. We don't have a color—Mark can copy color photos on his machine in the shop.

**Interviewer:** If we need color photos I'll probably make another trip out and maybe borrow things and do copies of them.

**Judy:** Let's see. I think that's all the wedding albums. These are grandchildren albums. That's Becky. That's the shower. Okay. Oops. I have one more. I don't know. This is Karen. We couldn't find them. They were married in '81. And mother died in—What year was Kevin born? And she died after he was a year old. Daddy died in '93. No, daddy died in '79. She died in '93. But we couldn't find—So Karen didn't get to wear 'em in her—Or carry them. We couldn't find them. 'Cause Karen's name's not on that list, is it?

**Interviewer:** No I don't think it is.

**Judy:** We couldn't find them for her wedding. That's at Karen's—No Karen wouldn't want me to take that over there today Whew! [laughing] Stuff may or may not be ready to tuck away. [laughter].

**Interviewer:** We'll find out, won't we?

**Judy:** Well he likes them. She's a darling little girl. Okay, you know—Are these color or black and white?

**Interviewer:** These are colored. Do you want me to keep these out so we can put the photographs back?

**Judy:** Yeah, if you want to—If you want Mike to make copies on the copy machine in black and white you'd have 'em.

**Interviewer:** This would be wonderful.

**Judy:** Good. Bring the other book too. You know what? We don't have any color pictures of the wedding do we? They didn't do 'em then.

**Mike:** I've got color pictures—

**Judy:** ...of Daddy's and my wedding. Where did we have 'em?

**Mike:** I have no idea. But I have this picture almost identical to it in color.

**Judy:** Good.

**Interviewer:** Maybe we can show some of those.

**Judy:** Whatever Meghan wants copied. Let me put these back in the—Are you done with them? Here's where you shrink it. She had it basted to her slip.

**Mike:** Let me have it back. I wanted to compare the two – because I think I put it in at the wrong orientation.

**Deb:** 'Cause that cut off grandma— [long pause]

**Judy:** That didn't have—That's long before grandpa put the--Here's the cattle— [long pause]

**Mike:** ...And the woods...

**Judy:** You kids cleared the woods in— [long pause]

**Mike:** First grade, maybe?

**Judy:** You were little bitty. You each had a bucket. So that'd been '64 or '65. They had cattle all over the place didn't they? See there used to be a fence right across here and they pastured sheep in front yard. You didn't mow the front yard, you had sheep [laughing]. When we were in Minnesota and we went up to Mayo, those deep right-of-ways on either side of the road – you can see that those are pasturing. There's a lot of animals.

**Interviewer:** So you said there were stairs added to the house? Was that from when you were leaving from the wedding?

**Judy:** Well yeah. When we walked down that—'Cause Daddy and Walter [name], in the late fall put in those front stepping stones. Not the present sidewalk. Mark and I had Dwight [name] do that, or Mr. [name]. But daddy had got great big field stones and they laid those in place. And they had the parking lot. Remember? We couldn't afford to. When I was in school in '53 I was back in recession again, so we had the reception there. And everybody loved it and my mother was so gracious to do it at home. But that windmill was there until—Do you remember the windmill at grandma and grandpa's house? We took that down I think when Tom [name] was born. Right there. 'Cause see the water from that windmill is piped under the playhouse out to the horse tank where you could swim. So when there'd be a windy day the reservoir—Remember the big cistern? It was filled with cold water. And when there was no wind in the windmill we'd

fill up the horse tank, they'd open the vat. It was great engineering for the 20s. The pipes are still down there.

**Mike:** I'm sure they've rusted through by now. [laughter]

**Judy:** That was the 20s when [inaudible] I don't know. I was in that room when they got dressed. This is Caroline and Chloe. There's Caroline. Remember Becky got up that night and [went to the office] and printed programs. They forgot to print them. And also at 11 o'clock before the wedding the band leader called from a cruise and said he'd forgot that you wanted him to play dance music for the wedding, for the reception [laughing]. I wonder why—Well maybe Jean was married when we couldn't find them. Do you remember Uncle Phil? Mark's brother.

**Interviewer:** I do.

**Judy:** Max is in the wedding. Did you say you got color picture of that? Well then maybe—I'll have to look at that album. [inaudible] I forgot—[long pause]

## Appendix 13 – Interview with Deb McKinney (2014)

**Interviewer:** As a starting point, I'd like to begin with your wedding. Could you describe your wedding for me?

**Deb:** My wedding was held at 5:30 P.M. on August 11, 1979 at West Street Christian Church in [town], IN. (My home church in nearby [town] was undergoing an addition and remodeling project so it wasn't able to hold the 200+/- guests). I would call our wedding a traditional church wedding. The tuxedoed ushers seated guests as the organist played hymns and popular songs that I had selected. There were ribbon and flower bows decorating the pews and floral sprays and candleabra decorating the front of the sanctuary. The ushers, groomsmen, and fathers wore burnt umber tuxes and the groom wore an ivory tux. The bridesmaids wore floor length peach colored gowns that had spaghetti straps and sheer short sleeved peach capelets. The flower girl wore a butter yellow floor length dress and the mothers wore floor length pale blue dresses.

My dress was floor length ivory satin with a train. It had a lace overlay of the bodice and lace sleeves. On my head I wore ivory silk roses on a headband and a lace veil. The dress and veil were made by my mother. I wore ivory satin pumps. Grandma Mary Kirkpatrick's shoe fancies were tacked onto the underskirt of my dress as the "something borrowed". (The something old was an embroidered silk handkerchief given to me by my mother's cousin. It had belonged to her mother and was incorporated into my bridal bouquet. The something new was the dress my mother had made. My garter was made of lace and blue satin as the something blue.)

Reverend Ken [name] from my home church performed the ceremony and my husband's friend and fraternity brother, Dave [name], was soloist. He sang the Wedding Song before the ceremony and the Lord's Prayer during the ceremony while we kneeled on a satin covered kneeling bench. Our mothers lit candles before the ceremony and we used them to light a unity candle. I was escorted down the aisle by my father. The organist, Richard [name], played Mendelssohn's Wedding March as the bridal party entered the sanctuary and the Bridal Chorus as my father and I entered.

As was popular at that time I wrote the wedding vows that my husband and I recited from memory. Many friends and family members attended the ceremony, including our three surviving grandmothers and one of our two surviving grandfather's. (My paternal grandfather was unable to attend due to the health of my paternal step-grandmother). Following the ceremony we had a receiving line and punch and cake reception in the church's basement fellowship hall. During the receiving line my older brother introduced himself (to people he didn't know) as "Mike McKinney", the name of the groom. I didn't hear about it until later, but it has always been a fun memory for me, despite any confusion it may have caused.

The groomsmen and ushers decorated my husband's black Cutlass Supreme with white paint and tin cans and stuffed limburger cheese in the air conditioning vents. As was custom in [town] at the time, we were driven through town on the "cruise route", honking the horn to attract attention. Following this we headed to my parent's rural home for a catered reception attended by all the family and the wedding party. We had small white lights in the trees and a champagne fountain set up on the lawn, which proved to be a popular gathering place for the wedding party.

**Interviewer:** What about shoes, jewelry, veil/headwear, or other things I might have missed?

**Deb:** I wore pearl earrings and my engagement ring, but that was all of my jewelry until getting my wedding ring during the ceremony.

**Interviewer:** Where did you get dressed for your wedding?

**Deb:** There was a "bride's room" at the church and that's where the ladies got ready. It was basically a large sparsely-furnished (sic) living room with a floor length mirror.

**Interviewer:** Did you have anyone assisting you in this?

**Deb:** I remember my mother being there in the bride's room, but my maid of honor and bridesmaids actually helped me into my dress, etc.

**Interviewer:** How would you personally define the word "tradition"?

**Deb:** Without using the dictionary I would define tradition as something time-honored, done the same way, passed along like a family history, similar to baking the same treats for a holiday year after year.

**Interviewer:** Did you participate in any bridal dress traditions as a part of your wedding?

**Deb:** The bridal dress traditions that I participated in are the: something old, something new, something borrowed and something blue tradition as well as wearing my husband's maternal grandmother's "shoe fancies" tacked onto my underskirt as the "something borrowed".

**Interviewer:** Could you tell me more about how you incorporated these traditions into your wedding? (Ceremony, setting, dress [personal], dress [partner's], dress [wedding party], other)

**Deb:** When planning my accessories for my wedding ensemble I started with the "Something old, something new" saying. I knew that my gown would be the something new, the something old was the silk handkerchief I added to my bridal bouquet, the something borrowed was the shoe fancies that my grandmother-in-law to be had made



and worn for her wedding. That left the something blue so I bought a blue garter in order to complete the saying.

**Interviewer:** Did you wear Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick's shoe buckles as a part of your wedding attire?

**Deb:** Mary Kirkpatrick was my mother-in-law's mother. When I went to my future mother-in-law to discuss wedding details, she mentioned the shoe fancies and asked if I would be interested in wearing them. My husband was the first of her children to marry and I understood her interest in continuing the tradition with the next generation of brides.

**Interviewer:** Why did you choose to participate/not to participate?

**Deb:** I thought it was an intriguing thing to be a part of and I wanted my future mother in law to like me. :-)

**Interviewer:** How would you describe this tradition?

**Deb:** Mary Bishop (Kirkpatrick) fashioned the shoe fancies when she was an undergraduate student at Purdue University. She wore them on her shoes when she was crowned May Queen and later during her wedding. Once her friends started to get married, several of them asked if they could also wear the shoe fancies as a way to be a part of each other's special day.

**Interviewer:** Could you describe for me how you incorporated the shoe fancies into your wedding attire?

**Deb:** I had smooth satin pumps dyed to match my dress, so I was hesitant to tack the shoe fancies onto my shoes as in those idealistic youthful days I honestly thought I would wear the pumps again instead of relegating them to my someday-childrens' dress-up box. So, my mother tacked the shoe fancies onto the underskirt of my wedding dress. While we were on our honeymoon she removed the shoe fancies from the underskirt so they could be returned.

**Interviewer:** How did you feel about participating in these dress traditions?

**Deb:** I enjoyed having these traditions as part of our wedding. So much of the planning was making lists, checking things off, but the traditions were more personal or enjoyable than just to do lists.

**Interviewer:** Do you think that your feelings about these traditions changed since your wedding?

**Deb:** I think over the years I have become more nostalgic toward the traditions we employed. I like how they tie us to other generations.

## Appendix 14 – Interview with Deb McKinney (2013 pilot project)

**Interviewer:** I'd like to start by talking with you about your wedding. Could you describe your wedding to me?

**Deb:** Our wedding took place in August in a small town church. My home church was being remodeled at the time so we were using the church of the same denomination in the larger nearby town. We were married by my pastor.

I guess you could call our wedding traditional. There were candles and florals sprays up front and we had bows on the pews for decorations. We had an organ music prelude including Mendelssohn's Wedding March. The flower girl carried a basket of rose petals that she sprinkled down the aisle. Our vocalist was my husband's college fraternity brother and a soloist with the Purdue Varsity Men's Glee Club. He sang The Lord's Prayer during the ceremony. Following the ceremony we had him sing The Wedding Song. Before the ceremony our mothers each lit a candle and we used those to light a Unity Candle during the ceremony.

The wedding colors were peach and rust which were popular at the time. My husband and I each wore ivory. In those days it was quite popular to write your own wedding vows, so I wrote ours.

I had three friends as my attendants and my husband had his two brothers plus my older brother. In addition he had some friends and my younger brother serve as ushers.

My mother made my wedding dress and I carried a floral bouquet that included an antique handkerchief that belonged to my mother's elderly relative.

Following the ceremony we had a cake and punch reception downstairs in the church's fellowship hall. Our parents and the wedding party stood in a receiving line and greeted everyone as they came through the line. I discovered later on that my older brother had greeted people he didn't know by introducing himself as the groom.

**Interviewer:** Could you tell me more about what a home church is?

**Deb:** When I said home church I was referring to the church my family attended. In this case the church was quite near our home and my mother's grandfather helped to build the church.

Our family was quite involved in our home church, serving meals, singing in the choir and for special music, serving on leadership committees, etc.

Does that answer your question?

**Interviewer:** That does, thank you!

Before, you mentioned that you considered your ceremony traditional. Could you elaborate on that for me?

**Deb:** Sure. Our wedding was in 1979. We did write our own vows, which was quite popular at the time, but the rest of the ceremony was what I call traditional. One of my cousins greeted guests outside the sanctuary and had them sign the guest book. Another friend helped with gifts brought to the church. Ushers greeted guests at the door to the sanctuary and seated them according to whether they were friends or family of the bride or the groom. My friends and extended family sat on the side of the church where my parents and grandmothers were seated, and my husband's friends and family on the side behind his parents and grandparents.

We had an organist play wedding themed songs as the guests waited for the ceremony to begin. My husband's sister was our flower girl and dropped rose petals on the aisle runner. She was followed down the aisle by the groomsmen and bridesmaids. My maid of honor and my husband's best man were next to last. They each carried a ring, as we had no young boys in the family to serve as ring bearer. My father escorted me down the aisle and placed my hand in that of my husband's. When asked, "Who gives this woman in marriage to this man?" my father answered, "Her mother and I do".

The pastor who conducted the service then greeted guests and opened the ceremony with prayer. Following the vows, my husband and I kneeled while the pastor prayed over us and continued kneeling during the singing of The Lord's Prayer (There was a padded kneeling bench that had been rented for the occasion). Our photographer took photos before the ceremony, but only of "the men" in one area and "the women" in another area as my husband didn't see me that day until I walked down the aisle. The only photos of both bride and groom were following the ceremony.

Following the wedding the guests went to the basement of the church for a cake and punch reception in the church Fellowship Hall. Cream cheese mints and nuts were also served. All the guests received a peach colored artificial rose filled with rice. When they shook the rose, the rice flew out and that is how they greeted us as we exited the church. My mother and I had put the roses together earlier in the month.

Now many times you hear of destination weddings or couples marrying while scuba diving or horseback riding, so I consider our wedding to have been traditional. In a church with a pretty set agenda.

**Interviewer:** Great, thank you so much. You mentioned that you and your husband (and your attendants) each got ready for the wedding in a separate area, could you elaborate on what you were doing as you prepared?

**Deb:** Honestly we just arrived and got dressed in our wedding attire, checked our make-up and prepared ourselves to enter the church.

Having witnessed the prep time (with food, beverage and activities available) at some recent weddings I am still amazed that current wedding participants have to spend the whole day in preparation, although now that usually includes most of the photography BEFORE the ceremony, but I am also amazed that it never occurred to us (or others who held weddings in times close to ours) to offer food or at least water for those getting ready. In 1979 I didn't know about if water was available in a plastic bottle anywhere. When we traveled we took a thermos or two with our beverages... We still could have had a jug of water and some cups available. Water fountains and wedding attire are NOT a good mix.

I knew where the men were getting ready, but the only man I saw after we entered the church property was my dad. He got into his tux in the men's area and then came to the women's area to "collect" me for our sanctuary entrance.

**Interviewer:** Sounds like quite a difference. Could you tell me more about what you wore on the day of your wedding?

**Deb:** I remember what I wore for the wedding and afterward, but not before. I hope that is ok. For our wedding I wore my wedding dress, which is a floor length candlelight satin dress with a lace overlay on the bodice and full length lace sleeves. My mother made the dress for me. I had a pair of satin pumps that were dyed to match the dress. My veil was made of candlelight colored tulle and it was attached to a headband with 7 satin roses. My mother also made the veil and fashioned the satin roses from wedding dress material.

**Interviewer:** Earlier, you mentioned using some items in your overall wedding attire that came from relatives, could you tell me more about those items?

**Deb:** The bouquet that I carried included an antique silk handkerchief that belonged to the wife of my mother's cousin. I had modeled her mother's wedding dress at a Bicentennial Fashion Show and she wanted me to have the handkerchief to carry during my wedding.

I also wore the shoe buckles that my husband's maternal grandmother had made and worn in her own wedding. They were fashioned of lace and I believe seed pearls and could be worn on the shoes or elsewhere in a wedding ensemble. My (then future) mother in law had asked if I would like to wear them as my something borrowed or something old part of my ensemble.

**Interviewer:** You've mentioned the something borrowed, something old rhyme. Prior to this interview, what other bridal traditions were you aware of?

**Deb:** For a long time I had known of the something borrowed, something blue, something old, something new tradition. Other than that the traditions I had heard was for the bride and groom to not see each other the day of the wedding (before the ceremony) and that the bride's father (or another trusted male relative, if the father unavailable) should escort the bride down the aisle and "give her away".

In our area at least, it was tradition for the honeymoon vehicle to be decorated with tin cans, glass paint, streamers to show it was a newlywed's car. Sometimes I heard of a bridal couple being "chivareed" (may not be spelled right) where they were ambushed on their wedding night by members of their family or wedding party. We were luckily not among those chosen for that "honor".

**Interviewer:** How did you find out about all of these traditions?

**Deb:** Most of them I heard about through word of mouth either while playing doll weddings with friends/cousins or when attending bridal showers for my cousins or other relatives, friends. I had observed the car decorating in my small town. If you happened to be in town on Saturday night at the movies or whatever, you would see the decorated cars carrying the newlyweds through town so everyone could wave at them. The decorated cars were always honking and flashing their lights to draw attention to the newlyweds.

**Interviewer:** So if I understand, there were a number of traditions available in your home town to draw on for your wedding, from using family members' heirlooms to how you decorated the car, is that correct?

**Deb:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Great! So knowing about all of these different traditions, could you tell me how you chose to incorporate them into your wedding?

**Deb:** I remember wanting to have something old etc. because it was a time honored tradition. We drove through town because we were happy and wanted to share our joy with everyone else.

I chose to wear my husband's grandmother's shoe buckles because it pleased my mother in law and that seemed like a smart thing to do. :-)

I really didn't care about the "wedding time tradition", but my mother did and since she and my dad were paying for the wedding, I let her have her way. Also seemed like a smart thing to do. :-)

In case I forgot to mention it before, the time for the wedding ceremony, according to my mother, HAD to be on the half hour so that the hands of the clock were moving up during the 5:30 PM ceremony instead of down as they would be if we had been married at 5 PM.

As my mother told the story, if you were married on the hour your marriage would be full of strife and bad luck.

As for the car decorating, I don't think we "chose" to have it decorated, but the ushers and groomsmen thoroughly enjoyed decorating it while the gals were getting dressed. I imagine it started as a way to keep young men attendants out of trouble while the women went through their lengthier preparations. I would have preferred it if they had stopped before the limburger cheese in the air conditioning vents, though. That black car was quite pungent after sitting out in the August sun.

**Interviewer:** You've mentioned not particularly caring about the wedding time tradition, and of course your feelings on the limburger cheese. How did you feel about participating in the other traditions you've mentioned?

**Deb:** I liked the something old...tradition as it has always seemed to me to be synonymous with weddings. The decorated car was fine, or would have been if it weren't for that stinky cheese. We got the car washed the next day to make sure the writing came off. One of the back windows leaked a little and got the carpet wet behind the driver's seat. After our wedding trip we went to get into the back seat and there was rice growing in the carpet! The wedding guests had thrown rice on us as we left the church so we must have left rice in the car from our drive through town...

The shoe buckle tradition was something I liked the idea of as it tied me to my husband's family. My mother-in-law was careful to mention that I didn't HAVE to use them, but that if I wanted to I needn't have them be visible since they were from a very different time. (My husband's grandmother wore a flapper wedding dress in the 1920's when she was married).

Did I leave any out?

**Interviewer:** I think you've mentioned all of them, yes. With regards to all of these traditions which you've utilized, do you think that your feelings about these traditions have changed since your wedding?

**Deb:** For the most part I think my feelings about the various traditions have remained the same with one exception. Five years ago my daughter-in-law wore the shoe buckles when she married my son. My husband's sister brought the shoe buckles and tacked them onto the underskirt of the dress. She recounted the story behind them to my daughter-in-law's female relatives and attendants at the bridesmaid's luncheon. That intensified the feeling of family that I had when I wore them nearly 34 years ago.

**Interviewer:** I have one last question before we wrap things up. Where could I go to learn more about these various traditions?

**Deb:** I imagine some of them have been recorded in various historical publications. Otherwise I would suggest asking older family and community members. For example a list of the people who wore my husband's grandmother's shoe buckles is kept with the shoe buckles.

(Is this what you mean?)

**Interviewer:** Yes, it is, thank you. Is there anything else you would like to tell me?

**Deb:** I find it interesting that things I had forgotten about came to mind through the interview process. I appreciate you taking the time to interview me as it has recaptured some fond memories for me.

**Interviewer:** Thank you for sharing that. I really appreciate the time you've taken to allow me to interview you. I do have one final question for you -- are there any questions you think I should be asking that I have not asked?

**Deb:** Perhaps a "feeling" question such as do any of the aspects of your wedding or traditions etc. evoke any strong feelings?

I, for one, had sort of forgotten how much I enjoyed planning my wedding and having my wedding, even though compared to today's details our wedding was quite simple and many things were left to chance.

Something I may not have mentioned is in regard to wedding gifts and I just find it humorous. Nowadays people register at big national stores like Crate and Barrel, Macy's etc. and many couples have a honeymoon fund or house fund that you can contribute to online. When we were married in our small rural community our only registry was at the local hardware store. We had a list of color themes and sheet sizes, but everything else was up to the guests. Made for some interesting gifts, I must say. :-)

**Interviewer:** Great! Thank you so much for participating in this interview. I really appreciate the time and effort you've put into this. Please let me know if you have any questions about the use of the data gathered through this interview, or anything else. Thank you!



## Appendix 15 – Interview with Lynn Kirkpatrick

**Interviewer:** As a starting point, I'd like to begin with your wedding. Could you describe your wedding for me?

**Lynn:** It was a beautiful, sunny autumn day on Oct. 2, 1982 for about 200 guests. The wedding was at Christ Church Cranbrook, which seemed to have an incredibly long aisle to a nervous bride like me. I wore a white high collar dress with sleeves of lace. Dave wore a very traditional black tux as did his groomsmen. My bridesmaids wore floor length mauve dresses. My Maid of Honor and Dave's Best Man were good friends who ended up marrying each other. Dave's two brothers, Tom and Don, along with my brother, Paul, and another friend filled out the rest of the groomsmen. Dave's sister, Carol, along with my sister, Jan, and two other friends were the bridesmaids.

**Interviewer:** How would you describe your wedding dress?

**Lynn:** I wore simple pearl earrings and a headpiece that pinned to the top and back of my head and had a long veil with some added lace that complemented the lace on the dress. The dress had a 3-foot train. My shoes were nothing special: white pumps. One bridesmaid loaned me her slip which really filled out the skirt beautifully. I pinned the shoe fancies on the slip as they were too fragile and yellowed to put on the shoes.

**Interviewer:** What about shoes, jewelry, veil/headwear, or other things I might have missed?

**Lynn:** I kept it pretty simple. I wore a headpiece with veil that stayed behind (not over my face) and single pearl earrings.

**Interviewer:** Where did you get dressed for your wedding?

**Lynn:** Our wedding was at Christ Church Cranbrook in Bloomfield Hills, MI. It is a large Episcopalian church founded in 1928, the same year Chuck Kirkpatrick was born. The inside has a very tall ceiling and, as mentioned before, quite a long aisle. It has dark wooden pews and many beautiful wooden carvings, stone pillars and mosaic tiles. It was Dave's church where he had been an acolyte, so he really wanted to have the wedding there. My Presbyterian church was a very informal one so I didn't pressure him to have it there. My bridesmaids and I dressed in the church library.

**Interviewer:** How would you personally define the word "tradition"?

**Lynn:** With the wedding in mind, tradition meant having a ceremony that had no surprises and followed the conservative way weddings had been held at Christ Church Cranbrook.

**Interviewer:** Did you participate in any bridal dress traditions as a part of your wedding?

**Lynn:** I wore a white dress per tradition. I also wore a headpiece with veil even though I wasn't crazy about its style. I honored the Kirkpatrick family tradition of wearing the shoe fancies (by pinning them to my slip). I followed the "something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue" tradition: old shoe fancies; new earrings and dress; borrowed slip; blue garter.

**Interviewer:** Did you wear Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick's shoe buckles as a part of your wedding attire?

**Lynn:** Judy McKinney contacted me and then shipped them to me.

**Interviewer:** Why did you choose to participate/not to participate? Do you want to participate in this tradition?

**Lynn:** Judy McKinney contacted me and said I would be carrying on the family tradition, so I felt it was the right thing to do. I was very happy to be joining the family!

**Interviewer:** How would you describe this tradition?/Could you tell me a little bit more about this tradition?

**Lynn:** It is a cute tradition that does not involve too much. Nothing humiliating or garish. Easy tradition to carry out by just pinning them to something. Wearing them on the shoes though, would have been more difficult as they were very fragile.

**Interviewer:** Do you know of anyone else who wore the shoe buckles?/Do you have other members of your family who intend to wear the buckles when they marry in the future? (daughters, nieces, cousins, etc.)

**Lynn:** I personally pinned the shoe fancies to Annie's slip for her wedding in 2011. They seemed so fragile, I put them in a lace pouch first.

**Interviewer:** Do you think that your feelings about these traditions changed since your wedding?

**Lynn:** Shoe fancies are very odd in this century and these are very tired looking, so hiding them under the dress is fairly necessary. Fortunately, they fulfill another tradition, the "something old, something borrowed" tradition. So in that regard they are very useful. I can see the tradition continuing for that reason. It's also fun to know that so many family members have participated

## Appendix 16 – Interview with Carol Jackman

**Interviewer:** As a starting point, I'd like to begin with your wedding. Could you describe your wedding for me?

**Carol:** So sorry to be so slow in my response. Ed and I were married May 28, 1988. We had about 175 people at the wedding.

We were married at Christ Church Cranbrook in [town], Michigan. Our wedding was at 6:00 PM with a reception following at the Birmingham Athletic Club

The wedding ceremony was pretty typical. We had the minister from Christ Church and also a priest that was a friend of Ed's family preside at the wedding. We had a organist, and just followed the traditional wedding ceremony.

It was a warm and sunny day. Ed and I were 31 and 32 when we got married, and I had already stood up in 7 weddings. I have wore [sic] some very interesting bridesmaids dresses in my time (the ugliest was the eyelet rainbow wedding, where we all wore different colors of eyelet bridesmaid dresses)

We had 4 bridesmaids (3 of my friends and one of his sisters) and 4 groomsman (1 of his brothers, one of my brothers and two of his friends). The men wore basic black tuxedos that they rented.

The bridesmaids wore rose colored long dresses with big shoulder pads and puffy sleeves. The dresses were identical. The bridesmaids helped me pick out the dresses they would wear.

**Interviewer:** How would you describe your wedding dress?

**Carol:** My dress was white with a lace overlay and had a train. It had long sleeves that were lace, and a rounded neckline that was also lace. (I remember that I wanted the lace on the dress to cover all of the freckles that were on my chest!)

The dress has large shoulder pads (what were we thinking at that time?) and puffy sleeves and small sparkling jewels on the dress.

**Interviewer:** What about shoes, jewelry, veil/headwear, or other things I might have missed?

**Carol:** I made my wedding veil, (because I was too cheap to pay for one!) It was simple white satin flower wreath and was fingertip length veiling. I think I did not actually wear the shoe clips (I was afraid they would fall off my shoes) but pinned one to my dress.

The shoe clips were my something old, a blue garter was my something blue, a purse I used was my something borrowed and my dress my something new.

**Interviewer:** How would you personally define the word “tradition”?

**Carol:** I consider a tradition, a custom that is passed down over the years.

Aunt Judy told me about the shoe buckles and sent them to me to wear. I know my Mom did not wear them (she and Dad eloped), but I thought it was neat to wear something that belonged to my Grandmother.

**Interviewer:** How would you describe this tradition?

**Carol:** It is very special to have a family tradition that has touched so many of the family members. I look forward to seeing my children (and their wives) wearing the shoe fancies, just like their great grandmother. I’m very happy that Grandma Kirkpatrick started this beautiful tradition. Seeing the list of brides that have worn the shoe fancies makes me smile and appreciate our wonderful family.

**Interviewer:** How did you feel about participating in these dress traditions?

**Carol:** As I mentioned above, it was a great feeling. I felt a great sense of family and support and belonging.

**Interviewer:** Do you think that your feelings about these traditions changed since your wedding?

**Carol:** I think I have come to appreciate the tradition even more. It is very cool that the tradition continues and is passed down from generation to generation.

**Interviewer:** Are there any other stories about your wedding that you would like to share with me?

**Carol:** I can’t think of any stories, anything in particular you are looking for?

**Interviewer:** Nothing particular, but sometimes people have specific stories they want to tell. Thank you so much!

## Appendix 17 – Interview with Becky Thompson (2014)

**Interviewer:** As a starting point, I'd like to begin with your wedding. Could you describe your wedding for me?

**Becky:** Meghan - I think you already have these from me.

**Interviewer:** How would you personally define the word "tradition"?

**Becky:** I'd define tradition as something done within a family or community that has meaning for the larger group. It is not time-specific; something could be requested as a tradition after only one experience.

**Interviewer:** Did you participate in any bridal dress traditions as a part of your wedding?

**Becky:** I think you already have these from me.

**Interviewer:** Did you wear Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick's shoe buckles as a part of your wedding attire?

**Becky:** You already have these from last year.

**Interviewer:** How did you feel about participating in these dress traditions?

**Becky:** I think you already have these from me.

**Interviewer:** Bringing things back around to your wedding attire, do you have a photograph of yourself in your wedding dress?/Would you be willing to provide me with a copy of the photo for use in my thesis?

**Becky:** I'll scan them at work Monday and email them to you, okay? I don't have any of the shoe clips, so I pulled two full length shots.

## Appendix 18 – Interview with Becky Thompson (2013 pilot project)

**Interviewer:** I'd like to start by talking with you about your wedding. Could you describe your wedding to me?

**Becky:** I was married April 1, 2000 at 29 years old. I am the youngest of four children but the only girl, and my brothers had been married almost 20 years by the time my wedding came along. As a result, there were a lot of collected experiences and ideas for my wedding plans.

I was engaged for only 3 months before the wedding. My husband and I met at our church and wanted to be married there. This was a bit unusual, as our family generally subscribes to the norm of being married in the bride's home church, which would have been my parents' church in Indiana. I was traveling a lot for work, and my mother graciously agreed to plan almost the entire wedding for me.

We were married at our church in a very traditional ceremony. I wore a full length gown and had three attendants, all in butter yellow gowns. The guys wore tuxedos, and [my husband's] son, [who was] 10, was the best boy and joined the three groomsmen. A dinner reception followed at Marywood Country Club, also in [our town].

**Interviewer:** You've mentioned that your wedding was very traditional. Could you tell me more a little bit more about that?

**Becky:** I suppose that it has lots of what you'd consider stereotypical of a church wedding. Organ music (lots of Bach and Mendelssohn), wedding party in tuxedos / gowns, candleabras in the front of the church. Candelight bridal gown with attendants also in full length gowns, two flower girls, a unity candle and communion. The full deal.

**Interviewer:** You've mentioned your bridal gown a couple of times. Could you tell me more about what you and your wedding party wore?

**Becky:** Not really. I can scan and send pictures, but I'm not very good at the description. Let's see – taking a very basic stab at this:

Bridal gown: candelight satin gown. Square neck and short cap sleeves of lace. Lace overlay on the front down to a princess waist (is that the one that drops in center front?) Lace panels on the skirt, bow in the back at the waist. Short train – maybe 7-10 foot?

Maid of honor: butter yellow satin gown with square neck and short cap sleeves. Two attendants: butter yellow satin gowns with spaghetti straps and a short jacket over the top. Oops – attendant gowns were tea length, not full length.

**Interviewer:** That description is great actually! Could you tell me about any accessories you wore with your gown?

**Becky:** Small pearl earrings (new), I had my hair in an up-do with a flowered headpiece. The veil attached at the back of the headpiece with velcro. A garter with a blue ribbon, and my grandmothers' shoe clips pinned to my petticoat (old, borrowed).

**Interviewer:** It sounds like you were following the old bridal rhyme, something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue. Is that correct?

**Becky:** Yes, although I can tell you I'm not as superstitious about that as some of my friends have been. I've heard of last minute jewelry loans to brides in tears b/c they don't have a borrowed item...

**Interviewer:** Oh no! I'm glad that wasn't your experience, from the sound of things. You mentioned earlier that the time span of your family members' marriages had resulted in a lot of collected ideas and experiences when it came to planning your wedding. Would you be able to walk me through some of that?

**Becky:** Yeah, and you'll laugh. It turned out to be a real blessing that I was traveling so much, because Mom had a whole file in the file cabinet with wedding ideas. She was terrific – she'd zoomed in on a range of ideas for music, colors, flowers, wedding gown, and décor. It wasn't like a bridezilla thing, she had to adjust for the fact that the wedding was in a different state. But once we settled on church, reception, and florist, she just went with it.

As you know, our town is small (about 5000 people) and Mom had pretty much lived there her whole married life. Add in a large, extended family of cousins, three sons' weddings, and most of my friends' weddings as well – she had lots and lots of experiences to draw from.

I've heard people say that a woman dreams of her wedding her whole life, but the bride's mother dreams of the daughter's wedding since before birth. I believe that's true.

As far as my own opinions, I wanted to be married by my pastor, I wanted the recessional to be from the Sound of Music, and I wanted lily of the valley in my bouquet. I was pretty good with anything else.

If I think of specifics, I remember loving the long row of buttons on [my sister-in-law's] wedding dress, and glad that I had a long row of buttons up the back of mine (except I had a zipper and hers were individually fastened - yikes!)

The idea for the recessional came from my friend's wedding. The shoe clips are a family tradition.

**Interviewer:** That sounds like a really valuable resource for you! Your mother was very involved in helping with your wedding. Was she also involved in helping you get dressed on your wedding day?

**Becky:** Yes, she was there the whole time. I came in a little late from a pedicure, so mom and the attendants were already there and set up.

**Interviewer:** So your mom and your three attendants helped you get ready? Could you tell me a little bit more about where you got dressed for the ceremony?

**Becky:** There was a room just off of the sanctuary in our church, and it opened onto both the sanctuary and out into the back hall that led around to the main entrance to the sanctuary. The men were in a similar room on the opposite side of the sanctuary.

**Interviewer:** Great! Does anything else stand out in your memory as a part of your wedding ensemble?

**Becky:** Just before I went out the door, mom knelt in front of me and pinned on the shoe clips my grandma made for her wedding in 1922. These were in a glass box, as they had been for many years at my grandmother's house when I was a little girl. She read the list of all the brides who had worn them before me, including herself and all my sisters-in-law, and we both got a little teary. It was like having my grandma there with me.

**Interviewer:** You mentioned earlier that the shoe clips are a family tradition. Do you know anything more about this tradition that you would be willing to share with me?

**Becky:** My mom would be a more authentic source, but I know my grandma, Mary, designed them for her wedding dress when she married my grandfather, Frank, in 1922 after they graduated from Purdue University. As was typical at that time, she sewed them onto her shoes and then removed them afterward, probably to be worn again at other opportunities.

She loaned them to several cousins when the[y] were married (these would have been cousins on her husband's side), and then to family friends who were living in [their town] where they lived at the time. Later, her daughter (my mother) wore them at her wedding in 1953 (?). They have been in every wedding of Frank and Mary's grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I'm not sure who last wore as actual shoe clips. Today, they are more suitable for under the dress. The fan shaped lace at the base is yellowed and torn, and only parts of the silk flowers remain. I think these were originally silk orange blossoms, but Mom would have to confirm.

I thought about having them re-done for my wedding to wear as shoe clips, but Mom pointed out that they are so fragile there is really not much to work with. At any rate, it turns out that having the actual item there is even more special than a replica.



**Interviewer:** Great, thank you so much! Since we're on the topic of bridal traditions, were there other bridal traditions you had heard of before this interview?

**Becky:** It seemed like everything was changing when I got married. The traditional “love, honor, and obey” was out of fashion (until you read the intent in the Bible, but that’s another conversation), balloons killed birds, rice sprouted and killed small animals. Releasing doves or butterflies was cruel to them, and I always thought bottles of bubbles was just a little too cheesy. There were more things not to do than traditions of what should be done.

I went with wildflower seeds instead of rice, and gave them as favors for people to take home and plant after the ceremony. No balloons, doves or butterflies.

Um, the wedding toast, given to bride and groom by the best man is a tradition we kept. The old/new/borrowed/blue tradition we kept. Oh, and not seeing the bride or her gown before the wedding is a tradition we honored, too.

**Interviewer:** How did you find out about the traditions that you did choose to follow?

**Becky:** I guess in reading (gotta love Jane Austin) and mostly through attending weddings.

As far as the shoe clips, I remember seeing them in a glass box on Grandma’s desk when I was a little girl visiting. She kept a list in the box of all the brides who’d worn them, with the date of the wedding. I grew up on that story, so it seems I’d always known I would wear them one day. I saw my sisters-in-law pinning them on, and I was blessed enough to pin them on [my nephew’s wife’s] dress myself. It’s a nice tradition, and one I hope to continue.

**Interviewer:** You've already mentioned some of the ways that you did this, but could you tell me how you incorporated these traditions into your wedding?

**Becky:** Well, I think I mentioned the old/new/borrowed/blue

I put a twist on the rice by using wildflowers. This was an idea from one of my friends who is a horticulturalist. She had a contact who could get wildflower seeds in bulk, so we ordered some that were native to the midwest. I bought little cellophane envelopes and put a small card and some seeds into the envelope, asking each guest to plant the seeds at home in our honor. It also prevented me getting doused with rice when we left the church.

I don’t think I did very many more. I didn’t really want to have a bunch of stuff to keep track of.

**Interviewer:** Makes sense to me! Thinking back on the dress traditions, especially, how did you feel about participating in those traditions?

**Becky:** Hmm, I guess I felt like I was part of a circle much bigger than me. It felt fulfilling in a way. I mean, I'd always known about them and had never reached the point where it was my turn to participate. Does that make sense?

**Interviewer:** I think it makes a lot of sense. Have your feelings about any of the traditions or rites of passage that you've mentioned changed since your wedding?

**Becky:** No, not at all.

**Interviewer:** Great. Do you know where else I could or should go to learn more about these traditions?

**Becky:** If you haven't already done so, I hope you'll contact [my mother]. She's got the original list of all the brides who have worn these shoe clips, and could probably outline a lot of other bridal traditions, depending on how broad a list you are gathering.

**Interviewer:** Great! With regards to the shoe clips, you've mentioned that it's a tradition you want to continue. Do you have any plans on how to continue this tradition?

**Becky:** I hope that someday my daughter will wear them on her wedding dress.

At some point, I imagine I'll take over the role Mom plays in keeping these clips. I'll make sure they are available for all the weddings of Frank and Mary's descendants, and that they're returned for the next wedding.

**Interviewer:** We're almost done! I just have one last question. Can you think of any questions that I should have asked, but didn't, or anything else that you would like to tell me?

Thanks!

**Becky:** No, I can't think of any. Good luck with the assignment!

## Appendix 19 – Interview with Carrie McKinney (current research)

**Interviewer:** As a starting point, I'd like to begin with your wedding. Could you describe your wedding for me?

**Carrie:** basically, my wedding was local destination wedding in July. If that makes sense! We wanted to stay in our home town and have the tropical theme carried out. It was a sophisticated day with splashes of tradition, the tropics, and togetherness. I had planned a lot of my wedding so I could have family be apart of it. Here are a few memories: My sister-in-law, Meghan McKinney, is very knowledgable (sic) in the field of apparel, and she accepted my proposal to make a one-of-a-kind ring pillow that reminded me of the tropical flowers you see in the summer. Everyday I see it as it is displayed on my dresser. 2nd, my husbands side of the family has a long running tradition of pinning the vintage shoe clip underneath your wedding dress. This was a great surprise to me and I loved being apart of their tradition. It was very welcoming..like a right of passage. There are other things too, and I was prepared for the age old tradition, "something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue." Not sure if I can remember them all, but the day was so much fun and such a blur!

**Interviewer:** How would you personally define the word "tradition"?

**Carrie:** a tradition is something that continually happens in the future, and is followed by the past. Tradition builds over time and links/connects family and friends together. Tradition unites new and old into one memory. Traditions can merge into new traditions, or simply stay the same over time. Tradition to me involves those closest to you, sharing space and time together, and it usually takes place yearly. My most favorite tradition, for many years, was going to my grandma and grampa Fox's for New Years. All parents, grandkids, etc., would get 1 shot glass filled with liquor. 1 by 1 we would make a wish for the new upcoming year and then toss the alcohol into the fire place. The fire would roar! It was awesome. Then, 1 of the 7 grandkids, ( rotated each year and in order of age), would get to change year in white numbers to the new year. This was located on the top of the doorway. So this involved a step stool for everybody.

**Interviewer:** Did you participate in any bridal dress traditions as a part of your wedding?

**Carrie:** yes, McKinney shoe clip sewn under the hem of my wedding dress for the wedding ceremony. I also signed the long list of brides before me. The paper and the shoe accessory are kept in a safe box until the next bride gets married.

**Interviewer:** Did you wear Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick's shoe buckles as a part of your wedding attire?

**Carrie:** yes. See answer 3 above.

**Interviewer:** How did you feel about participating in these dress traditions?

**Carrie:** I felt very blessed and very fortunate to be apart (sic) of this long running tradition. As I stated earlier, I felt very united and accepted just by wearing this little shoe accessory. It is a small item, but really impacted the union of Kevin and I as we we also uniting our 2 families.

**Interviewer:** Are there any other stories about your wedding that you would like to share with me?

**Carrie:** not that I think really apply, but thank you. Our wedding was mostly non-traditional. Outside ceremony with Pastor Curtis, inside reception, and then tropical after party by pool side.

## Appendix 20 – Interview with Carrie McKinney (2013 pilot project)

**Interviewer:** All right. So, as I mentioned earlier, my project is a narrative, which means I'm really interested in your words, your thoughts, and your experience. The end goal of this interview is to capture those thoughts and your feelings accurately and then to portray them anonymously in a small paper for a class where I'm learning how to be a better researcher.

My particular project, again, is about how dress traditions are formed and adopted and this interview is about your participation in a bridal dress tradition within your family.

And please let me know, again, if at any point there are any questions you want to skip.

**Carrie:** Okay.

**Interviewer:** So, if it's all right with you, I'd like to start by talking to you about your wedding. Can you describe your wedding to me?

**Carrie:** Oh, it was a tropical dream in Iowa. So...kind of unique; probably non-traditional. It was in town, but we set it up to look like a destination wedding. No ceremony in a church. It was very open, on a golf course and then everything was onsite location. So, the reception and after party was all in one area.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So, would you be able to tell me a little bit more about what you wore at your wedding?

**Carrie:** Oh, yeah. My mom and I went shopping for a couple of bridal dresses and then we found one that we liked at The Bride's Corner, a little shop. And after we looked, they actually moved location to a really nice shop, so I really liked the designer-- well, actually I don't know if she designs anything, but she owns her own boutique, does all the bridal dresses, bridesmaid dresses; she's really nice. She does all the hemming, everything.

But I picked one. I wanted something simple; something to show off more of my form and I went the complete opposite when I tried it on and I have heard that from a lot of brides that they do that.

I ended up going with like, this cookie cutter, princess dress. The top was embellished with all these little crystals and then it poofed out at the hip. So, complete opposite of what I was looking for.

**Interviewer:** Sure. And did you do anything with accessories on the day of your wedding?

**Carrie:** I did. I had jewelry from my aunt. She had made me a bracelet at a bead shop and a necklace and matching earrings. And then I also had planned something borrowed from my [maternal grandmother] and we were attaching it underneath the skirt. So, no one could it except for the people applying it and stitching it in and then randomly, and it was a great surprise, one of the members from the extended family, [my husband's aunt]-She brought, from [my husband's] side, from her great-grandma? Is it [my husband's grandmother's] grandma? I'm actually not sure which grandma.

Yeah. So, yeah, it's in [my husband's] family and it was a shoe buckle. And it was-- I can't even remember what it looked like, but it had-- it was either medal and diamonds or just metal. But it was a shoe buckle and she had it in a nice wooden box with a piece of paper of all the brides that had worn it underneath their dress as well and she said, "I would be honored", pretty much and I like, cried, because I didn't even know that was happening. So, I got another borrowed moment and she stitched the buckle underneath the hem of my dress with my [maternal grandmother's] little pendant.

So, I had one from like each side of the family, which was really special and I just felt a sense of unity and like, connection from a member of [my husband's] side of the family, which was really nice.

**Interviewer:** Great. Well, that actually leads into the next question pretty well, which is I'm curious, did you participate in any bridal dress traditions as a part of your wedding?

**Carrie:** Um...I don't think I did anything really special. I tried to do the something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue. I can't even remember if I got everything or not. But, you know, I have my jewelry. I've saved all that, so that I can hand that down. But I don't think I did much anything else.

**Interviewer:** You also had mentioned earlier that you had the pendant and then this shoe buckle. Could you talk to me a little bit about how you found out about these traditions?

**Carrie:** It actually was random; total random. And if it weren't for [my maternal grandmother's] putting it underneath, I don't know if I would have really known about it. I'm trying to think. That whole day is a blur.

But either [my husband's aunt] brought it up or we were randomly putting it underneath the dress skirt. But I do remember [my husband's aunt] saying it's tradition that the bride has it on her somewhere and I know I was putting [my maternal grandmother's] pendant underneath the skirt, so we added it right next to it. She just stitched it in, in like, two minutes, knotted off the string, and then it was there. So, yeah.

**Interviewer:** Great. And were you the one then who came up with the idea of using your grandma's pendant, or had that been--?

**Carrie:** Kind of. I asked [my maternal grandmother] for something borrowed, because I didn't want to take it, and that actually ended up being something old, because she let me keep it. And that pendant was what she got on her first Christmas from [my maternal grandfather].

So-- I mean, there's some stuff there that's tradition. So, that become something old then and then [my husband's aunt's] shoe buckle would have been something borrowed because as soon as that day was over, they clip it and they put it back in the shoe box or whatever it comes in; the little cedar chest.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So, can you tell me a little bit more about how you incorporated these two objects into your wedding?

**Carrie:** I liked that they were both in the family for you know, like, decades. It wasn't something just picked out or made or bought. They were in the family and it just creates the sense of unity and the fact that they were sewn in next to each other I think is something special. But it was so random. It wasn't planned, which makes it even more special.

**Interviewer:** Great. And did you do, off the top of your head, anything else along those lines as a part of your wedding? Whether it was for you or another person?

**Carrie:** Not necessarily. I did do something different with the bouquet. I did attach little things that meant things that were special to me. Like I had some charms I got that were crosses and we stitched them on to some thread and then that was intertwined into the bouquet. Stuff like that. I just think that anything that-- I don't know. Everyone's different, but charms or anything that you symbolize on your day is kind of a statement and obviously with getting married it's a unity statement and I wanted everything to kind of symbolize what I stood for and I wanted the cross; I wanted God there. Those little things. So I think having, even though it's not your family, but having those little pendants or little trinkets that mean something to you is kind of nice.

**Interviewer:** Great. So, how did you feel about using these objects as a part of your wedding?

**Carrie:** Oh, I think it's a good thing. It only adds an element of more happiness, more ooh-- trying to think of the word I'm thinking of. [laughing] But, you know, these little things that don't even cost that much, they're inexpensive, they're just in the family. I think those little things are what stand out and make that day special.

**Interviewer:** Great. So, you mentioned the charms and the shoe buckle and the pendant. Can you think of anything else that you used?

**Carrie:** Uh...I don't-- I mean, no. [laughing] I don't think so.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So, since your wedding, have your feelings about using these objects changed at all?

**Carrie:** I wouldn't say that they've changed, but if another bride was to ask for my opinion on something that I would redo over again, that would be part of it because it's just so special and it's a unity between you and other family members, whether you met that person or not. It is a sense of unity between both families and it is something special because you're supposed to get married once.

**Interviewer:** Fair enough. So, if you were going to send me to a person or a place or a book or anything to learn more about these traditions, where should I go?

**Carrie:** Well, you could probably go to [MarthaStewart.com](http://MarthaStewart.com). Anything Martha Stewart bridal, she has really good insights and then I would probably just have to Google some things. I'm sure if you did traditions slash bridal or plus bridal you could find stuff.

**Interviewer:** Okay. And then you also mentioned your grandmother and [your husband's aunt] as people who helped you as well and your aunt made your jewelry?

**Carrie:** Mmm-hmm.

**Interviewer:** Is there anything that I should be asking you that I haven't?

**Carrie:** No. [laughing] I can't think of anything.

**Interviewer:** Okay. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

**Carrie:** Well, I will say this: If the shoe buckle has anything to do with the main research or not, I do think it's interesting and I'm a shoe manager, so I see all these fashionable shoes go in and out, you know? But I think it's fun to see the traditions of what the shoe has become for that person. Some people wear tennis shoes, you know. Some people used to, in the Victorian Age, wear the shoe buckles and all of this.

I wore hot pink Nine West shoes and I think that's fun and every bride should do something unique, so...yeah.

**Interviewer:** So, you mentioned that every bride should do something unique. What was the most unique thing for you?

**Carrie:** Um...I have to think about that for just a second. Well, besides throwing a tropical wedding outside, I would probably say for me, it was probably finding the shoe, really. I looked here, couldn't find anything. I want to say we were in Indiana for something and didn't find anything there. And then I ended up finding my shoe in Texas,



of all places. And I believe I got a second pair for the after party. Yeah. So, the shoe was very important I guess. [laughing] Looking back.

**Interviewer:** Great! Let me make sure I didn't miss any questions with you. I don't think I did. Well, thank you very much for the interview. I really appreciate it.

**Carrie:** Well, you're welcome.

## Appendix 21 – Interview with Brooke McKinney

**Interviewer:** As a starting point, I'd like to begin with your wedding. Could you describe your wedding for me?

**Brooke:** To Ben and I, our wedding was the first representation of how we would be as husband and wife. So first and foremost, we wanted it to be a Christian wedding, where there was a focus on Christ and the unity of two people. For that reason, we quickly decided that we our ceremony would be held at a church, in fellowship with a couple hundred of our dearest family and friends. We were married at St. Luke's United Methodist in Indianapolis, IN where I grew up going to church, and where my brother, sister and I were all baptized and confirmed. That aspect of our wedding was most important to us. Next came all the nitty-gritty details (which are probably not so important in the grand scheme of things, but were fun to think about). The overall feel we were going for was a sort of timeless elegance. Bearing that in mind, we started making all the decisions that come along with planning a large wedding -- picking a dress, designing a cake, choosing table linens and fancy flatware, etc. Our colors were red, black and white with damask accents and rhinestones here and there to add a little sparkle. We like to think it was a pretty classy event and that we achieved what we were going for.

**Interviewer:** How would you describe your wedding dress?

**Brooke:** My wedding dress was an ivory (or "candlelight," technically), satin, full-skirted A-line gown. It was strapless with a sweetheart neckline and a pleated bodice, and the waistline was covered in rhinestone beading. Down the back of the skirt were satin buttons, beginning after the beaded waistline. Here is a picture of it, if it helps :-)

<http://www.onewed.com/wedding-dresses/designer/emerald-bridal/dress/sweetheart/a-line/floor-length/9165>

**Interviewer:** What about shoes, jewelry, veil/headwear, or other things I might have missed?

**Brooke:** Yes, I had long, teardrop (fake) diamond earrings. No necklace or bracelet. I also had a rhinestone hair piece that I wore on the right side under my (sic) veil.

**Interviewer:** Where did you get dressed for your wedding?

**Brooke:** The women all got dressed together in a room at the church normally used for Sunday School classes.

**Interviewer:** Did you have anyone assisting you in this?

**Brooke:** Yes, my mom helped me get my gown on, and my sister and various bridesmaids helped me with shoes, accessories, etc.

**Interviewer:** How would you personally define the word “tradition”?

**Brooke:** I would say tradition is something special -- an event, an object, a ritual, etc. -- that holds a group of people together. In this case, the "shoe fancies" were something that, on my wedding day, made me feel like I was sharing in something special with all the other women in several generations and branches of my family were a part of. And that feels really cool to be a part of.

**Interviewer:** Did you participate in any bridal dress traditions as a part of your wedding?

**Brooke:** Just the classic "Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue." We pinned the shoe fancies in the tulle under my dress. That was my something old and something borrowed.

**Interviewer:** Did you wear Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick’s shoe buckles as a part of your wedding attire?

**Brooke:** My mom pinned them to the tulle underneath my dress.

**Interviewer:** How did you learn about this tradition?/Are you aware of this tradition?

**Brooke:** From Grandma McKinney, of course! She’s the current “keeper” of the shoe fancies and, as you know, a lover of family tradition. I am so grateful to her for teaching me about them and keeping the tradition going.

**Interviewer:** Why did you choose to participate/not to participate? Do you want to participate in this tradition?

**Brooke:** Because family tradition means a lot to me as well. It made me feel like I was involved in something special -- sort of like I was carrying with me generations of marital wisdom as I walked down the aisle and began my own married life.

**Interviewer:** How would you describe this tradition?/Could you tell me a little bit more about this tradition?

**Brooke:** The passing down and sharing of a special piece of a wardrobe to remind us all of our lineage and where we come from as we leave our families and join another in marriage.

**Interviewer:** Do you know of anyone else who wore the shoe buckles?/Do you have other members of your family who intend to wear the buckles when they marry in the future? (daughters, nieces, cousins, etc.)

**Brooke:** Yes. My younger sister, and hopefully my own daughters, when the time comes (many years from now!).

**Interviewer:** How did you feel about participating in these dress traditions?

**Brooke:** Included and special.

**Interviewer:** Do you think that your feelings about these traditions changed since your wedding?

**Brooke:** No.

## Appendix 22 – Interview with Annie Breithaupt

**Interviewer:** As a starting point, I'd like to begin with your wedding. Could you describe your wedding for me?

**Annie:** Our wedding was in early May, at my church in Northville, MI. It was a nice day, after a cold spring, and flowers were blooming but the leaves were not yet on all the trees. It was a pretty big wedding with my family, my husband's big family, and friends there with us.

**Interviewer:** How would you personally define the word "tradition"?

**Annie:** Tradition is something which is learned from previous generations, and passed along to future generations.

**Interviewer:** Did you participate in any bridal dress traditions as a part of your wedding?

**Annie:** I wore the "shoe fancies" pinned to my dress. They have been worn by women in my dad's (Kirkpatrick) family. I think they used to be worn on shoes, but since they are old now, they are in a small lace bag. I pinned them to the inside of my dress.

**Interviewer:** Did you wear Mary Bishop Kirkpatrick's shoe buckles as a part of your wedding attire?

**Annie:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** How did you feel about participating in these dress traditions?

**Annie:** I thought it was nice to think about the many women who had done the same before me. I felt sisterhood thinking about the fact that they may have been doing very much the same thing, pinning the shoe fancies to their dresses, and maybe feeling the same way - nervous, happy, excited - for their wedding day.

**Interviewer:** Bringing things back around to your wedding attire, do you have a photograph of yourself in your wedding dress?/Would you be willing to provide me with a copy of the photo for use in my thesis?

**Annie:** I do - when I am on my home computer I will find one for you!