Planning My Geeky-Queer Wedding: The Reception

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When planning our geeky-queer wedding, Andrew and I had to make up a lot of things along the way, while balancing some of the traditional aspects that we find appealing. Sometimes, creating a new guide for our circumstances has been a little difficult. Other times, it was as easy as figuring out what aspects we really do not like in traditional weddings, and simply eliminating them; sometimes replacing them with our own special touches. The reception is another one of those situations where the end result is due to a process of elimination and supplementation, balanced with a couple traditional elements.

Andrew and I are two extremely introverted individuals. As a result, there are many things in a traditional wedding reception that cause us to become extremely uncomfortable. Also, we are two individuals who don't appreciate a lot of the social conventions found within traditional wedding receptions. Then, add that I'm a trans man and Andrew could be described as a pansexual yet cis male, for some, that in and of itself is enough reason to throw all tradition out the window, and build something unique.

Just like when we decided we were going to get married, were deciding on what to wear ,were deciding on the roles of family and guests, and were deciding on what type of ceremony we were going to have, our reception is going to be very much a reflection of the type of people we are, and the importance of the people who will be in attendance.

Here is a list of things we have decided that we'd rather have a case of [Terellian Death Syndrome](#) than have to endure during our reception. While we understand that many people find the following things to be enjoyable, for us, they are rather painful:

Girton College wedding reception, near Cambridge. Image by Wedding Photography by Jon Day. Some rights reserved.

We will not be having an MC.
- We will not be having any special toasts or speeches. Even if we had decided to have wedding parties, we would have eliminated toasts.
- We will not be having any ceremonial dances — such as the "first dance," and dancing with parents and different members of the wedding parties — and we will not be having a reception DJ.
- There will be no kissing with the clanging of wine glasses.
- Andrew and I will not be sitting at a head table. In fact, there will be no assigned seating arrangement.
- We will not be posing for photographs.
- As there is no bride, there will be no tossing of a bridal bouquet or tossing of any garters. We are not supplementing this tradition with anything else.

- We will not be having traditional wedding favors or fancy decorations, outside of the fancy table settings provided by the location.
- There will be no cutting of a wedding cake.

When Andrew and I told his parents all of the things we are not going to be doing, once we got to the wedding cake, his mother said, "No wedding cake! Why have a wedding reception at all if you aren't going to cut any wedding cake?!" We found this rather amusing. A few other friends had similar reactions. This is one social convention, to which people appear to be so attached, that we simply do not understand.

The majority of these things, Andrew and I found quite embarrassing during our respective previous wedding receptions.

I do not think I can properly relate how horrified I was when the MC during my previous ceremony told the room to return my house keys, only for a large number of people to come forward and remove their house keys from their key chains and place them in front of me. I wanted to die. It was highly embarrassing. It became even more so when the MC said something to the effect of, "I can't return my key. You stole the key to my heart many years ago."

Andrew and I felt the same way, to varying degrees, about all of the things that forced us to be in the spotlight. What, for many, is something that is supposed to be fun, for us these things are filled with moments of wanting to crawl into some dark corner and disappear. That does not make for a fun day or a fun evening. Isn't the point of a wedding reception to have fun?

Not only do we want to throw a party that celebrates our love for each other, but Andrew and I want to throw a party that celebrates the love we have for the friends and family who will be attending, and their importance in our lives.

In the end, we decided that our reception is going to be a mix of a formal dinner and house concert.

Dress code wedding card for our wedding. Image commissioned from Matt Schubbe.

The guests will be treated to a four course meal, complete with a very elegant dessert in lieu of wedding cake, and a couple of bottles of wine per table. If guests want other alcoholic beverages, the venue has a full bar from which they can purchase drinks.

- Following the dinner, we have hired one of our favorite independent musicians to perform a house concert. This is not to be confused with hiring a wedding singer. The musician will not be performing in a way that is traditionally done during receptions. Instead, the musician will be performing their original music like they would at any other house concert.
- During the house concert part of the evening, guests are more than welcome to get up and dance if they so choose, but there will be no formal, "This is where we get up and dance," part to the evening.
- After the house concert, I will break out my laptop and play some music — a lot of it will be geek music, filled with some of our favorite *Star Trek* inspired songs — while guests mingle and dance if they so choose.

Despite not having any formal dancing, there is a part of me that wants to get everyone dancing to *Gangnam Style*.

Even though we have eliminated toasts and speeches, kissing, photographs, and fancy decorations, we are allowing for the following:

- At any time, people can stand up and say a few words if they so choose. I will be saying a little bit of something to the guests, as well as introducing the musician we've hired.

"Vulcan kiss." Image from Star Trek: The Original Series episode, Journey to Babel © 1967 Paramount Pictures

- If people do decide to clang their glasses, then everyone will have to give a Vulcan kiss to their nearest neighbor, while telling them to, "Live long and prosper."
- We will be taking video of the wedding and reception. During the reception, we will pass around the camera so that we will get to witness the event through different eyes, so to speak. People can also record personal messages, if they so choose.
- While we won't be standing or posing for any pictures, I'm sure a few candid snapshots will be taken, as most guests have smartphones. Whether or not we decide to share these photos with the public, even if only a couple, is yet to be decided. We may also take a few stills from the video and share them at a later date.
- We may purchase some *Star Trek* and other science-fiction odds and ends that correspond with the overall [theme of the wedding](#) to put on tables. We are also considering designing an [LCARS](#) interface, similar to the LCARS design I created for my [Geeky Pleasures website](#), for use as a guest book in conjunction with our tablets.

So, there you have it. Our reception, just like the rest of the event, will be a mix of traditional elements and things to make this day unique to our personal needs and likes.

At the end of the day, we want our wedding to be a party. What better excuse is there for people to fly in from across North America than throwing a party that celebrates love, diversity, family and friendships, with good food and excellent music? The best thing about it? We don't have to do any cleaning up once the party is over.

If you haven't already, I invite you to read the first four parts of this series: [Planning My Geeky-Queer Wedding: Introduction](#); [Planning My Geeky-Queer Wedding: The Proposal and the Rings](#); [Planning My Geeky-Queer Wedding: The Outfits and Wedding Attire](#); [Planning My Geeky-Queer Wedding: The Wedding Party, Family, and Guests](#), and [Planning My Geeky-Queer Wedding: The Ceremony](#).

Still to come in my geeky-queer wedding planning series:
- Last names and culture
- The location

- Gifts
- Things we've learned, and other miscellaneous things we did or are doing.

If you would like to see a post about something not already mentioned, I want to know. Tell me, what has you curious? About what would you like to see me write? If you let me know, I will try my best to include it in a post.

Finally, did you do anything unique or out of the ordinary for your reception?