**GENRE ANALYSIS PAPER- PREWRITING & DRAFTING STAGE**

**SAMPLES FROM AMBER**

**BRAINSTORM ABOUT GENRES**

*What kind of writing will I use in my work?*

* Things I’ve never written before: conference proposals, journal article submissions, dissertations, grants
* I could work on my CV and look at samples of that to make it better
* I could look at other people’s professional websites and improve mine based on genre conventions
* Assignment sheets! tho I think I have a good idea of the standard

*What kind of writing will I use in my personal life?*

* Wedding websites? Feeling a lot of social pressure to get engaged/not sure I want to work within the wedding website genre and abide by its rules bc it’s a lot of work to create and maintain
* Personal essays—so interesting but I feel like I studied them a lot in school soooo

**RESEARCH**

I have six samples: two from weddings of friends, and four from lists of “best wedding websites”

Purpose: to tell people about the couple and wedding

Audience: wedding guests

Rhetorical appeals: pathos! Looking at wedding websites makes me want to smile/cry with happiness for my friends and their love

Modes and media: It’s written/visual and it’s online on a website

Some common elements:

* They almost always have the same sections (“how we met” or “our love story”, RSVP, registry, pictures of the couple, details about the event, where to book a hotel).
* Style- the writing is often narrative and sweet in the “how we met” section, and direct/simple when it’s talking about directions and location.
* Design- these websites have premade templates, so I’ve seen some of those repeated in weddings that I’ve been invited to. They choose pleasing and soft colors. There also might be trendy background images, like leaves.
* Sources- Not really a thing

My interesting sample—The most recent wedding that I was at was Avalon and Leandro’s last month, and they used an evite instead of one of the more standard websites like The Knot. This is probably because: 1) Avalon is a very chill person, 2) they already got married in Cuba.

But! I’m interested in it as a sample because I like how relaxed it is. I like that it’s breaking the genre rules of wedding websites. It doesn’t have any pictures of them or a “how we met” story. I think that means that they assume that everyone knows about their love story already. It’s mostly just details for the night of. There’s a menu, location, details about going rafting the day before, a message board, and a registry. It’s interesting to note that they have a registry since most of the other genre elements are missing. But that makes sense because they didn’t do a registry for their first wedding.

**SHITTY FIRST DRAFT**

Wedding websites are a pretty standardized genre, meaning that they all share similar features. This is probably because on websites like TheKnot.com or WithJoy.com, you can log in and choose a template for your wedding. This is useful because wedding websites seem pretty essential to having a wedding, yet designing a website from scratch is often difficult.

I looked at six samples in order to get a feel for the genre. Two websites were for my friends’ weddings and four were from a round-up of “best wedding websites.” In terms of rhetorical situation, the purpose is to give information about the couple and the details of the wedding, and the audience is the people who are invited to the wedding. The most common rhetorical appeal is to pathos—through using pictures and love stories, the people getting married get us excited about their love story and about coming to their wedding. The mode is written and visual, and the medium is a website. You’ll see pictures and sometimes an engagement video on the website.

I noticed that in general, wedding websites share common elements. They have the same sections: RSVP, directions to the venue, which hotels to stay at, pictures of the couple, a “how we met” story, and a registry.

In terms of design, they use pleasing, soft/muted colors and/or trendy backgrounds. They might use the same design choices on the invitations and on the decorations on the day of the wedding to create cohesion. The colors aren’t too bright or loud because that choice might be distracting for the viewer. They also make heavy use of pictures of the couple. Pictures might be in just one section or they could be the background of the website in general. In a genre that relies heavily on templates, these pictures help the website feel personalized.

In terms of style, I noticed that sections with directions on where the venue is or what hotels to stay at are very simple and direct. This is so that they get the message across quickly to wedding guests. The writing style changes a lot when we get to narratives about how the couple met. Lots of couples write at length and are super descriptive. I’ve noticed that some couples write in first person and some write in third person. Third person feels weird because they’re writing about themselves but I think that people do that to feel more formal. In the same way that adding pictures of the couple makes the website feel personalized, these “how we met” stories help a template website to feel personal. Weddings are the biggest, most important day of life for a lot of people, so having a wedding website that feels personalized is probably pretty important.

What is not super common in wedding websites is logos or use of sources. They’re not really trying to appeal to my sense of logic—they’re trying to make me feel emotional and excited. Weddings are an exciting time when friends and family get to reconnect, and the guests get to watch two people who love each other make a commitment. They’re inherently emotional events, so pulling on our emotions makes sense. Let’s also be real: attending a wedding can be expensive. Though I’ve loved attending the weddings that I’ve been to, it’s been stressful to spend money on new outfits and plane tickets, and with holding down multiple jobs as an adjunct it’s been hard to coordinate taking time off and being able to afford the wedding at all. But a pathos appeal makes me forget all that—I just want to celebrate my friends love! Yay!

I chose my friend Avalon’s wedding website as my interesting sample. I attended her wedding this August, so the website and the wedding are fresh on my mind. This sample also breaks a lot of genre rules because it’s on evite.com (more casual than TheKnot.com or WithJoy.com) and it’s missing some of the traditional sections. It doesn’t have pictures or the “how we met” love story, so that takes away a lot of the pathos appeal. Though it has the same purpose and audience as my other samples, it’s a lot more straightforward.

I’m sure that Avalon made this choice because she and her husband got married in Cuba almost two years ago. They’ve spent the last two years working on his immigration, and he finally moved to the US this summer. Leandro’s friends and family were able to attend their wedding in Cuba, but most of Avalon’s friends and family had not met Leandro before and didn’t get to be at their first wedding. Because they were already legally married, I think that they took a more chill approach. I’m interested in this sample, though, because I like how chill it is. I think that even somebody who was getting married for the first time could use the evite.

Even though they didn’t have engagement pictures up on the evite before the event like most couples do in terms of design, people were able to post pictures of the wedding afterward, so we still all have pictures to look at. I think that this was also helpful because they didn’t have a wedding photographer. I’m realizing that in general the fact that they had a chill wedding website correlated super directly with having a chill wedding. They didn’t have a ceremony because they were already married, just toasts. They didn’t have a photographer, and the food was casual and delicious: mac and cheese and barbecue. I’m realizing that the invitation signaled something about the tone of the wedding in general. Just like standard wedding websites might set a color scheme or level of formality for the wedding, this evite set the tone too, and the tone is casual.

In terms of style, it’s very simple and straightforward—directions, menu, etc. Evite has a message board, though, and other websites don’t usually have that, so there was a conversational feel to the writing because Avalon was able to directly respond to people’s questions. This made the website feel friendly, casual, cozy—and the wedding felt like that too!

Like wedding websites in general, there weren’t really any logos appeals or sources. Not a thing.

I was interested in wedding websites because I’ve been going to a lot of friends’ weddings, and I feel some pressure to get engaged. Though Ojas and I love being partners and want to for as long as we both love each other, we’re not sure that we want to get married. Therefore, thinking about a wedding and all of the planning that goes into it makes me feel overwhelmed. My friends who have gotten married have put a lot of effort into the event—it takes a lot to book a venue, food, flowers, get a special outfit, get a photographer, and build a website. It’s both expensive and time-consuming! I have no money and not a lot of extra time to plan something like this!

The idea of having a wedding makes me feel extremely stressed. Building a website for a wedding makes me feel extremely stressed. Therefore, getting a better sense of the genre conventions and looking at a chill example of a wedding website are really useful to me. If I ever did plan a wedding, I would want it to be extremely relaxed, so I would probably do something very chill like what Avalon did. Because wedding websites seem so standard and use templates, it’s nice to explore other options. On the other hand, I may decide one day that I want to build a super standard wedding website. Now, I have a better sense of the common elements, so it won’t be as stressful for me to work within them.

Also, I will have more friends who get married, and it may come up between us that I’ve analyzed wedding websites and know about the genre conventions. I know that planning a wedding is a lot of work, so maybe I could help out a friend by sharing that genre knowledge with them.