

Michelle Kwan Ties the Knot with Clay Pell



By Michelle Danzig

On January 19, Michelle Kwan and Clay Pell spoke their vows while playing the song that Kwan skated to in the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Games, according to [People](#). The melody, "Fields of Gold" signaled a new beginning for the nine-time U.S. national figure skating champion and five-time world champion olympic skater. Pell, 31, who is the director for strategic planning on the National Security staff at the White House, tied the knot with Kwan, 32, at the First Unitarian Church of Providence, R.I. Pell donned his full U.S. Coast Guard uniform and Kwan wore a Vera Wang gown in ivory. The couple shared self-written vows before 240 family and friends, among whom included Olympic champions Brian Boitano, Dick Button and Dorothy Hamill. The two were so moved, they even shared a kiss before the end of the ceremony. Kwan is now a senior advisor for public diplomacy and public affairs and

told *People* that, although she doesn't believe in love at first site, she knew that Clay was the 'one.'

What are the benefits to writing your own vows for your wedding?

Cupid's Advice:

While many prefer to reiterate the traditional wedding vows, many have adopted the idea of writing their own wedding vows. Although this may be a more modern concept and not quickly accepted, there are some excellent benefits to writing and speaking your own vows at the wedding:

1. It is personal: Reiterating the traditional vows is beautiful and timeless, but doesn't always completely reflect the couple's relationship. By expressing exactly what made you fall in love with your significant other, or how you knew he or she was the one, you are creating a more personal and intimate ceremony.

2. It makes your wedding unique: No two wedding ceremonies are the same when the vows are created specifically for and by the couple. Maybe you include an inside joke or a favorite song; by writing from the heart, you are creating a ceremony that is unique to your and your future-spouse.

3. Your vows are more concrete: If you and your spouse went to different lengths to create the most intimate and personal vows, chances are they are aspects and characteristics of your relationship that you both value. Stating specific vows—even as specific as always vowing to kiss them everyday—will give them more meaning.

Did you write your own vows? Tell us below.