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[Oakland's royal wedding](#) [Nearly 600 attend Jerry Brown's nuptials](#)

- [Leah Garchik, Chronicle Columnist](#)

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Oakland Mayor Jerry Brown and Anne Gust, a lawyer who's been his sweetie since friends introduced them 15 years ago, were married in Oakland on Saturday, and it was romantic, traditional, pink-and-white and surprising to at least a few of their friends.

"No!" said former San Francisco Supervisor Angela Alioto when asked whether she'd expected her old pal Brown, one of California's most famous bachelors, to marry. "He's 67 years old It was about time."

Brown, whose formal name and previous employment are that of his father, former California Gov. Edmund G. Brown, began the first of two terms in the state's top job in 1974, when he was 36 years old. He was a seminary-educated politician, a Jesuit scholar interested in Buddhism, a protector of the environment and advocate for minorities, and an eccentric who drove a beat-up car and lived in an apartment rather than a mansion. His unconventionality and high-profile single life (most famously as the beau of Linda Ronstadt) were fodder for late-night monologues.

After leaving office, he traveled around Asia, returning to politics and a run at the presidency after Mother Teresa told him he could best serve by going home. Since he became mayor of Oakland in June 1998, his emphasis has been on economic growth, education and lowering the crime rate, and no one's called him "Moonbeam" for years.

On March 15, the day lawyer and then-Gap Chief Administrative Officer Anne Baldwin Gust turned 47, the mayor of Oakland and would-be state attorney general proposed marriage. "First of all, she wanted a ring," he laughed Saturday, in response to a question about why he'd decided to make a marital move.

In fact, friends described Brown as becoming mesmerized by the gem-selection process, even using a loupe to inspect for flaws. When a solitaire stone was chosen and Gust said she'd like two more to surround it, the bride-to-be stood her ground against the groom-to-be's contention that less would be more. "Not in this case," she said, and a three-diamond ring it was. "She's strong and supportive," said old friend Jo Schuman Silver, "Beach Blanket Babylon" impresario. "She has showed him how not to take himself so seriously, loosened him up. He laughs a lot with her."

"I think his personality has always been great," says Silicon Valley gastroenterologist Bart Lally, who has known Brown since grade school 60 years ago, but his "fun-loving side" has sometimes been "dormant." With Gust, "he has blossomed."

Gust, who grew up in Bloomfield Hills, Mich., graduated from Stanford and the University of Michigan Law School; she announced she was quitting her Gap job a few months ago. She will manage Brown's campaign for attorney general; the election is next June.

Willie Brown, who's known Jerry Brown for 40 years, says that Gust "is probably the only person that could be his campaign manager. I don't think he has that much respect for most persons in the world of politics, but I think he does have that much respect for her. ... When I have had meals with the two of them, she is a full participant, and has an opinion. And most of the time, it isn't his." Gust has said that she's been a registered Republican, an Independent and a Democrat.

Gust said the issue of whether she'll become Mrs. Brown is still "under discussion. When you're my age, you get used to your name."

The wedding was attended by almost 600 guests, including former Gov. Gray Davis, and three past and present San Francisco mayors, Willie Brown, Gavin Newsom and Sen. Dianne Feinstein, who conducted the precisely planned ceremony (the second marriage she's conducted). The readings from the Old and New Testaments, Gregorian chants by Exaudi nos and Cum júbilo, brass fanfare by the Whole Noyse and selections of medieval music sung by Melanie Spiller and Jennifer Lane were planned by Brown.

The groom's earliest plan for the event was for a pre-Tridentine wedding, harking back to the era before the Council of Trent made weddings church business. But "I told him it wouldn't feel real if he didn't get married in church," said his friend

Alioto. So after the Rotunda Building ceremony and reception, the couple came to San Francisco, where they were married at 5 p.m. in a much smaller religious ceremony at St. Agnes, where Brown's parents had married and where he was baptized.

Alioto interpreted Brown's decision to marry as a coming to grips with life's trajectory: "Jerry has big issues of mortality and immortality, so it makes sense." Alioto said she bought a burial plot "next to his, and I kept saying to him, 'What about eternity, Jerry?' "

Philosopher and innovator Stewart Brand, who, like his friend Brown, is a man who takes a long view, said, "He's a good Catholic boy who's read the Confessions of St. Augustine. He knows that you get to play for a long time, and then you bear down. He did play for longer than most."

Willie Brown viewed the timing as a practical matter: "Dianne hasn't endorsed him yet."

UC journalism Dean Orville Schell, who wrote "Brown" in 1978, said the groom's rarest trait is that he "does not spin himself," which probably bodes well for marriage. "She must appreciate the fact that he isn't all smoke and mirrors," said Schell. "Jerry Brown is an uncensored person. He says what he is thinking."

He has an "amazing capability to say things that other people dare not say." Schell spoke admiringly, but it's clear such plain talk can get a politician into public difficulty. "Anne's a pretty level-headed person, and in many ways a good complement to Jerry's Roman candle effect," said Schell.

Some details: The wedding planner was Sarah Berger, the flowers were by Ron Morgan, and the food was by Barbara Llewellyn Catering. Veggie-burgers were served along with mini-burgers, the carrot cake (not a formal wedding cake) featured nuts but no raisins, and the groom specially ordered cookies, ginger snap and peanut butter. As a surprise for Brown from Rotunda developer Phil Tagami, custom-made wine labels were ornamented with the words "Celebratio Nuptiarum Rubrum" and a Gaelic-looking cross, a Brown family symbol that was also on the front of lengthy programs.

The bride's ivory taffeta dress (3/4 sleeves, wraparound shirtwaist, box-pleated, lace-trimmed, street-length) was by the groom's old friend Diane von Furstenberg, and

Gust carried a bouquet of white roses and lily-of-the-valley. The bride's lace pumps and groom's black oxfords had been purchased two days before the wedding at Wilkes Bashford, and the groom seemed impishly proud to say that.

An Oakland School for the Arts choir sang during the reception, but there was no dance music. It was too early in the day to dance, Brown said, but according to an insider involved in the planning, "He doesn't dance in public. "

About 20 out-of-town family members, from as far away as Florida, bunked at Brown's old We the People commune on Harrison Street, and the couple was supposed to return there Saturday night for a small gathering after the St. Agnes ceremony. Then it would be off to the Russian River for a few days, and Rome in August for a real honeymoon.

In addition to family members, the guest list included Rep. Barbara Lee, D-Oakland, California Attorney General Bill Lockyer, State Senate President Don Perata, D-Oakland, Oakland City Council President Ignacio De La Fuente (endorsed by Brown as his successor), State Court of Appeal Justice J. Anthony Kline, Oakland Interim Police Chief Wayne Tucker, the Rev. Cecil Williams and Janice Mirikitani, Clint and Janet Reilly, Doris and Don Fisher, Stefanie and Peter Coyote, Orville and Baifang Schell, Lori and Peter Stern, Steve Kava (Gavin Newsom's chief of staff) and Dan Hinckle, Maurice Kanbar, Richard Blum, San Francisco D.A. Kamala Harris, Kathleen Alioto, Mimi Silbert and Jeannette Etheredge.

Many entered from the second floor, descending a grand staircase to the first, where the ceremony was to be held and where the heaviest hitters were seated. Politicians, Willie Brown and Gray Davis among them, greeted each other with manly three-backslap hugs, then lingered in the center of the room before taking their seats, so that everyone could see them.

Just after the ceremony began, the Gust family Bible slipped out of the hands of young Bernard Carlin, who was holding it before a reading of its inscription. The book clattered to the floor and the little boy glanced up at Feinstein -- the most motherly person nearby -- with an alarmed look on his face. She answered his unspoken question with a smile of reassurance: It was OK, he was among friends. The ceremony disappeared for a moment, eclipsed by a small exchange of warmth, comfort, security.

Later on, when the bride and groom were surrounded by TV cameras and reporters,

the subject turned again to rings, and the newlyweds held out their hands to show them off. The bride, unable to resist the urge, picked up her husband's hand and gave it a quick smooch. And that's why people get married.

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