Marriage in Ancient Rome
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Marriage in Ancient Rome, and the way in which Romans interacted according to society, was very different from other pre-modern societies. Unlike other societies, wives in Ancient Rome were able to own property, as long as it was protected by their husbands. It was very important for people to be married in Ancient Rome, especially for men. Men were also not fully seen as men unless they married and created a family with their wives. This term was called having dignitas. Although marriage was seen as a sacred union of two people, one to be respected, men were still allowed to have other sexual partners known as concubines.

Ceremonies varied from expensive religious rituals with the state gods and goddesses to rituals at home including family feasts during which couples joined hands and gave their consent before the witnesses. Later on, a priest was deemed necessary in order to validate the marriage. The priest’s blessing the marriage was seen to represent civil authority, as well as church authority since the church and state were one. In Ancient Rome, there was the betrothal, when a man agreed to marry a woman. This commitment had a legal status under Roman Law, and the giving of a betrothal ring became a very important part of it.

Conclusions
Many of the beliefs that were related to marriage in Ancient Rome now serve as the foundation for many of the marriages that occur in modern society today. As time progressed, marriage in Ancient Rome began to take different turns: from men having all of the power to an equal union among both sexes; from sending a simple letter to the groom’s family in order to seal the union to ceremonies blessed by the priest of the Catholic church. In Ancient Rome, marriage was not only seen as bringing two people together; it was seen as a mandatory process in order to belong in society. It related to property and power and, depending on whom one married, one’s social status was determined.

References