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VOWS

Sara Galvan and Luke Bronin



Photographs by Lance Rosenfield for The New York Times

AUSTIN, TEX., APRIL 7 Fellow Rhodes scholars share a desire to help society, and themselves, to live well. Top, the bride at the Museum of Art.

By STACI SEMRAD Published: April 29, 2007

ZOOMING through arid West Texas in August 2001, Sara Cecilia Galvan and Luke Aaron Bronin talked about everything under the desert sun — music, the Lone Star State, their hopes and dreams — and the sun itself.

Every time he stepped from his S.U.V., "It was like you got hit by a frying pan," recalled Mr. Bronin, who like Ms. Galvan had been named a Rhodes scholar earlier that year and was taking time before the start of his fall studies at Oxford University to be young and free.

Mr. Bronin, who was raised in Rye, N.Y., and Greenwich, Conn., but who is also an amateur country singer, had traveled to Austin, Tex., to record some of his compositions.

It happened that Ms. Galvan, a Houstonian whom he had met earlier that summer on the way to a barbecue in Virginia for the new Rhodes scholars, was in Austin, too, spending the last of the summer with family and friends.

So they set out on a road trip to Texas border towns like Laredo and to Marfa, in West Texas, which is known for its mysterious lights, as well as Big Bend National Park. "I spoke of my dreams of changing American cities through urban design," said Ms. Galvan, who trained as an architect at the University of Texas. "He spoke of his dream of

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Galvan, who trained as an architect at the [University of Texas](#). He spoke of his dream of contributing to society through policy work and politics.”

They also made it to the Blanco County Fair and Rodeo in Johnson City, where Mr. Bronin decided to take on a mechanical bull. “He was trying to show off and ended up flying 10 feet through the air,” Ms. Galvan recalled. “I thought he was nuts.”

Despite the heat and proximity, there was no talk of love. “We felt attraction,” said Ms. Galvan, a fifth-generation Texan of Mexican-American descent. “But it just didn’t seem like the right time to start something.”

By September they traded in the Texas heat for the rainy climate of Oxford, where during their first year Mr. Bronin had a bicycle accident while trying to juggle a sandwich, a coffee cup and a mobile phone. He broke a kneecap, and in doing so inadvertently began the process of winning Ms. Galvan’s affection. She began taking food and other necessities to him while he hobbled on crutches.

They began dating in earnest in March of their second year, traveling down the Thames in flat-bottomed boats, playing croquet and traveling to South Africa, Eastern Europe and the Balkans.

When their Oxford studies ended in 2003, their romance continued at [Yale](#), where both began studying for law degrees. He soon realized he could not live without her.

“She’s tough, she’s feisty, she’s fun,” said Mr. Bronin, 27, who is now a lawyer at the Hartford, the Connecticut insurance company. “I just love her. She always calls things like she sees them.”

In the fall of 2006, Mr. Bronin prepared an elaborate dinner for Ms. Galvan, who is now 28 and the Gallivan Research Professor of Law at the [University of Connecticut](#) and also a development consultant on a commercial real estate project in New Haven. Just before dessert, Mr. Bronin got down on one knee to ask for her hand.

Her answer was clear. “I *could* envision myself spending the rest of my life with Luke,” Ms. Galvan said. “We both have crazy dreams, and we love and respect each other. We’re best friends.”

More than 130 people attended their wedding on April 7 at the Laguna Gloria campus of the Austin Museum of Art. Before the ceremony, guests mingled in the museum’s 1916 Italianate villa.

The Rev. Carol Gadsden, an Episcopal priest and Mr. Bronin’s godmother, officiated as rain pattered on the tent that covered a patio overlooking lush parkland and Lake Austin. A mariachi band burst into action as the couple made a grand exit that was punctuated by Mr. Bronin joyfully shouting, “Ree-haa!” — a move that brought a smile to his bride’s face.

After family and friends offered toasts, all eyes turned to the newlyweds, who danced to “Living and Living Well,” a George Strait tune:

“There’s a difference in living and living well,” the lyrics go. “You can’t have it all, all by yourself. Something’s always missing ’til you share it with someone else.”

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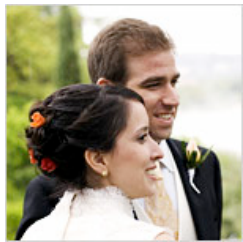
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