

Exercise: Explore the cultural logic of the following marital practices that are observed in many cultures worldwide:
→ In other words, why do people in this culture engage in this behavior? Why might a person in this culture say she likes this practice?
* This is a brainstorming exercise. I will collect these sheets, but you will not be graded on their content

Arranged Marriage

- * no effort on spouse's part in engagement
- * benefits both families, pleases both families, alliance
- * nearby families = son/daughter won't marry someone unsuitable
- * parents do wedding for them
- * no comp. between girls/girls + boys/boys w/ being popular w/ the other sex
- * no bad dates: no dates at all
- * woman feels inexperienced, trust parents to make decision
- * less divorce bc parents involved, more motivation to make marriage work
- * judge an individual based on not only them, but also their families
- * solidifies parent/child ties
- * a family can increase social status

contrast w/ Bridewealth/Dowry

- * contract between families, protects wife if husband dies
- * prevents divorce, stabilizes
- * showing respect to the other family, not necessarily "buying a wife"
- * many brides would be offended if their family didn't receive a bridewealth:
 - o signifies value of wife to community
 - * husband's family has invested in her, so she will be secure even if he dies
 - * compensation to bride's family for losing a laborer

Polygyny

- * barren wives not an issue
- * more children = more workers
- * one wife poorer, others available to make her
- * post-partum abstinence okay
- * women can split up chores/duties (if they get along)
 - o economy of scale
- * gives wives companionship