

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

- Usually arranged when the children are young; the parents arrange the children's future marriages
- Not in the future, so they don't for them - children also feel too independent to make decision.
- A way of bonding & clans together through marriage - union of 2 groups, not only 2 individuals -
- Can be used as a tool to raise one's status & the status of the family -
- Security of having a husband - no worry about being single forever - women share
- Involvement of parents gives motivation / pressure to make the marriage work -
- maintaining parent / child ties

Bridewealth

- Could be seen as insurance of fidelity - if the wife leaves the husband then they have to give the bride wealth back - stabilizes marriage -
- Meant to show respect to the woman's her family - not so much purchasing a wife so much as indicating their interest & willingness to participate - shows that the marriage isn't entered into lightly -
- Although it shouldn't be seen as a purchase, a marriage is a huge investment on all sides -
- Grants the bride security in case her husband dies; ensures she will be taken care of by his family even after that -
- Compensation to the bride's family for losing an important laborer

Polygyny

- Makes it possible for barren women to get married & lead a somewhat normal life, if there are other wives to produce children
- ~~Not necessarily~~
- Economically beneficial in the fact that it produces many laborers for the family -
- Eases the workload of the women -
- Compensation between co-wives