

Topic 8: Marriage and Residence Patterns

<http://youtu.be/Sbqv3MwwVd8>

Topic Questions

- What is the function of marriage?
- Does a “natural” form of human marriage exist?
- Why do marriage patterns vary cross-culturally?

Why do people get married?

- Brainstorm. Take 2-3 minutes to write down the reasons you think people get married.

Why do people get married?

- Children
- Property and economics
- Companionship
- Love
- Political/social alliances
- → Key function of marriage in human societies is alliance formation!
- Marriage is an adaptation to an economic system.

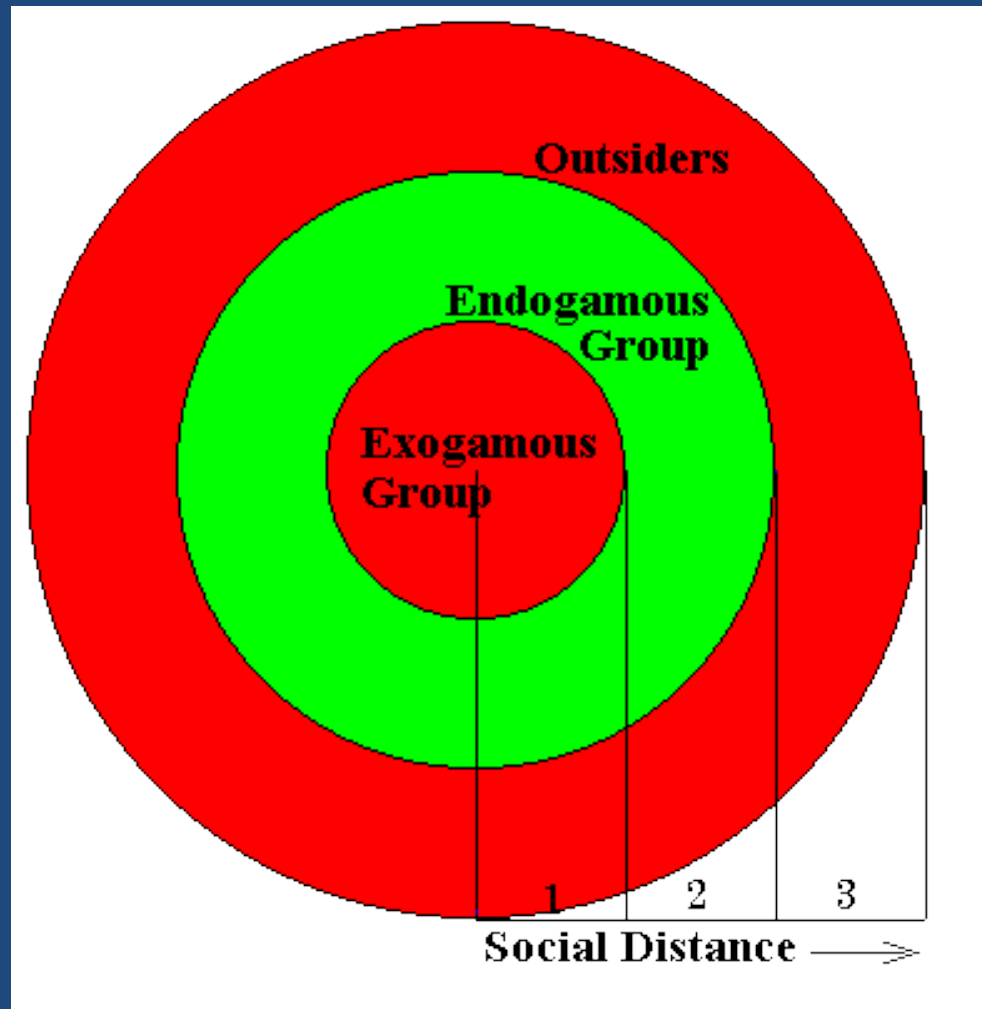
Defining Marriage

- A culturally sanctioned union between 2 or more people that establishes certain rights and obligations between the people, their children, and their in-laws.
 - Marriage organizes sex, labor, property, child-rearing, exchange, and status
 - Marriage is universal in human cultures
- Marriage is different than mating because it is backed by legal, economic, and social forces that regulate sexual relations, reproductive rights and obligations and confers legitimacy on life arrangements

Who can you marry?

- **Incest Taboo**—forbidding of sexual contact between close relatives; universally, parent-child, sibling; any further than that and culturally defined
 - Human nature? universal and for good biological reasons
 - Human culture? forces people to make alliances and form relationships with others, plus highly variable depending on cultural values

Who can you marry?



Who can you marry?

- **Exogamy**—marriage outside the group (exogamous group is the group you have to marry outside of)
- **Endogamy**—marriage within a particular group (large group you must marry within, often not explicitly defined)
 - ex. In American culture, people generally marry *within* their ethnic group, social class, religion, and economic class; in India, people generally marry within their caste

Types of Marriage

- Monogamy
- Polygyny
- Polandry
- Other?

Monogamy

- 2 Individuals
 - Until recently in the West, 1 man and 1 woman. Now, same-sex marriage is common in many Western nations.
 - More when we get to Gender and Sexuality. Function of marriage for same-sex couples is the same.
- Monogamy is the *stated* ideal in 20% of known human cultures
 - Serial monogamy is most common
- Common in intensive agricultural societies and many foraging societies (serial monogamy)

Monogamy

- Does monogamous marriage = sexual fidelity?
 - In a 2002 study in the United States
 - 45-55% of married women and 50-60% of married men said they had engaged in extramarital sex (Atwood and Schwartz 2002)
 - Of those that had *not* engaged in extramarital sex, 74% of married men and 68% of married women said they *would* cheat if they knew they would not get caught

Example of a monogamously married couple in an industrial society



http://img.huffingtonpost.com/asset/scalefit_630_noupscale/573de83f1600002a00f93e46.jpeg?cache=z6mq6n0k4w

Polygyny

- 1 man, >1 woman
- Polygyny is the *stated ideal* in 80% of known human societies
- Belief v. practice
 - >1 wife = expensive households
 - Often just wealthy men
 - Sign of status
 - Horticultural and Pastoral societies—labor important
 - Equal sex ratio? means men with fewer resources do not get married

Example of a polygynous marriage on a television show



http://assets2.bigthink.com/system/idea_thumbnails/24143/original/Big-love-cast14.jpg?1285195924

Polyandry

- 1 woman, >1 man
- Polyandry is the *stated ideal* in 0.75% of known human societies.
 - Fraternal polyandry is most common. A woman marries two brothers.

Example of a Tibetan polyandrous family (fraternal polyandry)



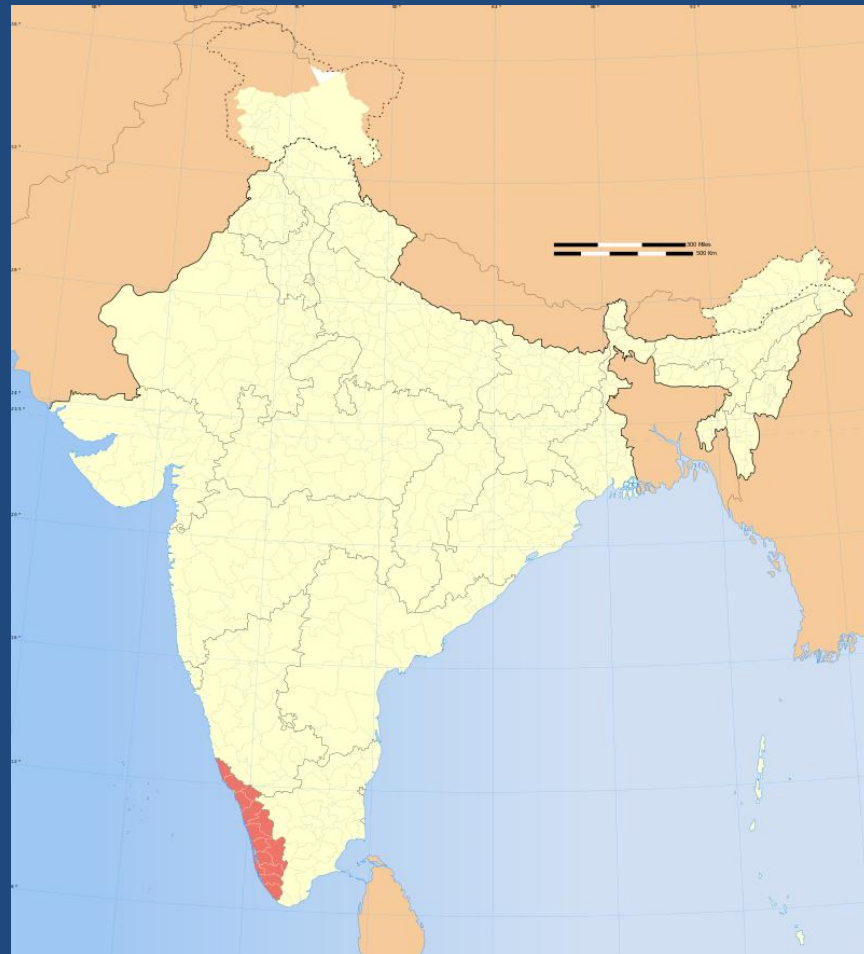
Is that it?

- Not at all! If you can think of a way for humans to organize relationships, somebody probably does it that way.
- Human marriage rules are highly variable and flexible cross-culturally and *within cultures*.
- One example of a group that breaks all the rules is the Nayar of Southwestern India.

Nayar

- Nayar marriage is basically an overnight affair, then women take lovers and children are raised in her household among her matrilineal kin.
 - Consanguineal households—a group of related women, their children, and their brothers.
 - Men's children are raised in their mother's household.
- The Nayar are members of the *kyshatriyas*, the warrior caste. Traditionally, males would often be off fighting so residential marriage was impractical.
 - Women were traditionally servants in *Brahmin* homes.
 - *Brahmin* are the priestly caste.

Nayar



Where do you live?

Patrilocal Residence



Bedouin Family in Syria

<http://www.travel-pictures-gallery.com/syria/syria-0052.html>

Patrilocal Residence

- Wife moves to live with husband's family.
- Common in societies where men's subsistence activities dominate (pastoral, agricultural), with polygyny, or where warfare is common,

Matrilocal Residence



The Hopi of the American Southwest are traditionally matrilineal

<http://blogs.dw.com/womentalkonline/2015/02/20/matrilineal-societies-in-the-world/>

Matrilocal Residence

- Husband moves to live with wife's family.
- Common in societies where women's subsistence activities dominate.
 - horticultural—Hopi
 - !Kung for brideservice—husband hunts for wife's family for a period of time after marriage

Ambilocal Residence



The BaMbuti of the Ivory Coast
practice ambilocal residence

Ambilocal Residence

- Flexible residence pattern.
- Common when resources are scarce or variable, often foraging societies.

Neolocal Residence



The American Suburb. Americans practice neolocal residence.

Neolocal Residence

- Married unit sets up a new household.
 - Independent nuclear family is standard, economic activities outside of home
 - Industrial societies

Avunculocal Residence



The Chamorro of
Guam
traditionally
practice
avunculocal
residence.

Avunculocal Residence

- Married couple resides with the groom's mother's brother
 - Found in matrilineal societies (for inheritance rules) that also emphasize men's role in subsistence (generally horticultural, pretty rare; Chamorro)