Marriage, Choice and Romantic Love
Romantic love may be nearly universal, but it is far from being a universally important basis for marriage.”

Source: Pasternak, Ember, and Ember *Sex, Gender, and Kinship*. P. 153.
## Martial Choice for Men and Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice/ Arranged</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal choice is dominant</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal choice, but parents approval necessary/desirable:</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/Parental co-agreement is the norm:</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Either personal choice or arranged is OK:</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arranged is dominant, but personal veto power exists:</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arranged, and veto is not possible or not easy:</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Broude and Greene's (1983) analysis of SCCS
Choice I

- 31% of time males can court autonomously but only 8% for females.
- Parents do not consult sons regarding their prospective brides in 13% of the case and 21% for females for prospective grooms.
- Local endogamy increases choice for both men and women (can court autonomously and/or are consulted).

After Rosenblatt and Cozby
Choice II

- The more choice is possible the more likely that romantic criteria (sexual attraction, affection, and courtly love) will be used over objective criteria such as economic skills, alliance considerations, status, etc.

- Freedom of choice and courtship antagonism (teasing, insulting, pranks, & verbal disputes) are associated.

After Rosenblatt and Cozby
If men and women share many of the same economic tasks then economic dependence is rated low.

If men and women do not share economic tasks (women restricted from doing “male” activities and men restricted from doing “female” activities) then economic dependence is rated high.

Examples:
- Dependence is high when only men can hunt and only women can gather.
- Dependence is low when both men and women can do the same agricultural tasks.

After Rosenblatt and Cozby
Romantic Love

- When economic dependence between men and women is **high** then romantic criteria will not be important.
- Romantic criteria become important when economic **dependence is low** because romantic attraction becomes an important way to hold marriages together.
- Romantic love, autonomous mate selection, and nuclear families are associated.
Elements of romantic love (found in 100 societies)

- Desire for union or merger, both physical and emotional
- Idealization of the beloved
- Exclusivity (reciprocal)
- Intrusive thinking about the love object
- Emotional dependency
- Reordering of motivational hierarchies or life priorities
- Powerful empathy and concern for the beloved

Source: H. Harris in W. Jankowiak edited
Romantic Love: A cultural universal?

- In more extensive research Jankowiak & Fischer examined the HRAF and found that romantic love existed in 89% (147) of all societies in the sample (166). In the remaining 11% (19) there was an absence of relevant information – ethnographers simply did not collect the information. In no instance did he find a society where it did not exist.

- Still the point remains: although romantic love appears to be a cultural universal, love only becomes an important foundation of marriage under restricted conditions including:
  - Autonomous mate choice (bride and groom choose one another)
  - When nuclear families become more important than extended families or kin groups
  - Economic dependence is low
The Population Council estimates that one in 7 or 14% of girls worldwide marry before their 15th birthday. Some rates:

- Indian states of Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh 36%
- Bangladesh 37%
- Northwest Nigeria 48%
- Amhara of Ethiopia 50%

Afganistan: Ghulan Haider, 11, is to be married to Faiz Mohammed, 40. She had hoped to become a teacher but was forced to quit her classes when she became engaged.