FAMILY SYSTEMS

Comparative Perspective
Family systems

• Family is UNIVERSAL

• Basic social group & structurally the most simple
Functions

• 1) Provides socially approved sexual relationships between men & women

• 2) Provides basic education & care of offspring
Functions

• 3) establishes a social identity for the individual

• 4) provides a fundamental economic unit
  – Household
Family Types: Independent Nuclear Family

- Monogamous
- Domestic group consisting of married couple and their children
- Highly mobile
- Support systems
- Neolocal residence
Polygamous or Plural Family

• One person married to more than one spouse

• Polygynous family

• Polyandrous family
Extended Family

- Created when newly married couple moves in with bride’s or groom’s family and dwells in the same household
- several generations
- importance of descent
Residence Patterns in Extended Families

• Patrilocal
  – couple moves in with groom’s family
  – cooperative labor of men
  – inheritance in male line
Residence Patterns in Extended Families

• Matrilocal
  – living with the bride’s family
  – cooperative labor or women
Residence Patterns in Extended Families

• Amibilocal
  – couple spends time in the household of either set of parents and later moves in with the other

  – changing on a regular basis

  – Foragers
Marriage Systems

• Socially sanctioned sexual and economic union between men and women

• Marriage as a form of ALLIANCES
Marriage Systems

• Marriage as Exchange
  • exchange of gifts; reciprocal rights & privileges

  – Bridewealth
    • compensates family of bride for losing member

  – Dowry
    • women’s inheritance is taken with her into marriage
Marriage Systems

• Choosing a spouse
  – marriage by arrangement
  – marriage by capture