

l its people. culture
was atop in

[Art & Culture](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

I have researched further and read on Wikipedia that bride kidnapping is also rampant in certain parts of Africa, Central Asia, East and South Asia, and even among the Americas and Europe. As much as I would like the practice to end, all I can do is to wish the women who get kidnapped to be blessed with a blissful life because they do not deserve to be stripped of their freedom, whether they like it or not, and live in a gruesome manner. As we discussed further, we learned that in Kyrgyzstan, culture meant everything for its people. Culture was atop in their hierarchy of priorities; culture was above religion and law. Bride kidnapping, also known as "ala kalchuu" which means to take and flee, is illegal in Kyrgyzstan, but since it is part of their culture, and culture has more importance than law, the custom is overlooked by the government. Our professor stated that only affluent men involve themselves in bride kidnapping.

As I heard this, my naïveté led me to think that if love was not present in the relationship, maybe marrying for money wouldn't be as bad as it seems - you'll be free from poverty, you can live a comfortable life, have influence and experience other benefits that come along marrying for money. Watching the short film further immediately reminded me of how the cruel world can be. It was revealed in the film that some of the women who were kidnapped for marriage didn't get their fairytale-like ending where they lived happily ever after. Some of them were unhappy with their life, some were hurt, offended and humiliated by their spouse. Life simply became too rough for them to handle.

Their situation got so bad that death was their only means of escape.

After all, loneliness is more painful than being hurt. Apparently, claiming back

your kidnapped daughter would bring shame to the family since it is the culture and the tradition of the Kyrgyz. I first heard about bride kidnapping during one of our class.

I never expected such ludicrous custom to exist in the 21st century. Each country has their own set of laws, traditions and beliefs. Regardless of how insolent a practice is, we must learn to respect their deeds because we are all different from one another. Before the semester ended, we watched a short film about a practice in Kyrgyzstan where the man abducts the woman he wishes to marry - bride kidnapping. It is part of their culture and it has been practiced from god knows when throughout their history.