

Why marriages fail essay sample

[Family](#), [Marriage](#)



Marriages can be very tough to maintain. They require a variety of skills. Looking at marriages in different cultures, we can see very different points of view towards marriage. We all know the American culture and how we view marriage. The article " Why Marriages Fail" by Anne Roiphe presents the gloomy side of American marriage. It takes mainly a negative look at American marriage. It does not seem to look at the positive parts of it. A culture that is completely opposite of ours is represented in the article " It Takes a Village to Make a Relationship" by Sobonfu Some. Ms. Some writes her article to try and convince us that her type of marriage is almost perfect. She is from a small village in West Africa from the Dagara tribe. It will be hard to compare and contrast the two articles and views of marriage, because each article gives only one point of view. However, I will try to show ways, in the areas of sexuality and conflict, that the Americans and Dagaras are similar and different.

The Dagara's view of sexuality is different from ours. We view sexuality in marriage as having two purposes. One is to have children, the other is for pleasure. This is not in Roiphe's article, but it is something we all understand and accept. The Dagaras view sexuality only in connection with their religion. Some states that " There is a spiritual dimension to every relationship, whether or not the participants acknowledge it. Two people come together because spirit wants them together." This means that they view their relationship with their husband or wife as something more sacred than sexual. The Dagara tribe does not look for pleasure in sex; it is very sacred to them. Both cultures are similar because they both at least start out with

only one mate when they are married. They certainly both use sex to have children, whether it is a sacred act or not.

In the article " Why Marriages Fail" , Ms. Roiphe states that, " Most often extramarital sex destroys a marriage because it allows an artificial split between the good and the bad". I am not sure what that means, but American culture and values do not allow for more than one wife or husband in a marriage. When there is a third person involved in a marriage, it causes problems. This conflict does not seem to exist in the Dagara tribe because if the wife says that it is ok, the husband gets another wife to live in the house with them. Doing this helps them connect to the spirit world. Roiphe very freely lists many reasons that American marriages have conflicts. " Outside pressures such as job loss, illness, infertility, trouble with a child, care of aging parents and all the other plagues of life hit marriage the way hurricanes blast our shores." I think that most of these very same pressures attack the Dagara tribe and cause conflicts.

This is how they are similar. After all, we are all human beings. In the Dagara article, Some does not talk about things that create conflict. However, there is a Resolving Conflict section, so you know that there is conflict going on. The Dagaras resolve conflicts by sitting back-to-back. " After invoking the spirit, both people express their frustrations..... Outsiders watching this ritual might fear the men and women are about to kill each other, but it has a powerful emotional ending." This lets us know that they consider their religion an important part of all their life. It is important when they are happy and when they are in trouble.

Many of the ideas in the Some article are very different than what I am used to hearing about. I think for her ideas to have any chance of working in our culture, Americans would have to let their religion be more important. I don't think you can just take what they do, such as polygamy or trusting others to raise your children, or letting others choose your mate, without taking also what they believe about " spirit." That is one of the main things I agree with her about. The Dagara tribe says, " In our village polygamy is allowed." I find this not normal. The way I was taught growing up was to only have one wife.

These were interesting articles. I found myself agreeing and disagreeing with both of them. They both gave strong views about marriage. Even after reading about the Dagara tribe, I still believe that the standards in the American culture are better for me. The American society says " The struggle to survive in marriage requires adaptability, flexibility, genuine love and kindness, and an imagination strong enough to know what the other is feeling." That's for me.