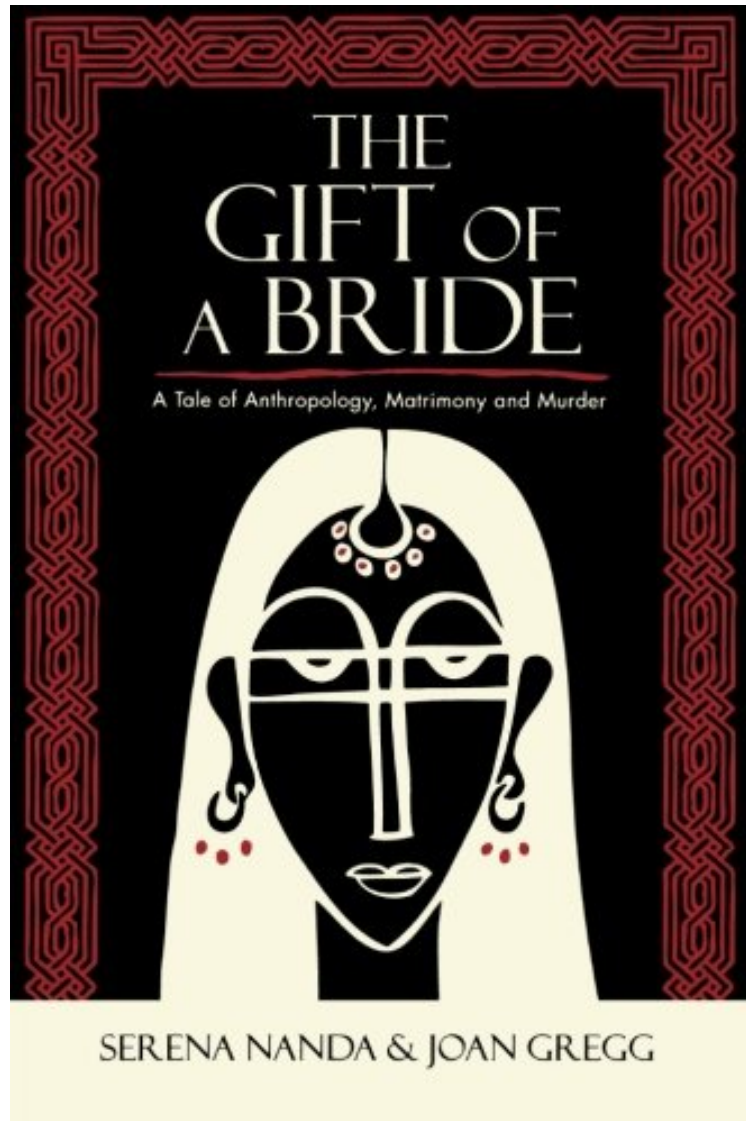


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The Gift of a Bride: A Tale of Anthropology, Matrimony and Murder

Serena Nanda, Joan Gregg
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Serena Nanda, Joan Gregg : The Gift of a Bride: A Tale of Anthropology, Matrimony and Murder before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Gift of a Bride: A Tale of Anthropology, Matrimony and Murder:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Don Walt It gives you a great anthropological view of culture in India. Overall I will say it's a great read. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. sub-par fiction

story, and poor printing

By Pearlragon3

My copy of the book has a couple of missing pages somewhere in the beginning, I forgot which chapter. There is nothing that can be done about it, it is definitely the printer's fault. If you want a review for how good of a read this is, I will have to ruin it for you: I would not recommend this book. I had to read it for an anthropology class at a community college. The professor used it to replace another book he had been assigning for years, also about India, but he thought that this particular book would be a more interesting look at Indian culture. All I got out of it was that dowry deaths are very common throughout India. A bride is married into another family through an arranged marriage, the bridegroom's family puts on appearances but demands an expensive dowry. Then the dowry is used for their own daughter, and the bride is fatally murdered sometime after. Yes, this dark aspect of Indian culture is almost never talked about it, and it's probably a good thing the author chose to write something about it. Another issue that was talked about was how the new bride is forcibly cut off from her own family, which does happen in a lot of Indian arranged marriages, especially since the bride is now part of someone else's family. But I have a severe issue with this book being fiction instead of a real-life look at real families that went through the same tragedy. Most anthropology books are written to tell a real person's story, and if the names had to be changed, fine with me! I was not moved by this story; the plot and most of the dialogue could have been better. The author needs to go back and write a better anthropology book instead of creating fiction based on her line of work.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A real page turner

By Diane Breitman

extremely well written. I would read anything written by this author. This was a book I found hard to put down. Thank you for sending it to me.

This ethnographically based murder mystery, set in an Indian immigrant community in New York City, uses the main principles of cultural anthropology and ethnographic method to explore a wide range of cultural conflicts. Central themes of gender inequality, violence against women, and immigrant adaptation to American life are revealed through authentically drawn characters and a tightly woven plot. Power-driven egos, workplace harassment, hostile neighbors, and financial desperation drive the suspense in this exciting novel.

Let me start by saying that I loved the manuscript and would most certainly use it in a class of cultural anthropology. I would also use it in my gender class as well. The authors have written a remarkable work. It works on so many levels that it is hard to adequately express my enthusiasm. The book has many strengths. It presents the field of anthropology in a careful, useful, and interesting manner. Using fictitious classroom presentations, lectures and discussion, as a way of introducing materials and subject matter of the book, is excellent. Having a murder plot unfold in multiple ways, with a constant eye on multiple cultural dimensions is also excellent. Keeping the plot line alive, exciting and to the point, continues this excellence. The authors have mastered the art of story telling, plot advancement, readability and line continuity. I literally could not put it down. It can truthfully be described as a page turner. It is refreshingly unique, creative, interesting and captivating. In anthropology, in this day and age, that is remarkable. (Barbara Joans, Merritt College)

This fictional ethnography of Indian marital beliefs and customs paints a strong contrast between American notions of individual choice and freedom of decisions versus the strong web of social and familial obligations to which Indians must attend. The reader is exposed to an intense level of Indian extended family involvement in and concern about marital decisions and woes, which stands in strong contrast to American notions of the marital relationship being a private affair between partners. (Association for Feminist Anthropology)

About the Author

Serena Nanda is professor emeritus of anthropology at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY. Joan Gregg is professor emeritus of English at New York City Technical College, CUNY.