

Husband — Wik

APRIL-REM WIINGA JEREMY-MEK ATENGQ'RTUQ. – APRIL'S HUSBAND'S NAME IS JEREMY.



Photo: John and Julia Pestrikoff, husband and wife,
Port Lions, Alaska.

In classical Alutiiq society, marriages were either arranged or formed by mutual consent. A couple might approach their parents for permission to marry, or parents might plan their children's engagement. Marriages were formalized with valuable gifts. Prospective in-laws exchanged items to symbolize their acceptance of a union. With the gifts bestowed, the young husband went to live with his bride, working with her father to prove his abilities. When children were born, couples often started their own households. There was no formal ceremony at the time of marriage, although some unions were recognized with celebrations at winter festivals. After marriage, a woman might add additional tattoos to her body or hands as a sign of love for her husband.

Marriages were usually monogamous, with one man married one woman. However, polygamy - marriage to multiple spouses - did occur. Chiefs and shamans were particularly likely to have multiple wives. One historic source tells of a chief who married eight women. Similarly, wealthy women would sometimes marry a second husband. This person functioned as a servant, conducting household chores.