



- Do men and women in your country have very defined roles? For example, do the men provide for the women, while the women look after the children and the house?
- How do you think these roles have evolved, how are they changing today?

MEN FORCED TO BE WIVES



Denise Dowling reports

In an unusual festival in northern Greece, husbands and wives swap roles for one day

Nikos Mitrelis's list of chores is long: sweep steps, hang laundry, scrub bathroom, get groceries, cook soup. His wife Dina, meanwhile, reclines on a sofa. Dressed in his wife's bathrobe, apron and headscarf, Nikos fetches her a coffee. Dina sips it and scans the morning paper. He parts the lace curtains and peers outside. Thankfully, no one has witnessed his servile behaviour.

But despite appearances, Nikos is not that rarity in Greece – a subservient husband. He may be henpecked this morning, but he rules the roost during the rest of the year. For today is *Gynaikratia* (women in charge), a role-reversal festival held on 8th January each year in several villages of north-eastern Greece.

During *Gynaikratia*, men are forbidden to leave their home. If one is imprudent enough to venture outdoors, the women have been known to beat him.

While some of the women take it easy, others are taking care of business – like the two dressed as police officers. In a blue uniform and white high heels, Teresa blows a whistle to stop traffic. Today this village is honouring the rule of women. Would you like to donate money to the women's union? The money will pay for the women to take a holiday, leaving their husbands at home.

By now, some men have taken the risk



of breaking their curfew and wander by, sulkily swinging worry beads. A hunched man hobbles past, raising his cane like an exclamation mark. 'Women should not have rights for the day,' he says. 'Not even for an hour.'

Janios Theofilikieas and his cronies admit to being domestically challenged on the other 364 days of the year. 'It's a matter of pride,' the farmer explains. 'The older men believe it's a woman's job to do the housework and care for the children.'

'Last year my husband dressed as a woman and did the housework,' says Janios's wife Julia. 'But his friends teased him so much, he refused to do it this year.' Their fifteen-year-old daughter Niki shudders as she recalls the meals her father served.

Dimos Somalos, 69, is feeding his grandchild. He delicately spoons in strained carrots while Marina covers her mouth to hide the giggles. 'It's better that women care for babies and the house,' she says, 'because men don't know what they're doing.'

Dimos seems to be enjoying himself, bustling about with baby food and hanging laundry. But he says there is one task he won't perform. 'I don't change nappies,' he laughs. 'That is not a man's job.' The couple's son, however, is quite open about helping his wife at home. 'But they live in Athens, so it's different,' Dimos says.

Then they travel to the local hall where only women are admitted. Inside they drink from bottles of *retsina*, but even though the conversation grows increasingly raucous with every swig, the women remain fairly decorous. However, they have been known, later in the evening, to imitate their men by stuffing potatoes in their pants and chasing each other around the room.

'When I marry, I want my husband to help me with the housework,' Niki announces. 'I want to marry, though it is also good to be single.' Her cousin Aleka smiles with a wisdom greater than her nineteen years and says, 'But if a woman is not married, she is free.'

Marie Claire

???

COMPREHENSION

- 1 What happens in the festival?
- 2 Who is normally in charge in Nikos' household?
- 3 What will the women do with the money they collect?
- 4 How good does Janios Theofilikieas think he and his friends are at doing the housework?
- 5 Which member of Dimos' family is happy to do his share of the housework? Why?
- 6 What does the writer mean by, 'with a wisdom greater than her 19 years'?



AMMUNITION BOX

Key words

male chauvinism *prejudiced attitude of certain men who believe they are superior to women*

feminism *belief in the principle that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men*

stereotype *an image, idea or character that has become fixed or standardised in a conventional form without individuality*

Handy hints

- The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) is the expert body on equality between men and women in the UK. It was created by Parliament in 1976 to try to end sex discrimination and promote equal opportunities between men and women
- Women still earn less than men in the UK. Women in their twenties earn 92% of the male wage, while the average gross weekly pay is 72.5% of men's earnings
- Employed fathers work an average of 20 hours a week more than employed mothers. The working week of fathers is four hours longer than men without children



DISCUSSION

- 1 How would your society react to the idea of forcing husbands to be housewives for one day each year?
- 2 Do you think that some women would prefer to stay at home and look after their children while their partners supported them? Give your reasons.
- 3 Do you think women should receive some kind of payment for looking after the home?
- 4 In your country, are there some men who stay at home while the woman goes out to work? How are these men viewed? Do you think it is a good idea?
- 5 Are there some jobs in your country that are still dominated by men? If so, which jobs and why?



ACTIVITIES

A Work in groups of four or five.

You have been commissioned by your local government to come up with ideas for organising a festival in your town similar to the one in Greece. However,

- Some men have complained about the festival, saying it shouldn't go ahead. They believe the festival is an insult to them, disrupts their lives, and that what happens in the home is private
- The women are strongly in favour of the festival, saying it's only a bit of fun, it's their one day off, and it helps their men realise what life is like for them. If it is banned, say the women, then something should be done either to make men help at home, or to pay women for their work

Make your recommendations, and be prepared to justify them! You will have to try and please both the men and women! If there is more than one group in the class, compare your ideas.

- B Write an essay: Men and women will never be equal, they are too different. Discuss.



NETWORKING

Find out how women's roles have changed in your country in the past 30 years. How have men been affected by these changes?

Books: *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus* by John Gray

Raising Boys by Steve Biddulph

Stiffed by Susan Faludi

The Ax by Donald Westlake

Why Men Don't Iron: The Real Science of Gender Studies by Anne and Bill Moir

Why Sex Is Fun by Jared Diamond

Films: *American Beauty* (1999) directed by Sam Mendes
The Fight Club (1999) directed by David Fincher

Websites:

www.eoc.org.uk
www.women.com/

Women's Movements and Feminism

- 1) What is feminism?
- 2) Why isn't there something called 'masculinism'?
- 3) Is your country totally fair and equal to women and men?
- 4) What do you know about the history of feminism?
- 5) What have feminist movements achieved in your country?
- 6) Do you think feminism sometimes has an unfair image?
- 7) Why do you think relatively few women belong to feminist movements?
- 8) Can men be feminists?
- 9) What important things should men know about feminism?
- 10) Why is there a stereotype of feminists hating men?

- 1) Do you think feminist movements are needed in this century?
- 2) How wide is the gender gap in your country?
- 3) What do you think feminists mean by 'reproductive freedom'?
- 4) What is your opinion of 'sexual objectification' – portraying women (or men) as objects of sexual desire?
- 5) What is the biggest worldwide problem facing women?
- 6) What problems are there for women in other countries that do not exist in your country?
- 7) What do you think of the view that marriage constitutes slavery for women, and that freedom for

women cannot be won without the abolition of marriage?

- 8) There is a site called "Ladies Against Feminism," which "promotes beautiful womanhood." What is it all about?
- 9) How would the world change if there was perfect sexual equality?
- 10) Which woman has made the greatest progress for women?

UN boss not doing enough for women

United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan received a _____ reminder yesterday that he is not doing enough to reduce the gender gap that prevails worldwide. A global _____ of women's groups wrote to the UN head castigating him for his _____ of progress in moving towards equality. They _____ their disappointment and outrage, and accused Mr. Annan of _____ little more than "lip service" to the promotion of women's rights. They aptly pointed out that despite the UN's lofty _____ and proclamations of parity and progress, "the position of women in high-level UN posts has stagnated." They added: "Although we've had a lot of _____ commitment to women's rights, it still hasn't made it on to the big _____ of UN reform."

*rhetorical
coalition
ideals
voiced
stern
agenda
paying
lack*

Minimal _____ has been made in the ten years since the 1995 Beijing conference on women's rights. Many groups expressed consternation that there was only "token representation" of women on _____ committees and high-level _____ panels within the UN. "What is being called the UN 'gender architecture' is more like a _____. Women need a bigger _____ house if equality is ever to become a reality," said Charlotte Bunch of the Center for Women's Global Leadership. Another _____ point in the letter highlighted the need for change at the top: "We need new and _____ leadership and the way to get that is by ensuring we reach fifty-fifty women and men in all decision-making _____," said June Zeitlin, executive director of the Women's Environment and Development Organization. A sign that things are not moving in this direction is that a man replaced Ms. Louise Frechette last week as the UN deputy secretary general.

*expert
pertinent
global
critical
positions
progress
innovative
shack*

General Point of View

- It is thought that...
- Some people say that...
- It is considered...
- It is generally accepted that...

Agreeing with an opinion

- Of course.
- You're absolutely right.
- Yes, I agree.
- I think so too.
- That's a good point.
- Exactly.
- I don't think so either.
- So do I.
- I'd go along with that.
- That's true.
- Neither do I.
- I agree with you entirely.
- That's just what I was thinking.
- I couldn't agree more.

Disagreeing with an opinion

- That's different.
- I don't agree with you.
- However...
- That's not entirely true.
- On the contrary...
- I'm sorry to disagree with you, but...
- Yes, but don't you think...
- That's not the same thing at all.
- I'm afraid I have to disagree.
- I'm not so sure about that.
- I must take issue with you on that.
- It's unjustifiable to say that...

Expressing opinion

I think...
As far as I'm concerned,..
To my mind,...
According to me,...
As I see it, ...
It seems to me that...
In my point of view / my opinion,....
From my point of view...
I am of the opinion that...
I take the view that. ..
My personal view is that...
In my experience...
As far as I understand / can see/see it,...

Agreeing with an opinion:

I agree with this opinion.
I completely agree with this view.
This is absolutely right.
I couldn't / can't agree more.

Partial agreement:

I agree with this point of view, but...
This idea is right, but...
I agree with you, but...

Disagreeing with an opinion:

I'm afraid. I can't agree with you.
I disagree with you.
I don't agree with you.
I'm not sure I agree with you
I think you're wrong

Personal Point of View

- In my experience...
- As far as I'm concerned...
- Speaking for myself...
- In my opinion...
- Personally, I think...
- I'd say that...
- I'd suggest that...
- I'd like to point out that...
- I believe that...
- What I mean is...

World views: ways of thinking

People in relation to their beliefs

person	definition	related words
adherent (of)	a person who supports a particular idea or party	adherence, to adhere to
convert (to)	someone who has taken on a new set of beliefs	conversion, to convert
fanatic	(disapproving) someone with a very strong belief	fanaticism, fanatical
radical	someone who believes there should be extreme political change, either of a left- or right-wing nature	radicalism
reactionary	(disapproving) someone opposed to change or new ideas	reaction
bigot	(disapproving) someone with strong unreasonable beliefs who thinks that anyone with other beliefs is wrong	bigotry, bigoted

A definition of one world view

Feminism: The modern feminist movement stems from the middle of the 1960s in North America. Basically the movement seeks equal political and social rights for women. The main theoretical **assumption**¹ shared by all branches of the movement **derives from**² the belief that there has been a historical tradition of male exploitation of women. Feminists are anxious to **eradicate**³ this exploitation. Feminism is a fairly general label attached not to a set of universally accepted **postulates**⁴ but to a range of beliefs with little in common, save a desire to raise **consciousness**⁵ and to **usher in**⁶ a more equal society.

- ¹ unquestioning acceptance that something is true
- ² has its origins in
- ³ abolish or get rid of
- ⁴ basic principles (verb to **postulate**)
- ⁵ awareness
- ⁶ introduce

Other words and expressions relating to believing

credible: believable The schoolboy produced a barely **credible** excuse for arriving late

credulous: too willing to believe what you're told

He's a **credulous** fool to believe what the management says.

incredulous: not wanting or able to believe something

I was **incredulous** when he told me he was quitting his job to go to New Zealand.

credence: (formal) acceptance that something is true

This document **gives/lends/adds credence** to Professor Ray's hypothesis.

gullible: easily tricked into believing things that may not be true a **gullible** person

ingenuous: trusting, sincere, often in a way that seems foolish

It was rather **ingenuous** of Anna to ask a complete stranger to share a taxi with her.

(im)plausible: (un)convincing a **plausible** argument an **implausible** excuse

If you (formal) **ascribe** or **attribute** something to someone or something, you consider something to be caused, created or possessed by that person or thing.

Many scholars **ascribe/attribute** this anonymous poem to Dante.

a tenet: one of the principles on which a belief is based the main **tenets** of liberalism

give someone the benefit of the doubt: to accept that someone is telling the truth even though it is not certain We should **give her the benefit of the doubt**.

If you **take something with a pinch of salt**, you do not totally believe what you are told.

You should **take** what he says **with a pinch of salt** – he's inclined to exaggerate.

If you don't believe what someone is saying you can say informally:

I don't buy that! What d'you take me for? Pull the other one!
A likely story! I wasn't born yesterday! I'll believe it when I see it!

41.1 Write the name of one person you know who could be described by each of the words in A.

EXAMPLE *an adherent of the Liberal Party - my Uncle Jim.*

41.2 Find words and expressions in the text in B meaning:

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| 1 has its origin in (find two expressions) | 4 totally |
| 2 wants to achieve | 5 variety |
| 3 very much want to | 6 not sharing much |

41.3 Look at C and circle the correct word in the sentences below.

- 1 A gullible person believes everything even if it is plausible/implausible.
- 2 I don't find his story at all credible/credulous.
- 3 When marking exams, try to give candidates the advantage/benefit of the doubt.
- 4 A likely/probable story! I don't believe one word you said.
- 5 That may be your view, but I don't buy/sell it.
- 6 It is better to take his promises with a pinch of salt/pepper.
- 7 The discovery of some ancient pieces of pottery lends consciousness/credence to the theory that there was once a Roman settlement there.
- 8 The play has been assumed/attributed to Shakespeare.

41.4 Choose the best words from the box to fill the gaps in the sentences below.

adherents	ascribe	converts	credence	eradicate
ingenuous	pinch	postulate	tenets	

- 1 The party claims that its primary aim is to poverty.
- 2 It has been said that to a religion can often be much more active supporters of the religion than people who were born into it.
- 3 It was rather of him to suggest that many criminals would hand in their illegal weapons if they were promised an amnesty.
- 4 One of the basic of Marxism is that economic relationships determine the nature of society.
- 5 Many of the self-professed of this philosophy have never even read its basic texts.
- 6 Historians the origins of this philosophy to Ancient Greece.
- 7 These findings lend to the case put forward by the government.
- 8 Advances in modern technology have enabled contemporary physicists to new theories about the origins of the universe.
- 9 I take anything said by an election candidate with a of salt.

41.5 Write six of the words and phrases in C in a sentence that is personally meaningful for you.

EXAMPLE *You shouldn't be so gullible and believe everything sales people tell you.*

FOLLOW UP

Use an Internet search engine such as Google www.google.com to look up a world view that interests you, e.g. feminism, Marxism, humanism, Buddhism or any -ism that you want to research. Make notes about (a) the origins of the -ism, (b) what its basic tenets are, and (c) what differences there are between its different branches (if it has them).

Lily Allen: 'Feminism shouldn't even be a thing anymore'

Singer makes outspoken comments about women's rights in new interview <http://www.nme.com/news/lily-allen/75926>
Lily Allen has said she does not think feminism should be an issue in 2014, stating that "everyone is equal" in the modern world.

Allen, who will release new album 'Sheezus' later this year, made the comments as part of her role as guest editor of mens magazine Shortlist's 'How To Be A Man' issue. Speaking about a song on her forthcoming album, which tackles the way she believes women behave towards one another, Allen says that women are their own "worst enemy."



"Feminism. I hate that word because it shouldn't even be a thing anymore," she said. "We're all equal, everyone is equal. Why is there even a conversation about feminism? What's the man version of feminism? There isn't even a word for it. Menanism. Male-ism. It doesn't exist."

Speaking about the problems facing women more generally, Allen continues and expresses her theory about who the real "enemy" is: "It's much the same [as it used to be]. But I don't think men are the enemy. I think women are the enemy. I know that when I'm sitting in a restaurant and a really beautiful woman walks in, who's skinny, I instinctively think, 'Oh, she's really skinny and beautiful and I'm really fat and ugly.' So it's more of a competitive thing. It's weird. It's just really unhealthy and we're our own worst enemy."

Allen recently revealed that she is worried Kanye West will call her out on the title of her forthcoming album 'Sheezus'. The singer, who won Best Solo Artist at last week's NME Awards With Austin, Texas, named her third album as an homage to the rapper, who released his album 'Yeezus' last year.

Allen released two singles last year, a cover of Keane's 'Somewhere Only We Know', which featured on a TV advert, and 'Hard Out Here'. She recently followed it up with 'Air Balloon' but still hasn't announced when her third album, her first since 2009's 'It's Not Me, It's You', will be released

Read more at <http://www.nme.com/news/lily-allen/75926#XC5EYdt5Y75T6aww.99>

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"I cannot emphasize enough how wrongheaded this is. Withholding criticism and ignoring differences are racism in its purest form. Yet these cultural experts fail to notice that, through their anxious avoidance of criticizing non-Western countries, they trap the people who represent these cultures in a state of backwardness. The experts may have the best of intentions, but as we all know, the road to hell is paved with good intentions."

— Ayaan Hirsi Ali, *The Caged Virgin: An Emancipation Proclamation for Women and Islam*

"As a woman you are better off in life earning your own money. You couldn't prevent your husband from leaving you or taking another wife, but you could have some of your dignity if you didn't have to beg him for financial support."

— Ayaan Hirsi Ali, *Infidel*

"I'm just being myself. There is not an ounce of me that believes any of that crap that they say. We can't be feminine and be feminists and be successful? I want to be a f--king feminist and wear a f--king Peter Pan collar. So f--king what?"

--- Zoey Deschanel

But, of course, you might be asking yourself, 'Am I a feminist? I might not be. I don't know! I still don't know what it is! I'm too knackered and confused to work it out. That curtain pole really still isn't up! I don't have time to work out if I am a women's libber! There seems to be a lot to it. WHAT DOES IT MEAN?' I understand. So here is the quick way of working out if you're a feminist. Put your hand in your pants.

a) Do you have a vagina? and

b) Do you want to be in charge of it?

If you said 'yes' to both, then congratulations! You're a feminist

--- **Caitlin Moran**, in *How to Be a Woman*

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- Do you see yourself as a typical man or woman? Why or why not?
- Are there different expectations for sons and daughters?
- What behaviors are deemed as appropriate for men but inappropriate for women?
- Are more professional musicians female or male in your country?
- Are more teachers female or male in your country?
- Are men and women equal in ability and intelligence?
- Can men wear women's clothing or can women wear men's clothing? Why or why not?
- Can men wear pink clothes?
- Is it OK for men to cry? Is it OK for women to cry?
- What would people think of a man who backs down from a fight?
- What would people think of two women involved in a fist fight?
- In your home, who does the cooking, cleaning and household chores?
- Is it possible for women to join the army in your country?
- Do women swear a lot?
- Are there more male or female managers and executives? Why do you think this is?
- Should boys and girls be brought up differently?
- What would happen if your parents changed their place for one day?
- Do men/men friendships differ from women/men or women/women friendships? How?

If chivalry is dead, blame it on the selfish feminists

Sisters, I have sinned. According to the Society for the Psychology of Women, I am guilty of 'benevolent sexism'. Let me confess...

On Sunday I asked a male friend to help me sell a computer (gigabyte? hard drive? You've lost me); on Monday, I happily took the tube seat of a strapping young gentleman who offered; on Tuesday, I forced my boyfriend to carry the groceries home; this morning I emailed a group of friends with the subject line "hey girls."

Feminist psychologists cite exactly these four examples in a report published today rattling against women who are "not aware of the overall prevalence and extent of sexism in their personal lives blah blah blah." Apparently, I have may have caused "potential harm" to women. I can't help but wonder whether the time of these academics might be better spent helping victims of domestic abuse or rape, say, or under-age prostitutes – rather than creating problems that aren't really there.

I'm as "feminist" as the next woman – if that means supporting gender equality – but there's nothing worse than a po-faced man-basher whose mouth purses up when the door is held open for her. "You've abandoned the sisterhood," they whine, when a woman simply wants to be looked after and treated like a lady. Do they really believe men think we can't open a door ourselves?

In a world where you're likely to be asked out on a date on Facebook or proposed to via tweet, it would be pleasant for some "old school" traditions to remain. Thankfully, there are still men out there who will take your coat, pull out the chair and pay for dinner. Hairy bra-burners may be happy to walk on the outside of the road but what about the rest of us?

If chivalry is dead, blame it on the feminists.

By Lucy Jones, Assistant Comment Editor, The Telegraph, 15 Jun 2011

Video – Benevolent sexism - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E12OprghpXk>

Team A

You take the position that women are absolutely equal to men in every respect. Women can do any job and assume any role and perform any task just as effectively as men. There is nothing that men can do that women can't do just as well. You will argue that a male dominated society is responsible for creating the notion of gender roles and creating inequality between the sexes. This is a purely artificial product of society and it is unfair and unjustified.

Team B

You will argue that, although you agree in principle that men and women are equal, it just isn't true in reality. Nature created men and women differently and made them naturally more suited to certain roles. Gender roles are a natural product of evolution and are not artificially imposed by society. There are certain jobs and roles that women just can't do well. This is just a fact of life and feminists must learn to accept it.

