

# UNIT 16 A WOMAN'S PLACE

## UNIT OVERVIEW

In this unit, students will:

- 🎧 Read the interview with Dr. Lee about her views on the roles and responsibilities of women.
- Answer multiple-choice questions to show understanding of her ideas.
- 🗣️ Consider four alternative opinions about women's roles in society, and decide who makes the strongest point.
- Study the Opinion Network to learn expressions for talking about other people's opinions.
- Extend the Topic by talking about what's important when choosing a job.
- Read a Culture Corner extract about the roles of men and women in the workplace.
- Share ideas about their ideal spouse.
- Watch a follow-up video extract from Derek giving his views about women's roles in society.
- Take the Unit Test.

## Authors' Introduction

Go to [impactseries.com/issues](http://impactseries.com/issues) to listen to Joseph's unit introduction.

## The Issue

In this unit, we hear an interview with Dr. Mary Lee, the author of a book about women's roles in society. She believes that men should work outside the home and women should stay home and take care of children. She believes this is the "natural order." She thinks that many social problems have resulted from changes in society and women taking on the roles traditionally taken by men. The unit revolves around the question of men's and women's roles in society.

## Questions Raised

- What roles should men and women take in society?
- Is it "natural" for women to stay home and for men to go out and work?
- Does the fact that women increasingly work outside the home create problems for families or for society?
- Is it fair for women to be expected to stay at home and not work?

## To Keep in Mind

- Values about gender roles are tied to deeper assumptions about how different (or similar) men and women are. Countries that emphasize a separation between men's and women's roles tend also to assume that men and women are fundamentally different. Assuming a gender difference may mean assuming that, for example, women are naturally more nurturing than men.
- There's a distinction between official policy and personal choice. One can discuss what laws and social support systems should be put into place, or one can discuss the more personal issues of how people want to live their lives.
- It's good for teachers to have a basic understanding of laws and support systems related to gender equality in the country you are teaching in. For example, can both men and women get time off work when a child is born? Do women have the right to take a leave of absence to have a child? What public childcare facilities are available? Are there laws about equal pay for equal work? If you don't know these things, teaching this unit and discussing these issues with students is a good way to find them out.

## TEACHING GUIDE

### Getting Ready

→ Explain to students that the theme of the unit is women's role in society. Ask them to read the questions and mark down their answers. Put students in pairs and have them ask each other the questions.

🎯 **Teaching Tip:** These questions only require short answers. To encourage more interaction with this activity, have students answer follow-up questions that you put on the board. For example, you can write several follow-up questions for students to choose from when working in pairs:

Can you tell me more about that?

Can you explain your answer?

Why do you think so?

Can you give me some reasons for your opinion?

### Situation

→ To use this passage as a listening activity, have students review the comprehension questions on page 71 before looking at the text. Then have them listen to the audio recording of the interview with the text covered. They should try to answer the comprehension questions just by doing the listening. Have the students listen a second time, following along with the recording in their books. Having students cover the passage while answering the questions (after listening/reading) obliges them to focus on what they remember, rather than going back to the text to search for answers. Students can be told that they should try to answer the questions for a set amount of time (three minutes, say) without looking at the text, and that they will be able to check the text afterward.

🎯 **Teaching Tip:** When teaching a unit based on an interview, a possible extension activity is to have students invent their own questions they would like to ask. Students whose level is high enough can do a role play in which one plays the guest and must answer the new questions that the other student has created.

### Check Your Understanding

#### Answer Key

1. b    2. More than one answer is acceptable.    3. Children drop out of school and they take drugs.  
4. More than one answer is acceptable.    5. a

### What Do You Think?

→ After you check students' understanding of the story using the comprehension questions, students discuss their opinions about Dr. Lee's opinions. Discussion should be done in pairs.

🎯 **Teaching Tip:** Iris, Mark, Shingo, and Anna don't actually say whether they agree with Dr. Lee's opinions or not. One way to extend this activity is to have students discuss the question: "Do you think Iris agrees with Dr. Lee's opinions?" and then ask, "Why do you think so?"

📌 **Culture Point:** Women working outside of the home is not always associated with wealth and economic development. Saudi Arabia, for example, is a wealthy society yet has very traditional gender roles. When Japan became a newly industrialized country, it was considered a "luxury" for women to stay at home with the children (since in traditional farming and merchant families both men and women worked). The rise of the "salaryman" lifestyle in which men commuted to work and women stayed home was considered very modern at the time.

### Extending the Topic: Societal roles

→ Have students work individually when writing out the ideas that are different from Dr. Lee's, and in pairs (or threes) for the follow-up discussion.

Give students plenty of time to read and fill out each item. The more clearly they have understood these statements and thought of their own ideas, the easier it will be for them to do the following discussion activity.

## Culture Corner

Have students work in pairs or groups of three. Students read through the survey results about the number of hours per day that women vs. men work. Give them an opportunity to ask about unknown words or about the grammar in the statements. You can ask for students' general reaction to the list, or write a few questions on the board for discussion in pairs. You may want to ask the students about their impression of the differences in workload between men and women in their own countries.

## Extra Activity: Debate

If there is time, try the Extra Activity, a debate. Set up the debate by dividing the class into pairs. Student A in each pair must argue for the position: Traditional roles for men and women are unfair. Student B should argue for the opposing position: There's nothing wrong with traditional roles for men or women. Note: Even if some students prefer the opposite position, assigning the positions—or beliefs—randomly can give them good practice for developing critical thinking.

Allow the pairs to exchange ideas a few times. Then ask them to decide who had the better arguments. If you wish, you can now have students exchange partners: A's become B's and B's become A's. Students will now debate the opposite position.

## Sharing My Ideas: The ideal spouse

### → Choose

Explain to students that they will talk about their ideal spouse. If you have students who are already married, they can talk about what qualities an ideal spouse would have. This topic is related not only to the qualities that a spouse might have (kindness, flexibility, etc.), but to lifestyle—for example, Who will work? How will we share responsibilities of a family? etc.

### → Prepare and Rehearse

Because this outline is rather detailed, give students the option of writing on a separate sheet of paper. In the general description section, you can provide support for students by listing or eliciting adjectives that might describe a perfect spouse. You can also list or elicit activities that married couples do together (e.g., romantic dinners, taking care of children, going shopping, taking vacations together). This will make the topic more concrete for students. It may also be helpful to go over the Language Hints.

Have students rehearse with a partner. Be sure to have students improve their outline after having practiced it once (or twice). You could go over the Presentation Tip at this time and have students practice a second time without looking at their notes.

### Sample Presentation

*First of all, my ideal husband should be kind. And I want someone who is basically a happy person. No one wants to live with someone who is in a bad mood. I am very active so I want to do many things with my husband, such as travel and sports. Of course if we have children, we won't be able to travel as much. I would like to work before my baby is born. That means my husband should be flexible. Another thing is, after my child starts school I want to work again. That means my husband will need to help take care of the family and do housework. I don't want a husband who just wants to be taken care of. I want to take care of my children, not my husband! To conclude, a happy, flexible person is ideal for me because I want to live a happy active life!*

### → Present

Have students work with a new partner, or put them in small groups. Be sure that everyone has read and understood the Listener task, and encourage the listeners to take notes.

If you are using the assessment guide below, go over each point with the whole class before students begin their presentations. (This could also be done during the Rehearse step so that students have time to prepare for or practice each assessment point.) Be sure to remind your students that communicating their ideas is more important than trying to use perfect English!

## Assessing the Activity

Create a handout with a rating grid such as the one below, or simply write it on the board. (Note: For more information on student assessment and ways to modify the assessment system, see *Assessing the Activity*, Unit 1.)

- 1 – The presenter gave a general description of his or her ideal spouse.
- 2 – The presenter talked about work, children, and household tasks.
- 3 – The presenter used the Language Hints.
- 4 – The presenter showed enthusiasm for the topic.
- 5 – The presenter made eye contact with the audience.

When students are working in pairs, have each student evaluate the other. If a student presents in front of a small group or in front of the class, have each student evaluate him or her. A rater can give up to 5 stars for each category, so the maximum score for any presentation is 25 stars.

Of course, you can also give your own assessment, along with positive suggestions for how the presenter can improve next time.

## PERSONAL OPINION

→ If you have downloaded the video clip or have access to the Internet in class, play the video clip. The first time, have the students watch with books closed. Ask questions to see if the students have understood the gist of Derek's opinion. Then have them look at the summary. See if they can fill in the missing words. Play the extract once or twice more. Then check the answers.

### Answer Key

#### Derek

This is an equality issue. Basically, the foundation of a modern society needs to be based upon the idea that a man and a woman are equal. And both have the ability to go and do and see and have what they want.

Obviously, this doesn't mean infringing upon the feelings and rights of others, but a woman should have the ability to choose and do as she wants.

If a woman prefers to stay at home and be with her family—to stay at home and raise her children, there should be no stigma attached to that. The same as if a woman wants to work, and raise a family at the same time, more power to her. And especially if a woman just wants to choose a career over family, that's her choice.

### Video Script

Basically, the foundations of modern society should be built upon the ideas that a man and a woman both are equal. And both have the equal ability to do and say and go and see and have what they want, whenever they want. Obviously, not to infringe upon the feelings and those rights of others, but a woman should have the ability to choose and do as she wants.

As society changes, as the woman wants, a woman would like to stay at home and be with her family and raise her children, there should be no stigma attached to that. Same as if a woman wants to work, and raise a family—more power to her. And especially if a woman wants to just choose a career over a family, that's their, her choice. And therefore that should not be held against her.

## UNIT TEST

→ Make copies of the Unit Test for each student. Distribute the copies and allow about 15 minutes for the class to complete the test. Correct the test in class.

A. Understanding the Situation: The focus is on understanding Dr. Lee's position on the role of women in today's society.

B. Vocabulary: The focus is on words or phrases from the Situation or the Extending the Topic sections. Students fill in three missing words of a short paragraph that summarizes the Situation.

C. Expressions: The focus is on checking students' understanding of the What Do You Think? and Opinion Network sections.

**Answer Key**

- A. 1. d 2. a 3. c 4. b 5. c  
B. beliefs, problems, history  
C. 1. c 2. a

**LINKS**

If you would like the class to do additional research on gender roles, here are some useful links:

UNICEF—gender and human rights:

[http://www.unicef.org/gender/index\\_bigpicture.html](http://www.unicef.org/gender/index_bigpicture.html)

A Turkish soap opera challenges traditional gender roles:

<http://worldblog.msnbc.msn.com/archive/2008/07/31/1236952.aspx>

Television and gender roles:

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Modules/TF33120/gendertv.html>