



- Description: This 33” wooden statue from the Dogon group in Mali c. 1900 depicts a male-and-female couple and is a religious object. This ancestral couple is charged with “creative energy” and has sacrifices made to it each year. The man and woman together represent the balance between masculine and feminine; both are equally powerful and important, and their union is a source of great strength.
- Modern connection: Although of a much different style, tone and use, this symbol of balance between the genders likens greatly to our common symbols of gender equality and feminism--symbols with these purposes most commonly use the Mars and Venus gender symbols and the minimalist “man” and “woman” figures used to label gendered bathrooms, but no matter how simple, the messages bear a distinct similarity to the truths illustrated with this statue.
- Trivia questions:
 - In what ways does the Dogon group interpret and practice gender equality? (Separate gender roles but equal importance)
 - Does this statue depict a specific ancestral couple or a more generic religious symbol? (Not specific people, but nondescript legendary characters)
- Activity: Imagine you are an American artist in 1900, and are tasked to draw or sculpt a representation of the gender balance. What would it look like, and how would it differ in style or message from this statue? Keep in mind that this was the era of the women’s

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suffrage movement in the United States, and that women wouldn't be able to vote for 20 more years.