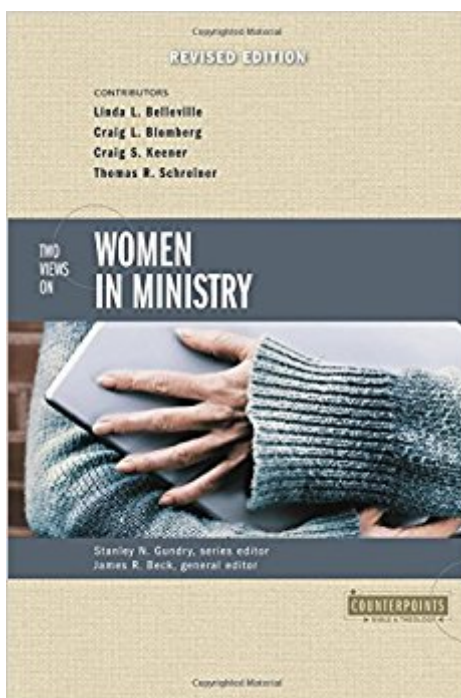


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# Two Views On Women In Ministry (Counterpoints: Bible And Theology)



## Synopsis

What does the Bible say about women's roles in the church? With pros and cons on either side of a heated, ongoing debate, no definitive conclusions have emerged. This book furnishes you with a clear and thorough presentation of the two primary views on women in ministry so you can better understand each one's strengths, weaknesses, and complexities. Each view—egalitarian (equal ministry opportunity for both genders) and complementarian (ministry roles differentiated by gender)—is represented by two contributors. This revised edition of the book brings the exchange of ideas and perspectives into the traditional Counterpoints format. Each author states his or her case and is then critiqued by the other contributors. The fair-minded, interactive Counterpoints forum allows you to compare and contrast the two different positions, and to form your own opinion concerning the practical and often deeply personal issue of women in ministry. The Counterpoints series provides a forum for comparison and critique of different views on issues important to Christians. Counterpoints books address two categories: Church Life and Bible and Theology. Complete your library with other books in the Counterpoints series.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

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Stanley N. Gundry is executive vice president and editor-in-chief for the Zondervan Corporation. He has been an influential figure in the Evangelical Theological Society, serving as president of ETS and on its executive committee, and is adjunct professor of Historical Theology at Grand Rapids Theological Seminary. He is the author of seven books and has written many articles appearing in popular and academic periodicals. James R. Beck is professor of counseling at Denver Seminary and the author of many books, including *Jesus and Personality Theory: Exploring the Five Factor Model*. The essays are contributed by Thomas R. Schreiner, Linda L. Belleville, Craig S. Keener, and Craig L. Blomberg. Dr. Linda Belleville is Professor of New Testament at Bethel College and Graduate School in Mishawaka, IN. Craig L. Blomberg (PhD, Aberdeen) is distinguished professor of New Testament at Denver Seminary. He is the author, co-author, or co-editor of numerous books and more than 130 articles in journals or multi-author works. A recurring topic of interest in his writings is the historical reliability of the Scriptures. Craig and his wife Fran have two daughters and reside in Centennial, Colorado. Craig S. Keener is professor of New Testament at Asbury Theological Seminary and holds a doctoral degree in New Testament Studies and the Origins of Christianity from Duke University. He is the author of several commentaries on books of the New Testament. Thomas R. Schreiner (PhD, Fuller Theological Seminary) is James Buchanan Harrison Professor of New Testament and associate dean of Scripture and interpretation at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. The author of numerous books, he is the preaching pastor of Clifton Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky.

This revised edition is simply outstanding! Regardless of your current position on women in ministry,

there is much to learn from these scholars. They engage in virtually every angle of the debate, and they do so with extensive research (with the exception of egalitarian Craig Keener, who points to his research elsewhere). Craig Blomberg's essay alone is worth the price of the book. It's obvious from his discussion and footnotes that he reads widely. Blomberg (against women as overseers but in favor of women as pastors and preachers) writes with exceptional clarity and is easy to understand. He was immensely persuasive. Linda Belleville (in favor of women as pastors, preachers, and overseers) was very technical in her approach and thus requires some working knowledge of Biblical studies. She wrote, however, an outstanding essay. Thomas Schreiner (against women as pastors, preachers, and overseers) is moderately easy to understand and presents a well-researched chapter. All contributors are sympathetic and come across with genuine humility and the willingness to stand corrected upon a more clearer understanding of Scripture. As a student, I appreciated that. Pastors would be well served to learn from the exegetical research here, particularly since we are called to preach. These essays teach the importance of learning hermeneutics, context, historical background, Biblical languages, word studies, and church history for proper interpretation of Scripture. The authors talk about the differences between deacons, teachers, preachers, overseers, elders, headship, authority, submission, function, and gender roles, all pertaining to women. They debate on whether women should be silent in churches, preach in a congregation, teach men, become pastors, or hold positions of authority. The counter-arguments after each chapter are also very helpful. This book is worth the read even if you are decided on a position. Like other Counterpoint books, this volume helps us learn how to be better students of the Bible, and that alone is worth the price of any Counterpoint book.

This provided an excellent contrast between complementarianism and egalitarianism. It used two essays from each view, attempting to provide a spectrum across four varying degrees on the continuum. The essays themselves were understandable and written well (they are written for someone seriously studying the topic... this is not a laypersons book, so it avoids many of the pitfalls common to the genre, such as an over generalization), however it was longer than it needed to be. I found myself skimming too often so I could reach the end of the section. Each of the four authors critiques the other articles, providing an excellent mechanism for addressing the potential for building a straw man argument. As someone who abhors cultural niceties just for the sake of having cultural niceties, it was irritating how much space was wasted on the different authors attempting to be nice with complements prior to bashing each others views. I love the concept, but the execution was disappointing-- while trying to avoid straw man arguments, several were made in the

critiques. Altogether, it is worth a read if seriously studying the topic-- all four views (two views with two varying degrees each) are explained well, and at the very least, the reader can see what kind of straw man arguments are prevalent in the debate when reading the responses.

I found this to be an extremely interesting and informative book, as all of the Zondervan Counterpoint books have been. I think it could have been accurately labeled as Three Views of Women in Ministry, since the book contains proponents of three distinct views--the traditional view that women are not to be involved in authoritative preaching or ruling over men in the church, the view that women can be involved in every ministry in the church except senior pastor (Craig Blomberg) and the view that women can be involved in every role in the church (Craig Keener and Linda Belleville). Although I started reading the book believing the traditional view, I believe all three views are very well argued and shown to have solid biblical support. For anyone who is interested in exploring this issue personally, or for any church that is considering this issue, I highly recommend this book as a worthwhile investment in time.

A great respectful dialogue (although somewhat brief) between four (three of whom are exceptionally well-known) scholars (Linda Bellville, Craig Blomberg, Craig Keener, and Thomas Schreiner) on their views regarding women in ministry.

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