The Wisdom Books: Feminist Approaches

### Proverbs

A bracket round the book: Ms Wisdom in chapters 1-9; Lemuel’s mother and the wise woman in chapter 31. But “the strange woman” (and the fantasizing man). The nagging wife (and the wandering husband). See Camp, Brenner.

### Job

What about Mrs. Job? Would a story about a woman be different?

See Brenner (*Wisdom Literature*), Clines.

### Ecclesiastes

A male quest?

A male gloom in 7:28? Is it misogynistic and uninspired?

 Or a comment on the author’s experience as a man?

 Or part of a reflection on how Genesis 2 has not come true?

 Or misogynistic and denied in the context - this is what I have *not* found (Murphy)?

[Note literally “One human being (’*adam* not ’*ish*) from a thousand I have found, but a woman among all these I have not found.”]

### Song of Songs

The standout biblical book for an egalitarian vision of man and woman? Note not “lover” and “beloved” (NIV): the woman can love and the man be loved! The most plausible candidate for identification as a biblical book by a woman? The female voice speaks for 53% of the time, the male for 34%. But is the voyeurist perspective male? See Trible, Brenner.

### Esther

The Bible’s radical feminist, who refuses to cooperate with the system (Vashti), and its liberal feminist, who works the system (Esther)? See Brenner, White.

### Daniel

A story of macho men and of consorts, mistresses, a queen mother, wives executed with their husbands, political pawns, and other women who have learned to act in macho ways (ch. 11).

### Also Ruth

A story in which two women take responsibility for their lives and become for each other what their men could not be - though they too have to work within the patriarchal system. Another plausible candidate for female authorship? See Trible, Brenner, Bauckham