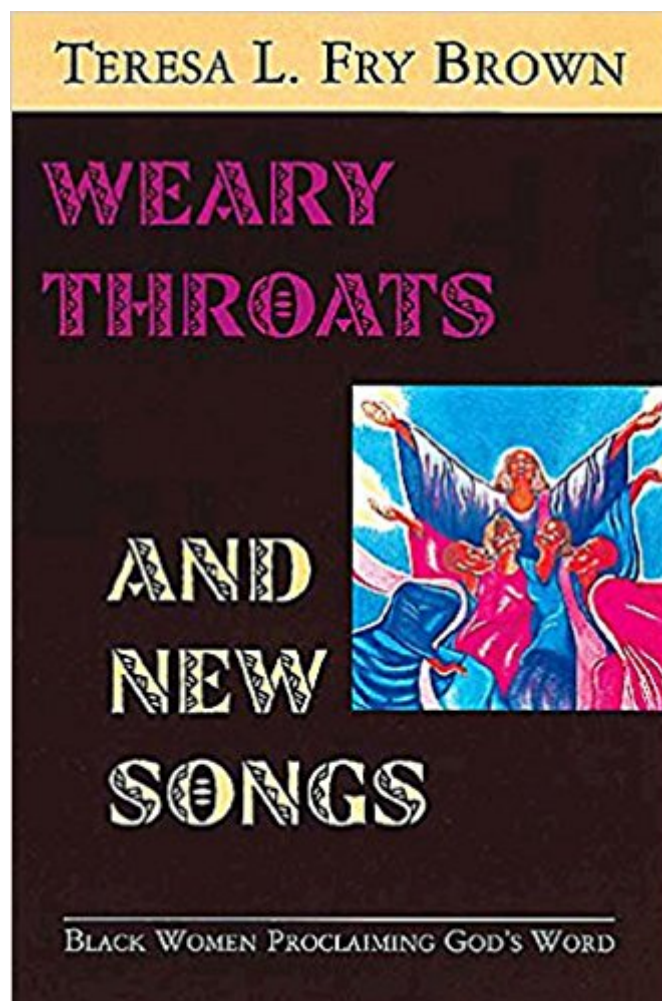


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# Weary Throats And New Songs: Black Women Proclaiming God's Word



## Synopsis

Examines the rich heritage of African American women who have proclaimed--and still proclaim--God's word. Against all odds, African American women have passionately proclaimed the goodness of God and lifted up Jesus' name despite barriers of race, class, denomination, education and gender. In response to a sense of deliverance from evil and in gratitude for answered prayers, these women have related their faith and trust in God in sacred places such as ships, fields, homes, barns, factories, hospitals, schools, pulpits, missionary societies, and over kitchen sinks. Even when disenfranchised in the religious communities they helped create, African American women continue to "say a word" about God, whether they are ordained or not. This book provides a brief review of the rich heritage of African American female proclaimers and examines contemporary African American women's sermon preparation, content, delivery, and personhood. Brown draws heavily on interviews and conversations, as well as audio and video tapes of women proclaiming God's word, to relate how and why African American women tell others about God despite resistance (weary throats) and with the help of support (new songs) in religious and social communities.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Teresa L. Fry Brown is the Bandy Professor of Preaching at Emory University's Candler School of Theology in Atlanta, where she became the first African American woman to attain the rank of full professor. She holds a PhD from Iliff School of Theology in Denver and is ordained in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

I was assigned this book for a class and when I tell you this book spoke to my soul. It spoke to my soul. Amazing stories and a beautiful layout.

The book was very interesting and uplifting to read; the history is great to know and that there is power in prayer.

Good

Teresa Frye Brown's music ministry forms a background for her application of music as a metaphor to the preaching moment. In this book she interviews numerous preaching "sistas" and uses categories from her homiletics courses to structure the data that she found in the interviews. The result is a helpful "Black Women's Commentary" on the homiletic process. After reading the book I felt a renewed resolve to promote and defend women in ministry as well as an imperative to follow God's call on my own life irregardless of ecclesial impediments to my journey.

**Ordination and the Call**

The first couple of chapters provide information on ordination and call that every male minister of the Gospel should keep in mind. It is a review of the gender barrier to ordination. Interestingly enough this aspect of the book also demonstrated the resolve of our sisters to find ways and means to preach the gospel irregardless of these barriers. While we should never accept discrimination in any form, I did find the list of venues for women's in ministry to be a very helpful way to see other possible ways to minister apart from the pulpit in the church that all ministers, male and female, should look at. Our sisters have shown us the way to greater ministry.

**Biblical Exegesis**

After call and ordination, Brown moves to a discussion of Biblical exegesis, themes, and structures for sermons by Black women. I found that this section demonstrated that while some women have a tendency towards preaching actively for liberation of women, most of the themes such as "purpose, hope, and liberation of the poor" holds much in common with the Black male preacher.

**The Whoop**

Of special interest was the discussion of the "whoop." In the past the "Whoop" has been looked down upon. Today I am finding more and more seeking to implement whoop or "whoop-like" elements in their sermons. I found it helpful the way she discusses a criteria for evaluating the appropriateness of the whoop in a particular sermon. In addition to this, I liked the inclusion of a list of dialogical cues from black women preachers that call for response from the congregation. These cues are sayings like "Stay with me!" or "Amen Lights!" Many of these I have heard in black churches. What is interesting about the list is that the wide variety of statements points to an underlying premium on

authenticity. The variety of cues to call and response demonstrates that the Black Pulpit allows one to be oneself. This is an especially interesting statement in light of the fact that Black women have not always been allowed to be their selves. An example of this is the discussion of ecclesial clothing. I think that there are many interesting points, but after reading this I saw again the need for women to not only be preachers, but women to be themselves when preaching. Especially because the Black pulpit has placed a premium on authenticity, the black women should not be chastised for being a woman (makeup and clothing) or for sounding like a woman. After reading the book, I am becoming more and more convinced that a book on black preaching must have an audio component. How can one speak about the whoop or homiletical devices without giving an audio example? This could be helpful to preachers who have not been steeped in this form of Black preaching. Another issue in the book is that only Brown's sermons were included in the book. I understand that people pushed her to do this, but I think that a wider variety of voices might have helped. If one did not provide a wider variety of voices then at least provide a wider variety of sermonic styles. Perhaps she could have provided examples of an expository, celebrationist, thematic, and other types of sermons to demonstrate the richness of the African American women's approach to the preaching task. Be that as it may, I would suggest this as a very good book to use in an introductory Preaching class.

An Epidemic of SINGleness: God's Solution  
Royal Moments of A King's Daughter: A 21-Day Spiritual Detox and Devotional Volume I  
An insightfully clever parallel between the composition, arrangement and presentation of a musical masterpiece and that of Biblical text. "Singing in the key of G-O-D" is one of my favorite chapters. Dr. Fry-Brown weaves musicianship with ministry of the Word and presents it with such eloquence and creativity, allowing us--the readers, into the heart and mind of the Spirit. She has represented the body of Christ, the "Sistas of the cloth," and Black educators favorably. It is to our advantage as ministers of the Gospel, to sing the song--weary throat and all, at every given chance. From your "Contempo Black Preaching student/Candler, 2007" (Kay) K.B. Jenkins

Read this book. Great info.

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