

Egalitarianism, Halacha and Minyanim

Issue	Traditional	Egalitarian
Women and Mitzvot	Conditional. Women not obligated to time bound mitzvot, therefore time bound mitzvot are conditional (Mishnah Kiddushin 1:7, Bavli 29a)	Women are obligated to all “genderless” mitzvot regardless of their nature (see Rabbinical Assembly OH 53:4.1984)
Mechitza	Three key issues: kol isa (Song of Solomon 2:14), fulfilling a mitzvah when one is exempt and kavod hatzibbur (Mishna Rosh Hashanah 3a), honor of the praying congregation (Megilah 23a)	Mechitza only had to do with Temple worship (tractate Sukkot) and does not apply to the synagogue today. Sees other arguments as unreasonable.
Women as Shliach Tzibbur	Women cannot read in front of men (see Mechitza halachka)	Women served as judges (see Devorah), therefore they can be shliach tzibbur (see Rabbinical Assembly OH 53:4.1984)
“Special Role” Argument	Women as having higher neshamot (souls), therefore not needing to take part in Jewish ritual life, save for the gendered roles (lighting nerot for Shabbat, etc.)	Women’s special roles as being “in addition to” and not “instead of”.

Sources for traditional views of women and halacha:

Chabad.org: Women, Femininity and Feminism

http://www.chabad.org/search/keyword_cdo/kid/1682/jewish/Women-Femininity-Feminism.htm

Rabbi Yossi Frand

<http://www.yadyechiel.org/>

Sources for egalitarian views of women and halacha:

The Rabbinical Assembly Orah Hayyim

<http://www.rabbinicalassembly.org/jewish-law/committee-jewish-law-and-standards/orah-hayyim>

Mechon Hadar Halachic Think Tank

http://www.mechonhadar.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=8e2def5c-17b6-4160-9fe3-874c9c9c3587&groupId=11401

Please note: this text may not be shared or reproduced without the written permission of the Darshan Yeshiva.