

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-01922-5 - The New Milton Criticism
Edited by Peter C. Herman and Elizabeth Sauer
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

THE NEW MILTON CRITICISM

The New Milton Criticism seeks to emphasize ambivalence and discontinuity in Milton's work and to interrogate the assumptions and certainties in previous Milton scholarship. Contributors to the volume move Milton's open-ended poetics to the center of Milton studies by showing how analyzing irresolvable questions – religious, philosophical, and literary critical – transforms interpretation and enriches appreciation of his work. *The New Milton Criticism* encourages scholars to embrace uncertainties in his writings, rather than attempt to explain them away. Twelve critics from a range of countries, approaches, and methodologies explore these questions in new readings of *Paradise Lost* and other works. Sure to become a focus of debate and controversy in the field, this volume is a truly original contribution to early modern studies.

PETER C. HERMAN is Professor of English and Comparative Literature at San Diego State University.

ELIZABETH SAUER is Professor of English at Brock University, Canada.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-01922-5 - The New Milton Criticism
Edited by Peter C. Herman and Elizabeth Sauer
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-01922-5 - The New Milton Criticism
Edited by Peter C. Herman and Elizabeth Sauer
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

THE NEW MILTON CRITICISM

EDITED BY
PETER C. HERMAN
AND
ELIZABETH SAUER



Cambridge University Press
 978-1-107-01922-5 - The New Milton Criticism
 Edited by Peter C. Herman and Elizabeth Sauer
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
 Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
 Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press
 The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107603950

© Cambridge University Press 2012

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
 and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
 no reproduction of any part may take place without the written
 permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2012

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data
 The new Milton criticism / [edited by] Peter C. Herman, Elizabeth Sauer.
 p. cm.
 Includes index.

- ISBN 978-1-107-01922-5 (hardback) – ISBN 978-1-107-60395-0 (paperback)
1. Milton, John, 1608–1674—Criticism and interpretation. I. Herman, Peter C., 1958–
 II. Sauer, Elizabeth, 1964–
 PR3588.N48 2012
 821'.4—dc23
 2011049970

ISBN 978-1-107-01922-5 Hardback
 ISBN 978-1-107-60395-0 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or
 accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in
 this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is,
 or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Contents

<i>Notes on contributors</i>	<i>page</i> vii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
<i>Note on editions</i>	xii
Introduction: Paradigms lost, paradigms found: the New Milton Criticism	I
<i>Peter C. Herman and Elizabeth Sauer</i>	
PART I THEODICIES	
1. Milton's fetters, or, why Eden is better than Heaven <i>Richard Strier</i>	25
2. "Whose fault, whose but his own?": <i>Paradise Lost</i> , contributory negligence, and the problem of cause <i>Peter C. Herman</i>	49
3. The political theology of Milton's Heaven <i>John Rogers</i>	68
4. Meanwhile: (un)making time in <i>Paradise Lost</i> <i>Judith Scherer Herz</i>	85
5. The Gnostic Milton: salvation and divine similitude in <i>Paradise Regained</i> <i>Michael Bryson</i>	102
6. Discontents with the drama of regeneration <i>Elizabeth Sauer</i>	120

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-107-01922-5 - The New Milton Criticism
 Edited by Peter C. Herman and Elizabeth Sauer
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

vi

Contents

PART II CRITICAL RECEPTIONS

- | | | |
|-----|--|-----|
| 7. | Against fescues and ferulas: personal affront and the path to individual liberty in Milton's early prose
<i>Christopher D'Addario</i> | 139 |
| 8. | Disruptive partners: Milton and seventeenth-century women writers
<i>Shannon Miller</i> | 156 |
| 9. | Eve and the ironic theodicy of the New Milton Criticism
<i>Thomas Festa</i> | 175 |
| 10. | Man and Thinker: Denis Saurat, and the old new Milton criticism
<i>Jeffrey Shoulson</i> | 194 |
| 11. | The poverty of context: Cambridge School History and the New Milton Criticism
<i>William Kolbrener</i> | 212 |
| 12. | Afterword
<i>Joseph A. Wittreich</i> | 231 |
| | <i>Index</i> | 249 |

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-107-01922-5 - The New Milton Criticism
 Edited by Peter C. Herman and Elizabeth Sauer
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Notes on contributors

MICHAEL BRYSON is Associate Professor of English at California State University, Northridge. He is the author of *The Tyranny of Heaven: Milton's Rejection of God as King* (2004). He has also written on the relationship between sacrifice, death, and community formation in the book of Judges (in *Religion and Literature*), and has recently finished the manuscript for a new book on "The Atheist Milton."

CHRISTOPHER D'ADDARIO, Assistant Professor of English at Towson University, is author of *Exile and Journey in Seventeenth-Century Literature* (Cambridge, 2007). He has also written articles on John Donne, Abraham Cowley, and John Manningham's Diary that have been published or are forthcoming in *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, *English Literary Renaissance*, and various essay collections. His current book project is on perceptions of the everyday in early modern England.

THOMAS FESTA is Associate Professor at the State University of New York at New Paltz. He is author of *The End of Learning: Milton and Education* (2006) and editor, with Michelle M. Dowd, of *Early Modern Women on the Fall: An Anthology* (forthcoming). His articles on Milton, Donne, Browne, Shakespeare, Spenser, and Wordsworth have appeared, or are forthcoming, in *Milton Studies*, *Studies in Philology*, *English Language Notes*, and elsewhere. His essay "Milton's 'Christian Talmud'" (*Reformation* 8) won the 2004 William Tyndale Prize, awarded by the Stationers' Company of London.

PETER C. HERMAN is Professor of English and Comparative Literature at San Diego State University. He is the author of *Royal Poetrie: Monarchic Verse and the Political Imaginary of Early Modern England* (2010), *Destabilizing Milton: "Paradise Lost" and the Poetics of Incertitude* (2005), and *A Short History of Early Modern England: British Literature*

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-107-01922-5 - The New Milton Criticism
 Edited by Peter C. Herman and Elizabeth Sauer
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

viii

Notes on contributors

in Context (2011). He is also the editor of *Approaches to Teaching Milton's Shorter Poetry and Prose* (2007), and the forthcoming *Approaches to Teaching Milton's "Paradise Lost"*, 2nd edition.

JUDITH SCHERER HERZ is Professor of English at Concordia University in Montreal. She works on both early modern and early twentieth-century writing. She has published two books on E. M. Forster and numerous articles and essays on, among others, Leonard Woolf, Donne, and Milton. She is a former President of the Association of Canadian College and University Teachers of English and of the John Donne Society.

WILLIAM KOLBRENER, Professor of English at Bar-Ilan University, is author of *Milton's Warring Angels* (Cambridge, 1997) and co-editor of *Mary Astell: Reason, Gender, Faith* (2007). His essays on early modern writing have appeared in journals such as *English Literary History*, *Common Knowledge*, *The Eighteenth Century*, and *Milton Studies*. His book on Jewish hermeneutics and epistemology, *Open Minded Torah: Of Irony, Fundamentalism and Love* was published in 2011.

SHANNON MILLER is Professor and Chair of the English Department at Temple University. She has authored *Invested in Meaning: The Raleigh Circle in the New World* (1998) and *Engendering the Fall: John Milton and Seventeenth-Century Women Writers* (2008). She has also published articles on women writers of the early modern period, including Mary Wroth, Mary Sidney, Margaret Cavendish, and Aphra Behn. Her current book project is titled "On the Margins of History: Studies in Seventeenth-Century Pamphlet Collections."

JOHN ROGERS, Professor of English at Yale University, authored *Matter of Revolution: Science, Poetry, and Politics in the Age of Milton* (1996), winner of the MLA Prize for a First Book, the James Holly Hanford Award (Milton Society of America), *Choice* magazine's award for an Outstanding Academic Book in 1996, and the Samuel and Ronnie Heyman Prize for Outstanding Scholarly Publication by a Yale Junior Faculty Member in the Humanities. He has also published articles on Milton, Marvell, early modern gender relations, and women's literary history in *English Literary History*, *Milton Studies*, the *Huntington Library Quarterly*, and in multiple essay collections. He has twice received awards from the Milton Society of America. *Milton's Passion* is forthcoming.

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-107-01922-5 - The New Milton Criticism
 Edited by Peter C. Herman and Elizabeth Sauer
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Notes on contributors

ix

ELIZABETH SAUER, Professor of English at Brock University, has authored two books, *Paper-Contestations* and *Textual Communities in England* (2005) and *Barbarous Dissonance and Images of Voice in Milton's Epics* (1996). She has also edited twelve volumes, including *Milton and Toleration* with Sharon Achinstein (2007), *Milton and the Climates of Reading* (2006), *Reading Early Modern Women* with Helen Ostovich (2004), and *Books and Readers in Early Modern England* with Jennifer Andersen (2002). She is the recipient of awards from the Milton Society of America; *Choice*; The Society for the Study of Early Modern Women; and the Canada Council for the Arts (Killam Research Fellowship).

JEFFREY SHOULSON, Associate Professor of English and Judaic Studies at the University of Miami, is author of *Milton and the Rabbis: Hellenism, Hellenism, and Christianity* (2001), winner, American Academy of Jewish Research Salo Baron Prize for First Book in Judaic Studies, and co-editor, with Allison P. Coudert, of *Hebraica Veritas? Christian Hebraists and the Study of Judaism in Early Modern Europe* (2004). He is on the editorial board of *Milton Quarterly* and has served on the board of the Milton Society of America. His articles have appeared in *English Literary History*, *Journal of English and German Philology*, *Milton Studies*, and *Essays in Literature*. He is completing a book on "Fictions of Conversion: Jews, Christians, and Cultures of Change in Early Modern England."

RICHARD STRIER, Frank L. Sulzberger Professor at the University of Chicago, is author of *Unrepentant Renaissance From Petrarch to Shakespeare to Milton* (2011), *Resistant Structures: Particularity, Radicalism, and Renaissance Texts* (1995; pbk., 1997), and *Love Known: Theology and Experience in George Herbert's Poetry* (1983; pbk., 1986). He has edited *Writing and Political Engagement in Seventeenth-Century England* with Derek Hirst (Cambridge, 1999), *Religion, Literature and Politics in Post-Reformation England, 1540–1688* with Donna B. Hamilton (Cambridge, 1996), and *The Theatrical City: Culture, Theatre and Politics in London, 1576–1649* with David L. Smith and David Bevington (Cambridge, 1995; pbk. 2002).

JOSEPH A. WITTEICH is Distinguished Professor in the Ph.D. Program in English at the CUNY Graduate Center and Honored Scholar of the Milton Society of America. His books include *Why Milton Matters: A New Preface to His Writings* (2006); *Shifting Contexts: Reinterpreting "Samson Agonistes"* (2003); *Feminist Milton* (1987); *Interpreting "Samson*

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-01922-5 - The New Milton Criticism
Edited by Peter C. Herman and Elizabeth Sauer
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

x

Notes on contributors

Agonistes” (1986), winner of the James Holly Hanford Award; “*Image of that Horror*”: *History, Prophecy, and Apocalypse in “King Lear”* (1984); *Visionary Poetics: Milton’s Tradition and His Legacy* (1979), *Angel of Apocalypse: Blake’s Idea of Milton* (1975). He is also the author of dozens of articles, chapters, and reviews.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, the editors want to thank Ray Ryan for his patience, wise guidance, and his confidence in this project, and we likewise extend our gratitude to the contributors for their diligence and collegiality, and for sharing their expertise with us. This volume also benefited tremendously from the constructive and incisive reports of the anonymous readers, which helped strengthen and sharpen our argument.

Peter C. Herman: I want to thank Joseph A. Wittreich for his work and for his example. Feisal Mohamed has been a worthy interlocutor, and John Rumrich consistently provided sage advice and much-needed encouragement. I owe my interest in law and literature to Constance Jordan, and I am privileged to have been, and continue to be, her student. I am also grateful to the Modern Language Association and the Renaissance Society of America for sponsoring panels on the New Milton Criticism, where some of these articles had their first public outing, and to the Milton and the Law Symposium at the University of London for inviting me to participate.

Elizabeth Sauer: I gratefully acknowledge the support of the Canada Council and Killam Trusts for a Killam Research Fellowship that provided invaluable release time. Additionally, I would like to thank the Social Sciences Humanities Research Council of Canada for its generous research funding, and my colleagues and students at Brock University for their counsel and community. Christopher Stampone served as a tremendously efficient, rigorous, and conscientious research and editorial assistant for this project. Particularly influential for me has been the Milton scholarship by Joseph A. Wittreich, Balachandra Rajan, Paul Stevens, Sharon Achinstein, Nigel Smith, and Barbara Lewalski.

While the naming of debts in the acknowledgments is a pleasure, we also take this opportunity to remember four people who are no longer with us: Douglas A. Brooks, John T. Shawcross, Marshall Grossman, and James Paxson. All were stellar scholars, colleagues, and friends. All are deeply missed.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-01922-5 - The New Milton Criticism
Edited by Peter C. Herman and Elizabeth Sauer
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Note on editions

Unless otherwise stated, all references to Milton's *Paradise Lost* are from Barbara K. Lewalski (ed.), *John Milton, Paradise Lost* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), and all references to Milton's prose works are from Don M. Wolfe (ed.), *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, 8 vols. in 10 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953–82).