epic intention and Fish emphasizing the corrective work of Milton’s narrator, who consciously dissuades readers from reading “against the grain.”

Shears’ book distinguishes itself both in its substantive engagement with prominent Romantic interpretations and appropriations of *Paradise Lost*, and in its sustained tracing of three centuries of reading Milton’s epic “against the grain.” Significantly, although Shears is more a scholar of Romanticism than of Milton, his discussion of the historical sweep of Milton criticism is impressive, and readers hoping to better understand that sweep will profit from Shears’ efforts. My only substantive criticism is that in some of his chapters on individual Romantic poets Shears tries to cover so many different works that in places those chapters risk losing the forest for the trees. And, although Mary Shelley not being a poet legitimately excludes her from Shears’ book, I nonetheless mourn her absence and wonder what treasures Shears might have offered regarding her appropriation of *Paradise Lost* in *Frankenstein*. All in all, this study is well worth reading and one whose value extends to students and scholars of Milton, Romanticism, and the long eighteenth century in general.


*Politicizing Domesticity from Henrietta Maria to Milton’s Eve*, by Laura Lunger Knoppers, identifies the Caroline royal family’s great interest to the Victorian “cult of domesticity,” a period in which “imagining the British past as a prototype of an idealized present” (1) was commonplace. Her investigation, grounded in Frederick Goodall’s painting *An Episode in the Happier Days of Charles I* (1853), interprets the leisurely outing of King Charles and his family as similar to portraits of Queen Victoria, Prince Albert, and their children. The Introduction outlines the ways in which visual materials, literary texts, cookery books, and political writings are used as political propaganda in representations of Charles I and Henrietta Maria, Oliver
and Elizabeth Cromwell, and in the characterizations of Adam and Eve in John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. In recouping the seventeenth-century royal representation and the discourses that contested and opposed it, she interrogates the liminal space between domestic and monarchial images.

Chapter 1, “The scepter and the distaff: mapping the domestic in Caroline family portraiture,” explores images of the royal family including the George Marcelline *Epithalamium Gallo-Britannicum* (1525), Van Dyck portraits of Charles I and Henrietta Maria with their two eldest children (1632), and Van Dyck portraits of the children alone (1632 and 1637). Newly wedded Charles I and Henrietta Maria are represented in the *Epithalamium* with right hands joined, in fashionable attire, and with allegorical figures of war and peace. Speech bubbles proffer the unity of marriage and glorify the Queen’s virtue; the scene’s message declares a public kingship and anticipates the dynastic expectations for this couple’s offspring. Portraits show the vitality of “children as children, not simply as miniature adults” (26) attending to each other and positioned with the family dogs. The rich indoor scenes displaying family comfort, spousal affection, and parents in close proximity to their children exemplify the domestic ideal. These accessible representations make visible an intimacy British subjects relished and “mapped a gendered domesticity on to the royal couple” (27), one that later backfired as critique of the King’s uxorious marriage.

The Frontispiece to *The Sussex Picture, or, An Answer to the Sea-Gull* (1644) carries an “allegedly incriminating portrait” that received Parliamentary comment (38). Controversy revolved around the King appearing to offer his scepter to his queen, but she refuses, and directs him to give it to the Pope. In addition to the religious and political ramifications of the image, the cleft staff, used for flax or wool and typical of women’s work, symbolizes female authority. This image foregrounds the “assimilation” of Henrietta Maria as a wife who has “inverted household order by dominating her husband” (40) while destabilizing the representation of the male dynasty.

Chapter 2 “‘Deare heart’: framing the royal couple in *The Kings Cabinet Opened*” exposes the responses to *The Kings Cabinet Opened* (1645). Editing and selecting thirty-nine of the minimum of fifty-
seven letters captured after the battle of Naseby, Parliament published the letters to “shape public opinion against the king” by intimating disorder in his household and government (43). Presented as the intimate communication between the king and queen, the linguistic decision to use “cabinet” in the title heightens secrecy and elevates the intrigue of their exchanges. Deliberate printing decisions contributed to textual emphasis upon revelation and discovery of secrets, language that is part of parliamentary propaganda (43). The results of Parliament’s strategic efforts to select, translate, and edit the original letters debilitated the king’s effectiveness. Specifically, the letters appear to reveal the monarch’s pro-Catholic sympathies and excessive devotion to his wife. The six letters written by Henrietta Maria are placed mid-text, another subtle nuance of a foreign threat at the center of King Charles’s world.

“Material legacies: family matters in Eikon Basilike and Eikonoklastes,” Chapter 3, examines Charles I’s religious and private papers, and the king’s deathbed meditations, featuring both “dynastic succession and affective family bonds” in his writings (8). Knoppers explores the John Quarles and John Milton contrasting views of Eikon Basilike. Quarles embraces domestic privacy between the king and queen, eliminating the political content while Milton foregrounds the texts as public documents. In Eikonoklastes he rejects the “legacy Charles identifies for family and British subjects” (85). Contemporary readers’ marginalia reveals appreciation for the domestic language, minimizing the political legacy of the king’s book.

Chapter 4, “Recipes for Royalism: Henrietta Maria and The Queens Closet Opened,” discusses a cookery book put into print by W.M. but without the queen’s involvement. Stress on the secrecy of these recipes stirred interest in the queen’s domestic endeavors. Designed to reconfigure the public’s memory of the queen, the recipes identify neither her personal habits nor practices, but presents recipes and household activities similar to those of British genteel women. Markings in extant copies reveal that the recipe book invited readers to enter Henrietta Maria’s private arena by inscribing their own experiences, modifying recipes, and recording details of their own lives (107). The queen thus retains a nationalistic presence amidst the Protectorate government.
In Chapter 5, “‘Protectresse & a Drudge’: the court and cookery of Elizabeth Cromwell,” Knoppers highlights domesticity’s potential to legitimate sovereign power after the Protectorate and the return of Charles II. She addresses The Court & Kitchin of Elizabeth (1644), a cookery book that recalls Henrietta’s Maria’s The Queens Closet Opened by “satirizing the failure of Cromwellian imitation” (115). Vital Elizabeth Cromwell does not fit the name “drudge,” however, and her recipes show little difference from cookery books of the time, including the former queen’s. Elizabeth is presented as careful with money and resourceful in housewifely duties. Marginalia points out that her impersonation of the monarchy provides the public persona that the satiric cookery book attempts to repudiate.

“No fear lest Dinner Coole’: Milton’s housewives and the politics of Eden,” Chapter 6, refers to the will and household inventory of Milton’s widow, Elizabeth Minshull, addresses the material culture of the poet’s domestic space and probes representations of domestic practices in Paradise Lost. Minshull’s household management points to “not only industry, skill, temperance, frugality, but rational choice and freedom,” although Eve, in her “uniquely hybrid space,” demonstrates similar domestic accomplishments that lead to debate, separation, and the fall (145). Rewriting Paradise Lost as a rhymed royalist opera, The State of Innocence (1677), John Dryden’s “Edenic household evinces not the republican virtues of choice and reason, but courtly banter and witty flirtation” (162).

The Afterword revisits the Charles I and Henrietta portrait that began Knoppers’s study as taking on a new role when the “long seclusion of the widowed Queen Victoria brought a resurgence of republican sentiment” (165). The painting, made more popular by its version as an engraving, inspired a play, Charles I (1872), that portrayed a domestic cheer recognized as a fantasy of the past. Politicizing Domesticity shows the iconography of domesticity as a “powerful and contested tool of gendered propaganda” (165). This insightful study will appeal to scholars of political and cultural history, literature, book history, and women’s studies.