their syllabi. If, as I believe, *Comus* is an invitation to the epic poet, then Shullenberger may be even more adamant. For him, the epic poet is already there, in the text of *Comus*, and *The Lady in the Labyrinth* does all it can—and all it should—to reveal this to its readers.

Margaret Olofson Thickstun. *Milton's Paradise Lost: Moral Education*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007. xiv + 184 pp. $65.00. Review by JAMES EGAN, THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON.

Thickstun notes that her discussions of *Paradise Lost* are "influenced as much by contemporary research in psychology and moral development as they are by current Milton scholarship" (ix), and she makes ample use of the work of Perry, Fowler, Noddings, McCullough, and others. Considered as literary criticism, *Milton's Paradise Lost* reads the epic as a text concerned with the "moral and psychological education of young people," by which Thickstun means many of the poem's major characters. This emphasis aligns her argument with post-1990s exploration of Milton's pedagogy and the ways and means of the educational processes he dramatizes. Thickstun defends her emphasis on the literary study of moral questions as a means of not only heightening the emotional involvement necessary for contemporary readers to engage fully with *Paradise Lost*, but also as an antidote to what she considers the self-referential, abstract preoccupations of postmodern pedagogy. From this conceptual vantage point, she makes regular observations about the teachability of episodes and characterizations in the poem. Representative of Thickstun's overall position are the chapters on God the Father, Satan, Adam, and Eve.

God, she argues, is better understood by the metaphor of parenthood than by the traditional metaphors of kingship or military precedence. God presents Himself in Scripture as a "loving, jealous, occasionally angry, feeling father" (23), and Milton's construction of Him stresses the parental qualities of emotional investment, selflessness, and self-restraint. Thickstun valuably contextualizes Milton's portrait of God in terms of contemporary Puritan ideas of fathering; in the process she frees the historical identity of Puritan fatherhood from stereotypical oversimplifications of it. Milton's God considers

His creatures as individuals and, as part of His parenting, extends opportunities for personal growth even to Satan, whose treatment by God Thickstun interprets as the "tireless overtures of a caring parent," a sort of "loving outreach" (33). Unconventionally but persuasively, she reads the interaction of God and Satan throughout the poem as a series of redemptive possibilities for the fallen angel, so that the story of Satan becomes open-ended rather than fixed. Her claim that the Satan-Sin conversation identifies him as a failed parent merits attention.

Chapter seven, "Adam as Parent," examines the Adam-Eve relationship from the point of view that Adam is, first of all, Eve's parent. When he asks for Eve, Adam sets in motion a complex series of responsibilities for her, including the responsibility for the welfare of another; such responsibilities, for developmental psychologists, define Adam's "moral adulthood" (126). Adulthood takes shape as well through the elaborate pattern of interactions between Adam and Eve, interactions that cause Adam to accommodate another human perspective both independent of and dependent on him. Thickstun reads Adam's desire for intimacy with Eve as a wish for emotional fellowship more than a craving for sensual pleasure. Adam's anxiety at the thought of being separate from Eve grows primarily out of the intense sensations of fear and loneliness. As she makes these arguments, Thickstun dialogues effectively with the sizeable body of postmodern scholarship which addresses the relationships of the first parents. Chapter eight, "Eve, Identity, and Growing in Relationship," studies the reciprocal relationship of Adam and Eve and Eve's developmental responsibilities for Adam and the Garden. Thickstun concedes the conventional critical doubt about the adequacy of Adam's reaction to Eve in the Separation Colloquy, but finally decides that Adam and Eve have reviewed "questions of liberty and responsibility, of Eve's sufficiency and Satan's duplicity" sufficiently to have "prepared Eve to resist temptation" (141). She points out that Eve has more than a little experience in recognizing evil, and as readers have noticed, Eve's dialogue with Satan contains enough wit (and the processes of cognition which underlie wit) to suggest that she well understands just what Satan is proposing. The author's evidence leads convincingly to

her conclusion that Eve is sufficient to have withstood temptation, and not a victim of divine manipulation.

The pedagogical implications of this reading of the epic are regularly mentioned: Galbraith Crump's *Approaches to Teaching Paradise Lost* (1986) is cited, and the author frequently invokes her typical audience of undergraduate, first-time readers of Milton. This pedagogical emphasis is a mixture of pluses and minuses. Thickstun objects to the anesthetizing effect certain critical methodologies have on first-time readers of *Paradise Lost*, self-referential methodologies preoccupied with their own inner workings, to the detriment of the actual text. Here she articulates a genuine problem encountered by teachers of the poem. In contrast, her readings enable a passionate involvement with the text in order to transcend barriers between it and students (10). These readings, stressing emotional investment in *Paradise Lost*, are meant to help students engage with the central moral questions Milton engages (13). Teachers of the epic to the kinds of students Thickstun references and possibly to other audiences will appreciate the pedagogical objectives she proposes and the obscuring and abstracting tendencies she objects to in Milton scholarship. It is important to note, however, that the pedagogical argument of this book poses several problems as well. Thickstun maintains that in order for students to become confident in their ability to read the epic, teachers may need to prepare study guides, language games, or map-making exercises (13), yet she provides none of the above herself. Had she offered a fully developed pedagogy in the form of lesson plans, writing assignments, or test questions, teachers could more easily measure the potential usefulness of such apparatus in comparison to their own strategies. In the hands of individuals other than the author, moreover, one wonders whether Thickstun's approach might cause as many student access problems as the ones she attributes to traditional postmodern pedagogies, even allowing for the success she has experienced with it. Because the pedagogical claims she makes have clinical implications, the burden of proof that her teaching access-routes are an improvement over others in play is on her; such proof cannot be anecdotal and might even need to be supported by data or studies of student writing and course evaluations. All of this is not to deny that *Milton's Paradise Lost* can work as a diary or a personal history, but to

underscore the complexities of modern pedagogy in general and the adaptive skills of individual teachers of the epic.

Shannon Miller. *Engendering the Fall: John Milton and Seventeenth-Century Women Writers*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008. viii + 280 pp. $65.00. Review by LISA J. SCHNELL, UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT.

In the blurb he contributed to the jacket, David Norbrook calls *Engendering the Fall* "an ambitious book." It's an equivocal phrase that registers my own equivocal response to Miller's book. Yes, the book is very ambitious: it puts Milton into conversation with writers from almost the entire seventeenth century; it takes on the issue of influence, which is thorny at best; it engages in some of the biggest issues surrounding polity and science in the period; it rightly positions gender, and particularly the gendered narrative of the Garden, at the center of these seventeenth-century discourses. At the heart of the book is Miller's desire to ascribe—some would say restore—to women a place in the early modern conversation around gender and governance. Filmer, Hobbes, Hooke, Locke: all figure highly in Miller's discussion of that conversation. But so do Rachel Speght, Aemilia Lanyer, Elizabeth Poole, Lucy Hutchinson, Margaret Cavendish, Mary Chudleigh, Aphra Behn and Mary Astell. And at the center of it all is Milton's *Paradise Lost*, radiating and refracting (one of the book's most oft-repeated words) the "sustained cultural power of the figure of Eve" (4) both backwards and forwards from its post-Restoration spot in the seventeenth century.

The book is organized into three sections: Part I, called "Pretexts," traces, through the early seventeenth-century's *querelle des femmes* and some of the texts it spawned (Speght's *Mortalities Memorandum* and Lanyer's Salve *Deus Rex Judaeorum*), the emergence of innovative thinking about gender as a category of knowledge. Despite a lack of "irrefutable evidence," Miller argues that because Milton was part of a community of readers in mid-century who read tracts like those in the *querelle*, the defenses of women by writers like Speght and Lanyer "constitute a field of context that Milton appears to have engaged in