

Dissertation Title — Milton's Learning: Complementarity and Difference in *Paradise Lost*
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15 February 2023

ABSTRACT: When we consider, in the vein of Golda Werman's Milton and Midrash, the idea of Milton's *Paradise Lost* as self-consciously responding to the Bible, the question of why he makes the changes and additions that he does comes to the fore. This dissertation explores the middle books of *Paradise Lost* as Milton's midrashic interventions that, among other things, emphasize the presence of education in the Garden. These scenes shed some light on Milton's own views of education. Specifically, these interventions show a theory of education that conceives of difference as non-combative, a distinctly non-Hobbesian view of difference. Using Aristotle's four causes as a means of anatomizing education in the poem, I find that education is a model for the way that differences are treated as complementary entities in Milton's unfallen world. However, temptation intervenes and succeeds in leading agents to fall via "unlearning," a concept developed in the fourth chapter, in which difference itself is deemphasized. In the end, sin and temptation are alike in their insistence on singularity. This insistence, in Milton's postlapsarian world, creates competition in difference, making complementarity problematic if not impossible.