

Forum

PMLA invites members of the association to submit letters, printed and double-spaced, that comment on articles in previous issues or on matters of general scholarly or critical interest. The editor reserves the right to reject or edit Forum contributions and offers the *PMLA* authors discussed in published letters an opportunity to reply. Submissions of more than one thousand words are not considered. The journal omits titles before persons' names and discourages endnotes and works-cited lists in the Forum. Letters should be addressed to *PMLA* Forum, Modern Language Association, 26 Broadway, 3rd floor, New York, NY 10004-1789.

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Milton and Religious Violence

TO THE EDITOR:

Concluding his comments on Feisal G. Mohamed's "Confronting Religious Violence: Milton's *Samson Agonistes*" (120 [2005]: 327–40), Joseph Wittreich writes, "The ultimate question is whether Milton's tragedy, as a cherished artifact of Western literary tradition, shows, in Mohamed's words, 'evidence of the very brand of thought that the political dominant vilifies in the Other' or whether, breaking free of his own culture of violence, Milton here mounts a critique of it" (1642). Wittreich's useful summary does not require a bifurcated response by Mohamed, John Carey, or any other critical writer; Milton and other cherished authors can serve as artifacts of their times even as they break with their cultural moments to offer critiques, whether intended or unintended.

Those of us reading texts by canonical authors such as Milton will continue to expend ink on the extent to which they serve or break. Mohamed compellingly demonstrates why we should pursue a wide variety of views in these commentaries as a method of understanding our attachment to—and thus our temptation to avoid contradictions in—cherished traditions we perceive as our own.

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Law and Literature in Dialogue

TO THE EDITOR:

I hope you will permit a longtime lawyer-member to join—somewhat tardily—the debate on law and literature inspired by Julie Stone Peters's essay ("Law, Literature, and the Vanishing Real" [120 (2005): 442–53]) and then continued by Peter Brooks's Forum letter (1645–46). Like Brooks, I ap-

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