

think one can make much of his *fidus Achates*). Curiously enough, however, one variant of the Aeneas legend emphatically associates him with homosexuality: the twelfth-century French *Roman d'Eneas*. In this poem, Queen Amata vociferously opposes her daughter Lavinia's proposed marriage with Aeneas on the grounds that he is a lover of boys! Whether Milton, for all his wide and profound reading, would have known this poem I cannot say, though it would be interesting to find out.

Apropos of the medieval background to Milton, I was intrigued by Bredbeck's narrowly limited discussion of Ganymede as an emblem of homoeroticism "within the vernacular of the Renaissance" (264). A brief mention, at least, of the similar symbolic use of Ganymede before the Renaissance would not come amiss. The medieval literary tradition of debate poems includes contests between homosexual and heterosexual love with titles like "Ganymede and Helen" and "Ganymede and Hebe" (see John Boswell's *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality*), and it seems clear that there is a continuity of tradition from the Middle Ages through the Renaissance. Incidentally, Boswell's study is extremely useful for obtaining an overview of the evolution of attitudes toward homosexuality in Western Christian society during the centuries leading up to Milton's time; the work may or may not have figured in the general background of Bredbeck's study, but explicit reference to Boswell could only enhance "Milton's Ganymede."

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To the Editor:

Gregory W. Bredbeck, in "Milton's Ganymede: Negotiations of Homoerotic Tradition in *Paradise Regained*," uses as "documentation of deviant sexual behavior" an attack against Elizabeth Cellier entitled *To the Praises of Mrs. Cellier, the Popish Midwife*. He alleges that this attack appeared in 1641, at the time of Milton's prose work *Of Reformation in England*, and argues from this supposed publication something about the sexual context of that era (263).

Unfortunately for his argument, Cellier flourished something like forty years after this date, in 1679–88, and could not possibly have been attacked in print in 1641 or even in Milton's *lifetime*.

This misdating is a reminder of the real risk involved in writing an essay with a strong ideological bent while using historical data chiefly for ornamentation.

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Reply:

Randi Eldevik's observations are absolutely fascinating and deserve to be worked up into a full article. In the book based in part on my essay, I touch briefly on some of the medieval traditions, and I am of course aware of Boswell's work—but I do not cover the issues in a way that precludes Eldevik's addressing them. As her letter so helpfully points out, there is much more that can be said about my topic—and I look forward to seeing others take up this task.

I thank Anne Barbeau Gardiner for the factual correction, particularly since it arrived in time for me to alter my book. There is indeed a broadside account of the Cellier controversy dated 1641, and this date has been transferred in pencil to two other accounts, all of which are bound in the British Library in a volume of broadsides inclusively dated 1600–50—hence my confusion. I am most intrigued by Gardiner's final sentence, for it addresses neither how one might write an argument without an ideological "bent" nor the ideology implicit in her own desire to keep the facts "straight."

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The Future of Grimm's Law

To the Editor:

I am greatly disturbed by Zacharias P. Thundy's reply to Edgar C. Knowlton, Jr. (Forum, 106 [1991]: 309–11). As though Knowlton's criticism of his former remarks (Forum, 105 [1990]: 1127) were not sufficient, Thundy now offers a number of considerations on the comparative method. Putting aside the origins of *cēosan* and *taste*, I would like to comment on the following statement by Thundy: "To me [Knowlton] seems to imply that we should accept past linguistic scholarship as authoritative and unquestionable. On the contrary, I hold that all scholarship, especially study of the origin of the language families, is very tentative. This qualification applies to the laws of Indo-European, particularly Grimm's law, which governs the reconstruction of the consonants" of many Proto-Indo-European roots. Thundy goes on to say that "[m]ost Indo-Europeanists cite the many laws of Indo-European as gospel truths even though scholars have fought and continue to fight over them, and there remain many honest doubts about them."

The reason Thundy is "skeptical" of many Proto-Indo-European roots based on Grimm's law "is that