



# The Poetics and Politics of Youth in Milton's England

*Blaine Greteman*

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As the notion of government by consent took hold in early modern England, many authors used childhood and maturity to address contentious questions of political representation - about who has a voice and who can speak on his or her own behalf. For John Milton, Ben Jonson, William Prynne, Thomas Hobbes, and others, the period between infancy and adulthood became a site of intense scrutiny, especially as they examined the role of a literary education in turning children into political actors. Drawing on new archival evidence, Blaine Greteman argues that coming of age in the seventeenth century was a uniquely political act. His study makes a compelling case for understanding childhood as a decisive factor in debates over consent, autonomy, and political voice, and will offer graduate students and scholars a new perspective on the emergence of apolitical children's literature in the eighteenth century.

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