John Milton: The Prose Works

Thomas N Corns

John Milton, English scholar and classical poet, is one of the major figures of Western literature. He was born in 1608 into a prosperous London family. By the
John Milton is best known for *Paradise Lost*, widely regarded as the greatest epic poem in English. Together with *Paradise Regained*, it formed his reputation as one of the greatest English writers. In his prose works he advocated the abolition of the Church of England. His influence extended through the English civil wars and also to the American and French revolutions.

**Early Life & Education.** John Milton was born in London on December 9, 1608 to John and Sara Milton. He had an older sister Anne, and a younger brother Christopher, and several siblings who died before reaching adulthood. As John Milton’s career as a writer of prose and poetry spans three distinct eras: Stuart England; the Civil War (1642-1648) and Interregnum, including the Commonwealth (1649-1653) and Protectorate (1654-1660); and the Restoration. Milton’s chief polemical prose was written in the decades of the 1640s and 1650s, during the strife between the Church of England and various reformist groups such as the Puritans and between the monarch and Parliament. Designated the antiepiscopal or antiprelatical tracts and the antimonarchical or political tracts, these works advocate a freedom of conscience and a h