

Gender and the Power of Relationship: United
as one individual Soul in Paradise Lost.

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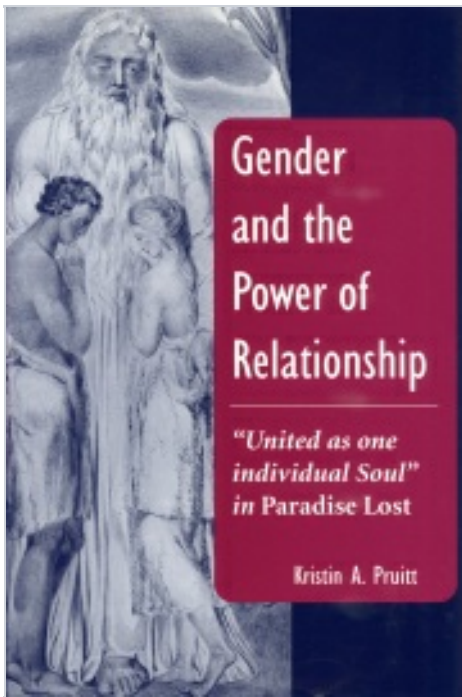
Gender and the Power
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Gender and the Power of Relationship: "United as one individual Soul" in *Paradise Lost*

By Kristin A. Pruitt

2003

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SUMMARY

In this provocative study, Kristin A. Pruitt offers a close reading of pivotal passages and critical concerns in *Paradise Lost* and examines Milton's presentation of Adam and Eve's relationship through the intersections of theology and gender in the poem. By delving into several seventeenth century commentaries on Genesis, Pruitt examines the various depictions of Eve and presents Milton's Eve and her relationship with Adam. In recent years, scholars have addressed the disparate, often contradictory positions on gender and hierarchy in *Paradise Lost*. However, Pruitt adds to the discussion another layer: that the dialectic in the poem—the parallels and reversals in structure, imagery, action, and characterization—offer a reading from multiple perspectives and means of understanding one of the poem's principal messages, which is the dual emphases on individuality versus selfhood and relationship versus union.



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