

Katherine D. Harris

From: owner-RomanticGender@listproc.sjsu.edu on behalf of bolivamegs@juno.com
Sent: Wednesday, March 08, 2006 9:01 PM
To: RomanticGender@listproc.sjsu.edu
Subject: Presentation on "Infant Sorrow"

Hello all,

In preparation for tomorrow's class, here are my discussion questions and annotated bibliography. I will be discussing the Mellor and Bender article in connection with Blake's "Infant Sorrow."

Sincerely,

Meghan Kirkpatrick

Discussion Questions <?xml:namespace prefix = o ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" /> Mellor and Bender's discussion of the text of "Infant Sorrow" is limited to the traditional reading; are there additional supportable interpretations of the text? Does the diction and imagery within the text support a single, unified theme, or multiple, competing ideas?

In other poems from "Songs of Experience" how do the engravings support or refute the texts? Going beyond what Mellor and Bender have discussed, what additional conclusions can be drawn from the interaction between Blake's words and images?

The titles, "Songs of Innocence" and "Songs of Experience," highlight the difference between these two collections of poems. However, Blake's engravings for "The Lamb" and "The Tyger" stress the subjects' similarities. In what elements does "Songs of Experience" stand in contrast to "Songs of Innocence"? On the other hand, how do these two groups of poems converge?

Annotated Bibliography

Bender, John, and Anne Mellor. "Liberating the Sister Arts: The Revolution of Blake's 'Infant Sorrow.'" ELH 50 (1983): 297-319. JSTOR. San Jose State University Lib. 15 Feb 2006 <<http://links.jstor.org>>

John Bender and Anne Mellor's article, "Liberating the Sister Arts: The Revolution of Blake's 'Infant Sorrow,'" examines the competing language and picture codes within "Infant Sorrow." They argue that the text and the engraving are contradictory, independent, and equally valid, making "Infant Sorrow" a rejection of the Sister Arts Tradition. Furthermore, Blake's divergent text and illustration destabilize the authority of language and endorse multiple, non-hierarchical, irreconcilable meanings. For Bender and Mellor, "Infant Sorrow" poses a challenge to authority in general and argues that freedom exists beyond institutional systems.

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