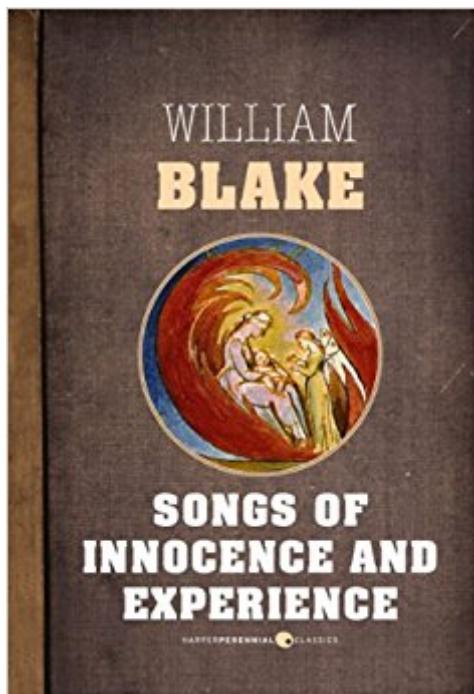


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# Songs Of Innocence And Songs Of Experience



## **Synopsis**

Songs of Innocence and Experience brings together two books of poetry by William Blake that delve into these two opposing states of the human soul. His Songs of Innocence are often cheerful and sweet and always demonstrate the purity of youth, as Blake explores themes of freedom, happiness, loss and religion. The optimism of innocence is keenly contrasted by Blake's Songs of Experience, which feature a more realistic and often darker view of the world. Originally published as two books with pages illustrated by the author, Songs of Innocence and Experience has often been considered a foundational work in Romantic period literature which surely inspired poets like Coleridge, Keats, Shelley, Wordsworth and Byron in the years that followed. HarperPerennial Classics brings great works of literature to life in digital format, upholding the highest standards in ebook production and celebrating reading in all its forms. Look for more titles in the HarperPerennial Classics collection to build your digital library.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Other users may be familiar with the .com practice of posting the Editorial reviews from a SIMILAR

product and adding marginal and easy-to-overlook footnotes stating that the posted reviews actually refer to an "alternate paperback edition." I was not aware of the practice before purchasing this book, but aside from that there is no twin footnote floating around the Customer Reviews section below the Editorials to tell you that the reviews provided are from a different book as well, nor can you see what book is ACTUALLY being reviewed unless you leave the book's page and go to See All. Most of the reviews are for this book: Songs of Innocence and Experience: Shewing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul, 1789-1794 (Worlds Classics) [Paperback] William Blake (Author, Illustrator), Sir Geoffrey Keynes (Introduction)

[http://www..com/gp/product/0192810898/ref=dp\\_proddesc\\_2?ie=UTF8&n=283155](http://www..com/gp/product/0192810898/ref=dp_proddesc_2?ie=UTF8&n=283155) Why post reviews of a book that the reviews are not for, on its own page? That is not only confusing, but misleading. The book I bought and received is the one with a portrait of Blake on the cover, and its ISBN is 97816119492998--which is not the ISBN posted in .com's Product Details section, as of June 1, 2012. lists it as xxxxxxxxxxxx2997. There are NO illustrations in this edition. In fact, there isn't any publisher information beyond "Printed in the USA" on the bottom of the first page after the cover. I have not read this book, and am not familiar enough with Blake's work to be able to determine off the cuff if there are any errors or typos. I am assuming that if you only want the poetry of Songs of Innocence and Experience, than it is probably fine--and yes, most likely free of errors/typos.

To begin with, it can be helpful to distinguish between "aesthetic" worldly poets/musicians and "vatic"/prophetic artists. Keats and Shakespeare, Ellington and Bill Evans belong in the first category; Shelley and Milton (and, of course, Dante) along with John Coltrane and Sun Ra belong in the second. Blake is the foremost representative of the latter group--the bards (Milton was his hero; America's Ezra Pound his foremost descendant). Of all the so-called "Romantic" poets, he is in many respects the most atypical. Time, its passing, its presence as "personal memory," specific referents to particular places, the fleshing-out of human figures, whether upper or lower class--all this is of little interest to the visionary prophet written off as "crazy" during his life-time, eventually canonized by the Beatniks in the 1950s, and finally admitted to respectable academia. Earthly phenomena are of little interest to him because, frankly, they have no status in reality. I deliberately steer students away from his graphic art, because its symbolic nature is poorly understood by a generation brought up on images that glorify the material world (if the emphasis isn't on the "real," it's on the surreal or "hyper-real"--but the real with which today's readers identify is anything but the spiritual cosmos that Blake finds everywhere, whether a tiger or a grain of sand. (Pity his wife, who

understandably had little patience with him.) More often than not, Blake's pictures nowadays detract from, rather than support, the poetry.

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