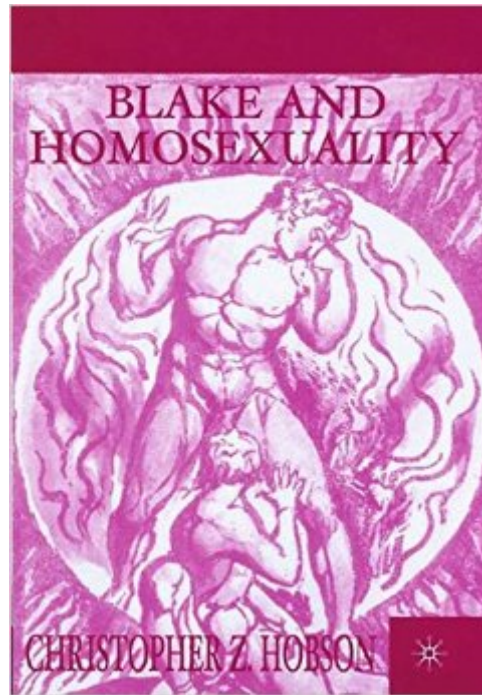


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Blake And Homosexuality



Synopsis

Against the backdrop of Britain's underground 18th and early-19th century homosexual culture, mob persecutions, and executions of homosexuals, Hobson shows how Blake's hatred of sexual and religious hypocrisy and state repression, and his revolutionary social vision, led him gradually to accept homosexuality as an integral part of human sexuality. In the process, Blake rejected the antihomosexual bias of British radical tradition, revised his idealization of aggressive male heterosexuality and his male-centered view of gender, and refined his conception of the cooperative commonwealth.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Modern scholarship has established that sexuality plays a vital role in the imaginative universe of William Blake, not simply for its own sake, but as a mordant vehicle for critiquing psychic and social realities. In this connection, it is generally assumed that Blake adhered to a conventional heterosexist view, namely that the male-female dyad is normative and the female must be subordinate to the male. In this pathfinding book Christopher Z. Hobson challenges that perception. To be sure, he acknowledges that in Blake's early work the conventional approach was indeed dominant. Over time, however, the artist-poet attained an understanding of the autonomy and value of both male homosexuality and lesbianism. In prose of remarkable clarity and conviction, Hobson firmly establishes this point through a close examination of particular passages in Blake's texts and images. This book is a major contribution to Blake scholarship. The only downside is that the illustrations are relatively few and some are murky. Yet this lack usefully serves to direct the reader

to other sources of Blake's images, notably the William Blake archive, easily accessible on the Internet.

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