

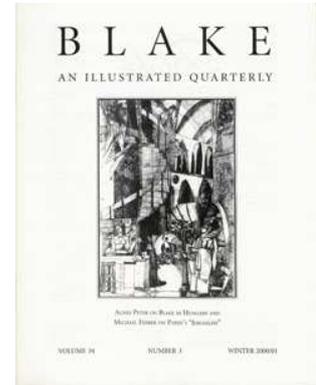
AN ILLUSTRATED QUARTERLY
BLAKE

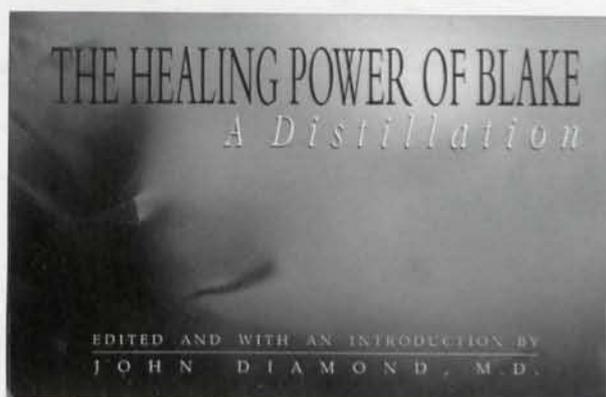
N E W S

John Diamond, The Healing Power of Blake

Patricia Neill

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John Diamond. *The Healing Power of Blake*. Bloomington, IL: Creativity Publishing, 1998. \$14.95. The author of this charming little book is a medical doctor. Dr. Diamond, rather than relying on the current medical model of treating the disease rather than the patient, prefers to concentrate "on the positive—the sufferer's innate healing power, his spirit, his life Energy." In other words, Diamond posits that poetry has a therapeutic power to actuate a person's own ability to heal: "All creativity has the power to raise the Life Energy, the healing power within, the *vis medicatrix naturae* of Hippocrates. And poetry is no exception, in fact its ability is second only to that of music—and when it is sung it is, of course, the equal." As he says in the Introduction, he finds the poems of Blake to "have the greatest Healing Power."

The book is a compendium of extracts from Blake's works, the prophetic books for the most part. And, as such, may not be of much interest to Blake scholars. However, the book might find its way into the hands of other types of readers, such as those folks interested in alternative forms of medicine.

I can say that the book did nothing for the raging migraine I had, or for my back, when I pulled some muscles. But it did have a nice effect during a recent head cold, when I mellowed out with some ginger tea and *The Healing Power of Blake*. Also, if I put the book on my head, my posture straightens up quite nicely. For \$14.95, that's not a bad deal.

—Patricia Neill

"Born in 1757 the son of an Irish hosier, Blake was an astonishingly talented man, who became a poet, painter, engraver and mystic, championing the freedom of the imagination and expressing a hatred of materialism and rationalism.

Jah Wobble's musical CV includes playing with the likes of Peter Gabriel, Brian Eno, Björk, Dodgy and Sinéad O'Connor. In a rare, one-off London show, the former member of Public Image LTD pays homage to one of England's most famous Romantic Poets in an evening of dub-driven soundscapes and cinematic projections."

THE BLAKE SOCIETY AT ST. JAMES'S "Programme 2000"

19 September

May Sung (St. Mary's College)

A Reconsideration of Execution and Conception: The Evidence of Blake's Job Copperplates

May Sung is a Ph.D. student at St. Mary's College, Strawberry Hill. Her study of the surviving plates for Blake's illustrations to the Book of Job has thrown up fascinating evidence about Blake's working methods. The myriad corrections, erasures, and second thoughts (*pentimenti*) upon the copperplates contradict what has become, following Joseph Viscomi's *Blake and the Idea of the Book* (1993), the conventional view of Blake's creative process.

17 October

Susanne Schmid (Free University of Berlin)

Blake and Germany

Dr. Susanne Schmid has lectured at the Free University of Berlin since 1994. She has written a study on myth in contemporary women's fiction (1996), and an introduction to Byron, Shelley and Keats (1999).

1 December

Dee Drake (Stockholm University)

Blake's Hecate Color Print: A Celebration of Infernal Female Desire

Dee Drake was recently awarded a doctorate by Stockholm University for her study "Searing Apparent Surfaces: Infernal Females in Four Early Works of William Blake."

She writes: "It is my contention that the infernal constitutes an essential female element of the divine in Blake's early work but is demonized in the late work as an attribute of the Female Will."