

Spring 2019

Experiences of the Innocent in Wordsworth's Poetry

Sarah Nix

University of North Georgia, sjcarn7063@ung.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.northgeorgia.edu/eng_capstone

Part of the [Literature in English, Anglophone outside British Isles and North America Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Nix, Sarah, "Experiences of the Innocent in Wordsworth's Poetry" (2019). *Department of English Capstone Abstracts*. 33.
https://digitalcommons.northgeorgia.edu/eng_capstone/33

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of English at Nighthawks Open Institutional Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Department of English Capstone Abstracts by an authorized administrator of Nighthawks Open Institutional Repository.

Sarah Nix

Title: Experiences of the Innocent in Wordsworth's Poetry

Wordsworth often incorporates children in his poetry as beings essentially synonymous with nature, who are able to understand life in ways far superior to adults because of a lack of worldly experience. He suggests that their innocence gives them an undefiled insight to certain eternal truths such as love and death. The children in Wordsworth's poetry are described as hopeful, joyous, untainted individuals who are able to face adversity head-on because of their closeness to nature. Wordsworth generally writes adults as individuals who have forgotten the divinity of nature because experience has tarnished their ability to comprehend eternal truths that children are still in tune with. Despite Wordsworth's claim that children are essentially innocent, these children are not innocent all; in fact they have developed such deep understandings of love and death because of extremely traumatic experiences, making them more like adults than Wordsworth claims. The children in Wordsworth's poetry are manifestations of his own understanding of love and death, incorporating some of his biography and revealing that these children are more like adults, specifically Wordsworth himself, than if we take the poet at his word. Clearly, the children in his poems do not develop a vast understanding of complex eternal truths through simply being innocent, but because they have overcome difficult situations, they serve as a representation of Wordsworth's own epiphanies which he acquired through personal tragic life experiences.