

BENNA

Antiguan folksongs, or **benna**, symbolize sexuality, a subject the mother fears her daughter already knows too much about. Historically, native Antiguan sang **benna** to secretly spread scandalous rumors and gossip under the uncomprehending British people's noses.

Singing **benna** in Sunday school, therefore, represents not only disobedience but also sinful, forbidden knowledge that can't be discussed openly in public, let alone in church. Even though the daughter may not consciously equate **benna** with sexuality as her mother does, her protestations nevertheless suggest she knows full well **benna's** seductive power, mystique, and forbidden qualities.