Letter to the Editor

for the unconscious as he encouragingly speaks to
the reader who has not yet dared to descend into
it." Blake also claims to speak the "Testimony of
Jesus" and "God's words," thus utilizing the
archetypes of Christ and God to preserve his
conscious ego in the face of an overwhelming un-
consciousness. Blake thereby identifies his first-
person voice with that Self that includes both the
conscious and the unconscious. Gallant then dis-
cussed the nine first-person passages in Jeru-
salem. The first six (1:1-5, 5:16-26, 15:4-36, 36:58-9,
34:27-48, 74:14-75:27) tell of Blake's life in an
Ulro that grows closer and closer and in which he
is increasingly separated from Jesus; the last
three (97:5, 98:40-41, 99:5) define Blake's hard-
won conviction that he has guided us through Ulro
to the divine vision. By using the first-person
voice in the last line of the poem, Gallant
concluded, Blake emphasizes that this is a journey
that we must each undergo, again and again.

Robert N. Essick's "William Blake: The Print-
maker as Poet" traced Blake's use of imagery drawn
from his etching and engraving techniques. The
minute particulars of his discussion are too rich
to be crudely summarized; readers should go to his
forthcoming book on Blake as a printmaker (Princeton
University Press, 1979) for a full exposition of
this imagery. But his concluding argument can be
described. Blake had a love-hate relationship with
his commercial profession. He deliberately identi-
fied many of his printmaking activities with Urizen,
thus suggesting that "commercial copy engraving
could become a trap, a degradation of the artist's
vision, and an aesthetic-economic system antithetical
to Blake's highest aspirations." On the other hand,
print-making can be "a medium for the expression of
imagination and the transcendence of this world";
and Blake received Urizen's unintelligible forms
in the process of printing. As Essick emphasizes,
"Urizen does not print his books. The renewal
inherent in the printing process makes all the
difference, just as it does in various forms of
turning around, converting a state into its contrary,
transforming finite into infinite— at key points in
the journey towards apocalypse in Blake's poetry." Through Milton, The Four Zoas and Jerusalem, Blake
struggled to define the proper relationship of
craft to art, of his potentially destructive Spectre
to the imagination of Los. As Essick concluded,
"the drama of Los and his Spectre in Jerusalem is
in part a mythic portrayal of the subordination of
copy work to original composition presented in the
Public Address and a vast metaphor for the redemption
of traditional techniques underlying the maturation
of Blake's graphic style from 1804 to the end of his
life." Finally, Essick suggested that the physical
labor and disciplined energy required of the engraver
acted as a necessary counter-balance to Blake's
"speculative and digressive mind," enabling him to
combine in his best poems "his mental adventures
and his keen sense of physical reality."

Morton Paley's essay on "Blake's Spectre" emphasized the personal aspect of the Spectre, i.e.,
Blake's Spectre as the embodiment of what Blake
didn't like about himself, namely his fearful
anxiety, his hostility (both passive and active),
his envy, pride, and black melancholy, and his

 extreme sexual jealousy. Paley stressed Blake's
use of the Spectre to reveal his "deep ambivalence
about sexual feeling" in "My Spectre around me";
Blake characteristicly separated sexual desire
(which he associated with the Spectre) from a
healthy love, and thus, Paley concluded, Blake is
far from being "the exemplum of sexual harmony that
some readers may wish to make him."

Paley then analyzed the strategies that Blake
used to dominate and control his own evil "spectrous"
feelings. He first had to recognize them, as Los
does when he divides the Spectre from his Emanation
(7:86:54); he then attempted to dominate and control
them. But rather than merely casting them out,
which Blake knew well could not be easily or
permanently done, Blake offered an alternative
solution. In Night Vila of The Four Zoas and on
plate 100 of Jerusalem, Blake envisioned a
triumphant resolution in which his healthy imagi-
nation embraced the Spectre, acknowledging that the
Spectre too has his place in the story. Only by
coming to terms with his own jealousies, pride and
vindictiveness could Blake attain his ultimate
vision of imaginative unity: "Therefore the Sons
of Eden praise Urthonas Spectre in songs / Because
he kept the Divine Vision in time of trouble."

The questioning centered on the degree of
success Blake achieved in his acceptance of and
control over his Spectre, and especially on whether
he liberated himself from a possessive, sexist
attitude toward women (let me say, parenthetically,
that I happen to think he did not). Even if Blake's
self is imaged in his poetry as finally integrated,
does that integration lead to productive relations-
ships with other people, and especially with women?
It was suggested that these questions could be
fruitfully explored in another MLA Special Session
on Blake and sexuality. ANNE K. MELLOR, STANFORD
UNIVERSITY.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editors:
Without wishing to seem ungracious to Mr. Andrew
Wilton for his generous review of my Samuel Palmer
a Biography and The Letters of Samuel Palmer, may
I make one observation?

In the latter Mr. Wilton takes me to task for
my transcription of a phrase from a letter of 1839,
viz., "inveighed Hannah into the conspiracy," and
he says the word "must be 'inveigled.'" Has Mr.
Wilton examined the MSS? If not, I can assure him
that "inveighed" is what is written in the origin-
als. If Mr. Wilton consults The Shorter Oxford
English Dictionary he will see that one meaning of
inveigle is "to entice, inveigle." Raymond Lister
Wolfson College
Cambridge
15 December 1978