that the term *Daemon* here is benevolent and not at all pejorative. I mean that he is not diabolical, consciously evil, though he may be mischievous, as Goethe said of the daemonic in theory (see quote, p. 1037). This lover has had a very bad effect upon the wailing Woman already, for he has caused her to become disoriented from humanity and actuality, just as Keats's elfin lady in *La Belle Dame sans merci* has caused her knight to become so; but she is not evil and diabolical, as I have pointed out in *The Daemonic in The Poetry of Keats* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1970), pp. 125–50. Quite properly, since the word for *daemon* in Greek meant *spirit*, the tutelary daemon of the region in *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, who was offended by the killing of the bird, is first called "the Spirit that plagued us so" in line 132 and accompanying gloss, thus signifying some pejorative meaning even before he is designated a daemon in the gloss accompanying line 402 where he is again called a "spirit." I did not have to use the manuscript text of *Kubla Khan* in order to make a valid comparison, as Nethercot says, for the two concepts of demon can be compared without the word. I used the manuscript more especially because it contains Abyssinian *Mount Amara* rather than unknown *Abora*, has the poet's incantatory dome built "of air" rather than "in air," and shows the poem to have only two stanzas or divisions.

But all this throws too much emphasis upon the "wailing Woman" and her "Daemon Lover," who are not actually in the poem but are only mentioned to convey the atmosphere of the "deep romantic chasm." I am merely saying that, taken to be a supramortal, amoral master of the *delights of love*, rather than an intrinsically evil creature, this Daemon Lover is a harbinger of the Abyssinian maid with the dulcimer, who is both a master of the supramortal, amoral *delights of song* and the chanting poet's very suitable muse (ll. 37–45), whose marvelous inspiration this poet is longing to regain just as the wailing Woman is longing to regain the supramortal love that makes all human sexual love pale into insignificance by comparison. Therefore, the Daemon Lover and the Abyssinian maid have a similar relationship to the wailing Woman and to the chanting poet respectively as that relationship which *the poet comes to have to his hypothetical listeners at the end*, for they are almost completely enchanted by his seemingly supramortal song, just as the poet is captivated by his Abyssinian maid-muse and the wailing Woman by her Daemon Lover. The whole piece, poem or fragment, is thus given discernible harmony and tighter unity by this concatenation of suggestion running all through it.

Finally, my interpretation rests primarily upon an analysis of the structure of the whole that throws emphasis upon this chanting poet and the startling responses of his projected listeners at the end. Through them we discover, as Elizabeth Schneider has shown (n. 8, p. 1040), that he is one of Plato's daemonically inspired lyrists, carried out of himself into a *furor divinus* and thereby conveying momentarily a glimpse of the terrifying beauty of a daemon world beyond the pale of humanity. Readers seem to share that glimpse. Hence the piece seems to be an attempt at a daemonically inspired incantation such as Plato discusses. It is thus a poem about the creation of a limited kind of poetry within the Dionysian strain, not about the creative process of poetry generally. Hence Coleridge's own reservations about the piece.

CHARLES I. PATTERSON, JR.
University of Georgia

"Risk and Redundancy"

To the Editor:

Liane Norman's thesis in "Risk and Redundancy" (*PMLA*, 90, 1975, 285–91) rests on what she calls the "balancing mechanism" between redundancy and risk. But such a mechanism, descriptive though it may be of some sorts of cognition, implies an opposition that rarely obtains in literature. A stronger emphasis on the *positively* motivating characteristics of imaginative risk would obviate the apparent circularity whereby communication is a precondition for communication; and it would avoid the apparent contradiction whereby the communication of a painful message mitigates the pain of the message.

"Novelty" theories of perception suggest that we learn most efficiently when there is an "optimal discrepancy" between new and familiar stimuli or schemata. In fact, some psychologists think that the need for novel stimulation is a "drive" to rival hunger. Such a hypothesis is congruent with much traditional *and* contemporary literary theory. Instead of the reluctant, passively "educable" reader implied by Norman's remarks—the reader as an old horse stroked and spurred along by a skillful rider—critics from Aristotle to Georges Poulet (and Stanley Fish and Wolfgang Iser) have portrayed an active audience whose instruction is closely tied to its delight. (Norman's references to Morse Peckham and Stanley Fish show that her fault is one of emphasis rather than of knowledge.) Father Ong ("The Writer's Audience Is Always a Fiction," *PMLA*, 90, 1975, 9–21) complements conceptions of the active reader by reminding us that since the reader is not present to the writer he must be fictionalized in the text. Which is to say that we must collaborate with the author to realize our roles, we must re-create "ourselves." Such re-creation entails the "risky" freedom of relocating the communal coordinates of distance and intimacy. It constitutes one of the great appeals of the written word.

Even in the fairly discursive passage Norman quotes from Milton (pp. 286–87), the reader and the writer are fictionalized. Redundancy reinforces the fictionalization and specific patterns of *conventional* redundancy alert the reader to its operation. But in spite of repeated rhythms and syntactic structures, the "proposition" that Norman paraphrases is repeated only twice, not seven times—each sentence does not "reiterate" the one before it. What Norman calls the "metaphorical 'play'" or the "subtle variations" (p. 287) that must be anchored by redundancy are themselves the major vehicles for molding the community between writer and reader.

The reader who reaches the passage in question probably has been convinced of Milton's intelligence and integrity. His knowledge of Milton, of rhetorical conventions, and of Milton's promise to demonstrate a paradoxical equivalence between the suppression of other and the suppression of self prepares him to receive elevated ideas amplified in a figurative style. It remains for Milton to convince him of his own (the reader's) ineluctable integrity. This is accomplished by flattering the reader's intelligence both explicitly and implicitly. A spiral of parallelism and antithesis elevates the main "characters," "you" and "us," above the "they . . . from whom ye have freed us" as it draws us closer. Each ascending turn that "you" make with "us" further justifies "our" confidence in "you"; and each is itself a vote of confidence. Most of the repetition serves the upward *motion* of the reading which is its message. (Few readers would fail to *paraphrase* the passage accurately given only its first and fifth sentences.) The reader must experience his own "free" sweep into "capaciousness," etc. He makes the heady flight from his best motives (as a literal or analogical MP) to their result in "enlarged" communion. Just as the reader is supposed to have fathered "our" wit, here he is made morally responsible for "our" brainchild by re-creating it.

Again, the reader is not only "implicated" by the message of Blake's "London" (p. 288), he is involved in the fictive time/space of the poem's performance. In fact, his participation must be even more active than in Milton's prose—partly because his role is not specified by the second-person pronoun. He must place himself continually as he reads, identifying with and/or distinguishing himself from both the lyric "I" and "every face." But the conventional context, the printed page and what we might call the specialized "redundancy" of the poetic line, signals his freedom to establish these identifications and distinctions without risking actual "weakness" or "woe." At least for the duration of the poem he can be at once part of and apart from the crowd. He can "wander" with Blake not only across the "charters" of institutional identity but across the boundaries separating the several meanings of single words. In the experience of reading he actively "marks" his own "marks." A shared condition becomes a shared act of vision.

We must participate still more actively in *Notes from the Underground* than we do in Milton or Blake (p. 289), for as Norman indicates, we must *reject* the ostensible role offered us by Dostoevsky's narrator. Or, more accurately, we must assimilate it to a deeper understanding of the relationship between the implied reader and the implied writer. But I would suggest that we "stay with" the Underground Man largely *because* of his improbable charms—blatant unreliability and "open contempt for his readers" (p. 289). For the narrator "exists" midway between the author and an imagined audience as an objectification of a common subjective condition. His meaning resides in a sense of isolation overcome partially and with great difficulty. When the narrator tells us that we "probably will not understand," we see that he is describing *both* an experience of our reading and an experience of our lives. We too have thoughts that we half hope and half fear that the world will not understand. Thus we can sense that the speaker's attack is also a defense and that his insults are also coy invitations. The Underground Man's skeptical "prescience" obliquely expresses the implied author's confidence in our willingness and ability to perform an act of reciprocal double vision. And this sort of double vision, this intimacy over distance, is the special communion made necessary and possible by the written word.

Jeffrey Albert
Brandeis University

Ms. Norman replies:

It is gracious of Jeffrey Albert to allow that, regarding "Risk and Redundancy," my "fault is one of emphasis rather than of knowledge." I confess that all his high-powered and learned language both confuses and wearies me.

My idea is not that the reader is passively educable, but that he is very active indeed in what he reads. Delight is part of it, of course, but there is a fair amount of risk in venturing into new realms of imagined existence precisely because normal identity is abandoned, however temporarily, and sometimes not fully recovered. I agree with Albert: there are great rewards in the relationships established imaginatively. In fact, I have no idea what he is so exercised about.

Liane Norman
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania