

Jaachi David

Prof. Justin Dixon

ACC Technology, Media, and Lit.

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### Frankenstein Reader Response Essay

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* tells the story of a talented scientist in Victor Frankenstein who becomes obsessed with reanimating a lifeless corpse. Eventually Frankenstein does accomplish this feat, but he lives to regret it as his new creation is nothing like he expected. This story is still heavily discussed because of its relevance to our world today. This novel serves as a cautionary tale for us today for what could happen if we try to step beyond our boundaries in the world of science. The story also touches a soft spot for me because I can't help but relate Frankenstein's experiences that of my own.

With this story, Shelley is trying to warn us of what could happen if we continue trying to use technology and knowledge for our own selfish reasons. "A new species would bless me as its creator and source; many happy and excellent natures would owe their being to me" (92). Here Victor is thinking about how he will be seen by others if he can pull off this accomplishment that no one else has ever done. He makes himself seem godlike when he talks about being a "creator". I believe that Victor did truly want to push the boundaries of science to new heights, but I also believe that it was fueled by his arrogance and his obsession to become like God.

When talking about God and the story, I can't help but think back to *Paradise Lost* by John Milton. Here we have Adam who has just been kicked out of the Garden of Eden and he's

trying to appeal to God basically asking for another chance. If we look at the similarities between this story and Frankenstein, we can see that the monster is acting as Adam and of course Victor is acting as God. Both Adam and Frankenstein's monster weren't asked to be created. "Did I request thee, Maker, from my Clay To mould me Man, did I sollicite thee From darkness to promote me, or here place In this delicious Garden" (Milton 743-746). Adam is asking God why he was made in the first place and then to make matters worse put into a Garden filled with delicacies. "Cursed, cursed creator! Why did I live? Why, in that instant, did I not extinguish the spark of existence which you had so wantonly bestowed? I know not; despair had not yet taken possession of me; my feelings were those of rage and revenge" (Shelley 146). Frankenstein's monster also questions his existence and wishes his creator would've just left him dead. There is also a similarity between Victor and Adam though. Adam was sent out from the Garden of Eden because he ate from the Tree of Good and Evil trying to expand his knowledge to be like God. Him doing this led to a lot of the pain we face in the world. Victor also wanted to expand his knowledge of life and death by reanimating this corpse. This ultimately led to the monster killing off all of Frankenstein's close friends and family. Shelley was trying to warn readers about the dangers of expanding knowledge for the purpose of someone's own selfish goals.

While reading Frankenstein, I related much of it to that of my own life. Now I'm not at all trying to compare our two experiences. My father is in my life but sometimes it feels as though he doesn't want his children or he feels like his life would've been better off not having kids. The same thing is clearly seen in Frankenstein. Victor shows no affection towards his creation. On the contrary, he shows disgust and hate towards him. The emotions that I experience

when I feel this way is bad enough so I can't even begin to imagine how Frankenstein's monster is feeling throughout the story.

Frankenstein stands a good reference for what society can become when we try to gain knowledge and apply it for evil purposes. It's also a warning for what can happen if you try to push the moral limits of science and it's a soft spot for me because of the similarities between Frankenstein and my own father.