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Frankenstein written by Mary Shelley, was a novel set in Europe written in the mid 1800s, but set in the late 1700s. Throughout this time period, Europe was undergoing drastic social and economic changes. Many of these changes were a direct result of the Industrial Revolution in Britain.

This time period is often described as an era of exploration, discovery, and industrialization which pushed the limits of what the world was capable of. Within Frankenstein Victor Frankenstein's life after creating the monster is a depiction of how Mary Shelley feared technological advancement without consideration of consequences, and she came to this opinion because of the effects of the Industrial Revolution on her life. She became wary of advancement simply for the sake of advancement. She forced her readers to ask themselves what price is too high to gain knowledge?

The Industrial Revolution is defined by Britannica as the process of change from an agrarian and handicraft economy to one dominated by industry and machine manufacturing (Britannica). Mary Shelley's Frankenstein serves as a critique to what

In the novel, Victor Frankenstein aimed to create life and nothing could stand in his way. He worked fervidly to create what he deemed as the perfect human. The summer months passed while I was thus engaged, heart and soul, in one pursuit (41). Victor drove himself to the brink of death from his relentless obsession with this creation.

He became so entangled with his task that he ended up neglecting his family, his friends, his career, and any concern for his own life. This discovery of such dangerous knowledge sucked all emotion and joy from his

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life and only served to cause him pain. His situation continued to worsen, as his creation systematically destroyed his entire life. Everyone he had ever cared for was strangled and Victor spent the remainder of his life in constant misery.

Though Victor's discovery of how to create life is amazing, reason and truth are unable to exist without emotion. The introduction of advanced technology and knowledge did not only affect those that had created or possessed the technology and knowledge, but rather it created problems and raised awareness of issues among the common people in Europe which in turn led to their disapproval of the overall industrial revolution phase.

Even though the continuous introduction of new machinery during the period of the Industrial Revolution generally made everyday life much easier, people didn't quite trust machines to do their jobs and most would prefer to stick to more natural methods of production. This can easily be seen within Frankenstein. When Victor's monster was created it was basically a machine, created mainly for the purpose of experimentation and discovery. When the monster attempted to become a member of society, he was feared and even hated by society because of his unnatural origins.

When Mary Shelley first published Frankenstein, she included a subtitle with it. That subtitle was The Modern Prometheus. Over time, the subtitle's use in print shrank until it was hardly ever used, but the comparison between Frankenstein and a tale from ancient lore is one worth exploring. In classical Greek mythology, Prometheus is credited as the creator of the first humans.

He shaped mankind with clay from the earth, which Athena then proceeded to breathe life into.

As the creator and even father of mankind, Prometheus provided for them and equipped them with the skills necessary for survival. Prometheus's story continues when he steals the secrets of fire from the gods and gives them to man, which Zeus- the king of the gods- punished him for. He stole fire from the gods for man to encourage their growth and to enable them to thrive and discover new and amazing things.

The subtitle *The Modern Prometheus* is juxtaposed with the primary title; Shelley compares Victor Frankenstein to the mythological father of mankind. The most obvious similarity between the two is that both characters form a living creature out of inanimate matter. Frankenstein's goals are focused on creating a new species [that] would bless me as its creator and source; many happy and excellent natures would owe their being to me. No father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as I should deserve of theirs (40).

In the Romantic era, Prometheus became thought of as a symbol for modern civilization and intelligence, as well as scientific discovery. Victor also, in his early stages of growth, felt as if the world was to me was a secret which I desired to divine (22). His desire to discover the hidden secrets of the world drew him to look further than what was natural for man to create. Victor longed to go farther into the realm of scientific knowledge and to expand the potential of human development.

But just like Prometheus, going past the natural limitations of what man is capable brings about consequences. Prometheus was castigated for caring for his creations too well by providing for them the necessary tools of progress. Victor, on the other hand, is revolted by his creation, and they eventually turn on each other.

Victor's creation of the monster is a reflection of the Industrial Revolution and a scientific era that pushed the borders of what was possible. Mary Shelley depicts a society that is forced to face a monster of their own creation.