

A summary of possessing nature



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In the critical essay *Possessing Nature: The Female in Frankenstein*, Anne K. Mellor states that a society for only men is Frankenstein's vision of creating a hidden good. Frankenstein constructed a male monster and will not develop a female creature due to the fact that he felt there was no reason for a female to exist within his race of immortal beings. Mary Shelley portrayed that Victor Frankenstein's desire to become a sole creator to suppress the value of women and to associate females with private affairs and males with public affairs, this would have consequences.

The first consequence is that males would not be able to create a balance between their intellectual and emotional activities. Frankenstein displays this when he cannot focus on his scientific research and love Elizabeth at the same time. The second consequence is that the division of sexual labour is the reason for the destruction of so many women in the novel. The third consequence is that women are unable to effectively function within the public realm. The De Lacys are a family which show value in self-sacrifice, "all work is shared equally in an atmosphere of rational companionship, mutual concern and love" (pg 277).

Mary Shelley uses this family to suggest that injustice is caused from the lack of feminine affections and compassion. An attitude of female sexuality is created through the separate spheres of society. This attitude is highlighted when he speaks of his fears during the creation of the female monster. He fears of the independent free will that the monster could possess that couldn't be controlled by man and he worries that the female will develop desires that are sadistic. Also, he expresses fear that his creation will not like the female or that the female will prefer ordinary males.

Lastly, Frankenstein fears the reproductive powers of the female monster and that she will create a whole new species of immortal beings. The destruction of his female creature parallels the destruction of his wife Elizabeth. Her death exposes Victor Frankenstein's greatest fear of female's sexuality and that he desires her more when she has passed. Frankenstein has more passion relationships with men. The fear of female sexuality and female reproduction are reflected both in Victor Frankenstein and as well in the patriarchal society which exists.

Science technologies and laws of polis are used to maintain the patriarchal order by manipulating, controlling and repressing women. Frankenstein's monster becomes his instrument to implement his most potent desire to rape, possess, and destroy females. Through the creation of his monster, he assumes that he can violate nature but this is unattainable for nature repels and revenges upon him. Firstly, nature denies his mental and physical health. Then nature prevents the creation of a normal being and causes him to despise his own creation and lead to the destruction of his world.

Nature also pursues him with lightning, thunder and rain which mimics "the very electricity he has stolen" (pg 282). Lastly, nature denies Victor Frankenstein the right of natural procreation when Elizabeth is killed on the night of their wedding. Despite the effects that nature sprung on Frankenstein, it was consistent in rewarding those who found beauty within it, those who cultivated her and demanded a sacrifice of the individual to provide for the greater good. The De Lacy family displays a high value for the greater good in comparison to Victor Frankenstein who is focused on individual needs.