

Mary shelley's
frankenstein and
william golding's lord
of the flies



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In this essay, I will study how the distortion of virtuousness is portrayed in Mary Shelley's 'Frankenstein' and William Golding's 'Lord of the flies'. I am going to be concentrating on the characters of Jack and the 'creation' in the particular novels. My focus will follow their deterioration from innocuous characters with no past of violence to their fall into treachery and deceit. When we are first introduced to the characters they are innocent. Jack is the leader of the choir at a public school and we associate this with being of high moral character.

We can also see that he has a child like naivety because he believes that he should be 'chief' because he '... can sing C sharp', which shows us he has an unbroken voice and is immature. The creation of Frankenstein is pure with no knowledge of good or evil and starts with a child-like innocence, which is similar to Jack. The monster is a creation that the creator '... had worked hard [on] for nearly two years for the sole purpose of infusing life into an inanimate body' and has no previous misdemeanour.

This is similar to the character of Jack because he is only a young boy and was brought up with a wealthy background, shielded from the evils in the world. Both Golding and Shelley created these characters like this so that the reader has an impartial view of their characters. As the novels proceed, the reader can see why the characters start their downfall into corruption. The first time we see the evil in Jack emerge is at the beginning of the novel when he is asked what he wants the choir to be.

He proposes the choir should be 'hunters', this shows us the other side of Jack, and we can see that he has a bloodthirsty and evil streak inside him

that wants to kill. In 'Frankenstein', the first time we get a glimpse of the immorality of the creation is when his own creator is 'unable to endure the being [he] had created' and this shows us that the creation must be evil if his own creator has 'disgust fill his heart' after he realises what he has created. The reader soon becomes conscious of the characters' increasing ferociousness as the novel's authors expose the plot.

In 'Lord of the flies', Jack starts to become increasingly savage and he decides he needs a 'barb on [his] spear' to aid him in his hunting. This shows us his growing malevolence because it implies that he intends to kill again, though only a pig at this stage in the novel. In 'Frankenstein' we become aware of the creation's quest for vengeance on his creator and he tells the reader that his 'feelings were those of rage and revenge', this gives the reader an insight to the plot of the novel and it shows his growing aggression towards his creator.

Humiliation and rejection play a key role in the causes of the characters' aggressive behaviour. In 'Lord of the flies', Jack is humiliated when he isn't appointed 'Chief' and his hunters fail to back him up. We see a new vulnerable and sensitive side to Jack that we have not seen before at this point, when he has 'Humiliating tears... running from the corner of each eye because his 'hunters' have rejected him. This kind of rejection occurs in 'Frankenstein' too. Frankenstein's creation is discarded by his own creator but also by mankind in general because 'All men hate the wretched.

He is left feeling 'Miserable' and hurt because as he says to Victor Frankenstein, 'you my creator detest and spurn me'. This shows us that the

creation is capable of human feelings and emotions and is not just a machine. This rejection results in a dramatic increase in the characters' lawless behaviour and their demise into corruption accelerates. Due to Jack's departure from the main group, he decides to establish his own 'tribe' where 'Anyone who wants to hunt when I do can come...' this leads to the boys becoming more savage and hunting more frequently.

Golding also creates Jack as the dictator of the 'tribe' and at the feast 'Jack, painted and garlanded sat there like an idol.' Jack believes in the status that he has given himself and the other boys need that strength of character in this difficult time, so they do not question it. As both of the novels draw to a close, we can clearly see the degree of the characters' distortion. We can see just how different and evil Jack has become when he commands the rest of his 'tribe' to '... throw [their] spears like at a pig' at Ralph in order to kill him.

This type of brutal murder also occurs in 'Frankenstein' and is committed by the creation, when 'The murderous mark of the fiends grasp was on her neck', meaning that the creation viciously murders Elizabeth. These murders (or attempts) symbolize the characters' loss of both morality and civility due to the evil they have encountered in their lives. The two novels have very diverse endings for the characters of Jack and the creation. In 'Lord of the Flies', Jack is returned back to humanity as if nothing had taken place on the island.

As the novel climaxes at the end, when Jack is at his most malevolent, the boys are rescued by 'a naval officer' who just thinks the boys have been

having 'Fun and games,' which is very ironic since Ralph was nearly killed by Jack and his tribe. This is the first time we see Jack as he really is, 'A little boy...' Whereas in 'Frankenstein' the creation incurs a more ominous and perhaps tragic fate as he tells the reader that he 'shall collect [his] funeral pile, and consume to ashes this miserable frame'.

By this, he means that he is now prepared to die for his sins and the loss of his creator and because he has had such an ill-fated life, he believes that he should die to repay society. These two endings juxtapose each other because one leaves us searching for justice, and the other satisfied but also slightly saddened. The use of figurative or metaphorical expression in both of these novels is clearly evident and used for the protagonists in the two novels.

The metaphorical language used in 'Frankenstein' when the creation is taught to read is used to denote the creation's ability to have human thoughts, feeling, and ability to become a member of society. Because he is taught to read, we can also see that it symbolises the fact that because he is different he is taught to fit in and attempt to become 'human'. This is similar to the symbolical meaning of the conch in 'Lord of the flies' because this is used to represent the social rules that exist in the 'real world'. When it is smashed all these rules disappear and chaos reigns over the island.

Animal imagery is used in 'Lord of the flies' to describe the choir as a '... Creature [that] stepped from a mirage...' I think that this makes the choir sound quite sinister, even though at this stage in the book they are still unspoiled schoolboys, so maybe this is an indication of the sinister things to

come later on in the novel. These vivid descriptions are similar to some of the imagery used in 'Frankenstein' when the creation is described as being an 'animal'. Similes are also used in the novel and especially when describing the conch to make it sound more beautiful 'and like a star'.

Beautiful imagery similar to this helps to balance all the bad things described in this novel. Metaphorical and symbolic language is used mainly to help us imagine what the authors are trying to convey in our minds more clearly but also to reinforce both good and bad things in the novel. The narrative perspectives used in the two novels differs in that 'Frankenstein' is written in the first person narrative most of the time, especially by Victor Frankenstein and uses language such as 'I rushed out of the room'.

The effect of this narrative and the fact it is in the past tense makes the novel like a diary and it makes the reader feel drawn in and more involved. This is different to the narrative used in the 'Lord of the flies', here third person narrative is used with language such as 'The two boys trotted down the beach.' This kind of narrative makes you feel as if you are actually there with the boys, but not involved, I think it also makes the boys on the island seem more isolated from the outside world.

In Frankenstein though more than one narrative is used, we can see different narrative perspectives especially in letters, and this mixed up narrative helps to symbolize confusion and disorder in the novel. Frankenstein is structured in chapters with long paragraphs and long sentences at the beginning and they are well punctuated and flowing. As the creation descends into evil and corruption the paragraphs and sentences start to get shorter again

symbolising disorder and chaos, for example ' my spirit will sleep in peace; or if it thinks, it will not surely think thus.

Farewell'. This is similar to the structural style used in ' Lord of the flies' because towards the end of the novel the sentences become broken and unfinished and gradually get shorter, for example ' But some-? " this again represents the chaos that is controlling the island. When Ralph speaks like this however, it is because he became confused and began to lose clarity in his thoughts and speeches, and'... was puzzled by the shutter that flickered in his brain. There was something he wanted to say; then the shutter had come down.

When Ralph does not finish his sentences it represents the fact that his health is deteriorating due to malnutrition and he starts to forget things, not only that occurred on the island but also of the ' real world'. I think another similarity between the two novels is in the way that the authors portray the corruption of innocence by removing authoritative figures from the characters' environment. In ' Lord of the flies Jack did not have adults with him as a superior and responsible authority. Because of this, he began to lose his fear of being punished for improper actions and behaviour.

The freedom offered to Jack by the island allowed him to express the darker sides of his personality that were repressed by his past environment and this freedom along with his malicious and arrogant personality made it possible for him to quickly degenerate into a savage. He put on paint, first to camouflage himself from the pigs. However, he discovered that the paint allowed him to hide the forbidden thoughts in his mind that his facial

expressions would otherwise show and' The mask was a thing on its own behind which Jack hid, liberated from shame and self-consciousness'.

This is similar to the creation in Frankenstein because his creator abandons him and he is left to fend and think for himself. He did not have anyone to teach him appropriate behaviour, civility, or self-discipline, and because of this, he got the boundaries of right and wrong confused. The creation needed guidance from his creator but didn't received it, he said ' Remember that I am thy creature' which shows us that he thinks he is the property of Victor Frankenstein and should therefore be guided by him.

Jack was corrupted by public school- belief in status. Society and their prejudice corrupted the creation during the novel. I think that the character that encountered the greatest corruption was Jack. I think this because at the beginning of the novel, Jack was an innocent schoolboy, and at the end of the novel, he had become a savage, which was quite a change! However, The distortion he encountered and the evil and nastiness that emerged from him towards the end had not just been a result of the island, but was already inside him from the very beginning.

This was partly down to his snobbish upbringing but mainly due to his arrogant and self-righteous personality that we could see from the start when he repeats the phrase ' Shut up Fatty' to Piggy. He tries to achieve total dictatorship and tries to abolish all order and civility that existed on the island. He gets rid of everything on the island that is good and civilized like Piggy, Simon, and the conch and this showed the extent of the corruption he had experienced.