

Mary shelleys frankenstein term paper sample

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



Introduction

First published in 1818, Frankenstein by Mary Shelley has been one of the most renowned novels in the world of science fiction, Victor Frankenstein's, the antagonist, is successfully able to use a dead body to create a creature. The creature has more capabilities compared to the contemporary human being. The so called " Frankenstein's monster" lacks the ability to interact with mankind. Mankind seems to reject its cooptation to society often viewing the creature as being the ' other' within the societal hierarchical framework. By spying on a poor family the monster realizes that it is not part of society and therefore seeks to revenge against its creator due to the fact that the creator exposed him to so much agony and loneliness in the world. As a fiction literary text, Mary Shelley uses this fiction story as a moral story with a key thematic lesson.

Purpose of Assignment, and thesis statement.

This paper takes the position that problems witnessed within society as a result of the creation of Victor Frankenstein's monster, illustrates that the poor and uneducated have no place in society. They are always treated as the ' other. In addition, the creation of the monster illustrates that western values derived from knowledge have the ability to be used to evil or good within society. In addition, Shelley's story seeks to demonstrate how the adoption of modern technology within society has the ability to lead to unnatural consequences that would have negative effects to both the survival and the comfort of mankind.

Analysis

Motifs of Knowledge in Novel

First, it is important to look at how Shelley brings out the motifs of the acquisition of knowledge, in term of education within the story. Shelley sees education as a tool that empowers the weak in society. It is through education that the society is able to stem out key problems that face society. It is evident from the plot of the novel that there are many families in the context of the novel that are languishing in abject poverty. However, the society in context seems to have a value for education and sees the knowledge acquired from education as being a remedy to the poverty that is engrained with the social strata of this society. This accounts for the reasons why most of the characters in the novel such as the novel' s protagonist Victor Frankenstein, Elizabeth Lavenza, and Henry Clerval are all educated. Despite the stressing of the importance of knowledge within this society, Shelley brings out the idea that knowledge has the ability to bring out two motifs within its characters.

First the acquisition of knowledge can lead to obsession. In this obsession would mean that individuals who obtain knowledge would like to use it to achieve things that have never been achieved by others. This form of obsession is the driving force that causes Victor Frankenstein to use a dead body to come up with a creature that ends up being a monster. In retrospect, Victor's knowledge would have been used in the development of other prospects based on the already existent social dynamics. The creation of a monster is an endeavor that was foreign in society. One thing that is worth realizing is that foreign ideas always have to endure a clash with the existent

societal framework that is considered as being the norm of society. It is after a series of rifts between what is considered foreign and the normalcy within society, that a cooptation of the foreign idea within society is achieved. In this case Mary Shelley paints the monster as being the foreign idea within society. The monster is not considered as being normal. The monster does not phenotypically resemble normal human beings. This creates a form of resentment from the normal mankind towards welcoming the monster into society. The idea of knowledge as the source of foreign ideas into society is used to bring out the reality of the conditions facing Europe at the time this fiction story is published.

This story is heavily influenced by the forces of industrialization sweeping across Europe at the time. Societies are forced to adopt new production strategies within the economy. There is a shift in the manual economic production strategies towards machine driven economies within society. These changes within society are caused by the rebirth of knowledge, often referred to as the renaissance. The enlightenment of the European population has caused the flow of ideas into Europe that has led to technological and communication advancement (Shelley 29). This has forced the European economies to embrace industrialization in order to boost production. However, society as a framework always has mechanisms that oppose change. The substitution of manual labor by machines leads to the loss of jobs by large populations with Europe. Considering that the loss of jobs meant that the purchasing power of the people is negatively impacted, the society tended to be receptive to the changes happening at the time. This led to the growth of civil movements like civil unions that were meant to

agitate for the rights of workers.

Therefore, the monster that is brought out in Mary Shelley's novel "Frankenstein" is used as a symbol of the foreign ideas that were arising in Europe at the time of the publication of this book. The problems and the chaos brought about by the monster illustrate the rifts in society between the already existent social norms and the foreign ideas that threaten the normalcy of society. In addition, Mary Shelley brings out the idea that knowledge can be a source of revenge in society. For example, it is through knowledge that the newly created monster is able to realize that it was a foreigner to the society in context. It was after going through a lot of resentment from the poor family that the monster realizes that it is not similar to mankind. It was the distinctions between the monster and mankind that caused the monster to lack companionship. By acquiring this knowledge, the monster decides to revenge against its creator for being exposed to loneliness within society. This results in the killing of Victor's young brother, and almost the entire family as a result of the revenge mission that the monster decides to engage in.

Similarly, it is through the acquisition of knowledge that the monster had committed these heinous acts that Victor also decides to destroy the monster, though at that point engaging in such an endeavor was close to impossible. In addition, Mary Shelley builds on the idea that the knowledge that is achieved within society is not based on spirituality and morality. This is the reason why Victor is unmoved by his decision to create another creature from dead bodies. Though knowledge is considered in this context as a gift from a divine being, it is evident that the knowledge obtained by characters

within this society is bent away from morality. This is also evident by the fact that the villagers are unwelcoming to the monster (Nichols 67). If their knowledge was founded on a moral principle they would not alienate the monster in the first place. On the contrary the monster had begun to try to create friendly connection with mankind, but after receiving huge resentment it decided to also take an immoral approach to mankind. Therefore, Mary Shelley paints knowledge as having two important motifs within the novel. First knowledge has the motif of bringing about obsession with society and secondly, knowledge has the ability to bring revenge within society because it exposes a character to the truth, and in some cases the truth might not be appealing.

Literary Devices

Major Symbolisms: - Monster, Changes in weather, and Lightening

Second, Mary Shelley employs major symbolisms to illustrate the predicaments facing society at the time. Despite being a fiction story Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein" is able to effectively persuade its readers about the problems that were associated with the coming of industrialization. Shelley uses the coming of the monster to represent the innovation that is taking place in Europe at the time. Among some of the inventions that Shelley captures within her story is the development of electricity which is viewed at first as a great invention that will improve the life of the society in context (Morton 29).

Despite using the monster to illustrate change, Shelley brings out the idea that change is double-sided. The innovations have the ability to harm mankind as is evident of the family that is killed by the monster. In addition,

Shelley uses lightening to demonstrate the fact that though the new innovations witnessed in society have benefits, they pose risks to the survival of mankind. Lightening in this case is used to identify the risks that are associated with the different types of innovations that are being witnessed in Europe at the time. Finally, Shelley uses the weather to illustrate the unnatural effects that are attributable to the adoption of ideas like industrialization that are as a result of the rebirth of knowledge taking place in Europe at the time.

Works Cited

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