

Good essay about comparative study of frankenstein and blade runner

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



The canon of human literature is littered with instances of human beings trying to aspire to the level of creators. There are many examples in different cultures of mankind suffering consequences when aspiring to the level of creation that these societies reserves for the gods. Ready examples include the Adam and Eve story in which humankind tastes from a tree of knowledge. Another example is that of Prometheus, the god who brought woes on humankind by given it the gift (or was it the curse?) of fire. In more modern times films and literature reflect this same human concern. The 1982 film Blade Runner, directed by Ridley Scott, shows a dystopian future in which a man called a blade runner is dispatched to kill four human clone creations gone rogue. Likewise, the antagonist in Mary Shelley's 1818 novel Frankenstein, undertakes a similar mission to destroy the creature he created.

Both the film and the novel deal with creatures that mankind has created which turn out not as the creators intended. In Blade Runner, humankind is spread out beyond earth and has additional colonies. People in this imagined version of the future have developed the technology to create human clones to serves as slaves on these colonies. But the lifespans they give these creatures is limited. The protagonist Deckard is a Blade Runner, which is a cop whose job it is to terminate these replicates after they are declared illegal.

This plot mirrors the plot of Mary Shelly's earlier work Frankenstein. But while Blade Runner takes place in an imagined version of the future, Frankenstein takes place in the present day of the time the novel was published, 1818. The protagonist creates his own antagonist in the story,

known as Frankenstein's monster. Victor, like Deckard spends much of the story trying to destroy his creation. Victor says of his self to the creature, " I ought to be thy Adam, but I am rather a fallen angel" (Shelly, 134). Because the creature is hideous and goes on to kill another human being, Victor feels a crushing guilt at the harm that has been done because of his creature.

Blade Runner shows the concern of creation gone wrong in a setting that is readily relatable to the audience at the time. By 1982 in the United States much of the population had migrated to urban settings. It was also a time when crime was on the raise within the country. The setting is in a world where urban crime has overtaken the city. When the film came out, it received an Academy award nomination for its special effects, which were cutting edge at the time.

Blade Runner relies more on a visual interpretation. In many scenes the sound effects muffle the voices. The pallet used by the director further heightens the sense that humankind has not only created clones that it does not desire, but has created a world that is no longer desirable to live in.

Every image on the screen has affects the viewer subconsciously. The pallet is drab, bland and dreary, which is intended to be off-putting to the viewer.

The lighting is dark and camera angles angels feature both slow winding zooms, and quick action scenes. There is symbolism, which invokes the original fall of man in the garden of Eden. There are serpents " that once corrupted man" which invokes the Garden of Eden.

Both the film and the novel have a central concern of what moral responsibility does humankind have towards its creation. These creations are not like the creation of a computer, but they have autonomous wills and

desires. Both Frankenstein's monsters and the four clones that have escaped to earth, led by Roy, want to go on living.

Deckard's "monsters" flee to an urban sprawl. Frankenstein's go to an opposite place, a frozen north artic. This is symbolic of the emptiness that Frankenstein's monster feels. He wants to learn, to understand, and after Frankenstein dies, he feels an emptiness at having lost his creator. Initially, he only wanted Frankenstein to create a mate for him so that he would not need to be alone.

Though the settings and time periods are different, the similarities between the two works are uncanny. When Roy, one of the clones, realizes that Pris, another one of the clones, has been killed, he begins to stalk Deckard. In the same way, Frankenstein's monster threatens to show up at his wedding after he has destroyed the monster's one chance at community, a mate.

The clones in Blade Runner and the monster in Frankenstein, both show human emotions. They desire community and want to avoid their own destruction. While the contexts in which these themes are presented in are different, the human concerns remain the same—at what point is a human creation more than just a thing? What ethical responsibilities does humanity have towards its creation, and at what point must they be recognized as entities with "human" rights?

Works Cited:

Blade runner. Dir. Ridley Scott. Perf. N/A. Warner Home Video, 1982. DVD.

Shelly, Mary W.. Frankenstein. Milwaukee: Raintree Publishers, 1981. Print.