

Frankensteins message essay example

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



Mary Shelley in her Frankenstein novel raised many interesting issues that remain important nowadays. But probably the most widely discussed one is the issue of scientific research and scientist's responsibility. Mary Shelley was probably the first one to talk about and to foresee the danger of careless approach to fast developing technologies and science in general.

The story of Victor Frankenstein is a story of inspired and dedicated scientist who failed to take his creation seriously and was not brave enough to take the responsibility. When we talk about scientist's responsibility, we talk about its' three components: responsibility to your creation, responsibility to society, and responsibility to yourself. Victor Frankenstein was carelessly driven by desire to gain the knowledge no one else had, to be the first one to give life to inanimate creature. As he says he " was engaged, heart in soul, in the pursuit of some discoveries which I hoped to make. None but those who have experienced them can conceive of the enticements of science". This desire made him blind to understand what he was going to create and what could be the consequences of his work.

In the process of his research Frankenstein considered it to be an act of science. After he finished his work and saw the monster he had created Frankenstein changed his mind and decided his creation to be an act of evil. But he never thought about this nameless monster to be living creature with human feelings and needs, that was not to blame for having ugly appearance and being oversized. This monster did not have a choice, but Frankenstein did. He could see the ugliness and sizes of his creation and think of its' future in case of success. Instead, Victor got scared, he felt disgust and abandoned his creation to discover the world by itself. When

describing the monster Frankenstein says: “ No mortal could support the horror of that countenance. A mummy again endued with animation could not be so hideous as that wretch. I had gazed on him while unfinished; he was ugly then; but when those muscles and joints were rendered capable of motion, it became a thing such as even Dante could not have conceived.” Obviously, Victor Frankenstein was inspired to “ play God” when giving biological life to an inanimate object but he was not ready to continue playing this role and helping his creation to obtain life in a broader sense. This is an example of totally irresponsible behavior of the creator towards his creation. And only before his death Victor admits: “ In a fit of enthusiastic madness I created a rational creature, and was bound towards him, to assure, as far was in my power, his happiness and well-being”.

Victor Frankenstein created a monster potentially dangerous for human society. He unconsciously took such a responsibility but could not handle it. When working on the experiment Victor did not bother himself to create any plan on how to control and integrate his creation into society. Victor did not share with anyone his plans and ambitions regarding the research. At first he did not tell anyone to be the first to find secret of human life, after successful experiment he did not tell anyone because of shame and fear that no one would believe him. Of course, the character of Victor Frankenstein grows and develops up to the end of the story and at some point when he is working on female companion for his monster he realizes that “ even if they were to leave Europe a race of devils would be propagated upon the earth, who might make the very existence of the species of man a condition precarious and full of terror. Had I a right, for my own benefit, to inflict this curse upon

everlasting generations?” Frankenstein’s irresponsibility resembles a lot nowadays situation in science when people continue to invent and produce things harmful and dangerous for society just to prove themselves that they can do it and be greater than those who cannot. Mankind today knows a lot about how to create things, but it does not always know why these things should be created. That is the same as Frankenstein did not know the purpose of his creation.

Of course, we cannot claim that nowadays science is harmful. Because of technology development our lives are much easier and interesting. Without the development of medicine and numerous inventions in this field, we can only guess how many of those people who stayed alive might die. And it was also a risk and high ambition to make first surgery in order to remove the organ from a human body or to sew the torn one. Now we can be only grateful to those scientists who dared to take this risk and to try to “play God”. We cannot say that science is potentially dangerous and society should beware of it but we can demand scientists to beware of ignoring society and influence of their research on this society in order to not invent nuclear weapon again.

The problem with scientific research in relation to society is that theoretically inventions originally are neutral. Mostly they are neither harmful nor useful; they just exist. But the rate of harm or good they may bring depends on who uses these inventions and with which purpose. Inventions are neutral but very often their destiny is determined by their society perception and corruption. Frankenstein’s monster is a great example in this case as he was not just neutral but originally predisposed to good and positive motives,

however, because of prejudice (“fatal prejudice clouds their eyes”) and fear society refused to accept him, thus making Frankenstein’s monster their enemy. He asks his creator: “was none among the myriads of men that existed who would pity or to assist me; and should I feel kindness towards my enemies?” This is a lesson for scientists to foresee consequences of the research as well as for the society to be more open to new researches and possibilities modern world can offer us.

In the beginning, the third component of scientific responsibility was mention. It was the responsibility of the scientist to him/herself. This means that one always has to be honest with him/herself and if he/she is not sure whether at least one out of two types of responsibility mentioned above (responsibilities to creation and to society) can be handled the research should not be conducted.

In his confession to Walton Frankenstein says: “when I reflect that you are pursuing the same course, exposing yourself to the same dangers which have rendered me what I am, I imagine that you may deduce an apt moral from my tale”. And moral modern science may deduce from Frankenstein’s tale is that every action requires responsibility and the more revolutionary the action is, the more serious the responsibility is.

Works Cited

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