

Science and nature in frankenstein and blade runner essay

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



At all times, people were trying to explore nature and master their laws. Curiosity is one of the major human features, and it pushes people to discover new things and seek for new inventions. However, rarely if ever scientists were interested in the consequences that their discoveries might lead to. Thus, the ethical concern about relations between nature and science was the core idea of many literary works at all times.

A novel *Frankenstein* (1818) by Mary Shelley is a romantic work that reflects the consequences of “blind science” and human ambition, and *Blade Runner* (1992) by Ridley Scott depicts the industrialized society and world of the future which, in fact, deals with the same problems as *Frankenstein*.

In this essay, we are going to discuss the relationship between science and nature as an important universal concern through the comparative study of *Frankenstein* and *Blade Runner*.

First of all, let us discuss the problems and the main idea of the *Frankenstein*. This work was written during the epoch of Romanticism, and thus, it explores the concerns typical for that period.

The authors focused their attention on the emotional state of people and relations with nature and ethical problems of scientific discoveries. These problems are explored in *Frankenstein*. The author deals with the question of creating. Victor Frankenstein was intended to create a human being: “So much has been done, exclaimed the soul of Frankenstein—more, far more, will I achieve; treading in the steps already marked, I will pioneer a new way, explore unknown powers, and unfold to the world the deepest mysteries of creation” (Shelley 86)

Practically, he achieved his aim and made a human, but only physically. The soul of this creature was far from being a human soul. The creature was the part of the world, but it did not belong to it.

The solitude and despair pushed this creature to do terrible things. Victor Frankenstein says about his creation: “ I pursued nature to her hiding-places” (Shelley 52). However, did he succeed in this? Certainly, he did not. Thus, the author emphasizes that creation is only God’s responsibility, and science should not interfere in natural law as it will never surpass it.

However, the work by Mary Shelly was not a final point in the discussion of the relationship between science and nature. As Nadine Wolf comments in her book: “ When Mary Shelley wrote this novel, she probably didn’t expect that her vision of a manmade monster actually could become possible in the future. Though the development of genetic engineering, humankind is now in the same role of responsibility as Victor is in Frankenstein (20).

Really, the concern about the relations of science and nature is still popular in our era. In 1982, Ridley Scott created film Blade Runner that explored the same moral and ethical problems between science and nature.

Though the film was directed almost 200 years later than Frankenstein, in a “ time of phenomenal change: from IVF to genetic research to DNA and stem cell research” (Dixon 20), it also argues the right oh people interfere in the process of creation.

The idea of the film was partially inspired by the medical debates around cloning: “ transplants of human organs became accepted though the

implications of selling these have become an ethical minefield.” (Dixon 21). Eldon Tyrell in Blade Runner wanted to create the replicants to show the power of progress and science over nature. His creations were perfect physically and intellectually, though they lack the emotions and understanding of their creator.

As human beings that felt the need for life, they were struggling for it and tried to survive in any possible way. There is a short but very significant dialogue in the film which explains its main idea: Tyrell: “ What seems to be the problem?” Roy: “ Death.” Indeed, life is what all living beings want and what can be given only by nature and not by science.

Both works discuss the question: “ what is it like to be a human being, even if you are not?” Both works had a very strong influence on the society they depicted. In addition, both authors explore the universal concerns about how far people can go in studying nature, “ it is, in fact, an amazingly sophisticated, sumptuously visionary treatise on the consequences of attaining godhood” (Kempley n. p.).

The works are very far from each other in time, but very close in ideas. They demonstrate that there is a great danger in human ambitions and knowledge with respect to the dominance of science over nature to which all scientists aspire to. The main idea of both texts is that something should be beyond human understanding that some aspects of nature shouldn't be discovered by people. Otherwise, the consequences can be terrible.

Thus, the concerns about relations between nature and science were popular at all times, and Frankenstein and Blade Runner are perfect examples of it: “ A number of critics have claimed that the remarkable power of Blade Runner rests on a fundamental mythic structure of the novel, Frankenstein, “ the struggle with human facsimiles” (Desser 53).

Both texts explore the relationship between science and nature as an important universal concern and provide the idea that human is a creation of God and child of nature and people have no right to interfere into the creation process.

Desser, David “ The New Eve: The Influence of Paradise Lost and Frankenstein on Blade Runner.” *Retrofitting Blade Runner: Issues in Ridley Scott’s Blade Runner and Philip K. Dick’s Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* Ed. Judith Kerman. London: Popular Press, 1991. 53-66. Print.

Dixon, Melpomene, *Texts in Time: Frankenstein and Blade Runner*. English Teachers Association. NSW, 2008.

Kempley, Rita. “ Blade Runner.” *Washington Post*. 11 Sept. 1992. Web.

Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft. *Frankenstein: Or, The Modern Prometheus*. London: Printed for G. and W. B. Whittaker, 1823

Wolf, Nadine. *Nature and Civilization in Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein*. GRIN Verlag, 2007.