

Critical analysis of mary shelley's frankenstein: science, science fiction, or au...

[Literature](#)



[Assignment Frankenstein Critical Analysis Evaluation Essay Frankenstein is one of the most popular books over the centuries written by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley. The novel is divided into three parts. The first one is told through letters which are written to Margaret Saville by her brother Robert Walton, a failed poet and now an explorer. Next come a series of narratives by a man called Victor Frankenstein who talks about his life, his love for science and his experiment gone horribly wrong and resulting in a Creature who kills all of the Frankenstein family. This is, again, followed by Walton concluding the story through his own perspective in which Frankenstein dies and the Creature is heartbroken and vows to kill himself. (Shelley)

The critical analysis that I have chosen is titled “ Mary Shelleys Frankenstein: Science, Science Fiction, or Autobiography?”. It is written by Dr. Sherry Ginn who is a professor at the Rowan-Cabarrus Community College. Before that, she taught at the East Carolina University and then the Wingate University for a few years. She did her MA and PhD in General-Experimental Psychology from the University of South Carolina. Dr. Ginn has published several articles and even a book, all related to the fields of psychology as well as neuroscience.

As is made obvious by the title itself, Dr. Ginn writes about the theory of what really was the inspiration behind Frankenstein. The official story is that Mary Shelley dreamt the whole idea behind the book and then penned it down. However, in her paper, Dr. Ginn explores over the possibility of whether the book was, in fact, a product of Mary’s life experiences. That it may have been an autobiography of sorts instead of a book under the genre

of science fiction.

Dr. Ginn has very appropriately used the support of several books and articles written about Mary Shelley's life, regarding all that she suffered through her childhood and till the time when she died. She has used Erik Eriksons theory of psychosocial development, which consists of eight stages, to evaluate Shelley's life and the affect that had in the writing of Frankenstein. These include her mother dying soon after giving birth to her, a jealous stepmother and a father who - unequal to the task of bringing her up - abandoned her. Then her miscarriage of Percy Shelly's child till out of four, only one survived her. Also, her guilt for blaming her husband for their son's death, which may have left to him committing suicide. These are parallels to her novel. (Ginn)

Other than the particulars mentioned in the article by Dr. Ginn, there is also the fact that Shelley herself attributed the final result of her novel to her life's happenings. Then there are the specific dates as well as names mentioned in the novel which connect to the important happenings taking place in Shelley's life. The letters Walton writes are addressed to his sister whose initials MWS matches Shelley's. The dates of when the letters were written clash with when Shelley was pregnant with her child and wrote Frankenstein. Even the Creature shares his birth year with that of Shelley's. One cannot help but agree with this theory considering all the facts which prove it to be, at least, partially correct. Frankenstein may be called a science fiction, but an argument to the story being influenced by Shelley's life can be made and quite successfully at that.

Works Cited

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