

Mary shelly's frankenstein and blade runner



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Both Mary Shelley's nineteenth century Gothic horror novel, *Frankenstein* (1818) and Ridley Scott's 1980s dystopic thriller, *Blade Runner* (1982), expose similar concerns about the consequence of unrestrained technological exploitation, unyielding consumerism and the threats these pose to the natural world. In fact it is through these respective texts, that Shelley and Scott share common values around notions of humanity, its morality and a fear of unbridled scientific progress.

As well as instilling man's seemingly instinctive depreciation of the natural world, showing that the values, ideals, and fears shared by society and mankind have not changed regardless of their contextual changes. Written during the 19th century, Shelley created this text to satirise the rising current view that nature would be overcome by science. The forever nameless monster speaks with awe about the variety of world cultures both past and present, " I heard of the slothful Asiatics; of the stupendous genius and mental activity of the Grecians; of the wars and wonderful virtue of the Romans of chivalry, Christianity, and kings.

The emotive and alliterative language through which Shelly portrays the different cultures, presents the notion that it is the individuality and uniqueness of cultures and nations which separates them as being remarkable in their own right. This is very much due to the contextual framework from which the novel was made, as in the nineteenth century, nations remained very distinct from others and cultural diversity was very rare. The notion, as portrayed in *Blade Runner* was that, through a union of the world cultures, accelerated through globalisation and consumerism, the world cultures' individuality would be lost.

This idea is expressed in Blade Runner by costuming the citizens of Los Angeles in an array of outfits which are nonspecific to time period or culture. They contrast from Rachel's 1950's style, 'western dress' to the city dwellers' futuristic dresses' portrayed with synthetic material, to the Hari Krishnas dressed in Hindu orange robes. The diversity of costuming and language used, accentuates the film's attempt to neutralise a sense of cultural unity which has stemmed from advances in technology and the development of a more globalised world.

In Frankenstein, Shelly shows her readers the repercussions of science, by portraying Victor Frankenstein as a man determined for a wealth of knowledge, "In a scientific pursuit, there is continued food for discovery and wonder" Shelly uses language such as 'pursuit', 'discovery' and 'wonder' to emphasise the endless process and thirst one acquires while striving for knowledge. She uses contrast to show the contradictory opinions of science, using language such as 'dangerous' after Victor creates monster. Shelly is trying to convey to the readers that knowledge is harmless unless the natural order of life is not disrupted.

Victor Frankenstein neglects his "creature" whereas in Ridley Scott's Blade Runner, Tyrell consistently tries to advance his creation, by making his replicants appear and feel more human, by giving his replicants memories. In Blade Runner, technology is constantly used to solve problems, and ironically, trying to solve the problems technology has caused. This includes the use of the off world colony as a means to a new beginning with the world, by leaving the polluted world and problems with Replicants behind.

Scott uses a pre-recorded statement, " A new life awaits you on the off world colonies! A chance to begin again in a golden age of opportunity and adventure" this slogan is used as a satire to the 20th century and it's increasingly materialistic approaches to marketing. This slogan is also satirising the slogan that brought citizens to America, Scott is alluding to the fact that if society does not change their actions in relation to technology and conservationism, our world will identify greatly with the world represented in Scott's Brave New World.

Both Frankenstein and Blade Runner demonstrate mankind's natural magnetism and craving towards new advancements in technology. Both texts highly represent both the amazing technological advancements science can make, but also the negative repercussive effects science can have on society if science takes over the natural order of life e. g. natural reproduction. Shelley and Scott share a mutual feeling towards notions of humanity showing that the values, ideals, and fears shared by society and mankind have not changed regardless of their contextual changes.