

Frankenstein and bladerunner



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley and Blade Runner directed by Ridley Scott are two texts that explore the conflicts between science and nature. Though they touch upon similar themes in different times, it is debateable as to whether they share universal concerns. Both Tyrell and Victor are blinded by their achievements, their unethical actions becoming the harbingers of not only their doom, but the world and people around them.

The creator's Promethean hubris ultimately leads to their downfall. The texts contain similar themes as they were both written in paradigm shifts with a focus on science and nature.

However, their contexts are very different and do not suggest that these concerns are universal. Victor's obsession with science and progress leads to excessive pride with power manifesting in ambitious individuals who see themselves as godlike.

For Victor the prospect of life and death " appeared to (him) ideal bounds". He considers natural environments to be his slave that " he has chased nature to her very hiding place". Victor is so egotistical that he proclaims " new species bless me as their creator". However as with all hubris the inevitability of his downfall is certain.

Both in the milieu of Greek promethean hubris and that of the Gothic Romantic does the scientist trespass in the domain of god. The creature's vengeance is the ultimate price Victor pays for his hubris.

Shelley foreshadows Victor's inevitable suffering through the irony of his own advice - " I seek for knowledge... I hope yours may not be a serpent as mine

had been". This alludes to the fall from Eden as Adam and Eve gained 'forbidden knowledge'. It is a double metaphor that plays both the knowledge Victor gains, as well as the loss of innocence of the monster as it goes into the real world.

Rather than resilient, nature in Bladerunner is fragile and vulnerable, and increasingly degraded when fundamental natural rhythms are ceaselessly destroyed by ruthless exploitation by ever increasing mammoth technology. The bleak vision portrayed in Bladerunner illustrates a chaotic nuclear holocaust, ecological fragility through soil depletion and acid rain. Man has not only subdued the earth but conquered and utterly defeated it.

Blade Runner depicts an industrialised society where Technology is supreme. The climate appears a nuclear winter poisoned by fall-out- dark, dank, with constant acid rain. The City is full of human misery – crowded, homeless, so anyone with good health has moved off earth. Tyrell's story is much less intimate than Frankenstein's, with a bigger focus on the replicants than their creator. This immediately puts doubt on the text's universality, as Bladerunner is much more concerned with the marginalised rather than the arrogant creator, perhaps suggesting the movement of decolonisation in between the Romantic and post-modern contexts. Both Frankenstein and Bladerunner are cautionary warnings about the threat to a diminished humanity posed by Science.

Both Frankenstein and Tyrell have challenged the frontiers of human knowledge and will suffer for it. Shelley parallels Walton's spatial explorations and Frankenstein's forays into unknown knowledge, as both

men seek to “ pioneer a new way,” to make progress beyond established limits. Science and too much rational learning can diminish our humanity. In both texts, humans lose control over their man - made creations. They share similar themes, but are cannot be labelled ‘ universal’ due to their disparate contexts.