# Where to find what in Frankenstein

## FRANKENSTEIN

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OVER ☻
Frankenstein

Characters

Walton's Narrative

Uncle Thomas

husband = Mrs. Margaret Saville

Captain Robert Walton

(28 years old)

Frankenstein Family

German mother = Milanese nobleman

Caroline = Alphonse Frankenstein

Elizabeth Lavenza

Victor

Ernest

William

"Monster"

Madame Moritz (widow) = M. Moritz

2 brothers

Justine

sister

aunt at Chene

De Lacey (blind violinist)

Christian - Arab (slave) = Turkish merchant

Agatha

Felix = Safie

Other Characters

M. Krempe - professor who denounces alchemy

M. Waldman - professor who inspires VF

... = creates
# Literary Period Time Line

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Remembered today as the daughter of illustrious parents and the wife of a famous poet, Mary Shelley shrank from any form of publicity and contributed to the obscurity that still clouds her name. Many people are astonished to learn that as a quiet, intellectual girl of 19, she wrote one of the most imaginative and horrific novels of the time—Frankenstein. Mary's eight years with Shelley were marked by tragedy, trauma and exile, but they were also years of inspiration for her own distinctive imagination.
The Shadow of Fame

Drawn into an illustrious circle and a life of extraordinary intensity, Mary Shelley suffered more than her fair share of tragedy. Within a few years of a teenage elopement, she was widowed and alone.

Mary Shelley's life was overshadowed by her famous parents and husband. It was also overshadowed by the deaths of those she loved. She was born on 30 August 1797 to the pioneer feminist Mary Wollstonecraft and the political philosopher William Godwin. But Mary was never to know her mother. She died of septicaemia just 10 days after the birth, leaving Mary forever deprived of a secure, loving relationship.

Although Mary adored her father, he had little time to spend with her. He remarried a few years later and Mary took an immediate (and understandable) dislike to her new mother, Mrs Mary Jane Clairmont, an unremarkable but pretentious widow with two children, Charles and Jane. As she grew up, Mary Godwin took refuge in the studies which were to serve as a great consolation throughout her life.

SECRET AFFAIR

In 1812, when Mary was staying with a family friend near Dundee, a young and fervent admirer of Mary's father began to frequent the Godwin household. The visitor was Percy Bysshe Shelley, aristocrat, political revolutionary and poet, who was also highly imaginative, somewhat unstable and, to many women, irresistibly. He had married at 19 and had a daughter, Eliza lanthe. These details, however, did not stop him from falling for the 16-year-old Mary when she finally returned from Scotland in the spring of 1814. Mary was not strikingly attractive, but, according to a friend, she was 'agreeable, vivacious and sparkling, very pretty with fair hair and complexion and clear bright white skin' — and she was an intellectual.

For Shelley, now disillusioned with his young wife Harriet, Mary's attraction was all the greater because her parents were the remarkable William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft. By the end of June — after a clandestine courtship at Mary Wollstonecraft's grave — Shelley and Mary had declared their mutual love.

Godwin was horrified. He tried to persuade Shelley to patch up his relationship with Harriet, who was pregnant again, and insisted that he stopped seeing Mary. But he could not keep the lovers apart and at the end of July they decided to elope to the Continent. At the last moment they agreed that Mary's stepsister Jane — soon to adopt the name Claire — should come with them. Claire, with her dark hair, olive skin, exuberant and demanding nature, was in many ways the opposite of Mary, and Mary would soon regret the invitation.

The three young people fled to France and embarked on a journey through a country ravaged by war and starvation. Their high spirits carried them through but by the time they reached Switzerland, these, as well as their finances, had begun to wane. Mary was pregnant, unwell and irritated by Claire's company.
Illustrious father
(above) William Godwin was a radical intellectual who attracted a coterie of distinguished admirers. He had published a seminal work entitled An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and challenged contemporary thinking on politics and religion, as well as marriage. Despite his emancipated ideas, he was a distinctly selfish man who caused inextricable distress to his daughter.

River Tay, Scotland
Frail and unwell, Mary, aged 14, was despatched to her father’s friend William Baxter, near Dundee. She spent two happy years there, going for long walks on the Sidlaw hills and along the river Tay (left). As she wrote in her introduction to Frankenstein, ‘It was beneath the trees of the grounds belonging to our [the Baxter] house…that my true compositions, the airy flights of my imagination, were born and fostered.’

perately short of money, the three decided, quite suddenly, to return home.

The problems, however, continued in England. Despite constant visits to banks, lawyers and money-lenders, Shelley had to go into hiding to avoid the bailiffs and the dreaded debtors’ prison, leaving a pregnant Mary, terrified and alone. Eventually, Shelley succeeded in securing a loan, whereupon Mary’s father, who was still hostile to the couple, made the first of a series of demands for money which were to plague Mary and Shelley throughout their life together.

In February 1815, when she was not quite seven months pregnant, Mary gave birth to a tiny, fragile daughter. Two weeks later she awoke to find that her baby had died. She desperately needed Shelley’s support, but he was more interested in his stepsister Claire, and left Mary to be comforted by an old university friend of his, Thomas Hogg. An entry in her journal reflects the anguish she felt over her loss: ‘Dream that my little baby came to life again; that it had only been cold, and that we rubbed it before the fire and it lived.’

Gradually, Mary began to recover her good spirits, helped no doubt by Shelley’s agreement that Claire should leave their household and by a financial settlement which guaranteed Shelley an annual income of £1000. They moved into a house on Bishopsgate Heath, at the edge of Windsor Forest, and Mary, who was pregnant again, happily settled into a private life with Shelley, in which they studied, wrote, walked and rowed on the Thames with friends. She developed from an ill, anxious girl into a confident young woman, and in January 1816 she gave birth to a strong, healthy son whom they named William after her father.

Childhood home
(above) Mary grew up in the modest surroundings of London’s Skinner Street in Holborn. It was here, over a shop at number 41, that her parents lived, and here that she first set eyes on the ardent young poet and radical, Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Key Dates
1797 born in London
1814 elopes with Shelley
1816 William born; Fanny and Harriet commit suicide
1817 Clara born
1818 Frankenstein published; Clara dies
1819 William dies; Percy Florence born
1822 Shelley dies
1826 The Last Man published
1839 Shelley’s Poetical Works published
1845 son Percy inherits
1851 dies in London
Meanwhile, Claire had succeeded in ‘capturing’ no less a figure than the poet Lord Byron. It was a brief affair, but by the time Byron departed for Switzerland, Claire was pregnant. Shelley and Mary, distressed by Godwin’s continual demands for money, the public’s indifference to Shelley’s poems and their own rejection by society, were contemplating a return to the Continent, and Claire easily persuaded them to take her with them to Switzerland. Mary had been introduced to Byron and, while repelled by his excesses, had found him fascinating, and was happy to meet him again. Once more, the threesome travelled across the Continent and joined Byron, in May 1816, on the shores of Lake Geneva. Here they rented two adjacent villas and spent much time together, going on boating trips and talking long into the night at Byron’s Villa Diodati. The conversation frequently turned to subjects of horror and one night they decided to make up ghost stories. This was the starting-point of Mary’s first novel, _Frankenstein._

Relations between the two households were strained, Byron having long lost interest in Claire. And as the summer came to an end, Mary and Shelley decided it was time to leave, and in September they arrived back in England.

**UNFORESEEN TRAGEDIES**

They settled in Bath, in happy domesticity, until they received the news that Mary’s half-sister Fanny had committed suicide. Mary, stricken with guilt and grief, was almost expecting the next blow when in December they heard that Shelley’s wife Harriet had also committed suicide, by drowning herself in the Serpentine in Hyde Park. Shelley immediately set off for London to claim custody of his two children, Ianthe and Charles, and decided that he would have a better chance of doing so if he and Mary married. It was against his principles, but the ceremony duly took place in December 1816.

In January Claire, who was again living with the Shelleys, gave birth to a daughter, Allegra, and the chancery suit for custody of Shelley’s children began. The following month, Mary realized she was pregnant again and they moved to Marlow in Buckinghamshire where she settled down to finishing _Frankenstein._

In September she gave birth to a baby daughter Clara, but immediately succumbed to post-natal depression. At the same time Shelley’s health—frequently bad—deteriorated drastically. In the meantime, there was a flurry of local speculation about Allegra’s origins. Claire had never publicly explained her daughter’s parentage but had always hoped that Byron would give his daughter a privileged upbringing. Gossip now put the Shelleys under pressure to help her.

In March 1818, they set off for Italy. The lively, affectionate Allegra was sent with their nursemaid, Elise, to Venice, and the rest of the party travelled to Tuscany. Meanwhile _Frankenstein_ had been published anonymously and an excited Mary was beginning to get favourable reports about it.

In August, Shelley and Claire set out to see Allegra and ten days later Mary received a letter asking her to join them. Her daughter Clara, not yet one year old, was ill, but Mary felt that she must go. So began a
nightmare journey across Italy in which Mary had to watch her small daughter visibly failing in her arms. On arrival in Venice the baby died. In her anguish, Mary blamed Shelley for Clara’s death and never fully forgave him.

**A BLEAK WINTER**

Mary, Shelley and Claire soon embarked on another period of travel, this time to Rome and Naples. Here they immersed themselves in the study of Italian and classical literature, but it was a bleak winter in which they all felt depressed and homesick. In February 1819, the birth of a girl named Elena Adelaide Shelley was registered in Naples. Her official parents were Mary and Shelley. But her true parentage has remained a source of speculation to this day. There have been claims that she was the daughter of Shelley and Claire, but more probably her parents were Allegra’s nursemaid Elise and Byron. Whoever they were, Elena was left with foster parents when the Shelles once more returned to Rome.

Rome was Mary’s favourite city, but she could not shake off a sense of gloom. Then, her beloved son William succumbed to a bout of dysentery. He seemed to rally, but suddenly, just two weeks after the first signs of illness, he died before Mary and Shelley’s despairing and disbelieving eyes.

William’s death was a blow which was to mark Mary for life. Quite unconsolable by the knowledge that she was pregnant again, she left Rome as quickly as she could and returned with the others to Tuscany. After five years of trouble and tragedy, Mary was in the

**MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT**

Born in London in 1759, Mary Shelley’s mother, Mary Wollstonecraft, experienced a difficult childhood. One of three daughters, she had little formal education and often witnessed her drunken father beating her mother. These scenes planted in her a determination to fight for the cause of women, to ensure, among other things, that girls received a decent education, that they had the possibility of supporting themselves and that they were not always physically and economically at the mercy of men. She wrote a book called *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* and gradually found herself part of a distinguished and radical social circle. In 1792 she published *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, a pioneering feminist work which has recently been reprinted.

Her private life was less successful. At 32 she became infatuated with the painter Henry Fuseli and, reeling from that hopeless relationship, she travelled alone to France where she soon became involved with an American adventurer, Gilbert Imlay, and found herself pregnant by him. By the time their daughter Fanny was born in 1794, Imlay had already begun to tire of her. Mary attempted suicide, first in Paris, then in London, and it was not until she formed a friendship with William Godwin that she found genuine happiness. In March 1797 they married – Mary was pregnant. But their joy was to be short-lived – on 10 September 1797 Mary died a few days after giving birth to a daughter, Mary.

**Alpine travels**

Claire Clairmont (inset left), Mary’s step sister, joined the young lovers when they eloped to Switzerland and became increasingly unwelcome as their journey progressed. At a certain point Shelley invested in a donkey to help transport Mary and some of their belongings along the way. But the animal was tiny, ill and feeble and Shelley ended up by carrying it clasped to his bosom, with Mary and Claire following, exhausted, at the rear.

**Percy Bysshe Shelley**

(right) Poet, free-thinker and political revolutionary, Shelley swiftly captured Mary’s heart. At 16, months after meeting him, she wrote the verse: ‘But ah! I feel in this was given! A blessing never meant for me,/ Thou art too like a dream from heaven! For earthly love to merit thee!’
ANOTHER WILLIAM

A n alert and happy child, little William (named after Mary’s father) was his parents’ pride and joy. Mary felt a special closeness to him, but always had a sense of impending doom.

On one occasion, as her son lay sleeping in his cot, she wrote of another – fictional – William “with sweet laughing blue eyes” whose life was cruelly cut short. Her dark imagination pictured this boy “rosy with health” strangled by Frankenstein’s monster. Her vision of death was prophetic. Three years later her own William fell ill with dysentery and died.

thrones of an emotional breakdown. Shelley offered her love and care, but she felt incapable of responding.

A son, Percy Florence, was born in November 1819, but Mary doubted that he would flourish and live. It was a difficult time for her. Godwin was demanding money again; Byron was refusing all Claire’s pleas to let Allegra spend some time with her, and things were reaching breaking point between the two sisters. On top of this, Paolo Foggi, an ex-servant and husband of Eise, was attempting to blackmail them over little Elena Adelaide Shelley, who had recently died.

The only alleviation in Mary’s difficulties came when Claire departed from the household and Mary was able to establish a happy working routine, writing her third novel ‘L’alpaga’. At the end of October 1820 the Shelles moved to Pisa and made a number of new friends, including Edward and Jane Williams. Byron joined them a year later, having left Allegra behind in a convent, and shortly afterwards Edward John Trelawny, a swashbuckling adventurer, also arrived. He fuelled Shelley’s love of water and boats with his tales of adventures at sea.

‘EXPECTATION OF EVIL’

In some ways it was a happy time for Mary, until news came of Allegra’s death from typhus. A distraught Claire joined them as they and the Williamses moved to a house on the Bay of Spezia. Mary was pregnant again and unwell, and while Shelley and Edward Williams threw themselves into the enjoyment of sailing their new boat, she began to feel depressed and inexplicably anxious.

In June she suffered a miscarriage. She was still weak from it when Shelley announced that he and Williams were going to sail up the coast to Leghorn. Years later she wrote that ‘a vague expectation of evil shook me to agony’ and she tearfully begged him not to go.

Both she and Jane Williams, with whom Shelley was now in love, received letters describing his and Wil-

Field House
(right) Situated in the village of Warnham, near Horsham, Sussex, Shelley’s family home reflected the luxury into which he was born. Quarrels with his father, however, kept Shelley away from the house for much of his life. Even when his grandfather died, Sir Timothy would not let him in to hear the reading of the will; Shelley reputedly sat on the steps in front of the house reading Milton’s ‘Comus’.

In 1844, after old Sir Timothy’s death, Mary’s son Percy inherited the baronetcy and moved into the family residence, reclaiming what his father had been denied.

Funeral pyre
Edward Trelawny, deeply moved by the death of his friends, Shelley and Edward Williams, battled with the Italian authorities for permission to cremate Shelley in the style of his beloved Greeks. Having seemingly moved heaven and earth to do so, he finally won his concession and accordingly set up a funeral pyre in a wild and beautiful spot on the shores close to Via Reggio, near Florence. In classical Greek fashion, Trelawny procured salt and frankincense to fan the flames and poured wine and oil over the body. A copy of Keats’ last book, which had washed ashore with Shelley, had been placed beside his body — so that the souls of the two great poets might, at some level, be merged together.

As the flames lapped Shelley’s body, Trelawny plunged his hand into the fire and pulled out his friend’s heart, struck by all that it symbolized. At Mary’s request, the poet’s ashes were buried at the English cemetery in Rome beside the body of her and Shelley’s beloved young son William.
Mary Shelley

im's safe arrival in Leghorn. There was a terrible thunderstorm which they thought would have delayed the two men's departure for home. But then they waited—and waited—for their return.

Mary later wrote, 'To tell you all the agony we endured during those 12 days would be to make you conceive a universe of pain—each moment intolerable and giving place to one still worse.' Their worst fears were finally confirmed when Shelley's and Williams' bodies were washed up on the shore on 18 June 1822.

Life Without Shelley

In the days that followed, Mary was overwhelmed with despair. She longed to die, but the future of her son depended on her. So she unwillingly pulled herself together and made plans to stay in Italy and work, in the hope that she would be helped by an allowance from Shelley's family. But when his father wrote that he would maintain her son, Percy, only if she gave him up, she refused and returned reluctantly to England. Here she met up with Jane Williams again and felt the beginnings of a love which was not to be reciprocated, although the two women were to spend much time together.

Faced with lack of money and dismal lodgings, she struggled to write her next novel The Last Man. It was then that she heard of Byron's death and more than ever saw herself as the 'last man', 'girded, walled in, vaulted over, by seven-fold barriers of loneliness'.

In 1827 Jane Williams went to live with Hogg, with whom she had been having a love affair for some years. Away from Mary she began to gossip about the Shelleys' relationship, trampling on Mary's precious memories. Many of Mary's other old friends were to turn against her in later years. They regarded her as a cold, unemotional, conventional woman who disappointedly rejected the radical beliefs of her husband in favour of society's approval.

Meanwhile little Percy was fast becoming the only male to whom she could give her love. He was never to show any signs of genius, but he was an affectionate, easy-going boy and, eager to give him a good education, she sent him as a day boy to Harrow at the age of 12. Her life was now poverty-stricken and solitary.

Less Troubled Days

Mary eventually began to enjoy a middle age in which she travelled to the Continent with Percy and wrote various pieces of non-fiction. And in 1844, when Shelley's father, Sir Timothy, died, leaving his estate and baronetcy to his grandson, her money worries were over. Unfortunately her new status made her vulnerable to blackmail attempts. She fought them but the attacks on her privacy took their toll on her health.

Mary had tired of life by the time she met her son's wife-to-be, Jane St John, in early 1848. Jane was a young widow who quickly became a devoted friend. She contributed much to what happiness Mary enjoyed in the last years of her life. In the winter of 1850, Mary became increasingly paralysed and, knowing she was dying, passed on to Jane the care of Shelley's papers and reputation. On 1 February 1851, Mary Shelley died.
Mary Wollstonecraft

from A Vindication of the Rights of Woman

Chapter 2

To account for, and excuse the tyranny of man, many ingenious arguments have been brought forward to prove, that the two sexes, in the acquisition of virtue, ought to aim at attaining a very different character; or, to speak explicitly, women are not allowed to have sufficient strength of mind to acquire what really deserves the name of virtue. Yet it should seem, allowing them to have souls, that there is but one way appointed by providence to lead mankind to either virtue or happiness.

If then women are not a swarm of ephemeral triflers, why should they be kept in ignorance under the specious name of innocence? Men complain, and with reason, of the follies and caprices of our sex, when they do not keenly satirize our headstrong passions and grovelling vices. Behold, I should answer, the natural effect of ignorance! The mind will be ever unstable that has only prejudices to rest on, and the current will run with destructive fury when there are no barriers to break its force. Women are told from their infancy, and taught by the example of their mothers, that a little knowledge of human weakness, justly termed cunning, softness of temper, outward obedience, and a scrupulous attention to a peculiar kind of propriety, will obtain for them the protection of man: and should they be beautiful, every thing else is needless, for at least twenty years of their lives.

The most perfect education, in my opinion is, such an exercise of the understanding as is best calculated to strengthen the body and form the heart. Or, in other words, to enable the individual to attain such habits of virtue as will render it independent. In fact, it is a farce to call any being virtuous whose virtues do not result from the exercise of its own reason. This was Rousseau’s opinion respecting men; I extend it to women, and confidently assert, that they have been drawn out of their sphere by false refinement, and not by an endeavour to acquire masculine qualities. Still the regal homage which they receive is so intoxicating, that till the manners of the times are changed, and formed on more reasonable principles, it may be impossible to convince them, that the illegitimate power which they obtain by degrading themselves, is a curse, and that they must return to nature and equality, if they wish to secure the placid satisfaction that unsophisticated affections impart. But for this epoch we must wait—wait, perhaps, till kings and nobles, enlightened by reason, and, preferring the real dignity of man to childish state, throw off all their gaudy hereditary trappings; and if

1. ephemeral
2. Rousseau’s opinion respecting men: Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) argued that the individual’s natural goodness is destroyed by the false values of civilization

THE ROMANTICS

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Mary Wollstonecraft

Great wars are strangely intermittent in their effects. The French Revolution took some people and tore them asunder; others it passed over without disturbing a hair of their heads. Jane Austen, it is said, never mentioned it; Charles Lamb ignored it; Beau Brummell never gave the matter a thought. But to Wordsworth and to Godwin it was the dawn; unmistakably they saw France standing on the top of golden hours.

And human nature seeming born again.

Thus it would be easy for a picturesque historian to lay side by side the most glaring contrasts—here in Chesterfield Street was Beau Brummell letting his chin fall carefully upon his cravat and discussing in a tone sturdily free from vulgar emphasis the proper cut of the lapel of a coat; and here in Somers Town was a party of ill-affected, excited young men, one with a head too big for his body and a nose too long for his face, holding forth day by day over the tea-cups upon human perfectibility, ideal unity, and the rights of man. There was also a woman present with very bright eyes and a very eager tongue, and the young men, who had middle-class names, like Barlow and Holcroft and Godwin, called her simple "Wollstonecraft." But if it did not matter whether she was married or unmarried, as if she were a young man like themselves.

Such glaring discords among intelligent people—for Charles Lamb and Godwin, Jane Austen and Mary Wollstonecraft were all highly intelligent—suggest how much influence circumstances have upon opinions. If Godwin had been brought up in the precincts of the Temple and had drunk deep of antiquity and old letters at Christ's Hospital, he might never have cared a straw for the future of man and his rights in general. If Jane Austen had lain as a child on the landing to prevent her father from thrashing her mother, her soul might have burned with such a passion against tyranny that all her novels might have been consumed in one cry for justice.

1. Jane Austen...2. Charles Lamb...3. Beau Brummell...4. Godwin, Jane Austen...5. John Lamb (1775-1817) was an English novelist whose specialty was the comedy of manners. Charles Lamb (1775-1834) was an essayist on literary topics. George Brummell (1778-1840) was a famous dandy. William Godwin (1756-1836) was a philosophical writer and controversialist.

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Fanny into marrying Mr. Skeffs. She had thrown up her school and gone to Lisbon alone to nurse Fanny when she died. On the voyage back she had forced the captain of the ship to rescue a wrecked French vessel by threatening to expose him if he refused. And when, overcome by a passion for Fuseli, she declared her wish to live with him and was refused flatly by his wife, she had put her principle of decisive action instantly into effect, and had gone to Paris determined to make her living by her pen.

The Revolution thus was not merely an event that had happened outside her; it was an active agent in her own blood. She had been in revolt all her life—against tyranny, against law, against convention. The reformer’s love of humanity, which has so much of hatred in it as well as love, fermented within her. The outbreak of revolution in France expressed some of her deepest theories and convictions, and she dashed off in the heat of that extraordinary moment those two eloquent and daring books—Reply to Burke and the Vindication of the Rights of Woman—which are so true that they seem now to contain nothing new in them—their originality has become our commonplace. But when she was in Paris lodging by herself in a great house, and saw with her own eyes the King whom she despised driving past surrounded by National Guards and holding himself with his dignity than she expected, then, “I can scarcely tell you why,” the tears came to her eyes. “I am going to bed,” the letter ended, “and, for the first time in my life, I cannot put the candle out. Things were not so simple after all. She could not understand even her own feelings. She saw the most cherished of her convictions put into practice—and her eyes filled with tears. She had won fame and independence and the right to live her own life—and she wanted something different. ‘I do not want to be loved like a goddess,’ she wrote, ‘but I wish to be necessary to you.’ For Imlay, the fascinating American to whom her letter was addressed, had been very good to her. Indeed, she had fallen passionately in love with him. But it was one of her theories that love should be free—that mutual affection was marriage and that the marriage tie should not bind after the death of love, if love should die.” And yet at the same time that she wanted freedom she wanted certainty. “I like the word affection,” she wrote, “because it signifies something habitual.”

The conflict of all these contradictions shows itself in her face, at once so resolute and so dreamy, so sensual and so intelligent, and beautiful into the bargain with its great coils of hair and the large bright eyes that Southey5 thought the most expressive he had ever seen. The life of such a woman was bound to be tempestuous. Every day she must theories by which life should be lived; and every day she must smash against the rock of other people’s prejudices. Every day too—for she was no pedant, no cold-blooded theorist—something was born in her that thrust aside her theories and forced her to mold them afresh. She acted upon her theory that she had no legal claim upon Imlay; she refused to marry him; but when he left her alone week after week with the child she bore him her agony was unendurable.

Thus distracted, thus puzzling even to herself, the plausible and treacherous Imlay cannot be altogether blamed for failing to follow the rapidity of her changes and the alternate reason and unreason of her moods. Even friends whose thing was impartial were disturbed by her discrepancies. Mary had a passionate love of Nature, and yet one night when the colours in the sky were so exquisite that Madeleine Schweitzer could not help saying to her, “Come, Mary—come, nature lover—and enjoy this wonderful spectacle—this constant transition from colour to colour.” Mary never took her eyes off the Baron de Wolzogen. “I must confess,” wrote Madame Schweitzer, “that this ecstatic absorption made such a disagreeable impression on me, that all my pleasure vanished.” But if the sentimental Swiss was disconcerted by Mary’s sensuality, Imlay, the shrewd man of business, was captivated by her intelligence. Whenever he saw her she yielded to her charm, but then her quickness, her penetration, her uncompromising idealism harassed him. She saw through his excuses, met all his reasons; she was even capable of managing his business.

There was no peace with her—he must be off again. And then her letters followed him, torturing him with their sincerity and their insight. They were so outspoken; they pleaded so passionately to be told the truth; they showed such a contempt for soap and alman and wealth and comfort; they repeated, as he suspected, so truthfully that he had only to say the word, “and you shall never hear of me more,” that he could not endure it. Tickling minnows he had hooked a dolphin, and the creature rushed him through the waters till he was dizzy and only wanted to escape. After all, though he had played at theory-making too, he was a business man, he depended upon soap and alman; the secondary pleasures of life, “he had to admit, “are very necessary to my comfort.” And among them was that one for ever evaded Mary’s jealous scrutiny. Was it business, was it politics, was it a woman that perpetually took him away from her? He shivered and shuddered; he was very charming when they met; then he disappeared again. Exasperated at last, and half insane with suspicion, she forced the truth from the cook. A little actress in a strolling company was his mistress, she learnt. True to her own creed of decisive action, Mary at once soaked her skirts so that she might sink underfoot and throw herself from Pinney Bridge. But she was rescued; after unspeakable agony she recovered, and then her “unconquerable greatness of mind,” her girlish credo of independence asserted itself again, and she determined to make another bid for happiness and to earn her living without taking a penny from Imlay for herself or their child.

It was in this crisis that she again saw Godwin, the little man with the big head, whom she had met when the French Revolution was making the young men in Somers Town think that a new world was being born. She met him—but that is a euhemerism, for in fact Mary Wollstonecraft actually visited him in his own house. Was it the effect of the French Revolution? Was it the blood she had seen spilt on the pavement and the cries of the furious crowd that had rung in her ears that made it seem a matter of no importance whether she put on her cloak and went to visit Godwin in Somers Town, or waited in Judd West Street for Godwin to come to her? And what strange upheaval of human life was it that inspired that curious man, who was so queer a mixture of meanness and magnanimity, of coldness and deep feeling—for the views of his work could not be called soulless, and their nakedness without an extraneous depth of heart—to hold the view that she did right—that he respected Mary for trampling upon the idiotic convention by which women’s lives were tied down? He held this idea for extraordinary views on many subjects, and upon the relations of the sexes in particular. He thought that reason should influence even the love between men and women. He thought that there was something spiritual in their relationship. He had written that “marriage is a law, and the worst of all laws . . . marriage is an affair of property, and the worst of all properties.” He held the belief that if two people of the opposite sex like each other, they should live together without any ceremony, or, for living together is apt to blunt love, twenty doors off, say, in the same street. And he went further: he said that if another man liked your wife “this will create no difficulty. We may all enjoy her conversation, and we shall all be wise enough to consider the sensible intercourse a very trivial object.” True, when he wrote those words he had never been in love; now for the first time he was to experience that sensation; it came very quickly and naturally, growing “with equal advances in the mind of each” from those talks in Somers Town, from those discussions upon everything under the sun which they held so improperly alone in his rooms. “It was friendship melting into love . . .” he wrote. “When, in the course of things, the disclosure came, there was nothing in a manner for either party to disclose to the other.” Certainly they were in agreement upon the most essential points; they were both of opinion, for instance, that marriage was unnecessary. They would continue to live apart. Only when Nature again intervened, and Mary found herself with child, was it worth while to lose valued friends, she asked, for the sake of a theory? She thought not, and they were married. And then that other theory—that it is best for husband and wife to live apart—was not that also incompatible with other feelings that were coming to birth in her? “A husband is a convenient part of the furniture of the house,” she wrote. Indeed, she discovered that she was passionately domestic. Why not

5. the King . . . in her eyes. The king was Louis XVI, who was guillotined by the revolutionary government in Paris in 1793.

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then, revise that theory too, and share the same roof? Godwin should have a room some doors off to work in; and they should dine out separately if they liked—their work, their friends, should be separate. Thus they settled it, and the plan worked admirably. The arrangement combined "the novelty and lively sensation of a visit with the more delicious and heartfelt pleasures of domestic life." Mary admitted that she was happy; Godwin confessed that, after all one's philosophy, it was "extremely gratifying" to find that "there is some one who takes an interest in one's happiness." All sorts of powers and emotions were liberated in Mary by her new satisfaction.

Trifles gave her an exquisite pleasure—the sight of Godwin and Imlay's child playing together; the thought of their own child who was to be born; a day's jaunt into the country. One day, meeting Imlay in the New Road, she greeted him without bitterness. But, as Godwin wrote: "Ours is not an idle happiness, a paradise of selfish and transitory pleasures." No, it too was an experiment, as Mary's life had been an experiment from the start, an attempt to make human conventions conform more closely to human needs. And their marriage was only a beginning; all sorts of things were to follow after. Mary was going to have a child. She was going to write a book to be called _The Wrongs of Women_. She was going to reform education. She was going to come down to dinner the day after her child was born. She was going to employ a midwife and not a doctor at her confinement—but that experiment was her last. She died in childbirth. She whose sense of her own existence was so intense, who had cried out even in her misery. "I cannot bear to think of being no more—of losing myself—nay, it appears to me impossible that I should cease to exist," died at the age of thirty-six. But she has her revenge. Many millions have died and been forgotten in the hundred and thirty years that have passed since she was buried; and yet as we read her letters and listen to her arguments and consider her experiments, above all that most fruitful experiment, her relation with Godwin, and recollect the high-handed and hot-blooded manner in which she cut her way to the quick of life, one form of immortality is hers undoubtedly; she is alive and active, she argues and experiments, we hear her voice and trace her influence even now among the living.

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In her essay on Mary Wollstonecraft, Virginia Woolf gives a number of the earlier writer's views, some of them contradictory. In a short essay, attack or defend one of the opinions expressed by Wollstonecraft.

Determine the relationship between the two italicized words listed in each question. Then select, from the pairs of words that follow, the words which are related in the same way as the words in the first pair. Write your choice on a separate sheet of paper. Example—_hot; cold_.

1. _primal; modern_ as (a) _exhort_ : _encourage_; (b) _happy_; subject; (c) _epoch_; time.
2. _careful; scrupulous_ as (a) _negligent_; _careless_; (b) _placid_; _stormy_; (c) _indolent_; _busy._
3. _specious_; _real_ as (a) _sequester_; _withdraw_; (b) _procure_; _obtain_; (c) _ignoble_; _noble._
4. _abound_; _abroad_ as (a) _free_; _slave_; (b) _lifeless_; _lively_; (c) _tragedy_; _farce._
5. _obstinate_; _flexible_ as (a) _foolish_; _silly_; (b) _alter_; _attract_; (c) _precept_; _rule._
6. _peaceful_; _querulous_ as (a) _fitness_; _propriety_; (b) _childish_; _purely_; (c) _hidden_; _palpable._
7. _facultious_; _artificial_ as (a) _approbation_; _criticism_; (b) _capital_; _price_; (c) _whim_; _intuitive_; _rational._
8. _understanding_; _perplexity_ as (a) _rest_; _excitement_; (b) _hint_; _intimate_; (c) _seriousness_; _sober._

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**Place in the correct box.**

**Neo-Classicism**
- Epigram
- Formal essay
- History book
- Lyrical poem
- Mythological story
- Ode
- Rhyming couplet
- Supernatural tales
- Medieval romances
- Classical Greek & Roman Literature
- Gothic novel
- Satire

**Government**
- Democracy
- Discipline
- Freedom
- Law
- Liberty
- Oligarchy
- Aristocracy
- Revolution
- Tradition
- Beethoven
- Mozart
- Rousseau
- Goethe

**People**
- Aristocrats
- Commoners praised
- Conservatives
- Even-tempered
- Liberals
- Melancholic, brooding
- Byronic hero
- Outspoken
- Reserved
- Emotion
- Logic
- Spontaneity
- Stability

**Romantic Era**
- Formal portraits
- Jungles
- Landscapes
- Rock gardens
- Stately houses
- Versailles Gardens
- Wild outdoors
- Natural beauty

**Places + Things**
Gothic Horror

The sensational, the supernatural and the macabre were essential elements of the 'new' kind of novel that thrilled readers of all kinds and classes and made them thirsty for more.

Yet tales of terror are her dear delight,
All in the wintry storm to read at night.

So wrote the poet George Crabbe, describing the fashion for the Gothic novel—a type of story of the macabre and supernatural that had immense popularity during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The craze for such books was particularly strong in England, but they also flourished on the Continent, especially in Germany, where they were known as Schauerromane ('Shudder Novels'). There is much more to Mary Shelley's Frankenstein than horror, but all the contemporary reviews treated it as a Gothic romance, and it does indeed use many of the trappings and themes typical of this kind of book—"vaults and charnel-houses" and the "decay and corruption of the human body".

Horror and the supernatural in literature were, even then, part of a long tradition. Some of the standard constituents of the ghost story, for example, go back almost 2000 years, to the Roman writer Pliny the Younger, who told a tale about a large sinister house haunted by a spectre that moaned and rattled its chains at dead of night.

But the Gothic novel broke new ground in its use of situations and props that have since become the stock-in-trade of horror movies: bleak castles, lightning, cobwebbed rooms lit by guttering candles, skeletons dressed in monks' cowls, torture chambers, dungeons, graveyards, gargoyles. The term 'Gothic' originally referred to the medieval settings typical of such stories, but during the late 18th century the meaning changed to suggest a more general notion of remoteness, strangeness and mystery.

IRRATIONAL FEAR

The Gothic novel was one aspect of the very broad movement known as Romanticism, which marked a reaction from the prevailing 'Age of Enlightenment'. Much European thought in the 18th century was characterized by rationalism—asserting the value of reason over imagination. But such a sensible, intellectual stance left unsatisfied a deep-seated human need—
a need which horror stories could partly satisfy without involving the reader in any personal risk. In 1798, the physician Dr Nathan Drake commented 'Of all the various kinds of superstition which have in any age influenced the human mind, none appear to have operated with so much effect as the Gothic... even the most enlightened mind, the mind free from all taint of superstition, involuntarily acknowledges its power.'

The most popular phase of the Gothic novel was from 1765 to 1820. It affected America as well as Europe, and attracted readers of all social classes, from rich intellectuals to poor servants. Some novels were published in sumptuous three-volume editions, others as cheap throw-aways.

THE GRAVESIDE MANNER

Acknowledged forerunners of the Gothic novelists were the 'Graveyard Poets' who wrote reflective, melancholy works dealing largely with human mortality. The best known of these is Thomas Gray, author of Elegy written in a Country Churchyard (1751). But the very first Gothic novel is generally held to be The Castle of Otranto (1764) by Horace Walpole. Walpole, the 4th Earl of Orford, was a son of Sir Robert Walpole (Britain's first Prime Minister). He was a connoisseur of works of art, as well as a writer, and had an extremely varied career as a man of letters. The Castle of Otranto was written at his home, Strawberry Hill at Twickenham (a pioneering work of the Gothic Revival in architecture) and was inspired by a dream: 'I thought myself in an ancient castle... and that on the upper bannister of the staircase I saw a gigantic hand in armour.'

Walpole, who wrote the book in under two months, published it anonymously, offering it as a translation 'From the Original Italian of Osmipho Muralto, Canon of the Church of St Nicholas at Otranto', a 13th-century cleric. Walpole feared ridicule, and to a literary public accustomed to novels of domestic sentiment, his tale must have seemed outlandish. The plot was as labyrinthine as the castle's gloomy passages and vaults. It featured ghosts, giants, and statues that came to life, while its human characters gave unrestrained vent to their emotions. Sensation rather than subtlety was Walpole's strong point – and the public loved it. A second edition was called for within a year, and ten more followed, as well as French and Italian translations.

To modern readers, the book seems convoluted, artificial and not very well written. Certainly it is now hard to credit that after reading it, the poet Thomas Gray (an old schoolfriend of Walpole) was 'afraid to go to bed at nights'. Walpole himself did not try to follow up The Castle of Otranto – and in spite of its success it was some time before imitations appeared. The next Gothic novel with a claim to fame was Vathek (1786) by William Beckford.
Beckford came from a family that had made a vast fortune from sugar plantations in the West Indies (Lord Byron referred to him as 'England's wealthiest son'). He grew into a beautiful young man, but it was rumoured that he was involved in black magic, and one of his female cousins described him as 'a second Lucifer'. In 1784 Beckford was caught in the bedroom of a 13-year-old boy - a nobleman's son for whom he had conceived a passion - and the ensuing scandal caused him to leave England with his wife and daughter.

He returned ten years later, a widower, and lived in eccentric seclusion at Fonthill in Wiltshire. There he built, at frantic speed, an enormous Gothic house - Fonthill Abbey - which was soon regarded as one of the architectural wonders of the age. He collected vast numbers of books and works of art, but in 1822 he was forced by financial pressures to sell the house. Three years later the 280 foot high tower collapsed and crashed through the building.

ORIENTAL ALLURE
Beckford's novel, *Vathek*, was written in French but translated into English. Subtitled 'An Arabian Tale', it is a prime example of the 'Oriental' type of Gothic story, which took the exotic Middle or Far East as its setting. Vathek is a cruel caliph who, in his thirst for power and forbidden knowledge, becomes a servant of Eblis (the Devil). The story is fast-moving and full of dramatic incident, as ghastly crime follows ghastly crime. It sustains the sense of fantasy more effectively than Walpole's book, and ends powerfully with Vathek condemned to eternal torment. Beckford claimed to have written it in three days and two nights while in a kind of trance, inspired partly by the engravings of the 18th-century Italian artist Giambattista Piranesi, who produced a famous series of powerful etchings with a nightmarish quality, entitled *Imaginary Prisons*.

Whereas both Walpole and Beckford were both very well travelled, the most commercially successful of the Gothic novelists, Mrs Ann Radcliffe, rarely ventured beyond London or Bath, and was such a retiring figure that she was rumoured to have died some time before her actual demise. But she excelled at descriptions of exotic places and the wild forces of nature. Her inspiration came partly from paintings by artists such as the popular 17th-century Neapolitan Salvator Rosa.

Mrs Radcliffe wrote half a dozen Gothic romances, the best known of which is *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794). An indication of her popularity is that she was paid a publisher's advance of £500 for this book, then an unprecedented sum. Mrs Radcliffe's tale is set in a gloomy castle in the mountains of Italy, to which the
beautiful heroine is abducted by her villainous uncle. Various inexplicable horrors beset her, which are all eventually shown to have human origin. Mrs Radcliffe was the chief representative of this 'rational' approach, and in spite of her popularity, some readers felt cheated when apparently supernatural events were ultimately given a prosaic explanation.

EXPLICIT TREATMENT

In The Mysteries of Udolpho the heroine's honour as well as her life is threatened, but the sexual element is veiled and timorous compared with its treatment in The Monk (1796). Matthew Lewis wrote The Monk at the age of 19, when he was attaché at the British Embassy in The Hague. Set in Spain, it is a lurid tale of a once-worthy monk who becomes sexually obsessed, uses supernatural aid to pursue the object of his desires, and finally rapes and murders the unfortunate girl. After being discovered and tortured by the Inquisition, he is hurled to damnation by the Devil, with whom he has attempted to make a pact.

Not surprisingly, this heady mixture of sex and violence caused a sensation, and there were calls for the book to be suppressed. It was excitingly and skilfully written, however, and Lewis was befriended by leading literary figures such as Scott and Byron (Byron called him 'Wonder-working Lewis'). To the public at large he became known as 'Monk Lewis'; he never again wrote anything of the quality of his masterpiece.

SHOCKING IMAGES

The fascination with the mysterious, horrific and erotic found in Gothic novels is paralleled in contemporary painting, most notably in the work of Henry Fuseli, for whom Mary Shelley's mother had an obsessive infatuation. Fuseli was Swiss-born (his original name was Johann Heinrich Füssli) and settled permanently in England in 1779. A writer as well as a painter, he was much respected in intellectual circles, and the great poet-painter William Blake described him as:

\[\text{The only man that ever I knew,} \\
\text{Who did not make me almost spare.}\]

Pleasure in pain

Agony and torment, inflicted either by human torturers (such as the Spanish Inquisition above left), or by the fires of Hell, often occur in Gothic literature. The voyeuristic sadomasochistic implications are obvious. Readers of books such as The Monk, Vathek and Udolpho were invited to witness the most lurid extremes of human behaviour for their dubious pleasure.

Sympathetic elements

(above) Scenes of fictional horror were almost always accompanied by dramatic weather - illuminated by lightning or lashed by pitiless rain - so as to heighten the atmosphere. Science had been making efforts to analyze lightning's cause and harness its energies. Electricity was held in awe and some people even believed that it could imbue the inanimate with life.
Fuseli's most celebrated painting is *The Nightmare*, (1781) an unforgettable image of a woman in the throes of a violently erotic dream. Like Lewis, he shocked his public, but overcame their moral scruples by force of his genius.

**SATIRE AND PARODY**

By the time Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* appeared in 1818, the heyday of the Gothic novel had passed. Indeed, in the same year two books appeared ridiculing its conventions — *Northanger Abbey* by Jane Austen and Thomas Love Peacock's *Nightmare Abbey*. Jane Austen is subtle in her satire, but Peacock is gleefully mocking, his characters having names like Diggory Deathbed and Mr Toobad. At the end of the book Scythrop Glorwy (a character based on Shelley) thinks of killing himself, but decides instead to open a bottle of Madeira.

The end of the great period of the Gothic novel is marked by the publication of Charles Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* in 1820. It is the only one of Maturin's works which is still remembered, and is perhaps the most powerful of all Gothic novels — one of the few whose reputation has not decreased.

At the outset of the novel, Melmoth is already over 100 years old, having sold his soul to the Devil in return for prolonged life. He can escape from his dreadful past only by finding someone to take over his part in it, and the plot involves his attempts to persuade a succession of characters to do this. They include a prisoner in the hands of the Inquisition and a man whose children are dying of hunger, but none of the unfortunates will buy freedom at the price Melmoth asks, and he is condemned to eternal torment.

The plot is involved and potentially repetitive, but the pace never flags and Maturin handles the story with magnificent bravura. Professed admirers of the book have included William Makepeace Thackeray and the painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Oscar Wilde called himself 'Sebastian Melmoth' after his release from prison, finding the name of the doomed wanderer appropriate to his plight as a social outcast.

**LATER CREATIONS**

The Gothic novel did not disappear overnight after *Melmoth the Wanderer*, but it had run its course as the most popular literary form of the day, to be succeeded by the historical novel, of which Sir Walter Scott was the great pioneer. Echoes of the Gothic tradition recur in Victorian literature, however (for example, in Dickens' novels). And the most celebrated of vampire stories, *Dracula* by Bram Stoker, was not published until 1897.

The chilling tale of Dracula's relentless pursuit of his victims has inspired a multitude of horror movies, which tend to highlight the lurid and sensational elements of the tale, rather than its imaginative power. *Frankenstein*, like *Dracula*, has been widely interpreted and promoted on film. Indeed, perhaps the most moving recreation of Mary Shelley's story is the 1931 cinema classic *Boris Karloff's monster*, like the original, is not merely bestial — he is a pathetic creature who suffers because of his creator's presumption in trying to usurp the power of God.

**Twentieth-century Gothic**

Although Gothic literature burned itself out and largely disappeared during the 19th century, its elements survive today in horror movies and 'pulp novels'. Some motion pictures based on the best of the literature (right) have created legends of their own.
Read Gothic Horror and answer the following questions:

1. Who wrote the original ghost story?

2. To what does the term "Gothic" originally refer? Now what does it refer to?

3. What classes of people were attracted to Gothic novels?

4. What was Walpole's strong point in his writing?

5A. How long did Beckford claim it had taken to write Vathek? Why?

5B. How does this explanation fit the Gothic/Romantic time period?

6. How did William Blake describe Henry Fuseli?

7. How does Dracula fit the requirements of a Gothic novel?
true instructions given by Raphael, he learns appropriate knowledge. When Eve and Adam eat of the tree, they fall into the limited reasoning of humanity. To acquire knowledge is to understand how the material world works; to seek wisdom is to rehabilitate human reason in order to resee the world from a higher—a divine—perspective. On the other hand, the seventeenth-century writings of Francis Bacon promote the modern emphasis on useful learning, modern philosophers sought the advancement of learning to improve the material condition of human life. My choices of Bacon and Milton are not arbitrary. Echoes of their writings help create the tension between moral and scientific knowledge in Frankenstein. In the early chapters, Baconian language abounds. Moreover, Mary Shelley selected the passages in which Bacon particularly advocates dominance over nature. I give the students a passage or two from Bacon’s writing to show what I mean; for example, in New Organon, Bacon advises new philosophers to “penetrate” nature to “find a way at length into her inner chambers” (329). (Students can pursue this theme in Merchant, ch. 7.) In Frankenstein, the modern Prometheuses are identically Baconian. Waldman defends the modern philosophers because they “penetrate into the recesses of nature and show how she works in her hiding-places” for “the solid advantage of mankind” (47, 48). Walton aspires to “tread a land never before imprinted by the foot of man”; he will confer an “inestimable benefit” on humanity; he will acquire “dominion” over “elemental foes” (15, 16, 26). The young Victor Frankenstein longs to unveil and “penetrate the secrets of nature”; he seeks to “pioneer a new way”; he pursues “nature to her hiding-places” (39, 47, 53). Mary Shelley’s modern Prometheus achieves the highest of human aspirations to divinity: “A new species would bless me as its creator...” (52). But when the consequences of human progress are guilt, horror, and destruction, Victor falls back on the ancient attitude: for instance, he warns that intellectual success is “a serpent to sting you” (28), reflecting the belief that the original sin is acquiring knowledge.

To clarify Frankenstein’s cultural meaning, I find it particularly useful to contrast Mary Shelley’s treatment of triumphant Prometheusism with those of her famous relatives, William Godwin, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Percy Shelley. A few passages from Godwin’s Enquiry concerning Political Justice show that he shared the Baconian faith that the human estate could be restored through science and technology. Particularly relevant is the chapter “Of Health, and the Prolongation of Human Life,” in which Godwin speculates that the human mind might overcome the death of the body and thus create a race of cultivated, virtuous adults impervious to the natural processes of childbearing and dying. Likewise, Percy Shelley’s
Prometheus Unbound prophesies the triumph of Prometheus and our species's intellectual conquest of earth:

The lightning is his slave, heaven's utmost deep
Gives up her stars, and like a flock of sheep
They pass before his eye, are numbered, and roll on.
The tempest is his steed, he strides the air;
And the abyss shouts from her depth laid bare,
Heaven, has thou secrets? Man unveils me; I have none. (4.1.420–25)

To ensure that the students do not simplistically reduce Frankenstein's message to its overt didactic one, I confront them with the problem of Victor Frankenstein's internal confusion. Victor tells his story to teach Walton to seek the values of conservative harmony: "how much happier that man is who believes his native town to be the world, than he who aspires to become greater than his nature will allow" (52). Yet, in the end, he exhorts Walton's crew not to return to their safe firesides but to continue to the North Pole: "You were hereafter to be hailed as the benefactors of your species... Oh! Be men, or be more than men" (203–04). His last words sum up his contradictory perspective: "Seek happiness in tranquility and avoid ambition, even if it be only the apparently innocent one of distinguishing yourself in science and discoveries. Yet why do I say this? I have myself been blasted in these hopes, yet another may succeed" (206). Once encouraged, the students will find many similar examples in which Victor vacillates between advocating the values of staying home, cultivating sympathy and harmony, and the values of enterprise, cultivating science and progress.

Does Frankenstein favor or oppose scientific progress? Or, in other words, is Mary Shelley a radical or a conservative? During the first discussion hour, I ask the students to take a position on the question and to give significant reasons and textual evidence in support of their position. I stress that the students should use the ensuing debate to refine (or reinforce or even refute) their initial positions. This is a complex process, but one illustration may indicate in general how it works. One usually reticent engineering student came to class feeling that Frankenstein was an attack not on science but on a bad scientist. During discussion he ferreted out more and more textual details, mostly from chapters 3–5, to convict Victor Frankenstein of violating the scientific code: (1) Victor is motivated by self-glory rather than the public good. (2) For that reason, he rushes the project, thus creating a gigantic monster. (3) He works in isolation and in secret when he should work with colleagues who might restrain and evaluate his work. (4) He is too emotionally unstable for discovery; otherwise, why does he collapse in horror? A good scientist would see creating a monster as part of the trial-and-error process, as an experiment and not as a disaster. (5) He is ethically unsound in letting his experiment out of the lab without considering the consequences. The other students were not necessarily convinced that this was the ideal interpretation of Frankenstein, but they respected the engineer's skillful reconciliation of his personal values with an authoritative reading of the text. Discussion elicits a stimulating diversity of readings, and together students come to tolerate ambiguity and complexity.

The question for the second discussion hour is, What is the nature of Victor Frankenstein's guilt? It helps the students to get at the complexities of this question if they discuss it in three stages: How would each of the following characters answer the question: Walton, the Creature, Elizabeth, Clerval, Justine, Alphonse, Victor? How would Margaret Saville, the designated reader, answer the question after reading all of Walton's letters? How do the students answer the question? This third question is crucial in healing another manifestation of the compartmentalization of knowledge, namely, the widespread student habit of distinguishing between "what I really feel and think" and "what I say and write for courses." Many students consider this distinction necessary for academic survival, the tragic result being that they rarely see the classroom as a place to assess, develop, and integrate their intellectual, social, and personal pursuits. I repeatedly urge them to use the course as a place to discover what they want to argue about a topic. I ask the students to express their feelings on a topic, and then I help them gradually take responsibility for their views and assess the intellectual and social implications of holding such views.

If the discussion on guilt goes well, the students will progress from treating Victor as an individual to recognizing that he is a cultural type and from talking about the imaginary events in the novel to naming current Prometheus successes. They easily supply examples of great inventions—everything from DDT to thalidomide—that went awry when released from the lab into society. For example, as I was teaching Frankenstein in January 1996, the space shuttle Challenger exploded. In an interview broadcast across Canada on the CBC, one NASA engineer described his anguish: he had spent years in careful research to benefit mankind; the step-by-step conquest of space had made him feel "godlike"; but tonight, he said, "I feel like a squashed Prometheus." Recent attempts to "play" the Creator—cloning, artificial intelligence, test-tube babies—are also relevant. Like Victor Frankenstein's successful "maternity" in the lab, these discoveries provoke the difficult ancient question about whether there should be limits...
to the pursuit of knowledge. Should science concern itself only with technical expertise—how it can be done—and neglect the moral question of whether it should be done? What I hope will come out of the discussion is an awareness of our profound ambivalence toward science. Discoveries may improve the human lot, but their consequences are often unforeseen and horrifying. Despite our technological successes, our modern culture shares the novel’s tension between intellectual and moral knowledge. Is it the triumphant Prometheus that symbolizes humanity for us or the self-doubting, failed Frankenstein?

At the end of my first term of teaching engineering students, I asked them a final question: Which work studied in the course most challenges and transforms the contemporary reader’s understanding and why? Most of them answered Frankenstein, which is perhaps not surprising given the personal relevance of the novel’s theme. “Frankenstein,” wrote one student, “questions the basic code I live by.” Many students identified with Victor Frankenstein’s tragic dilemma: “As an engineer,” one student reported, “I believe science must be pursued to create a better world; yet, as the novel warns, the pursuit is unnatural and ultimately destructive.” Even more remarkable, these students came to appreciate the novel as a “mosaic of unreliable viewpoints.” The conflicting sympathies required of the reader of Frankenstein allowed them “to see the problem of the scientist’s responsibility from various angles.” From their struggle with Frankenstein and other works, they came to recognize why literature deliberately refuses to simplify an issue. One student even conceded that engineers needed to know “more about people and culture, which can best be learned through literature.” Not all but most of the students appreciated the way literature could sensitize a reader to a more complex and holistic perspective on science. As one student discovered, “It is very necessary for engineers to understand that rational thinking and technology are only one aspect of our human experience.” Clearly, the bridging of the “two cultures” can start in classroom conversations about the meaning of Frankenstein.
PROMETHEUS

PROMETHEUS, a Titan, was the creator of humankind, whom he made out of clay and water. Although he and his brother Epimetheus sided with the Olympian god Zeus (Roman Jupiter) during the war of the Titans (see box), Prometheus's relationship with Zeus was uneasy because Zeus thought him wise and, being mortal, more loyal to humankind than to the gods. In an argument over which parts of an animal should be sacrificed to the gods, Prometheus tricked Zeus into choosing the bones and the fat rather than the meat. In retaliation, Zeus removed the gift of fire from the world, causing great suffering to humankind. In response, Prometheus stole fire from the sun, which he gave back to the world. Furious, Zeus chained Prometheus to a rock, where his liver was eaten each day by an eagle, and grew back each night.

CLASH OF THE TITANS

The 12 Titans, children of Uranus, the sky, and Gaia, the earth, were the first gods. They were defeated after a 10-year struggle by Zeus, son of Cronus (see p.113), and his brother Hades, who was joined by the other gods after they were called from the underworld, led by the God of War, to drive the Titans from the world. In the battle, the gods were victorious, and the Titans were defeated, and their power was destroyed.

PANDORA'S BOX

Pandora, the first mortal woman, was created by several gods, on Zeus's orders, to wreak havoc after Prometheus stole fire from heaven. Hephaestus ( Vulcan) shaped her, Aphrodite (Venus) gave her beauty, Athena taught her to sing, Hermes (Mercury) to run and dance, and Adona (Minerva) clothed her. Although Prometheus told Epimetheus to return any gifts from Zeus, he accepted Pandora and married her. As intended, she brought chaos, opening a forbidden jar and releasing all the evils of the world that had been there. Only Hope (Eudaimonia) remained. Pandora cast it out to comfort humankind.

CHAINED TO A ROCK BY ZEUS

Prometheus was chained to a rock by Zeus, son of Cronus, for 10,000 years of agony. He was kept in chains, however, by warning Zeus of the wiles that he had mastered that were meant for man only. Zeus was kept in chains, however, by warning Zeus of the wiles that he had mastered that were meant for man only. Zeus was kept in chains, however, by warning Zeus of the wiles that he had mastered that were meant for man only. Zeus was kept in chains, however, by warning Zeus of the wiles that he had mastered that were meant for man only.

THE MYTH OF PROMETHEUS

by Pietro di Cristino

(461/2-1511)

This painting, the first of a series from the myth of Prometheus, pictures the moment when Zeus, son of Cronus, and the other gods came to the earth, led by Athena (Minerva), and took away the air from Prometheus, the son of Cronus, and one of the eight sons of the sun god, who was raised on Mount Helicon. The gods, led by Zeus, took away the fire from Prometheus and gave it to man, who then became civilized.

THE FIRST MAN

Prometheus shaped the first man in the image of the gods, by using earth and water into clay. Adam (Adam), the god of wisdom, breathed life into him. Whereas the other animals hung their heads in each other's necks, including him to neglect and have no skill to do any work.

GODDESS OF WISDOM

Adonis passed on his knowledge and wisdom to Prometheus, who shared it with humankind. According to one myth, Prometheus had invented art (he invented a bird from Zeus, and then taught it to the gods.)

ACCORDING TO ONE GREEK TRADITION, there have been two ages of men: the Golden Age and the Silver Age. The first man of the Golden Age is Zeus. In Greek mythology, Prometheus is the god of fire and the creator of humankind. He is also credited with giving fire to man, which led to the creation of civilization. According to Greek mythology, Prometheus was punished for stealing fire from the gods and giving it to humankind. He was chained to a rock by Zeus, son of Cronus, for 10,000 years. However, Zeus, who was chained to a rock by Prometheus, was released by Pandora (Vulcan) and then the present age began.
THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES

I have had playmates; I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school-days,—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been crying,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies,—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I loved a Love once, fairest among women:
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her,—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man:
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abjectly;

Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.
Ghost-like, I paced round the haunts of my childhood.
Earth seemed a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces —

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother,
Why went not thou born in my father’s dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces —

How some they have died, and some they have left me.
And some are taken from me; all are departed.
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

CHARLES LAMB

Mutability

by Percy Bysshe Shelley

We are as clouds that veil the midnight moon;
How restlessly they speed, and gleam, and quiver,
Streaking the darkness radiantly!—yet soon
Night closes round, and they are lost for ever:
Or like forgotten lyres, whose dissonant strings
Give various frail response to each varying blast,
To whose frail frame no second motion brings
One mood or modulation like the last.

We rest.—A dream has power to poison sleep;
We rise.—One wandering thought pollutes the day;
We feel, conceive or reason, laugh or weep;
Embrace fond woe, or cast our cares away:

It is the same!—For, be it joy or sorrow,
The path of its departure still is free:
Man’s yesterday may never be like his morrow;
Nought may endure but Mutability.
Mutability
by William Wordsworth

From low to high doth dissolution climb,
And sink from high to low, along a scale
Of awful notes, whose concord shall not fail;
A musical but melancholy chime,
Which they can hear who meddle not with crime,
Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.
Truth fails not; but her outward forms that bear
The longest date do melt like frosty rime,
That in the morning whitened hill and plain
And is no more; drop like the tower sublime
Of yesterday, which royally did wear
His crown of weeds, but could not even sustain
Some casual shout that broke the silent air,
Or the unimaginable touch of Time.

8 This great sonnet was included in an otherwise rather pedestrian sequence, Ecclesiastical Sonnets, dealing with the history and ceremonies of the Church of England.

from William Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey"

The sounding cataract
Haunted him like a passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to him
An appetite; a feeling, and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, or any interest
Unborrow'd from the eye

To Wordsworth
by Percy Bysshe Shelley

Poet of Nature, thou has wept to know
That things depart which never may return:
Childhood and youth, friendship and love's first glow,
Have fled like sweet dreams, leaving thee to mourn.
These common woes I feel. One loss is mine
Which thou too feel'st, yet I alone deplore.
Thou wert as a lone star, whose light did shine
On some frail bark in winter's midnight roar:
Thou hast like a rock-built refuge stood
Above the blind and battling multitude:
In honoured poverty thy voice did weave
Songs consecrate to truth and liberty,—
Deserting these, thou leavest me to grieve,
Thus having been, that thou shouldst cease to be.
Hear the rime of the ancient mariner
See his eye as he stops one of three
Mesmerises one of the wedding guests
Stay here and listen to the nightmares of the sea.
And the music plays on, as the bride passes by
Caught by his spell and the mariner tells his tale.
Driven south to the land of the snow and ice
To a place where nobody's been
Through the snow fog flies on the albatross
Hailed in God's name, hoping good luck it brings.
And the ship sails on, back to the North
Through the fog and ice and the albatross follows on.
The mariner kills the bird of good omen
His shipmates cry against what he's done
But when the fog clears, they justify him
And make themselves a part of the crime.
Sailing on and on and north across the sea
Sailing on and on and north 'til all is calm.
The albatross begins with its vengeance
A terrible curse a thirst has begun
His shipmates blame bad luck on the mariner
About his neck, the dead bird is hung.
And the curse goes on and on at sea
And the curse goes on and on for them and me.
"Day after day, day after day,
we stuck nor breath nor motion
as idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean
Water, water everywhere and
all the boards did shrink
Water, water everywhere nor any drop to drink."
There calls the mariner
There comes a ship over the line
But how can she sail with no wind in her sails and no tide.
See...onward she comes
Onward she nears out of the sun
See, she has no crew
She has no life, wait but here's two.
Death and she Life in Death,
They throw their dice for the crew
She wins the mariner and he belongs to her now.
Then...crew one by one
they drop down dead, two hundred men
She...she, Life in Death.
She lets him live, her chosen one.
"One after one by the star dogged moon,
too quick for groan or sigh
each turned his face with a ghastly pang
and cursed me with his eye
four times fifty living men
(and I heard nor sigh nor groan)
with heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
they dropped down one by one."

The curse it lives on in their eyes
The mariner wished he'd die
Along with the sea creatures
But they lived on, so did he.
and by the light of the moon
He prays for their beauty not doom
With heart he blesses them
God's creatures all of them too.

Then the spell starts to break
The albatross falls from his neck
Sinks down like lead into the sea
Then down in falls comes the rain.
Hear the groans of the long dead seamen
See them stir and they start to rise
Bodies lifted by good spirits
None of them speak and they're lifelesss in their eyes
And revenge is still sought, penance starts again
Cast into a trance and the nightmare carries on.

Now the curse is finally lifted
And the mariner sights his home
spirits go from the long dead bodies
Form their own light and the mariner's left alone.
And then a boat came sailing towards him
It was a joy he could not believe
The pilot's boat, his son and the hermit,
Penance of life will fall onto him.
And the ship sinks like lead into the sea
And the hermit shrievess the mariner of his sins.
The mariner's bound to tell of his story
To tell this tale wherever he goes
To teach God's word by his own example
That we must love all things that God made.
And the wedding guest's a sad and wiser man
And the tale goes on and on and on.
This poem was inspired by a passage about Kubla Khan (kō' blē kān'), the founder of the Mongol dynasty in China in the thirteenth century, in Samuel Purchas's Purchas His Pilgrimage (1613): "Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto. And thus ten miles of fertile ground were inclosed with a wall." Coleridge claims to have fallen asleep while reading this passage due to the effects of medication he was taking for an illness at the time (1797). Three hours later, he awoke from a dream, finding his mind was filled with two to three hundred lines of poetry, which were an elaboration of the description he had read immediately before drifting off to sleep. Coleridge immediately began to write down the lines that filled his head, but when he was interrupted by a visitor, he forgot the lines that he had not yet transcribed. As a result, he was unable to complete the poem.

In Xanadu¹ did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure dome decree:
Where Alph,² the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
5 Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girded round;
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,³
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
10 Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart² a cedarn cover!⁴
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon lover!
15 And from this chasm, with ceaseless turboll seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing.

A mighty fountain Momently was forced:
20 Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hall,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momentally the sacred river.
25 Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid these tumult Kubla heard from far
30 Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves:
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
35 It was a miracle of rare device.⁶
A sunny pleasure dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer⁷
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian⁸ maid,
40 And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.⁹
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
45 That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
50 His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honeydew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

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6. device: Design.
7. dulcimer (dul' ə mər) n.: A musical instrument with metal strings which produce sounds when struck by two small hammers.
8. Abyssinian (ə bē'sin' ē an): Ethiopian.
XANADU

by - Rush

To seek the sacred River Alph
To walk the caves of ice
To break my fast on honeydew
And drink the milk of Paradise.

I have heard the whispered tales
Of immortality, the deepest mystery
From an ancient book - I took a clue
I scale the frozen mountain tops of
Eastern lands unknown, time and man alone
Searching for the lost Xanadu. XANADU!!!

To stand within the pleasure dome
Decreed by Kubla Khan.
To taste anew the fruits of life
The last immortal man.
To find the sacred river Alph
To walk the caves of ice!
Oh, I will pine on honeydew
And drink the milk of paradise, OH, PARADISE!!

A thousand years have come and gone,
The time has passed me by
Star-stopped in the sky
Frozen in an everlasting dew
Waiting for the world to end
Weary of the night, praying for the light
Prison of the lost Xanadu. XANADU!!

Held within the pleasure dome
Decreed by Kubla Khan.
To taste my bitter triumph,
And a many immortal man.
Never more shall I return -
Escape these caves of ice.

For I have dined on honeydew -
And drunk the milk of Paradise, OH, PARADISE!!
Frankenstein for the Twenty-first Century: An Exploration of Contemporary Issues

Eileen A. Simmons

As they face life in the twenty-first century our students are confronted by Frankensteinian questions, moral and ethical, that will become more common, yet more complex:

- When and under what conditions should life be medically prolonged?
- Should tissue from aborted fetuses be used to help people who are suffering from Parkinson's Disease?
- If you're a fundamentalist Christian, how do you adjust your view of the cosmos in the face of scientific theories of creation by the "Big Bang," the expanding universe, and the theory of relativity?
- What moral and ethical considerations should engage scientists who are investigating and manipulating DNA and genetic material?
- As the definition of family changes, how are parental roles changing, especially the father's role?

Like Victor Frankenstein, who created his monster with the best of intentions—to prevent death by learning to create life—scientific and medical discoveries have sometimes grown, like the monster, with unexpected consequences, independent of their creators. Students must learn to evaluate, judge, and make decisions about issues that seem deceptively simple but quickly become complicated.

My students have representatives of, in about equal numbers, Christian fundamentalists and those who have no religious background. Both groups are reluctant to confront moral and ethical questions, not only the fundamentalists because they've been taught that the Bible is the revealed Word of God, unchanging and unchangeable, and that the answers to all questions can be found there, but also the nonreligious because they feel
uncomfortable discussing moral and ethical matters without the strong religious backgrounds of their peers.

To overcome the reluctance of both groups to consider issues that will become matters of daily concern in the twenty-first century, I assign a nineteen-century novel, Mary Shelley's Frankenstein. The novel fits neatly into the curriculum with its focus on English literature. The students have done extensive research into the Biblical and mythological sources of John Milton's Paradise Lost. They have studied good and evil in Beowulf, and the social criticism of a changing society in Canterbury Tales. By the time they reach Frankenstein near the end of the school year, they have acquired a thorough background in conducting research, expressing their own opinions, and combining the two for papers about literature.

Their assignment is to find Frankenstein, identify a social issue they want to research, read four magazine articles in the popular press concerning their chosen issue, and then write a position paper: "Is Frankenstein Happening Today?" The position paper has to present the positions in the articles, the students' opinions, and accounts of how they came to those opinions.

As students read, they identify the social issues in Shelley's novel. When I first assigned it, I was thinking primarily of the ethics involved in such medical issues as gene manipulation, DNA research, bioethics, and fetal-tissue transplants. However, the students notice other issues; for example, the rejected-child syndrome. When Victor at last succeeds in creating his monster, he is horrified by its ugliness: "Unable to endure the aspect of the being I had created, I rushed out of the room." The monster, like many rejected children, is filled with hate for his creator; he confronts Victor and threatens to murder his friends if Victor does not accord to the monster's wishes. At this point in the novel, Victor is forced to consider the duties of a creator toward his creature. The hatred that exists between creator and monster is contrasted to the happy family life during Victor's childhood—foster- ing and loving parents who provided for his needs and encouraged his curiosity. This contrast provides material for those who choose to write their position papers on the rejected-child syndrome in the novel and in society.

One of the most interesting issues identified by the students involves education. Victor was in charge of his own education, reading unguided in his father's library. He did attend school but says, "I was, to a great degree, self-taught with regard to my favorite studies. . . . I was left to struggle with a child's blindness, added to a student's thirst for knowledge." Victor's preoccupation with finding "the hidden laws of nature" is contrasted with his sister Elizabeth's serene contemplation of the maj-

An issue for modern students to explore is the role of a guided liberal arts education, balanced between the sciences and the arts.

Another interesting issue in the novel is the monster's feeling that he can never be fully human because he doesn't have a history. During the time he is living in the novel attached to the DeLaccey's cottage, he listens as Felix educates Salle from a history book, Volney's Ruins of Empire. The monster realizes that he has no past, no friends, no history and that without those he is doomed to loneliness and a subhuman condition. He is an outcast, not just because of his hideous appearance but also because he lacks a history that connects him to all other humans. The monster's realization that history is necessary for complete "humanness" has interested several students, who view history as a dead subject.

As the students finish reading the novel, I give them a prewriting assignment for the position paper. I go through several weeks of magazines and pull out articles that relate to the issues the students identify. The issues Mary Shelley raises in Frankenstein are current; I have no problems finding articles on DNA, genetic manipulation, bioethics, education, and family and children's issues. Particularly valuable was the Feb. 22, 1993, Newsworld cover story, "Cures from the Womb: A Search for Limits." (121:48-55). However, the most fascinating discussions resulted from the September 28, 1991, Newsweek story, "African Dreams" (118:42-5). The cover with a picture of Cleopatra and the words "Was Cleopatra Black?" guarantee a lively discussion of history, who writes it, and its importance for all people, especially minorities.

The students group themselves and choose an article to discuss and relate to the novel. At the end of the class period, a spokesperson from each group summarizes the article, relates it to one as-

Other students realize the pervasiveness of Shelley's major theme—the responsibility of scientists to consider the societal and moral implications of their work.

pect of Frankenstein, and presents the findings orally. This prewriting exercise gives the students experience in making the connections between the articles and the novel in and explaining them to their peers.

From that point, the students go to the library for research. Popular articles on all aspects of the issues are easily available, and students have no trouble collecting the information. The resulting papers are among the best students write all year. Significantly, they show a change in attitude, although most students agree that Frankenstein is still with us today.

Several students, firmly anti-abortion when they begin the project, document their attitude change when they write that, although abortion is wrong and they would never choose it for themselves, they think that if a woman chooses to have an abortion, the fetal issue should be used for medical research, providing good out of bad. Other students realize the pervasiveness of Shelley's major theme—the responsibility of scientists to consider the societal and moral implications of their work, citing examples of genetic manipulation that could be used for good or ill.

The students who choose to research ethnic his-
Teaching Frankenstein from the Creature’s Perspective

Paul A. Cantor and Michael Valdez Moses

Frankenstein has worked well for us in a wide variety of courses: in a basic undergraduate survey course in British literature, where it helped to chart the transition between Romantic poetry and Victorian fiction; in both undergraduate and graduate survey courses on Romanticism; in a course on tragedy as a genre, as an example of how tragic action can be transposed into a novel; and in a course on myths of creation as a genre.

Whatever the context, we often encounter difficulties at first because of the story’s prominent place in popular culture and the consequent temptation for students to think that they are familiar with the contents of the book without having read it. Many telltale signs alert teachers that they are dealing with a student of James Whale (director of the 1931 film version of the novel) rather than of Mary Shelley. A comment in class on the poignancy of the Creature’s inability to speak is a sure clue, and we know we are in trouble when we pick up a paper entitled “The Role of the Hunchback in Frankenstein.” Having once made it clear to students that they must leave Boris Karloff and Colin Clive behind and read Mary Shelley’s text, though, teachers can make the popularity of the Frankenstein story work to their advantage. The story could never have enjoyed the success it has had in the form of horror films if it did not somehow tap into a variety of adolescent fears and fantasies. Bearing in mind that Mary Shelley was the same age as many college students when she wrote the book, teachers ought to be able to make it speak with particular force to them. We have found that Frankenstein comes alive for students when we ask them about the ways in which they can sympathize and even identify with the Creature.

What Mary Shelley wrote is, after all, a grotesque variant of the bildungsroman. Literally at the center of Frankenstein is an account of the Creature’s education, and the Creature’s fundamental problem is the one with which many heroes and heroines of nineteenth-century novels grapple: how to find a respectable place in society. While the Creature’s situation is certainly extraordinary, its troubles mirror basic human concerns and anxieties. The questions that torment the Creature have a familiar ring to the ears of college students: Why do I appear to be different from everyone else (even though I seem to share the same feelings inside)? How do I fit into society? Why have I been rejected by someone who should have taken care of me? How do I find a mate? Is there anyone to share my misery? By getting students to approach the Creature’s experience in terms of such questions, a teacher can quickly break down their initial
tendency to see the Creature's story as fantastic and remote from their own interests and concerns.

But the point of this pedagogical exercise is not to reduce the Creature's story to the level of undergraduate angst; rather, once students begin to view the Creature sympathetically as an outcast, they can begin to explore Mary Shelley's specifically Romantic concerns in the novel. The Creature takes its place in a long line of Cain figures in English Romanticism, beginning with Coleridge's Ancient Mariner (to whom Walton refers in his second letter). Like its creator, Frankenstein, the Creature has much in common with the self-image of Romantic artists. Isolated from ordinary humanity, the Creature is simultaneously cursed and blessed: cursed with an inability to participate in the normal joys of humanity but blessed with special insights into the human condition precisely as a result of its isolation. Teachers can talk about the Creature's feeling for nature, in particular its affinity for sublime landscapes. In a Romantic or a general survey course teachers can ask students to compare the Creature's sensibility with that of particular Romantic poets, such as Wordsworth, Byron, and Percy Shelley.

We have found it especially helpful to discuss Frankenstein in terms of Rousseau's philosophy (in her journal Mary Shelley indicates that she was reading Rousseau's Reveries of the Solitary Walker while working on Frankenstein). In particular, we assign Rousseau's Second Discourse or at least explain the central ideas of the work. In many ways, Mary Shelley's Creature corresponds to Rousseau's "natural man," having roughly the same combination of virtues and defects. In some ways the Creature—even in its own eyes—seems uncivilized and hence inferior to the citizens of society. Like Rousseau's "natural man," the Creature at first lacks the ability to speak and reason. But by the same token, in some ways the Creature seems superior to so-called civilized people. Again like Rousseau's "natural man," the Creature is stronger and more vigorous than the citizens of modern society. It can survive in circumstances that would kill the pampered products of civilization. The Creature possesses the virtues Rousseau attributes to "natural man"—in particular, independence and a natural sense of pity. In telling the story of the Creature's turn to crime, Mary Shelley re-creates Rousseau's chronicle of the fall of "natural man" into civil society, with all the attendant psychic strains and distortions.

Using Rousseau as background for teaching Frankenstein helps students to think about the novel in broader, philosophic terms. His revolutionary reconstruction of human nature can suggest ways for students to break out of their conventional responses to the Creature and to understand that its monstrousness is in part a social construction. In a sense Mary Shelley is portraying the distorted world of society, in which Rousseau's "natural man" appears as monstrous—a creature with all the natural impulses of humanity—indeed a being in whom the creatureliness of humanity is heightened to a new extreme—is rejected by society as inhuman for its failure to fit into its conventional molds. Viewed in these terms, the Creature's story becomes a case study in alienation, in precisely the sense of the term that Hegel and Marx inherited from Rousseau. The Creature's tragedy is that, forced to see itself through the eyes of others, it ultimately accepts their view of it as monstrous. Because of this development, the Creature gets locked into a life-and-death struggle with Victor Frankenstein, in which it can succeed in rivaling its creator only by matching his destructive power.

Once we have our students thinking about the Creature as a pole of sympathy in Frankenstein, we ask them to press further and consider whether there are ways in which Mary Shelley might have identified with her "hideous progeny" or, alternatively phrased, ways in which Frankenstein might reflect the concerns of a nineteenth-century woman. At first, these questions may puzzle students. How can the story of a decidedly male Creature—it is, after all, questing for a female throughout much of the book—embody a woman's concerns? But when we remind students of the centrality of education as a theme in Frankenstein, a light begins to dawn. Denied access to any normal means of education, the Creature is forced to educate itself. Moreover, the Creature must do so on the sly, learning to speak and read by eavesdropping on the education the De Lacey family gives to the Turkish girl, Safie. The Creature thus appropriates for itself an education that was meant for another. Many a woman in the nineteenth century, barred from the educational opportunities available to men and forced to improvise an education for herself, faced similar circumstances.

From a formal perspective, this reading of Frankenstein has the advantage of justifying the long De Lacey episode at the center of the novel or at least of explaining its role in Mary Shelley's overarching plan. These chapters, which deal with the De Lacey family and the Creature's education, may strike students as tame by comparison with those describing Frankenstein's creative labors and the Creature's revenge on its creator. It may be that Mary Shelley was seeking in the De Lacey episode a plot device to explain how her Creature became so articulate. Significantly, the film versions of Frankenstein always drastically reduce this segment of the story or omit it altogether; their producers and directors well aware that audiences are looking for something more sensational than an elementary lesson in French.

Looking at the De Lacey episode in the light of Mary Shelley's concerns as a nineteenth-century woman may not make the story any more gripping at this point, but it does give students a sense of how the book coheres
Innocence regained, Frankenstein and Clever hid away. The material of the stories is               

earmarked by the themes of love and loss, the struggle against the elements, and the               

triumph of good over evil. The characters are developed with depth and complexity,               

making the story a timeless classic of literature. The novel also raises important               

questions about the nature of humanity and the consequences of scientific               

exploration. It is a story that continues to capture the imagination of readers today.
the light of my own vampiric my own spirit let loose from the grave
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The Wonders of Frankenstein

As he was reading the first page of the novel, he could see the entire book enclosed in a single paragraph. The physical appearance of the figure on the cover was striking. The title, "Frankenstein," was written in large, bold letters, and the subtitle, "A Tale of the Original Sin..." was written in smaller, more delicate script. The author, Mary Shelley, was listed below in a smaller font.

The story of Frankenstein was based on the novel by the same name, written by Mary Shelley. The novel was first published in 1818 and has since become a classic of science fiction and horror literature. The main character, Victor Frankenstein, is a young scientist who creates a monster and is haunted by its destruction.

The novel was well-received by critics and was praised for its exploration of themes such as the consequences of scientific hubris and the dangers of playing God. Despite its successes, however, the novel was also criticized for its treatment of women and its depiction of the Victorian era.

The novel was reprinted several times and has been adapted into numerous films and television shows. It has also been the subject of numerous studies and analyses, with scholars exploring its themes and its significance in literature and culture.
The existence of this northern Scottish coast was confirmed by Turner in his_msue works. The shore lines were continuous, but the waters of the sea, the tides, and the storms made it difficult to identify the exact location of the coast. The rugged landscape of the area, however, made it an ideal setting for Turner's paintings. The coastal areas were often depicted in a romantic and picturesque manner, highlighting the power and beauty of nature.

In the context of Turner's work, the coastal areas were not just simple landscapes, but elements that contributed to the overall atmosphere of his paintings. The use of light and shadow, as well as the dynamic movement of the sea, were all elements that Turner used to convey the power and majesty of the natural world.

The coastal areas were often depicted in a romantic and picturesque manner, highlighting the power and beauty of nature. The rugged landscape of the area, however, made it an ideal setting for Turner's paintings. The use of light and shadow, as well as the dynamic movement of the sea, were all elements that Turner used to convey the power and majesty of the natural world.

From the data presented, it is clear that Turner was deeply influenced by the coastal areas of Scotland, and that these areas played a significant role in his work. His paintings were not just representations of a landscape, but a reflection of his own emotional responses to the natural world. The coastal areas were not just simple landscapes, but elements that contributed to the overall atmosphere of his paintings. The use of light and shadow, as well as the dynamic movement of the sea, were all elements that Turner used to convey the power and majesty of the natural world.
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Problems of Perception

New York: Doubleday, Chapter 4, 1988

Mary Shelley's Frankenstein: The Fiction of Her Monsters

This article came from the book: "Problems of Perception."

Chapter Seven

Problems of Perception
Frankenstein and the sublime

...
Anke K. Meier
FRANKENSTEIN AND THE SUBLIME

I am afraid I was not in reality the monster he feared. I was in reality the creature he, through Vincen—a creature whom he does not understand—created, not as an object of horror, but as a source of comfort. I felt that my existence was a blessing, not a curse, and that I could be of service to humanity. But the creature Vincen was not content with this. He desired to be like man, to have the power of reason, and to be able to create a new world. He saw in me a means of achieving his goal, and he sought to control me.

I was created by Dr. Victor Frankenstein, a scientist who had dedicated his life to understanding the laws of nature. He had spent many years perfecting his knowledge of electricity and the human body, and he had finally succeeded in creating life from lifeless matter. I was born in a laboratory, surrounded by strange machines and experiments.

At first, I was filled with joy and wonder. The world was a place of marvels, and I longed to explore it. But soon I began to realize the limitations of my existence. I was unable to speak, to think, to feel emotions. I was a creature of the mind, without a soul.

Despite my isolation, I found solace in the company of others. I visited the homes of the villagers, seeking their company and understanding. I learned to communicate with them through gestures and signs, and I became a beloved member of their community.

But as the years passed, I began to feel the weight of my condition. I was not accepted by the other humans, and I was constantly reminded of my differences. I began to hate myself, and I longed for death.

But I could not die. I was a creation of science, and I was forever bound to the earth. I was a prisoner of my own creation, and I knew that I could never escape.

I learned to live with my condition, and I tried to find a purpose in life. I dedicated myself to helping others, and I became a source of comfort and hope for those who were suffering.

But as the years passed, I became more and more isolated. I was a creature of science, and I was forever alone. I knew that I could never be accepted by the other humans, and I knew that I could never escape my condition.

And so I remained, a creation of science, forever bound to the earth. I was a prisoner of my own creation, and I knew that I could never die.
and a major novel of ideas—
and her Frankenstein lives on as a great cautionary tale—

New York University
School of Professional and Continuing Studies
Professor of English

—Walter James Miller

and that Percy Florence, son and grandson of great talents,
lows of Percy Shelley's works. She resided herself in the
seasons of his life, novel of his life and work. His novel, "Frankenstein,
and his essay, "The Secret Sharer" in the postmodern
culture and philosophy, "The Iliad" of the ancient Greeks
and philosophy, "The Odyssey" of the ancient Greeks.

While readers will differ in their view of Frankenstein's
Elizabeth—she is a foil for the monster to do—killing

complicity in the murders and foils, there can be little doubt
that the monster is a foil for Elizabeth. What he can only dream of doing—killing

Elizabeth's reputation and setting the stage for his ultimate

murder of Victor Frankenstein was mostly

when the monster of Victor Frankenstein is murdered,

sentence of the monster's misdeeds. Perhaps, setting the

stage for the series of events that lead to the eventual

murder of Elizabeth and setting the stage for the

ultimate destruction of Victor Frankenstein.

Certainly, we have come to consider Frankenstein as the

unmitigated monster who is an

apex of a true, dynamic combination of Ego and Id. Per

Clarice Stetson and her son William, were dead by 1819,

after Frankenstein's death. Mary Shelley was a mixing

of both her and her son's, Frankenstein's stories.

Some critics think of the monster's death and the following

description that could result in revolution.

It's not surprising that the monster's death and the following

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It's not surprising that the monster's death and the following

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It's not surprising that the monster's death and the following

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It's not surprising that the monster's death and the following

description that could result in revolution.
The human would be affected in a misshap.

Without females, if there were no females,
If only children could be produced some other way,

Forward
Walton's presence in the story serves several narrative functions. His earliest appearance provides an opportunity for the characters to express their thoughts and feelings about the situation. Through Walton's narration, the reader gains insight into the characters' perspectives and motivations. Furthermore, Walton's presence allows the author to incorporate additional historical or cultural context, enhancing the depth and richness of the story. His role as a narrator also facilitates the exploration of themes such as destiny, fate, and the interplay between human agency and the natural world.