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**The Historical Importance of *Frankenstein* as it Relates to the Gothic Genre**

Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*explores the dangers and hazards of scientific developments and the pursuit of knowledge. By creating the monster, Frankenstein achieves a brilliant scientific discovery; he was able to make life from lifeless objects. Despite this remarkable revelation, Frankenstein’s monster only brought about havoc, destruction, and death. This novel serves as a warning against the curiosity of scientists who attempt to acquire knowledge farther than the normal human being. A quote that accurately portrays the danger of the scientific discovery made by Frankenstein is the following: “Learn from me, if not by my precepts, at least by my example, how dangerous is the acquirement of knowledge and 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” (Shelley 31). Victor Frankenstein created his monster for the benefit of humankind, yet it ironically caused more harm than good; the monster (whether intentional or not) murdered three people who were very close to Frankenstein. Mary Shelly was trying to warn society about the pursuit of knowledge, and it is evident through the fact that Frankenstein’s monster (created through a remarkable scientific advancement) caused so much destruction and pain in the lives of many people.This story was both written and set during the time of the first industrial revolution, in which there was no restrictions and limitations on the quest for knowledge and scientific inquiry. This definitely generated fear amongst people because they soon began to question the origins and principles of life; “The emerging science challenged the traditional view of the ‘vital spark’ believed to kick-start the soul and ultimately to have come from God with a new account: that life was merely an assemblage of pieces that could be brought to life by electricity” (Hammond 4).

Kim Hammond’s article,*Monsters of Modernity: Frankenstein and Modern Environmentalism,*thoroughly analyzes the novel and explains its historical significance. Hammond discusses the fear of scientific discovery and technological creations, along with the dangers of messing with nature and assuming the role of God. This article definitely fits well with what I will be writing about in Paper #1. It relates what was written in the novel to the occurrences that happened during the time period in which it was written and explains the analogous thoughts that appear in the novel. Hammond then analyzes three main characters (Victor Frankenstein, the monster, and Captain Walton) and discusses how the characters help develop the plot and warn against the dangers associated with scientific advancements. Overall, this article thoroughly analyzes the article in order to help fully understand how this novel is historically significant. An example from this article that proves the suitability of this writing to my paper is the following: “The story of Frankenstein is often interpreted and mobilized as a powerful and popular symbol of concerns over the risks and dangers of science, progressive modernity and its ensuing technological creations, and… the dangers of ‘messing with nature’ or ‘playing God’” (Hammond 1). This article will prove to be great assistance in writing Paper #1 and in understanding the novel *Frankenstein*.

Works Cited

Hammond, Kim. "Monsters of Modernity: Frankenstein and Modern Environmentalism." Cultural Geographies 11.2 (2004): 181-98. ProQuest. Web. 24 Jan. 2017.

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. Dover Publications, New York, 2013.