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# Bladerunner

Cinematic extrapolation of issues raised in Frankenstein; logical consequence of Frankenstein

## CONTEXT

### HISTORICAL (1982)

- Consequences of technicism- pursuit to ignoble ends, devoid of any personal, ethical or moral consideration
- Globalisation, materialistic consumerism, capitalist mentality → science supersedes spiritual & ethical values revealing alienation of individ, dissolution of family, destruction of ecological habitats; Nature irrevocably altered- natural element of procreation eliminated
- Social disillusionment characterised 1980's era
- Combined force of globalisation & materialism impact on existing social & eco values & practices
- Aggressive advertising, encouraged by drive for profits by rising corporate power of multi-nationals generated new consumerism, so-called "Asianisation" of Western markets
- Polit pressures as 'Cold war' fears & collective paranoia about perceived military threats from Russia
- In America, Reagan ushered raft of tough economic policies that cut areas of education, welfare & housing to cover burgeoning cost of increased defence spending
- Awareness of no# social concerns = mounting e.g. ethical issues of scientific & tech progress
- Pollution from commercial exploitation, industrialisation, urbanisation, excessive use of fossil fuels
- Escalation of political legislation & regulation regarded as invasive & eroding indiv rights, privacy & social autonomy
- Reagan period= time of increasing social alienation; by-product of validation of commercialism & militarism over trad values of family & community
- Concern= morality of future represented; Distastes & fear for 1980s values of American Capitalist mentality & implications of social inequity & ecological degradation

RECEPTIVE CONTEXT Our concept of humanity is being transformed by implants & transplants which make many humans composite of natural & artificial parts. Depicts a future whose fictional distance from present reality has grown sharply smaller as 2019 approaches

**GENRE** Subverts romance genre using relationship betw Deckard & Rachel. Conveys alienation & tension & develop empathy for ambiguous protagonists & their plight. Very detached as opposed to Pris & Roy

### SCIENCE FICTION

- Hybridised genre- mixing science fiction & film noir
- Fragmentation & representational uncertainty & postmodern methods e.g. appropriation, pastiche, simulation, proved too alienating for 1982 audiences; current audiences relish in dark vision of monolithic urban decay → didactic nature of genre- raise social awareness by reflecting many of the ecological & ethical concerns of its era

- Futuristic elements- futuristic gadgets, flying vehicles, artificial animals, video-phones, image enhancement machine

#### FILM NOIR/TECH NOIR

- Film noir elements pervade film, anchoring it in a sodden, decaying world w/ enveloping atmosphere of menace, pessimism, anxiety
- Film noir both a screen style & perspective on human existence & society; depicts nihilistic world view, protagonists as powerless hostages of fate in face of social corruption & decadence
- Narrative structure inferential e.g. ever-present hint of danger triggered by iconography of poorly lit streets, expressionistic lighting, disorienting cinematic style
- Dehumanising environment marked by human anonymity & vulnerability
- Reversed film-noir archetypes as site of morality is NOT the protagonist.

#### SETTING LOS ANGELES 2019

- Environmental issues: places concern in near future; such is man's rapacity; signals cultural & societal anxieties
- Haunting, hypnotic, harrowing; decrepit
- Fiery hell (allusion to Dante)- exploding from industrialisation → obsolete social & ecological despair
- Confronting futuristic representation of social ills
- Dark, post-apocalyptic hell; corporate presence predominates in world of artifice & overt materialism
- Unchecked industrialisation has exploited & debased the world's natural resources → urban wasteland
- Landscape devoid of any signs of children/natural beauty, replaced by decaying man-made structures
- Claustrophobic, menacing atmosphere results from visual predominance of human congestion set vs. backdrop of abandoned tenement houses, squalid streets & alleyways
- Overlooked by Tyrell's huge, monolithic structure- dwarfs region below; Slogan "*commerce is our goal*;" Size bestows status, ziggurat structure representative of power, influence, domination
- Verisimilitude replaced nature, wonders of genetic engineering created 'replicant,' slave underclass, specifically designed to help colonise 'off-world' alternatives to earth
- LA: repository for citizens who've failed to meet emigration reqs needed to access 'off-world' colonies
- Degradation & decay result from egomaniacal machinations of corporate god. Societal upheaval, social alienation, ecological bastardisation; city of hybridised humanity- starkly juxtaposed by Mayan splendour of Tyrell building (power to one- poverty to many)
- Visual & aural landscape saturated w/ advertising, of a polyglot population immersed in a Babel of competing cultures, of decadence & homelessness- vast, drab landscape cluttered w/ dilapidated buildings → lacks any sense of community or connection

**CHARACTERISATION** Alienated characters representatives of their dehumanised social milieu

#### DECKARD

- Anti-hero; nature ambiguous; heroism contrasts stereotypical genre tropes; lacks depth & verve (enthusiasm; vigour)
- Officially sanctioned killer murdering what were, after all, really people
- Cynical, world-weary demeanour; flawed anti-hero personality; emotionless, disenchanting ennui
- Tentacles of corporate power enabled them to manipulate law, e.g. Bryant's outburst *"If you're not a cop you're little people,"* Gaff leaves Deckard origami chicken implying Deckard controlled by corporate police
  - o Contrast: replicants are commodities, *"like any other machine, either a benefit or a hazard"*
  - o *"How can it not know what it is?"* referencing Rachel as 'it' shows arrogance & callous insensitivity

### TYRELL

- Tyrell (President of Tyrell Corporation) depicted as corporate 'God' lives in splendid isolation in Ziggurat structure
- Tyrell's indifference to feelings of others shown by treatment of Rachel- his creation/surrogate niece, *"Rachel is an experiment- nothing more;"* insensitivity as she's led to believe in the filial bond that has been embedded in her consciousness
  - o Not inferior to responders who identify w/ her despair, loss of identity, whereas Tyrell an inhumane, unfeeling
- Total indifference to creations' fate stresses lack of commercial ethics, emphasises abuse of scientific knowledge & tech capability to artificially create life; 4yr life-span *"fail-safe device;"* denial of basic humanity towards the replicants
- God-like status obvious- dressed in white when Roy visits his 'maker;' yet physical inferiority emphasised by thick glasses
- Refers to Roy as his 'son' but blind to ethical ramifications of his act of creation; lacks any parental concern, exhibiting only selfish, profit driven motivations

### THE REPLICANTS pivotal term

- Cyborg creations blur boundaries betw human & non-human; *"more human than human"*
- Genetically predetermined servitude
- Mugshots est the criminality of the replicants w/ death euphemistically termed *"retirement"*
- Superior strength & intellect → Q. humanity *"more human than human"* e.g. show compassion towards each other which makes them appear superior to human masters
- Essentially human beings, an all-flesh culture that is very advanced & highly perfected
- J.F. Sebastian *"You're so different- you're so perfect"*
- Roy's humanity shown through affection for Pris *"if we don't find help soon, Pris doesn't have long to live- I can't allow that"*

### ROY BATTY

- Exudes life; energy & heightened self-awareness- audience emphasises w/ struggle to survive
- Roy shows sense of wrongdoing, *"I've done... questionable things"*
- *"Quite an experience to live in fear- that's what it is to be a slave"* lack of commercial ethics

- Deckard's fall is prevented by last 2<sup>nd</sup>, super-human grasp by Roy's impaled hand; by empathising w/ victim & bestowing life rather than death, gains heroic status
- Death= tragic & given religious overtones by release of white dove, symbolic; cathartic, fundamentally challenging outlook
- "Ah! Kinship" when grabs foe's wrist → united coz Batty now hero- in way, more human than Deckard

### RACHEL

- Tyrell dismisses her as merely a creative experiment; stripped of humanity- feels objectified: Product "*I'm not in the business. I am the business*"
- His attraction compromised his role of pursuer- replicant status now compromises her
- Refers to her in sexually aggressive terms; reasserts social & political position of woman as object of man's consumption

**THEMES** Thematic expression of existential themes- pertaining to existence, imperialism, classism (society composed of distinct classes), ethics of personal heroism. Grand parable of mankind's ever-foiled mission to contend w/ its maker

### COMMERCIAL POWER Corporatisation of America

- No hope & no escape from totalitarian state
- Society in which spurious realities are manufactured by the media, by govts, by big corporations; bombarded by pseudo-realities characterised by simulacrum (imposter/created/synthetic realities)
- Characters forced into accepting social roles either by genetic design, dictums of commerce, pressure from police state
- Soulless beams of advertising hoarding
- Values family & community eroded by consumerist values

PARANOIA High level of paranoia pervades w/ visual manifestation of corporate power, omnipresent police, probing lights, powerlessness of the individ. Paranoia envelops the audience in suspicion & uncertainty. E.g. Gaff's patronising origami

### SCIENCE AS GOD

- Religious imagery foregrounds Promethean dangers of man playing God
- Synthetic replacement of what is naturally has morally compromised & tainted humanity
- Scientific progress has violated human existence, resulting in mass dehumanisation & desensitisation
- Freedom replaced by subservience, mankind reduced to commercial commodity
- Society is barren- LA post apocalyptic world where nature has been defiled & largely destroyed (highlighting ecological & sociological concerns intensifying in Reagan era)
- Poses question whether scientific & tech progress actually beneficial for humanity
- To ensure creation cannot harm creator- 4 year life span: echoes inherent threat found in monster's words to creator Frankenstein "*Remember; thou hast made me more powerful than thyself*"
- Capitalistic patriarchy (Tyrell), controls everything, the economy, law & populace

### SIMULACRUM (Questions what is humanity?)

- Human facsimiles almost indistinguishable making it difficult to determine real from artificial
- Memory & identity manipulated so nothing can be relied on as being real
- Simulation models surpassing original human model they were copied from

- Commodities- outcasts, ostracised, marginalised; enslaved & exploited; denied longevity
- Duality of man & duplicate is a recurring doppelganger motif e.g. Roy Batty & Deckard are shadow selves, reflections of each other, good vs. evil, hero vs. villain, victim vs. victimiser
- Man dehumanised while replicant achieves humanity
- Reversal of film-noir archetypes:
  - o Deckard= recalcitrant, rigid, inexpressive
  - o Batty: exuberant, passionate
  - o Nexus 6- aptitude for emotional learning (rarefied form of humanity) e.g. Batty's final action to save rather than take life
  - o Batty desperately desires life→human; whereas Deckard has an affinity w/ death, hopelessness→ambiguous

### HUMAN MONSTROSITY

- Tyrell has no comprehension of suffering or pain he causes; gives replicants memories of family coz gives him more power over them; offers only trite condolences about Roy's accomplishments
- Batty has sense of humour, Deckard frowns. Batty has childlike energy, Deckard is tired & slumped. Batty is eloquent & poetic, Deckard is virtually monosyllabic. *"I thought you were supposed to be good. Aren't you the good man?"*

### LESSENING OF HUMAN/CREATOR CONTROL

- Visit eyemaker Chew & kill; Roy quotes Dante- literary allusion reveals intelligence, sense of wrongdoing. Motif of angels extended→ fallen from grace
- Led to believe humans struggling to keep control over tech. Humans lost natural dominance

REDEMPTION In choosing to save Deckard, his foe, Roy assumes almost God-like or saintly status. Religious iconography e.g. spike pierced hand, releasing white dove (universal symbol of peace). Shrouded heroism & naked divinity

### DEGRADATION/ DEGENERATION

- Irreversible ecological degradation- Natural world exists only in dreams & memories. Encouraged to leave as life no longer tenable & desirable.
- Contamination both physical & emotional; also technological progress created moral anomalies
- Darkness pervades & nature seems defeated- yielded to industrial megalopolis
- Children noticeably absent/ New life- procreation absent. Evokes absence of family, nature; privileges other notions/ideas- strengthens warning
- Continual reference to artificial animals reinforces fragility of enviro.
- *"A new life awaits you in the off world colonies. The chance to begin again in a golden land of opportunity & adventure"* suggestive of earthly decay

### **TECHNIQUES**

ORIGAMI Gaff uses to taunt Deckard. In Bryant's office when Deckard insists he is retired, Gaff folds chicken (You're afraid to do it). Man w/ erection (you're attracted to her). Unicorn (You're dreaming; you can run away but she won't live)

CINEMATIC STYLE Ominous (portending evil or harm); sonorous (loud, deep, resonant), perplexing

- Create a menacing atmosphere of fear about where tech is heading

- Pass a serious comment on modern state of relations betw tech & people, freedom & slavery, meaning of life & death, the metropolis & people, man & woman
- Focus on social ramification of science & corporate greed
- Absence of dialogue suggests break down of emotion & communication

**EYE MOTIF** Chu's false eyes, Tyrell's glasses. Motif of eyes: questions reality & ability to perceive it? (Eyes widely regarded as "windows to the soul," eye contact a facet of body language that unconsciously demonstrates intent & emotion). Tyrell's trifocal glasses= strong indicator of his reliance on technology for his power & his myopic vision

**RELIGIOUS SYMBOLISM** Subtext of Christian allegory: identity as creations of god of biomechanics (Tyrell) & fall from heavens (off-world)→ analogous to fallen angels. Dove appears to symbolise Roy's soul ascending into the heavens. Delib misquote of William Blake's "*America, A Prophecy*" when Batty states "*Fiery the angels fell*" → identity as fallen angels

**VANGELIS' MUSIC** Score= trademark mix of electronic & acoustic= musical representation of film's dynamic betw human & android; ambience of heartbreaking melancholia

**NATURE OF TEXT** Warning vs. genetic engineering, consumerism, greed, mass production as well as the morality involved/engineering & implications of these. Offers bleak prognosis of future & raises philosophical questions about worth of humanity & human's control of world. Prophetic vision unarguably a reflection of the advent of globalisation w/in Scott's own context.

**AMBIGUITY** Entire structure of Blade Runner is one of parallel investigations e.g. tender looks & playful body language betw Pris & Batty contrasted to Deckard's clumsily forced embrace & "*Say, Kiss me*" scene w/ Rachel

### **SPECIFIC SEQUENCES**

**DECKARD TRACKS ZHORA & 'RETIRES' HER** Slow motion as Zhora shot & crashes through shop windows. Viewer uneasy as appears Deckard viciously shot beautiful defenceless woman in back: Question morality of humans- replicants more sympathetic & compassionate?

**RACHEL** Rachel aloof & enigmatic w/ patronising body language & tone of voice. Contrast epitome of human success, Tyrell, who is short, bespectacled, smug & whose description of Rachel as "*an experiment, nothing more*" makes him sound callous & lacking in vision

### **ROY BATTY MEETS HIS 'MAKER'**

- Tragic irony as human creators not admirable e.g. flawed creator Tyrell & diseased JF Sebastian & lacking qualities expected of humans e.g. Chew hunched & elderly; Tyrell isolated, half-blind
- Mise en scene: associations w/ pyramids, candles, white robes, chess boards, owls, eyes, father/son relationship
- Tyrell's language is scientific, formal & unemotional
- Contrast betw inferior 'maker' & a superior product is apparent e.g. Tyrell's comments "*The light that burns twice as bright burns half as long. And you have burned so very very brightly, Roy.*" & "*You're the prodigal son.*" Biblical allusion. Suggestions technology created surpassing human control

### **ROY'S DEATH**

- Roy linked in our minds w/ fallen angel
- Surpasses replicants in extent of his passion e.g. when meets Tyrell & demands extended life; anguish at idea of finite lifespan elevates him; Embodiment of motto "*more human than human*"

- Capacity for philosophical & spiritual thinking evident when quote Blake's poetry & understands Tyrell's biblical allusions
- Inevitable link w/ crucified Jesus when drives nail through palm & w/ Holy Spirit when releases dove at moment of death
- *"I've seen things you people wouldn't believe. Attack ships on fire off the shoulder of Orion. I watched C-beams glitter in the dark near Tannhauser Gate. All those moments will be lost in time like tears in rain. Time to die"* → profound sense of loss of potentiality

## Frankenstein

1<sup>st</sup> published anonymously 1818

### MARY SHELLEY

- Both parents were radical intellectuals: Mother Mary Wollstonecraft= feminist scholar, father William Godwin= philosopher & political theoretician
- While an adolescent formed a controversial & adulterous relationship w/ Percy Shelley
- Little formal education; father tutored her & often took children on educational outings. Access to library & many intellectuals who visited him e.g. Romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge → unusual & advanced education for a girl of her times
- 1816- summer w/ Percy, Claire Clairmont (stepsister), John William Polidori & Lord Byron near Geneva, Switzerland. Conversation: 18<sup>th</sup> cent natural philosopher Erasmus Darwin: said to have animated dead matter, & to galvanism & the feasibility of returning a corpse of assembled body parts to life. Discussion bout Darwin's discoveries → story unfolded from central, awe-inspiring image:
  - o *"I saw the pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling beside the thing he had put together. I saw the hideous phantasm of a man stretched out, & then, on the working of some powerful engine, show signs of life & stir w/ an uneasy, half vital motion. Frightful it must be; for supremely frightful would be the effect of any human endeavour to mock the stupendous mechanism of the Creator of the World."*
- Gave birth to 4 children, only 1 survived to adulthood- contact w/ death described as influence on her
- PURPOSE *"A tale which would speak to the mysterious fears of our nature & awaken thrilling horror to make the reader dread to look round, to curdle the blood, & quicken the beatings of the heart."*
- *"Treat a person ill & they will become wicked"* Percy Shelley
- Writing in age when 1<sup>st</sup> discoveries of modern science being explored → era of dawning possibilities. Haunting psychological study

### LITERARY THEMES & STYLES

#### GENDER

- Feminist & psychoanalytic critics responsible for recovery of neglect from Shelley as a writer
- Moers claims Shelley's loss of a baby crucial influence: "birth myth" in which Mary comes to terms w/ causing mother's death & for failing as a parent; *"unnatural modes of production & reproduction"*



- Shelley celebrates “*feminine affections & compassion*” associated w/ family & suggests civil society fail w/out them e.g. Victor complete madness accompanying Elizabeth’s death

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL CONTENT OF NOVEL Gilbert & Gubar- “one of England’s most notable literary heiresses” read voraciously novels e.g. Paradise Lost; translated into Edenic quality of valley, rivers, lakes

Frankenstein= Mary’s alter ego? That a male w/out sexual contact can reproduce= feminist fantasy. Laboratory replacing womb frees women from constraints of the body. Monster an “abortion” a defilement of human form- failure of man?

**HISTORICAL & LITERARY CONTEXT** Shelley concerned w/ no# of issues: Frankenstein a literary vehicle for exploring them. Ideas & values of Age of Enlightenment, Romantics, the Industrial Revolution, of science & tech & subsequent ethical dilemmas they provoked. Time of “ardent curiosity;” of intellectual ferment.

#### EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

- Period of great technological & scientific change
- Discoveries widespread inc evolutionary theories of Erasmus Darwin & potential for electricity (**galvanism**) to restore life to dead bodies
  - o Mirrored scientific advances of her day drawing on Promethean myth (Prometheus cited in allusions for his inventiveness, shrewdness, & for sufferings his genius brought him)
- Aspiration of modern masculinist scientists to be technically creative divinities
- Sense of individ pride & ownership in production of materials was taken away in early 19<sup>th</sup> w/ advent of mass-industrialisation. Resulted in alienation of worker from their product. Victor rejects his product as something that doesn’t intrinsically belong to him “*thinking & reasoning animal*”

GOTHICISM Gothic novel: characterised by picturesque settings; an atmosphere of mystery, gloom & terror; supernatural or fantastic occurrences; violent & macabre event

- The Gothic mode was a reaction vs the humanistic, rationalist literature of The Age of Reason
- Closely related to Romanticism
- Snister characters, macabre settings e.g. graveyards, charnel houses; thematically- elemental forces of good & evil wage battle for souls leads to murder & suffering; Mysterious, introverted, haunted aspects of existence= evoke alienation & despair
- Explored darker, secretive side of human psychology, passion, sensibility
- Gothic protagonists= villainous, larger than life figures, passionately struggling w/ mania, obsession or melancholy of some kind; exist in social isolation in remote, gloomy settings e.g. setting in “*wild & mysterious regions*” (icy wastes of North), reinforces emotional & intellectual isolation of protagonists; nature create atmosphere that serves to indicate the isolation of the two protagonists)
- Gothicism part of romantic movement of late 18<sup>th</sup> characterised by:
  - o Freedom of thought & expression
  - o Atmosphere of mystery & suspense- irony created by use of polyphonic narration
  - o Omens/portents/visions- disturbing dream
  - o High, overwrought emotion: narration highly sentimental
  - o Metonymy of gloom & horror: found in connection between nature & emotions

- Evokes terror through depiction physical & psychological violence
- Interrupted narrative that relies on multiple methods e.g. letters
- Dark underside of Romanticism
- About transgression (of certain values, ethics, morality, parenthood- making mistakes that critically impact others)

#### ENLIGHTENMENT VALUES (1685-1780)

- Rejected relig superstition contending that exercise of human reason held key to happiness
- Shelley's father= radical philosopher & writer (William Godwin) warned dangers inherent in placing 'abstracted' pursuit of knowledge before collective responsibility & happiness "*knowledge, & the enlargement of intellect, are poor, when unmixed with sentiments of benevolence & sympathy...*"
- Believed only way to know God, if at all, through science
- Dominated by faith in science & reason
- Claimed role of science as an agent of man's betterment

#### ROMANTICISM

- Mixes visceral & alienating subject matter w/ speculative & thought-provoking themes
- Foregrounds mental & moral struggles of the protagonist; Victor like Satan in [Paradise Lost](#), & [Prometheus](#): rebels vs tradition in creating life
- Challenged ideas of logic & fact espoused by previous 'Age of Reason' by promoting virtues of emotion, free thought, nature, the mind & the imagination
- Literary themes explored ideas of isolation, social disillusionment, tragedy of loss
- Saw neg connotations surrounding sweeping social & economic changes brought about by Industrial Revolution. Mass production= primary cause of mounting social ills e.g. poverty, urban over-crowding
- Saw industrialisation as serious threat to individualistic ideals
- Influence of ideas evident in Shelley's imaginative emphasis on forces of unchecked progress; novel a rejection of excesses of Industrial Revolution
- Couched in tempestuous atmosphere of heightened emotions
- Genre trope- novel's focus of decomposition & degradation & death
- Reaction vs view of physical world increasingly dominated by science. Nature, rather than society, man's proper setting- nature helps to fulfil man
- Focus on nature & emotions w/ heightened aesthetic sensibility
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau "*Everything is good as it comes from the hands of the Author of nature; but everything degenerates in the hands of man.*"

#### SCIENCE FICTION

- Explores marvels of discovery & achievement that may result from future science/tech developments
- Shelley uses tech finding of time: reinvents Promethean myth w/ spark of newly discovered electricity
- Based on science of the time & projections of what was believed to be possible

#### **CHARACTERISATION**

##### VICTOR (a representation of the Enlightenment man)

- Complex, ambivalent & deeply flawed
- Horrors derive from unmitigated desire "*to penetrate the secrets of nature*"
- Intoxicated w/ experiments but blind to ethical ramifications

- Isolation triggers moral disaffection & moral & psychological degradation (gothic genre trope)
- Effectively changes from an innocent fascinated w/ attainment of knowledge into a disillusioned, guilt-ridden man w/ lethal vendetta. Doomed by lack of humanness & w/draws from humanity- commits himself to animalistic obsession w/ revenge
- Hamartia- curiosity, pride, ambition- moral bankruptcy

#### PRE-AWAKENING

- *"In a scientific pursuit there is continual food for discovery & wonder."* Metaphor shows omniscient plight. Heart of Age of Enlightenment goal that human life be endowed with new discoveries & power

#### POST-AWAKENING

- *"misery had her dwelling in my heart"* Personification

#### THE MONSTER (a symbol of man's obsession with scientific advancement)

- Nameless monster= product of societal rejection, depicted as a lonely outcast; identity exists as a grotesque reflection of his maker. Doppelganger
- Not innately evil but goodness eroded through mistreatment
- Physical grotesqueness- aspect that blinds society to initially gentle, kind nature
- Eloquent narration reveals remarkable sensitivity & benevolence
- Given derogative euphemistic names to reinforce ill treatment & rejection
- Monster's natural state is the state of any human when born; could be taken as archetype of humans
- Synonymous w/ humanity esp. those who are different= EMPATHY: Shelley has magnified/ exploded ideas of society e.g. uncontrolled/unfettered scientific process
- Awareness *"Sorrow only increased with knowledge"* contrast Victor- has moral & ethical conscience

#### ROBERT WALTON

- Rationality & common sense → important link between narrators & reader; benchmark for comparison
- Humanised by emotional fragility, prey to fears & moments of despondency; able suppress ambitions
- Role parallels Victor's- both involved in searches for knowledge
- In ultimate decision to terminate treacherous pursuit → Walton= a foil (someone whose traits or actions contrast with, & highlight, another character's) to Victor; moral capacity
- Prevailing characteristic of Walton's personality= ambition, desire to *"tread a land never before imprinted by the foot of man"*= link to Victor.
- *"& the absence of the object of which I now feel as a most severe evil...I bitterly feel the want of a friend."*
- His ambition, remarkable for its hubristic scope, is seemingly w/out bounds *"One man's life & death are but a small price to pay for the furtherance of my enterprise"*

#### TECHNIQUES

- Doppelganger- duality of self w/in characters as mirror images (Gothic trope). Both Creator & Monster represent 2 sides of same person; Speculums of each other; inwardly fused as morally flawed reflection of each other
- Polyphonic narrative (consisting of many voices)

- Other characters illustrate central tale & show Victor= rich in family & friends & monster has no one
- Melodramatic language & heightened formality= Romanticism
- Proleptic novel

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE Epistolary narrative framework= 3 levels encapsulating recounts of Victor, Monster & Walton. Adds drama & intrigue & calls attention to motives of telling. Each speaker's distinctive personality clearly defined. Disjointed structure w/ no single authoritative voice. Similarities & differences that connect storytellers but Narrators differentiated by attitudes, values & voice. Victor relates to Walton his story so as to deter further calamity- does so coz appreciates the parallels subsisting betw Walton & himself, identifies dangers "*I imagine that you may deduce an apt morale from my tale.*" Victor's fate assumes importance as a warning vs obsession/interference w/ natural order; consequences of an immoderate fascination w/ science

#### THE LETTERS

- "Evil forebodings" predicates narrative journey that subsequently unfolds
- Moral intermediary
- Increase realism of the narrative; story told- through medium of Walton's letters- in their own words- lends poignancy & conviction to their hopes & fears; Gives novel verisimilitude- a sense of reality
- Wrapped in register of achievement, fate, destiny
- Walton= moral central argument betw 2 warring parties
- Victor to Walton "*Do you share my madness? Have you drunk also of the intoxicating draught? Let me reveal my tale, & you will dash the cup from your lips!*"

DIDACTIC Didactic strength lays w/ subtitle's inherent warning about evils if man plays God shown in Victor's obsessive quest to bestow life; becomes representation of archetypal 'mad scientist.' Compelling critique of the Enlightenment; powerful expose of the human repercussions that scientific obsession can inspire

**THEMES** Examines universal questions. Concerned w/ "the elementary principles of human nature."

#### THE MODERN PROMETHEUS

- Classical Titan 'over-reacher' of Greek mythology, punished for pushing beyond permitted limits or boundaries; Fire stolen from Mount Olympus- place of the Gods- in order to give it to man → eternally punished.
- Shelley's Promethean scientists has idealistic motives but god-like transgression vs nature unleashes cycle of tragedy & heavenly retribution
- Moral tale raise reader awareness of our moral accountability when tamper w/ nature; dangers associated w/ man assuming Godlike power
- Monster's very existence in a condemnation of science
- Victor's usurpation demonstrates lack of judgement, forethought & moral irresponsibility
- Risk of unchecked tech/scientific endeavour- manipulate natural laws w/out assuming subsequent responsibility
- Frankenstein acts like Prometheus in trying to steal secret of life from God & as a consequence- is punished by the monster

SOLITUDE Monster's growing understanding of social sig of family connected to sense of otherness & solitude. The cottager's devotion to each other (Vol2Ch3) underscore Victor's abandonment of his creation/ observing their kindness causes the monster to suffer. "*I*

*admired the virtue & good feelings & loved the gentle manners & amiable qualities of my cottagers, but I was shut out from intercourse with them.*" Lack of interaction w/ others, in addition to namelessness, compounds monster's lack of social identity.

- Victor pre-awakening: *"I seemed to have lost all soul & sensation but for this one pursuit...my eyeballs were starting from their sockets in attending to the details of my employment."* Alliteration & hyperbole show degeneration of Victor's social self
- Post-awakening *"company was irksome to me"*
- *"solitude was my only consolation- deep, dark, deathlike solitude"* asyndeton

#### DANGEROUS KNOWLEDGE

- Frankenstein *"how dangerous is the acquirement of knowledge & how much happier that man is who believes his native town to be the world"* presumption
- Pursuit of knowledge at heart of Frankenstein; Victor attempts surge beyond accepted human limits & access secret of life; Walton tries surpass previous explorers by endeavouring to reach North Pole
- Victor's creation endangers his loved ones; his obsessive hatred of the monster drives him to death
- Walton pulls back from his mission- learning how destructive Victor's thirst was
- Presents science as powerful force that can be used for good & evil; Recognises its potential to fundamentally challenge mankind's attitudes to God & existence
- The scientism & idolisation of tech distances us- estranges us- from all emotional & ethical restraints
- Moral corrosiveness of unrestrained scientific development- no moral framework to restrain ambition

SUBLIME NATURE References to nature as a source of unrestrained emotional experience for the individ- offers characters spiritual renewal. Written whilst nature being lauded by Romantics- consciousness of the greatness of nature vs the smallness of man

- Shelley aligns Victor w/ Romantic Movement which emphasized a turn to nature for sublime experience—feelings of awe, hope, ecstasy. Surfaces his guilt, shame: *"The rain depressed me; my old feelings recurred, & I was miserable."*
- Victor's formerly intense connection w/ nature fades→ no refuge from horror of monster's deeds; nature serves purely as backdrop for Victor's primal struggle vs. the monster
- Mired in depression & remorse after W&J's deaths, Victor heads to mountains to lift spirits
- Natural world= stylistic device to convey mood & tone & pre-empt the narrative
- *"These sublime & magnificent scenes...elevated me from all littleness of feeling."* Ability to rejuvenate. Melodramatic→ deification. Also *"imperial Nature"* hegemonic qualities. Capitalisation→ personification & reverence
- Preoccupation w/ nature implicitly ack man's impotence to create on the same scale

#### MONSTROSITY

- The monster is central to the novel as an illustration of the results of obsession
- Monstrosity results from grotesque appearance & unnatural manner of his creation; dark, supernatural workings
- Victor is a kind of monster- secrecy, ambition, selfishness alienate him from human society; consumed by obsessive hatred of his creation

- Ironically- this being is morally superior to creator: pathos results from undeniable alienation
- Resonant motif (his monstrosity)- object of disgust, abhorrence
- Larger thematic concerns of obsession & societal monstrosity
- Purity, gentleness→ murder *“exultation & hellish triumph.. I too can create desolation; my enemy is not invulnerable.”*
- Straddles world of human & non-human- connection to BR
- Monster *“You accuse me of murder & yet you would with a satisfied conscience, destroy your own creature”* Ambivalence about concepts good & evil
- Victor is megalomaniacal: delusional fantasies of omnipotence. Obsession w/ grandiose actions
- Zoomorphism *“Begone, vile insect! Or rather, stay, that I may trample you to dust”* indifference, imperative, abhorrence
- *“Begone! There can be no community between you & me”* indifferent tone, detached statement, blunt; abdication of responsibility
- *“demoniacal corpse;” “thinking & reasoning animal;” “scoffing devil.”*
- *“Where they ought to see a feeling & kind friend, they beheld only a detestable monster”* failure of humanity; lack judgement & insight?
- Existential questions: nature of humanity? Monster means to assess & question humanity

#### REVENGE & RETRIBUTION

- Common Gothic literary theme= vengeance; Victor & Creature= brutalised by mutual desire for retribution, spurred by diff reasons but equally savage & determined; retributive quest to destroy the other; Vendetta only thing giving life meaning
- Subsumed by roles as avengers, but it triggers moral degradation, stripping away of compassion until both justified in their plight. Self-destructive
- Victor *“My revenge is the devouring and only passion of my soul”* melodramatic & hyperbolic

#### FALLEN ANGEL

- Creature= effectively an innocent; Natural pure state of human being= corrupted by society of man
- Not born evil/morally monstrous; love is all he craves but physically monstrous= perpetually rejected
- Rational *“I was benevolent & good, misery made me a fiend.”*
- *“Accursed creator! Why did you form a monster so hideous that even you turned from me in disgust?”* reasoned & measured rhetorical Q.
- *“my vices are the children of a forced solitude that I abhor”*
- Monster likens himself to Milton’s Adam (allusion to Paradise Lost) *“Remember, that I am thy creature, I ought to be thy Adam; but I am rather the fallen angel, whom thou drivest from joy.”* Coz hated & rejected likens himself to Satan, Milton’s archangel expelled from heaven
- Consequence of rapidly developing industrial society= importance placed on appearance as reflected in disdainful treatment of Creature from humans→ Shelley pleads us to look into the true soul
- *“the fallen angel becomes a malignant devil”* intertextuality w/ BR?

#### SCIENCE PLAYING GOD

- "you cannot contest the inestimable benefit which I shall confer on all mankind to the last generation"
- Cautionary, prescient tale warning of perils unbridled scientific ambition. Epistolary voice Walton- embodies Enlightenment scientist-adventurer to reflect Shelley's society's resolute belief in the benefits of intellectual & material endeavours. Challenges this idea as naïve/destructive
- "A new species would bless me as its creator & source... No father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as I should deserve theirs."
- Victor pre-awakening "Life & death appeared to me ideal bounds, which I should first break through & pour a torrent of light into our dark world." Creation allusion & gothic
- "my fate is nearly fulfilled;" "nothing can alter my destiny:" presumptuous. Concepts enable him to reject the necessity of moral constraint. Sense of fate → means/consequences of actions are justified

**INTERTEXTUALITY PARADISE LOST (JOHN MILTON)** Correspondence drawn betw young Frankenstein's hope of scientific glory prompting him to manufacture a monster & God's creating the archangel who would become the rebel Satan. Allusions to illustrate themes. Adam of *Paradise Lost* resembles Monster: fell from or never got to enjoy grace. "Remember that I am thy creature; I ought to be thy Adam, but I am rather the fallen angel, whom thou drivest from joy for no misdeed." The Miltonic creation epic is central to the meaning of *Frankenstein*; Monster enacts, in turn, roles of Adam & Satan, & even eventually hints at a sort of digression into the role of God. Recalls time of primordial innocence. Metamorphoses into an outcast & Satanic figure: murders William in demonic rage "I, like the arch-fiend, bore a hell w/in me."

## Comparative Study of Texts and Context

- Develop student appreciation for the different ways texts can be valued over time
- New Historicism is an interpretive approach emphasises historicity of text, by linking text to compositional culture & society; concentrates on context & refuses to see literary works as "self-contained" objects
  - o DG Myers "text is not aloof from the surrounding context"
- Contiguity, proximity & associations that can exist betw text & context underscore this module
- Myers describes a "plurality of meanings;" Interpretive paradigms offered aren't definite or fixed
- Consider links betw texts such as context, theme, characterisation, style
- Issues & themes resonate in differing contexts. Audience & purpose= reason for differentiation
- Comparative study underpinned by concept of contextualisation
  - o How social, historical, cultural contexts impacted on crafting of texts, content, diff perspectives, our own reception of texts
  - o Question whether present changing values & diff perspectives
  - o Study interrelationships: address through creators, qualities & flaws, motives, responses to their actions, their creations
  - o Connection betw contexts & impact on meaning; deal w/ issues that arise from events, attitudes, values of their context



## TEXTS IN TIME

- Texts can mirror or challenge the prevailing values & perspectives of their era of composition
- Examination of paired texts inc comparison of how similar content is treated by the diff composers in terms of how values, ideas & language forms & features are communicated
- Texts are products of their times → capture the discourses of historical, social, polit context in which each emerges; how same concepts interpreted in dif historical contexts; how context affects meaning
- Similarities rather than connections coz connection implies that one is an adaptation of the other
- Meaning is derived from your understanding of similar concepts, interpreted & conveyed in different historical contexts; context effects meaning
- Values of each text's respective compositional culture & society
- MY PERCEPTION- are we progressing or regressing?
  - o Today we are desensitised to the grotesque aspects of Shelley's novel which was greeted w/ shock & amazement when it first appeared
- Both F&BR values have plasticity; parallel explorations lead to a depth of understanding; essentially explore the corruption of humanity; the ethical & moral consequences of obsession and scientific advance on humanity & the individual, as well as dehumanisation & ecological degradation
- Common theme: Scientific & business motivations conflict w/ ethical & religious concerns about the appropriateness of human intervention in the deepest fabric of nature

## GENRE- SCIENCE FICTION

- Science & modern intervention in the body & in life
- Linked by overarching themes & motifs that make them cautionary, prescient tales
- Each postulates warnings of possible neg futures
  - o Forecasts of doom if mankind obtains God-like power; ability to replicate life artificially
  - o Linking premise: dehumanisation results once humanity becomes subservient to tech & scientific advancement
- Question of what constitutes humanity underpins both texts; identity
- A technologically advanced society fears dependence on machines & subsequent loss of control coz it represents dehumanisation
- Moral weakness: mistreatment of creations is a social failing; focus on how society shuns/alienates
- Nature & effect of scientific research when divorced from ethical & moral responsibilities

## THEMES AND MOTIFS

### PROMETHEUS

- Juxtaposition betw real & artifice tested in both texts coz replicant copy largely surpasses original
- Both scientists strive for perfection, unconcerned w/ possible repercussions
  - o Tyrell's creation driven by personal greed
  - o Victor claims set out w/ good intentions for society's gain but also admits wanted to create "a new species" to "bless" him as their creator



- Scientific exploitation shows lack of moral judgement & questionable motives
- Control of Promethean experiment lost & shows creators' callous indifference, social irresponsibility
- Crystallisation of prevailing social fears regarding unchecked scientific & tech change

**MONSTROSITY**

- Explore monstrosity through questioning what isn't monstrosity: capricious definition of humanity- incorporates a quality
- Epitomises depths of despair suffered by those considered outsiders from humanity; man's failure
- Mistreated by makers & society as a whole yet both express powerful yearning for life itself
- Physical ugliness typically ascribed to monster but in Scott's futuristic world, maimed & ill-formed are human
- Verisimilitude challenges audiences to ponder where monstrosity lies, in the creator or creation; misdeeds predicated by human creators
- Both texts examine abrogation of moral & ethical responsibility as a denial of justice & duty

SIMILARITIES (points of commonality)	DIFFERENCES
Separation between Creature & Creator	Context/ medium/ audience
Warnings to human kind	Scientific God vs. Corporate God
OVERRULING theme= man playing God & ethics/ morality behind such an act (pitfalls). Warning vs dangers of such a plight	SPIRITUALITY- Shelley talks about spiritual connection. BR: Tyrell= god-like purely coz commercial & technological manipulation
Raises question "What is human?"	BR a cautionary tale in the tradition of Frankenstein
Intertextual references e.g. Promethean myth	
Ethical & moral tension betw fear of humanity's abuse of tech- coz inherent flaws (ambition, ego, greed)- & potential for tech to extend life & defy death	Scott's message more audacious; means by which express issue & scope of concern relevant to their advancement w/ time
Ramifications of using tech to create life	
Chief protagonists: vulnerable & alienated victims.	
Implications→ human/emotional dimension to human experience is absent (monstrosity & detachment)	
Notion of man's scientific & technological explorations as injurious to humanity	

**CONSTRUCTING A RESPONSE**

- Explore how context is reflected in texts; how composer created texts relevant to context
- Explore how the contexts of the composers differ & how these differences are reflected in their texts

→ Value of the texts in their own context & for modern audience; why we still resonate w/ these texts.

**THESIS**

- *Frankenstein* culminates Enlightenment values of reason & the Romanticist perception of industrial threats; *Blade Runner* explores the disillusioned & materialised forces of the 1980's Reagan era inc the influence of capitalism
- Both animate ethical dilemmas regarding the use & abuse of science akin to our evolving culture
- Shift in context will reflect a shift in ideas & values or how these are explored as well as the potency of these
- Shelley's world had not yet had to deal w/ the affects of industrialisation & technologisation: *Blade Runner* re-engages w/ issues *Frankenstein* raises in a new & altered cultural context. BR depicts questionable effect of 2 centuries of industry, technology & moral indifference
- Each text's power lies in way composer has set their vision in social & cultural realities of their time; Shelley & Scott anchor their creators' vision in the social & cultural realities of their time; both texts are prescient on the anxieties of their respective times
- Also context of responders influence reception

## **FRANKENSTEIN VS BLADERUNNER**

### MAIN IDEA

- F: exciting potential of tech enthralled Frankenstein to challenge mortality
- BR: Tyrell Corporation mass produce replicant humans almost perfect in appearance, intellect, strength (verisimilitude) Like Frankenstein's monster- forced into isolation & threatened w/ death

### CONTEXT

- F: early 19<sup>th</sup>: state of flux, humanity gaining more indiv power & tech adv escalating. French Revolution (1790's) demonstrated volatility & how social order being challenged.
- BR: 1980s' dystopian world; growing awareness human actions threatening nature & rights & needs of indivs overshadowed by greedy profit pursuit. Extinction natural species, threat of acid rain & global warming, pollution. Large multinational companies vying for eco control. US President Reagan implementing economic rationalism → high unemployment, removal welfare support. Globalisation → decline gov control & rise in multinational's power

### TEXTUAL FORM & STRUCTURE

- Similarity betw Gothic literature & film-noir genre → confronting /provocative
- F: Gothic horror grew from Romantic Movement- inspired by fascination w/ freedom of thought, expression, celebration of nature. 19<sup>th</sup> century Prometheus: reflects her criticism of Romanticists & scientists striving for change & stressing importance of indiv over common sense & comm. Challenges values of freedom & individuality & privileges values of compassion, love, courage. Narrative structure non-linear (presents events out of chronological order).
- BR: Film-noir genre tropes: seedy, dark settings, incessant acid rain, 'femme fatale' character. Uses bird's-eye view shots & panning shots to expose vastness of city. Medium shots & tight framing to expose ugly streets w/ pollution & disparate characters.

### SETTING

- BR: lengthening shadows & blue-tinted lighting signify paranoia, corruption. Establishing panoramic longshot expose oil refinery stacks belching flames. Heavily polluted, dark skyline
- F: physical setting subsumed by psychological mindscape of Frankenstein & creature *"The sound of the river raging among the rocks, & the dashing of the waterfalls around, spoke of a power [as] mighty as Omnipotence"* Imagery, alliterative "r" coupled w/ onomatopoeic "raging" & "dashing" convey power & potency of nature

CREATORS- lack insight, empathy; rather egocentric & indifferent to creations' needs. Alpha elitist figureheads

- F: comment on alchemists who believed could find key to immortality. Inexorable desire to create life → self-imposed exile
- BR: Tyrell remote & God-like indiv. Camera frequently tilts upwards w/ Tyrell in top third of frame: appear larger & convey dictatorial power

CREATIONS

- F: monster represented sympathetically as intelligent & sensitive. Becomes fallen angel.
- BR: replicants- role of villain but as narrative unfolds → empathy for their plight. Batty begins as fallen angel, rises symbolically on death. Roy reveals 'humanity' & integrity draining last vestiges of own life to save Deckard & delivers, whilst holding white dove, eloquent & moving soliloquy *"I've seen things..."* dove released into blue, clear sky devoid of smog, acid rain. Vangelis' non-diegetic symphonic music rises to a crescendo.

LANGUAGE: both laden w/ biblical allusions

- F: monster compares himself to Adam & Satan; hideous looks & terrible construction at odds w/ intelligent, philosophical, poignant observations.
- BR: replicants referred to as fallen angels. Roy misquotes Blake's *"America: A prophesy."* *"Fiery the angels fell."* Roy refers to Tyrell as *"God of biomechanics"* & Creator. Images shot through wide-angled lens dominate conveying humanity as disconnected & inhuman. Film-noir style: pervasive as incessant rain & chiaroscuro lighting creates cold, threatening city. To build tension- claustrophobic framing. Recurrent motif of eyes: blindness of humanity to abuse of tech & science. Dilapidated Bradbury building. Tyrell wears overly thick large glasses & Roy Batty sticks thumbs in his eyes. Ironically, Roy whose eyes are artificial, states he has seen *"things you people wouldn't believe"*- witnessed dark side of humanity; found humans' flaws.

IDEAS

- F: Shelley rejects revolutionary spirit of her age e.g. individualism, liberalism, power of imagination. Shelley pts to dangers of these ideals when not balanced w/ common sense, humility, empathy.
- BR: question about Deckard's status not answered → ponder what it means to be human

## ESSAY

***"Scientists... are responsible for their research, not only intellectually but morally."***

**With reference to both your prescribed texts, to the contexts in which they were composed, to the values inherent in each, and to other relevant material, discuss how far you think the respective composers would agree with this assessment of science.**

Literary texts, rather than being self-contained, are fashioned by emplotment, context and their composer's ideology. Mary Shelley, composer of the 1818 gothic novel *Frankenstein* and Director Ridley Scott of the Director's Cut of the 1982 dystopian film *Bladerunner*, would vehemently agree with the ethical dilemmas animated by the use and abuse of science. Furthermore, the correlation between text and context is prevalent in the respective assessments of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Enlightenment and Romanticist values imbued in *Frankenstein* and the 1980's material and capitalist forces of *Bladerunner*. In order to resonate with varying responders in portraying the human condition, both texts emulate and challenge values and perspectives of their era of composition akin to our evolving context.

Shelley and Scott crystallise the repercussions of divorcing science from ethical and moral responsibilities through textual resonance with their respective societal fears. Shelley's Promethean scientist usurps Enlightenment values of intellectual transcendence, imagining "a new species," whereby "no father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as [he] should deserve theirs." Whilst the biblical allusion implies the propitious filial bond between creator and creation, this notion is eschewed given the centrality of Victor's hubris to the expression. Scott utilises the megalomaniacal values of unchecked scientific advances born in *Frankenstein* as the genesis of his post-apocalyptic, capitalist hell. Low angle camera shots escalate the Mayan splendour of the Tyrell ziggurat to dwarf the urban wasteland below, emphasising the detachment derived from Tyrell's standing as Corporate God. Effectively, Scott has adopted commercialism to present Tyrell's disillusioned values in allowing science to supersede traditional institutions of family and community. Thus, in their alpha elitist figureheads, both composers caution the resulting of amoral scientific advancement in humanity's social desecration and decay.

Through perusing the implications of unfettered scientific advancement, Shelley and Scott discomfotingly relate the capricious definition of humanity that results from moral degradation. Shelley gestates the values of benevolence and sympathy, edified by her father, which beget monstrosity when detached from scientific research. Whilst Victor dismisses filial responsibility with the callous statement "There can be no community between you and me," the creature exudes eloquence in "Why did you form a monster so hideous that even you turned from me in disgust?" Contrasting Victor's amorality, the monster uses measured rhetoric to surpass his creator in humanity.

Scott compounds this question of what constitutes humanity by reversing tech-noir archetypes. Illuminating the derivation of human instability from commercial and scientific excess, *Bladerunner's* Corporal God denounces his humanity by relinquishing his filial responsibilities, hardheartedly commoditising Rachel as "an experiment, nothing more." Antithetically, Roy delineates moral integrity in accepting death with the redemptive deliverance of his foe. The biblical motif of the released white dove and the symphonic crescendo of Vangelis' music convey Roy's amelioration of humanity. Thus, through creating anomalous associations with humanity appropriate to their values, Shelley and Scott heavily concede to notions of science's inherent responsibilities. Their respective cautions endure by virtue of the portrayed notion of social alienation having universal resonance.

*Frankenstein* and *Bladerunner* forcefully manifest their assessments of science in the degradation of the natural world born by human monstrosity. Shelley, through melodramatic and aesthetic diction, “These sublime and magnificent scenes... elevated me from all littleness of feelings,” expresses the Romanticist notion of nature’s capacity to rejuvenate individuals. Through thus deifying nature, Shelley foregrounds its benefits, aspiring to wane the ecological bastardisation threatened by 19<sup>th</sup> century scientific and industrial excess. In contrast, expounding the blind consequences of not revering Shelley’s warning, Scott portrays nature’s absolute corruption befitting the overt materialism and consumerism of the 1980s. Utilising the film-noir genre trope of pervading darkness, he presents precarious and terrifying sweeping vistas of polluting oil refinery stacks and incessant acid rain. The fragility of nature is implied through its presence only as the outcome of science and dreams. Thus, assuming Shelley’s humanist value of environmental conservatism, Scott threatens a dystopian hell, through powerful manipulation of the camera, as a flaw of Promethean scientific pursuits. Inevitably, the notion of scientific abuse’s eventuation in ecological degradation is paramount to both composers given the vivacity and dynamism with which it is forewarned.

The nexus between *Frankenstein* and *Bladerunner* animates their essence as warnings of humanity’s demise at the hands of Promethean scientific pursuits. Shelley utilising gothic archetypes, pertinent to her literary context, fixates Victor as a tyrannical male. Through personification in “I was possessed by a maddening rage when I thought of him,” Shelley conveys his lethal vendetta owing to unchecked science. Effectively, through threatening death’s imminence, Shelley challenges modern responders to postulate whether we are morally progressing or regressing? As a continuum of *Frankenstein*, *Bladerunner* visually underscores this idea with the recurrent eye motif. Whilst symbolising our blindness to scientific abuse, the eye motif also compounds the invasion afforded by 1980s globalisation. Tyrell’s costume of overly thick glasses stresses his metaphorical blindness to responsibility and subsequent dehumanisation. Ironically, Roy, whose eyes are artificial, advertises omniscience in noting he has “seen things you people wouldn’t believe.” Thus, the eye motif symbolises a window to humanity, Roy having metaphorically witnessed its dark underside and flaws. Inevitably, textual interrelationship compounds personal learning through demonstrating the integrity of ideas in that they befit differing ideologies.

In conclusion, the contiguity, proximity and associations that exist between *Frankenstein*, *Bladerunner* and their respective contexts underscore personal learning of the texts. Shelley, through foregrounding Romanticist values of sublime nature, and Scott, by visually illuminating the disillusioned 1980s materialist forces, relate their humanist values in concurring that science necessitates moral responsibility. Given that meaning is derived from this correlation between ideology, text and context, the idea of scientific abuse exudes textual integrity. By virtue of this plasticity, Shelley and Scott underpin values of contemporary society, ensuring *Frankenstein* and *Bladerunner* endure as didactic warnings of the human condition.