

Midday Book Club



FRANKENSTEIN Discussion Questions

1. As you read the novel think about the following themes, all of which are represented in the novel.
 - Friendship--the role that it plays; how the main characters feel about it--between whom it occurs.
 - Revenge--discuss the motives for revenge of Frankenstein and the creature. Whose are most understandable--who owes more to whom?
 - Ugliness versus beauty and the consequence of reacting to these qualities (the creature is rejected because he is ugly even though he is initially quite noble and the mother adopts Elizabeth after being drawn to her beauty. What is Mary Shelley saying?
 - Obsession and ambition--really the main theme of the book. What do you think Mary Shelley is saying about both?
 - Isolation
 - The power of the senses. This is a very feeling book with many descriptions of nature, moods, emotions and strong atmospheres created.
2. Though Mary Shelley was not a Christian (as far as anyone can tell), she certainly appears to point out some ideas Christians can agree with and learn from. If you agree with this statement, what do you find those to be?
3. Why does Mary Shelley frame the story by Victor Frankenstein with the letters of Robert Walton?
4. Why are Robert's letters written to a woman rather than a man why to a sister and not a fiancée why to a married woman?
5. Trace the attitudes of the men in the novel toward women.

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6. Many critics see the monster as “female.” Muriel Spark argues that the monster is associated with the female heart rather than the male head and much stronger feminist arguments say that the monster expresses Mary Shelley’s own feelings of abandonment and rage. Other critics argue that while he has many traditionally feminine traits, he is a projection of Victor, emphatically male in gender and prowess. Pick a position and defend it.
7. What does the end of the novel say about Mary Shelley’s vision of human experience? Is Victor finally “heroic” and Robert ultimately “redeemed” as some critics claim?
8. What is the main character’s pilgrimage?
9. What about Robert Walton? Is he redeemed or not? The question is important because if Robert can learn what Frankenstein has not, there may yet be hope for people with his problems.
10. Compare and contrast the story of creation and the fall in Genesis with Victor's story and response to his creation.
11. How is this story a study in addiction?



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