



The Annotated Frankenstein

By Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

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The Annotated Frankenstein By Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

First published in 1818, *Frankenstein* has spellbound, disturbed, and fascinated readers for generations. One of the most haunting and enduring works ever written in English, it has inspired numerous retellings and sequels in virtually every medium, making the Frankenstein myth familiar even to those who have never read a word of Mary Shelley's remarkable novel. Now, this freshly annotated, illustrated edition illuminates the novel and its electrifying afterlife with unmatched detail and vitality.

From the first decade after publication, "Frankenstein" became a byword for any new, disturbing developments in science, technology, and human imagination. The editors' Introduction explores the fable's continuing presence in popular culture and intellectual life as well as the novel's genesis and composition. Mary Shelley's awareness of European politics and history, her interest in the poets and philosophical debates of the day, and especially her genius in distilling her personal traumas come alive in this engaging essay.

The editors' commentary, placed conveniently alongside the text, provides stimulating company. Their often surprising observations are drawn from a lifetime of reading and teaching the novel. A wealth of illustrations, many in color, immerses the reader in Shelley's literary and social world, in the range of artwork inspired by her novel, as well as in Frankenstein's provocative cinematic career. The fresh light that *The Annotated Frankenstein* casts on a story everyone thinks is familiar will delight readers while deepening their understanding of Mary Shelley's novel and the Romantic era in which it was created.

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The Annotated Frankenstein By Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

This is a splendid production, a happy convergence of topic and talent. *Frankenstein* could easily have been prey to a more sentimental and gossipy treatment; instead what emerges is thorough, spirited, and searching. The net effect is a downright moving portrait of author and novel both. (Garrett Stewart, University of Iowa)

This is a superb edition. The annotations provide extensive guidance to the basic themes of the novel, the significance of the names of the characters, the geography of the text, historical dates and allusions, and textual revisions. (Anne K. Mellor, University of California, Los Angeles)

An impressive addition to the study of Frankenstein. While ideal for students of English, this book is accessible enough for anyone desiring a deeper reading of the novel, and does just what a well-annotated work should do, shedding a bright light not only on the text in question, but also on its historical moment and literary forebears. (*Publishers Weekly* (starred review) 2012-09-24)

Wolfson and **Levao** revivify the original 1818 version of **Shelley's** classic in this illuminating annotated text. Beginning with a thoroughly researched introduction to the author's life and the 'life' of Frankenstein, Wolfson and Levao draw parallels between the novel's themes and the losses and turmoil that plagued Shelley. Moving along, their commentary draws from an abundance of criticism, focusing primarily on the novel's allusions to *Paradise Lost*, Coleridge's 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,' and the myth of Prometheus. At a more local level, the duo dutifully notate Shelley's ingenious use of language and her husband's edits. This book is accessible enough for anyone desiring a deeper reading of the novel, and does just what a well-annotated work should do, shedding a bright light not only on the text in question, but also on its historical moment and literary forebears. (Gabe Habash *Publishers Weekly* 2012-10-26)

The Annotated Frankenstein, edited by **Susan J. Wolfson** and **Ronald L. Levao**, brings scholarship to life for the lay reader. This latest volume in the irresistible 'annotated' series from Harvard University Press presents the 1818 edition on oversize, creamy-white pages divided into two columns. While the story runs down the inside columns, helpful commentary runs alongside. Every geographical, biographical and literary allusion is explained; themes are highlighted; and obscure words are defined. A hundred color illustrations sprinkled throughout reproduce manuscript pages, works of art, medical etchings, portraits of **Shelley** and her friends, and scenes from movie treatments of this deathless tale. (Ron Charles *The Washington Post* 2012-10-27)

First published in 1808, *Frankenstein, Or, the Modern Prometheus*, has fascinated, horrified, alarmed and even enchanted us ever since. In fact, as the editors of this usefully and delightfully annotated and illustrated edition make clear, almost as soon as the book was published, the word 'Frankenstein' (so often wrongfully ascribed to the monster and not his creator) became synonymous with anything new, especially disturbing developments in science and technology. This edition will improve greatly one's understanding of the book's provenance and its era. (*Globe and Mail* 2012-12-07)

Mary Shelley's classic tale of the doctor who awakened a monster gets an expanded treatment in the edition edited by **Wolfson** and **Levao**. This new treatment includes notes on Shelley's life and highlights literary allusions within the book. (Molly Driscoll *Christian Science Monitor* 2012-12-05)

This new edition of **Shelley's** nearly 200-year-old novel is replete with supplements--explanatory notes,

scholarly introductions, and other special features--that enhance the text itself. Wolfson and Levao provide useful information on the author's milieu, including details about her parents, friends, and husband, Percy Bysshe Shelley, focusing on the latter's contributions to the novel's birth and development. (Morris Hounion *Library Journal* 2012-12-01)

First published in 1818, very possibly the most famous debut novel in English, **Mary Shelley's** *Frankenstein: Or, The New Prometheus* has never been out of print. Far fewer people have read this somewhat difficult and didactic novel than know, or think that they know, who "Frankenstein" was; long ago, the grotesque figure of Dr. Frankenstein's Monster became detached from its literary context, as from its creator. Highly recommended is *The Annotated Frankenstein*, edited by Susan J. Wolfson and Ronald Levao, who seem to know, between them, all that there is to know about Frankenstein, including his myriad cinematic metamorphoses over the decades. (Joyce Carol Oates *Globe and Mail* 2012-12-29)

This is a serious work of interpretation. **Wolfson** and **Levao** offer the most extensively annotated edition of **Mary Shelley's** *Frankenstein* in print, a book that serves the educated but nonspecialist reader. (J. T. Lynch *Choice* 2013-02-01)

The Annotated Frankenstein...should appeal to scholars familiar with the novel as well as those exploring it for the first time. The editors, **Susan J. Wolfson** and **Ronald Levao**, situate the novel in its philosophical, literary, biographical and historical contexts, and provide apt illustrations and useful appendices (including examinations of the revised edition of 1831 and a timeline which juxtaposes the novel's episodes with concurrent historical events). Its expansive, cream-coloured pages and generous margins render the volume a world unto itself, while emphasizing the worldly issues **Shelley** addressed in her uncanny tale. (Michael Saler *Times Literary Supplement* 2013-05-10)

About the Author

Susan J. Wolfson is Professor of English at Princeton University.

Ronald Levao is Associate Professor of English at Rutgers University.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

James Bardsley:

Book is actually written, printed, or outlined for everything. You can know everything you want by a guide. Book has a different type. As we know that book is important issue to bring us around the world. Next to that you can your reading skill was fluently. A reserve The Annotated Frankenstein will make you to always be smarter. You can feel much more confidence if you can know about every thing. But some of you think this open or reading a new book make you bored. It isn't make you fun. Why they can be thought like that? Have you in search of best book or suited book with you?

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