

HORACE WALPOLE
THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO



Gothic Fiction

- *horror+ romance
- *calculated corporeal reactions: shivers & tears
- *pleasure of uncertainty, hesitation (Todorov)
- *atmosphere
- *antiquated spaces: dark dungeon, haunted house, laboratory
- *stock characters: damsel in distress, villain, monster, double
- * faraway & long ago: Sp inquisition, German robbers, Fr mob
- *predictable plotline – knowing readers
- *Hidden secrets of Past -- Haunting, Ghosts
- *Confused remembrance (déjà vu, dark prophecies ↔ reason)
- *uncanny (Freud)
- *Supernatural occurrences, doubles, madness
- *sensationalist themes: family crisis: incest, matricide, patricide
EA Poe: „The Fall of the House of Usher”
- *mock-documentarism ↔ „a literature of excess”
- *Supernatural occurrences, doubles, madness,
- * crisis in family: incest, matricide, patricide, Homely Gothic, Sensation Novel's influence → tabboos

❖ **Horace Walpole. *The Castle of Otranto*, 1764**

merged medievalism, terror, and sensationalist romance
dysfunctional families, sinful desires, ominous prophecies
Mockdocumentarism –preface
gigantic helmet crashing sickly son, incest, murder
Lit of excess

❖ **Anne Radcliffe. *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, 1794**

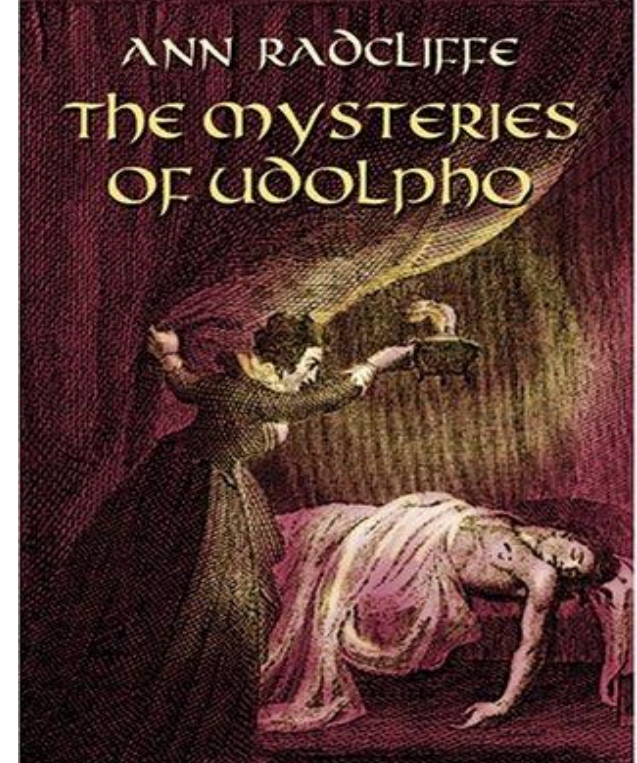
Female Gothic tradition: critique of patriarchal oppression
psychological suspense instead of bodily gore,
terror instead of horror
omnipresent sense of mystery instead of fast-paced actions,
vague hints at ghostly activity instead of explicit pr.
supernatural
(Parody: Jane Austen. *Northanger Abbey*)

❖ **Matthew Lewis. *The Monk*, 1796**

Male gothic, explicit violence

❖ **Charles Maturin. *Melmoth The Wanderer*, 1820**

Faustian deal, the Wandering Jew



PENGUIN CLASSICS

MATTHEW LEWIS

The Monk

CRITICISM

- -: Socially irresponsible escapism, predictable sensationalist shock art? Misty eyed nostalgia fr medieval past, barbaric energies ↔ Enlightenment, Neo-Classicism

LITERARY MERITS

- Chief vehicle for pol, soc, aesthetic enquiry → Rising number of readers
- Interest in psychologisation (pleasurable thrills)
- Social criticism (female Gothic!)
- Gothic traces in realist novel (London fog, moral corruption of poor, memento mori)
- Feat of fantasy (Coleridge: fancy ↔ imagination) META-FANTASY ASPECT
- **mirror** (reflect, mimesis) ↔ **lamp** (illuminate unseen world beyond perceived real)
- Bodmer on imagination: „not only places the real before our eyes in a vivid image and makes distant things present, but **with a power more potent than magic** draws that which does not exist out of state of potentiality, gives it semblance of reality, **makes us see, feel, hear these new creations**”



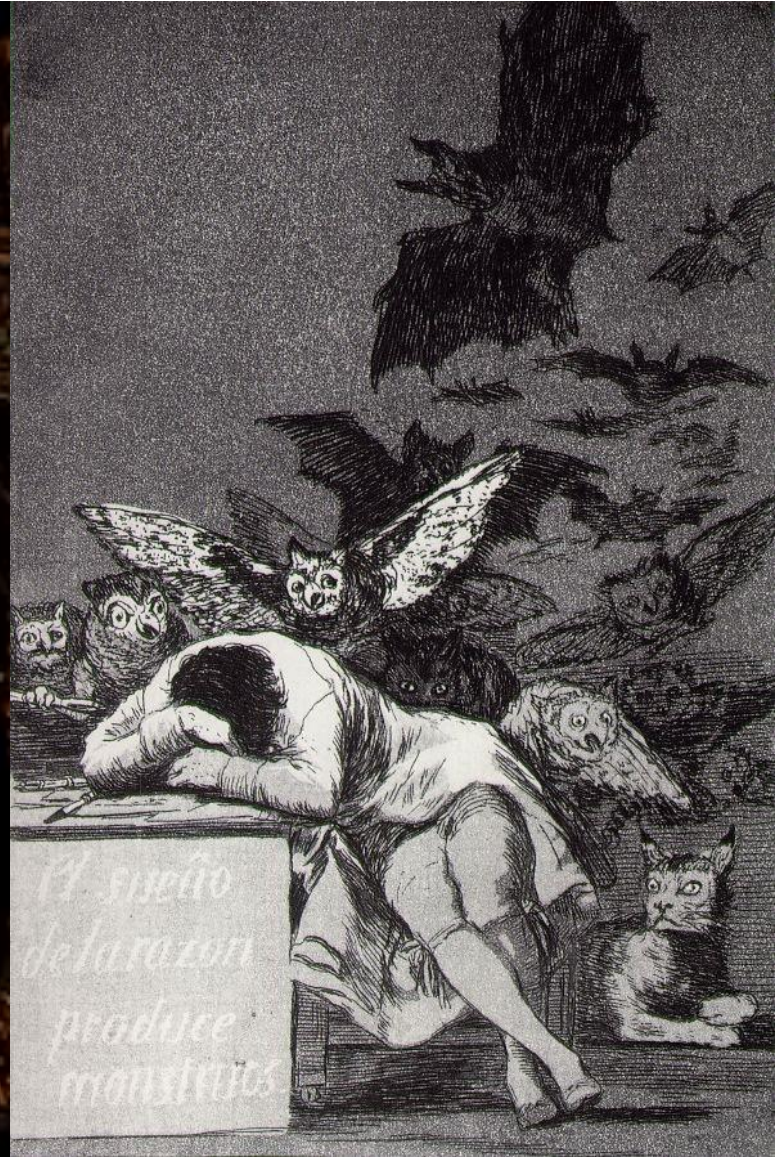
Henry Fuseli, *Nightmare* 1782



Gillray, James. "Tales of Wonder." [Ladies Reading The Monk]

Goya, Francisco. "The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters" (1797-98).

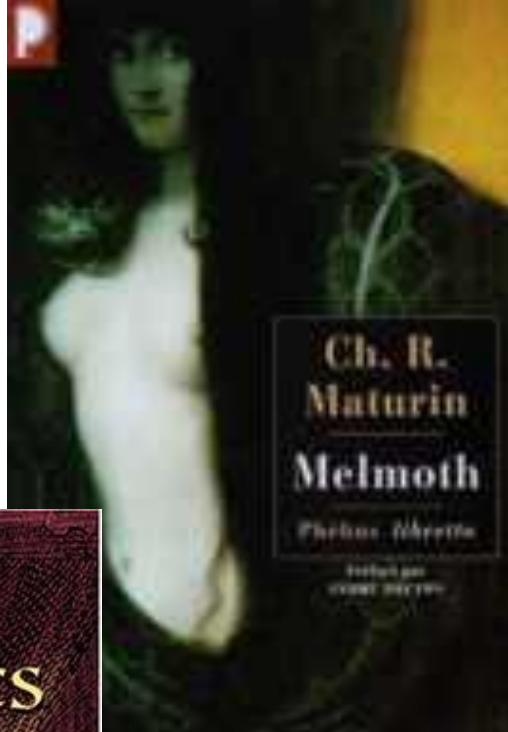
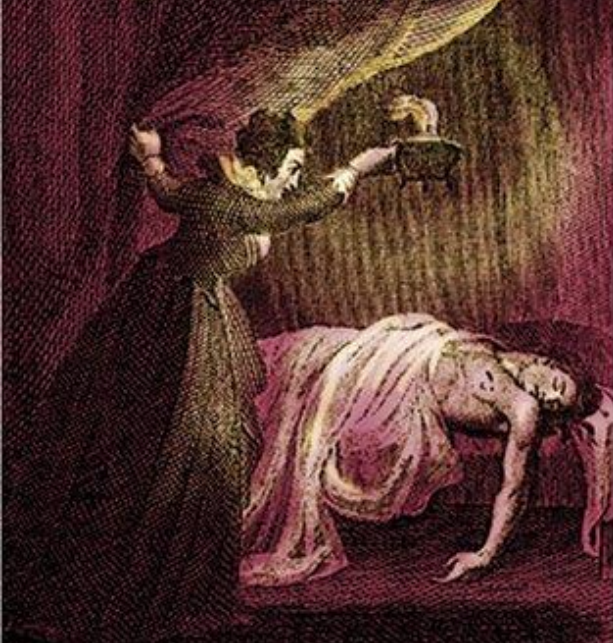
Counter-Enlightenment fascination with dark fantasies





THE MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO

ANN RADCLIFFE
The MYSTERIES
OF UDOLPHO



Ch. R.
Maturin
Melmoth

Charles Maturin

Translated by
GEOFFREY HUGHES

WORLD'S CLASSICS

CHARLES MATURIN
MELMOTH
THE WANDERER



PENGUIN CLASSICS

MATTHEW LEWIS

GOthic SUBGENRES

Regional: urban /rural /Southern Gothic

Homely Gothic

Terror/Horror Gothic

Female Gothic

Children's Gothic

Postmodern Gothic

Gothic pastiche, parody: J. Austen. *Northanger Abbey*, 1818



Caspar David Friedrich. Cloister Cemetery in the Snow (1817)



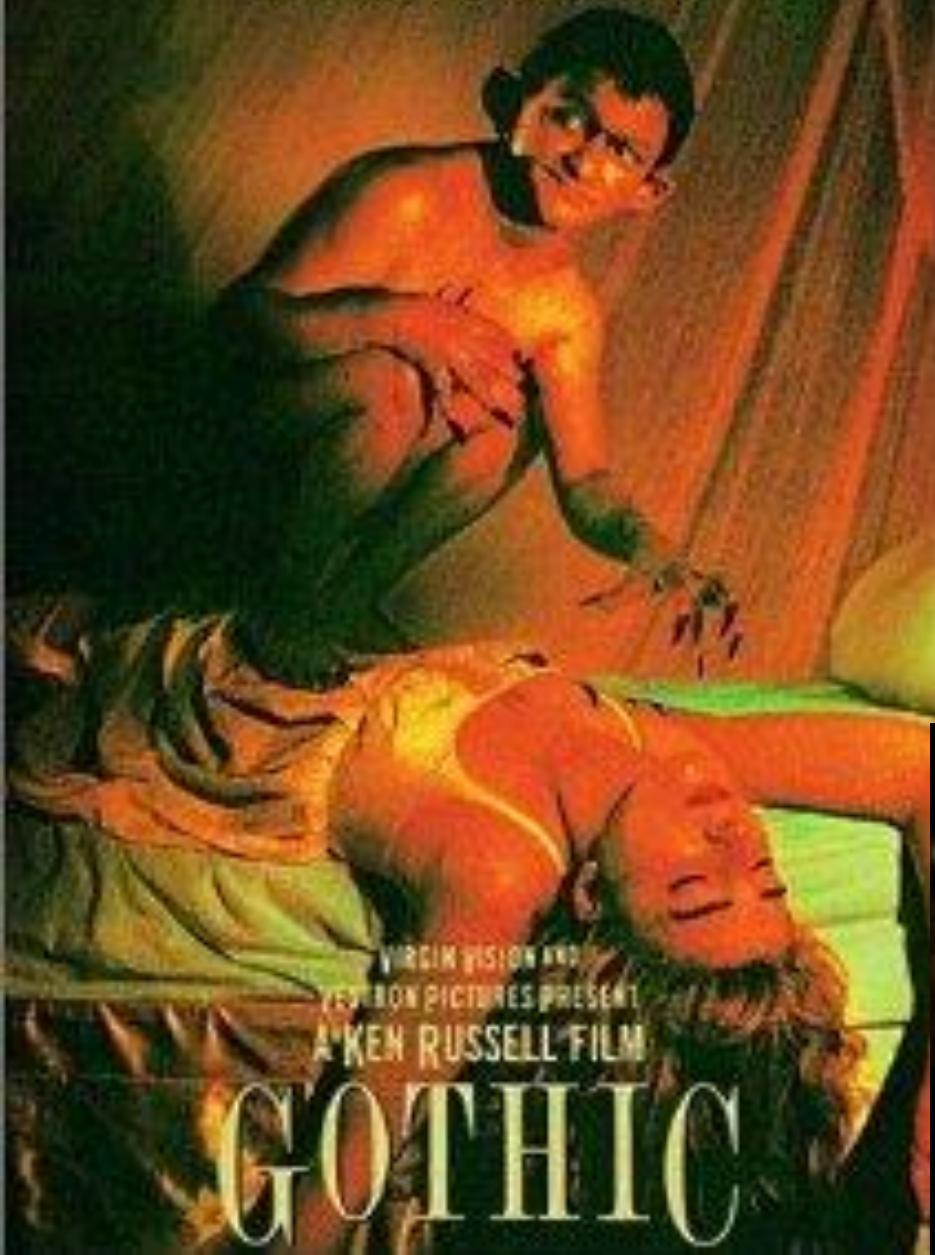
Gothic revived in postmodern film:

Shutter Island, dir Martin Scorsese, neo-noir psychological thriller, 2010

mind games, uncertainty, atmosphere, trauma, dysfunctional family, fear of madness



Conjure up your deepest, darkest fear...
now call that fear to life.



ORIGIN STORY: *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus* (1818)

1816 Villa Diodati

Lake Geneva, Switzerland

P. Shelley, Mary Shelley, Claire Clairmont,
Byron, Dr Polidori. The Vampyre



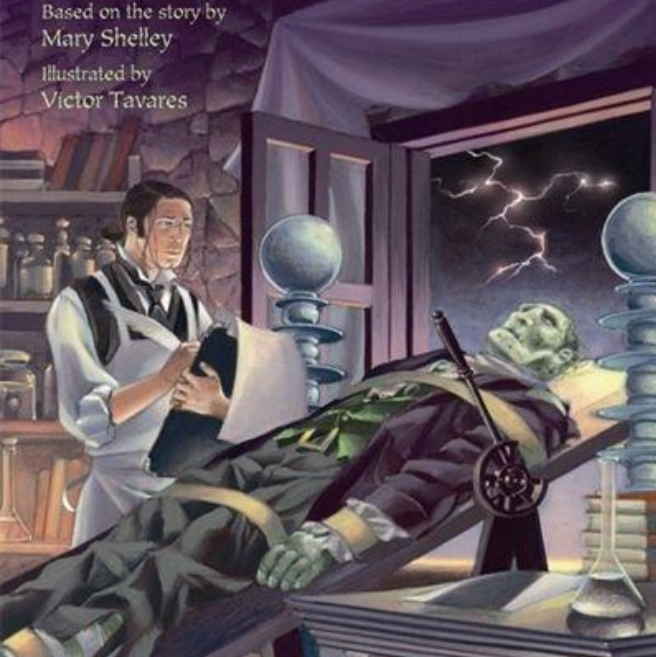
**I saw — with shut eyes, but acute mental vision —
I saw the pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling
beside the thing he had put together.** I saw the
hideous phantasm of a man stretched out, and
then, on the working of some powerful engine,
show signs of life and stir with an uneasy, half-vital
motion. Frightful must it be, for supremely frightful
would be the effect of any human endeavour to
mock the stupendous mechanism of the Creator of
the world.

--Author's Introduction, creation of Monster

**„How then I, a young girl, came to think of to
dilate upon so very hideous an idea?”**

- **1st: Anonymous publication**
- **Monstrous female authorship**
- **My hideous progeny =nameless creature= text**
- **Female Gothic**
- **AB: Birth trauma, miscarriage, matrophobia**
- **Failed parenting, crisis in family, Oedipal rivalry**





- First science fiction novel
- Mad scientist, overreacher character
- (Pseudo)sciences: Galvanism, Alchemy, Occultism, Electricity
- Prometheus + Faust figure
- dangers of Industrial Revolution, techn/sci. Progress
- Failed experiment, disillusioned artist
- Moral dilemma, ethical responsibility, question of humanness, humanity → Frankenstein: whose name?
- Scientific objectivity ↔ irrational eruption of uncanny in ordinary life (proto horror)
- proto speculative fiction: „what if” („The Mortal Immortal”)

I had worked hard for nearly two years, for the sole purpose of infusing life into an inanimate body. For this I had deprived myself of rest and health. I had desired it with an ardour that far exceeded moderation; but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart. Unable to endure the aspect of the being I had created, I rushed out of the room and continued a long time traversing my bed-chamber, unable to compose my mind to sleep.



intertextual predecessors:
Ovid's Prometheus,
Milton's Paradise Lost,
Coleridge's Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner



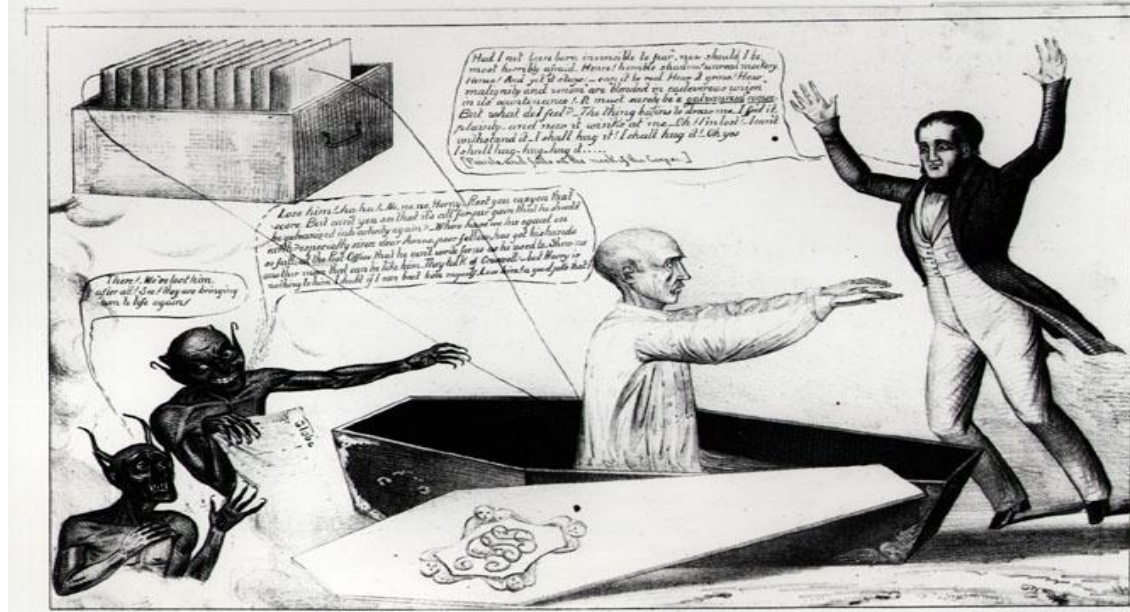
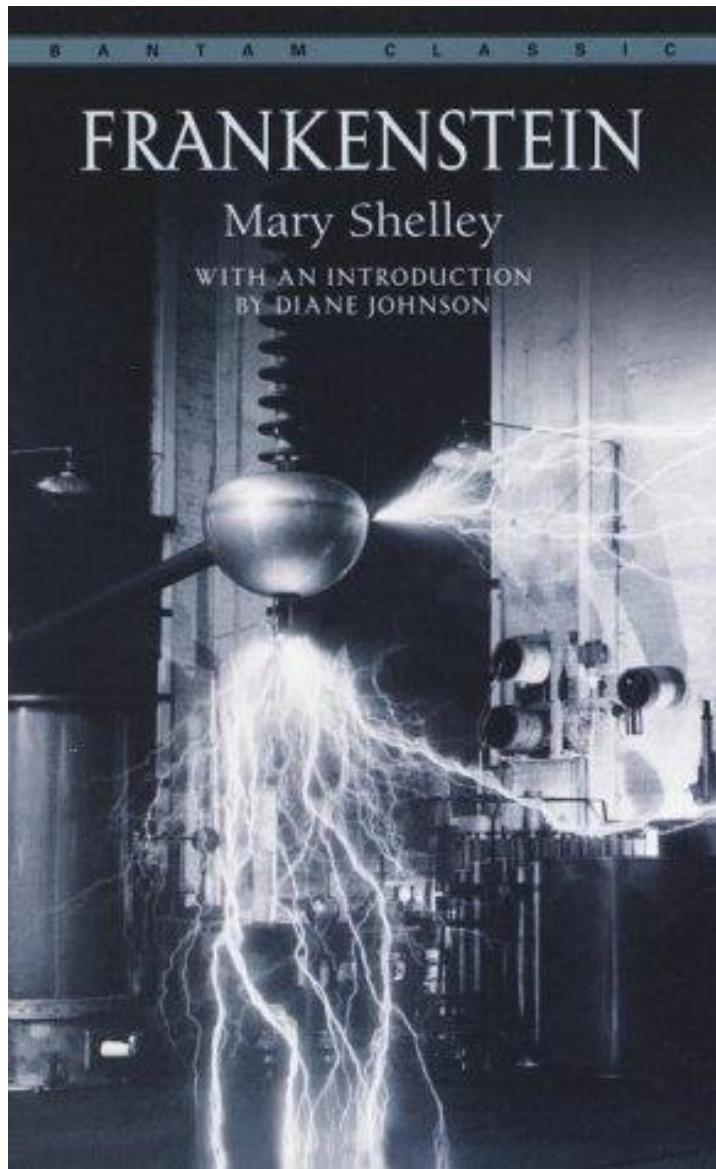
ETHICS in FRANKENSTEIN

- Prometheus, Faust, overreacher
- Sin, punishment, revenge
- Irresponsible power can lead to chaos
- q of corruption/perfection of human being Adam/ Satan/ God in Milton
- nature vs nurture:: aversion against the deformed is instinctual, natural or culturally conditioned: monstrosity of society rejecting the wretched creature
- confusion of name of monster & scientist Who is to blame?
- Soc constructionist view of disability

I beheld the wretch — the miserable monster whom I had created.

- Fear of working class
- Fear of racial diff (invasion fantasy)
- Fear of meat eating, cannibalism, Anti-vivisectionist views, vegetarianism
- Cautionary tale: self-pollution, masturbatory fantasy, dangers of homoerotic bondings





A GALVANISED CORPSE

Printed & Published by H. K. Robinson, 10, 12, & 14, Court Street, E.C. 4, London, E.C. 4.

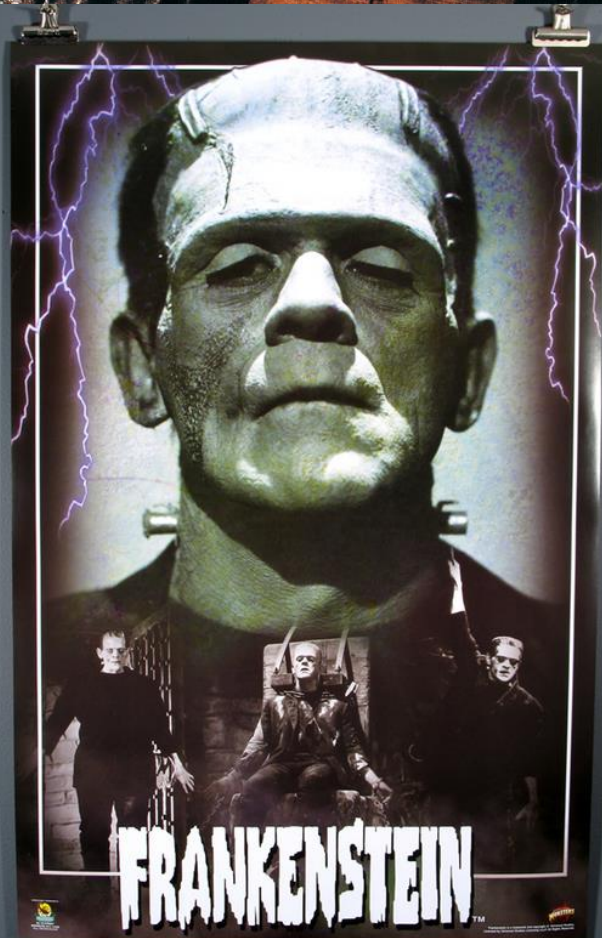
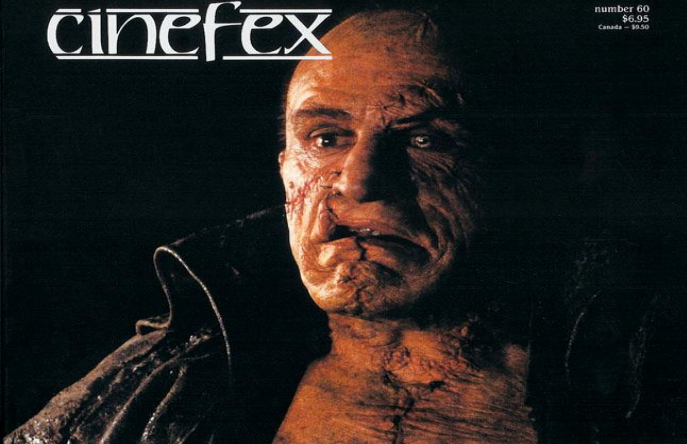
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I seek not a fellow feeling in my misery. No sympathy may I ever find. When I first sought it, it was the love of virtue, the feelings of happiness and affection with which my whole being overflowed, that I wished to be participated. But now that virtue has become to me a shadow, and that happiness and affection are turned into bitter and loathing despair, in what should I seek for sympathy? I am content to suffer alone while my sufferings shall endure; when I die, I am well satisfied that abhorrence and opprobrium should load my memory. Once my fancy was soothed with dreams of virtue, of fame, and of enjoyment. Once I falsely hoped to meet with beings who, pardoning my outward form, would love me for the excellent qualities which I was capable of unfolding. I was nourished with high thoughts of honour and devotion. But now crime has degraded me beneath the meanest animal. No guilt, no mischief, no malignity, no misery, can be found comparable to mine. When I run over the frightful catalogue of my sins, I cannot believe that I am the same creature whose thoughts were once filled with sublime and transcendent visions of the beauty and the majesty of goodness. But it is even so; the fallen angel becomes a malignant devil. Yet even that enemy of God and man had friends and associates in his desolation; I am alone.



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number 60
\$6.95
Canada - \$9.00



Of my creation and creator I was absolutely ignorant, but I knew that I possessed no money, no friends, no kind of property. I was, besides, endued with a figure hideously deformed and loathsome; I was not even of the same nature as man. I was more agile than they and could subsist upon coarser diet; I bore the extremes of heat and cold with less injury to my frame; my stature far exceeded theirs. When I looked around I saw and heard of none like me. Was I, then, a monster, a blot upon the earth, from which all men fled and whom all men disowned?

I cannot describe to you the agony that these reflections inflicted upon me; I tried to dispel them, but sorrow only increased with knowledge.

My person was hideous and my stature gigantic.

What did this mean? Who was I? What was I?

Whence did I come? What was my destination?

These questions continually recurred, but I was unable to solve them.



Monstrosity

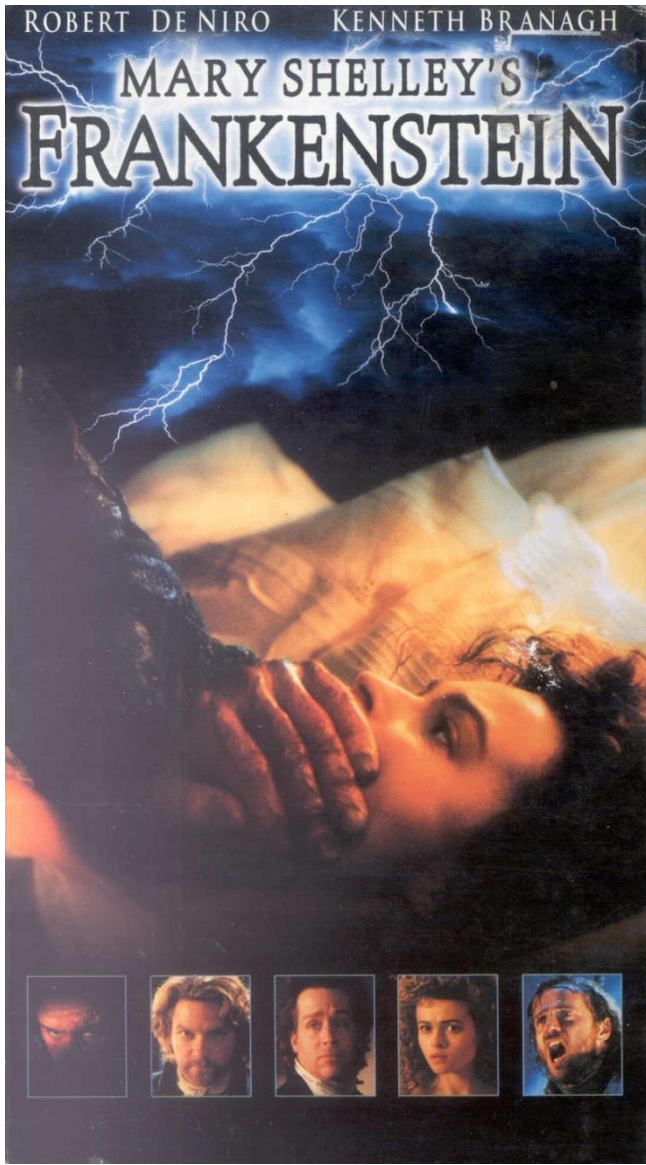
- vile insect
- daemon
- wretch/ed devil
- „it”
- a deformed Adam who did not ask for his creation yet claims right for happiness
- my hideous progeny
- name of creator and creature confused
- bad parent, rebellious child, narcissistic man, creative/writing woman
- Victor from Paradise Lost, Shelley, Prometheus
- Q of ugliness (n aesthetic, psychological, moral sense)



Proto-sci-fi, proto-horror, trauma narrative

Borders on

- the absurd (creature learns to write by eavesdropping on family)
- the genuine pathos (monster's loneliness, existential drama)
- the sublime (grandeur of Trans-Siberian track, vastness of Northern Polar region)
- the abject (dream of dead mother's rotting corpse, „my hideous progeny“, matrophobia)
- the uncanny (secrets of biological vs mechanical reproduction)
 - (oscillate bw suspense of terror gothic & gross violence of horror gothic)
 - (the crisis of nuclear family)
 - (the fear of the other: racial difference, working classes, industrial revolution)



- **Greatest horror: the monstrous feminine**
 - * mate for Frankenstein, nightmare of invasion
 - * dream of mother's rotting corpse, abject
 - * murder of bride in bed
 - * traumatic failed mothering (death of mother, still born children, impossibility of women's authorship) bibliogenesis: where do books/babies come from?



**Frankenstein. National Theatre 2011.
Rend. Danny Boyle. Jonny Lee Miller & Benedict Cumberbatch**

