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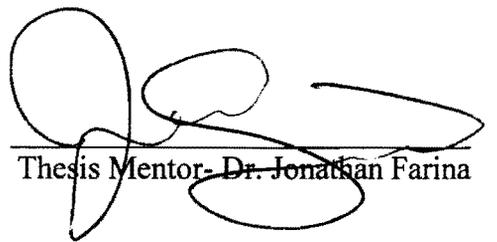
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**Fear and Loathing in Nineteenth-Century England:
Monsters, Freaks, and Deformities and Their Influence on Romantic and Victorian
Society**

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Abstract

In nineteenth-century England, the appearance of physical abnormalities within society was a rampant cause for panic. To be abnormal during the Romantic and Victorian ages meant that there was something wrong with you according to the laws of God, society, and nature. Charles Darwin's new study on the idea of fitness in the world added to the anxieties that being abnormal brought about. To be a freak or to be deformed was cause for ridicule and spectacle. If a person did not fall into the ideal of normalcy within society, they were considered the "other" and being the "other" was not something that made one an acceptable and productive member of society during this era. To be monstrous or abnormal suggested a form of idleness, infertility on the part of one's parentage, or rampant unproductivity. Instead, the label of "other" brought that person into an isolated domain of society where he or she was meant to be put on display and looked at until it could be observed what exactly caused this deformity and what could be done to isolate the occurrence and eliminate it from happening again.

Various fictions display what it means to be an abnormal person in England in this period and how the fears of society could be projected through various deformities or freakish manifestations. Being placed in the role of "other" was cause for alarm and brought a great deal of concern to those who had to associate with the outcast. The idea of deformities intermingling within normal society can be viewed in works such as Byron's *The Deformed Transformed*, Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Wood's *East Lynne*, and Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. These tales contain various forms of the deformity and monstrosity that represent social anxiety and the possibility of the invasion of the "other" and the loss of normalcy within society. These authors play upon the idea of physical deformities placed in their own world in

order to show that this is not a foreign concept to have those who may be viewed as abnormal living among normal society.

In nineteenth-century England, the appearance of physical abnormalities within society was a rampant cause for panic. To be abnormal during the Romantic and Victorian ages meant that there was something wrong with you according to the laws of God, society, and nature. Charles Darwin's new study on the idea of fitness in the world added to the anxieties that being abnormal brought about. To be a freak or to be deformed was cause for ridicule and spectacle. If a person did not fall into the ideal of normalcy within society, they were considered the "other" and being the "other" was not something that made one an acceptable and productive member of society during this era. To be monstrous or abnormal suggested a form of idleness, infertility on the part of one's parentage, or rampant unproductivity. Instead, the label of "other" brought that person into an isolated domain of society where he or she was meant to be put on display and looked at until it could be observed what exactly caused this deformity and what could be done to isolate the occurrence and eliminate it from happening again.

The major appeal for Romantic and Victorian culture in regards to freaks was being able to look at them, causing the freaks to become a spectacle. The British gaze upon those who were deformed showed that they felt superiority to those who were different from everyone else. The study of vision and sight was increasing during this period. In the nineteenth century, "the functioning of vision became dependent on the complex and contingent physiological makeup of the observer, rendering vision faulty, unreliable, and it was something argued, arbitrary" (Crary 12). Vision was found to be a part of the corporeal body rather than an outside sense. Therefore, vision "could no longer claim an essential objectivity or certainty" (Crary 12). Vision was determined both by the person who was seeing and the object that was being viewed. No two people necessarily saw the same thing in the same manner. The British were both viewing monstrosity and freakishness when it was there as well as projecting these aspects onto those

whom they already viewed as “other.” Vision was now viewed as “subjective—the notion that our perceptual and sensory experience depends on the nature of an external stimulus than on the composition and functioning of our sensory apparatus” (Crary 12). What a person sees in the outside world directly influences how that thing is seen. The British used their gaze in order to consign freaks, monsters, and deformed people to a subordinate position in society by prominently illuminating their freakishness and monstrosity and in turn elevating their own being by feeling their dominance as well as by being able to separate themselves from those who were “other.” Once “the empirical truth of vision was determined to lie in the body, vision could be annexed and controlled by external techniques of manipulation and stimulation” (Crary 12). Being looked upon was also a fear of British society because if someone looked hard enough, they might be able to dredge up secrets that were never meant to be brought to the surface. This caused greater anxiety in the Romantic and Victorian ages because the secrets that they held were not meant to be discovered for fear that England would be seen as an inferior culture and would lose the respect of the rest of the world.

Various fictions display what it means to be an abnormal person in England in this period and how the fears of society could be projected through various deformities or freakish manifestations. Being placed in the role of “other” was cause for alarm and brought a great deal of concern to those who had to associate with the outcast. Although freaks or deformed members of society were allowed to intermingle with “normal” people, they were also looked upon and observed regularly because of their deformities or freakish nature. Therefore, they became greater spectacles rather than being accepted. According to Lillian Craton, Romantics and Victorians were attempting to answer the question: “what does it mean for our understanding of society if the freak was more than the other, if he or she had a place within normative middle-

class culture that went beyond serving as a foil for it?" (4). Novelists who explore the separation of the "other" during this era include: Lord Byron, Mary Shelley, Ellen Wood, and Robert Louis Stevenson. Although the "other" is not always placed into isolation, he or she is regarded in a different light than those who are deemed normal and therefore receive a different treatment.

The idea of deformities intermingling within normal society can be viewed in works such as Byron's *The Deformed Transformed*, Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Wood's *East Lynne*, and Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. These tales contain various forms of the deformity and monstrosity that represent social anxiety and the possibility of the invasion of the "other" and the loss of normalcy within society. For the British, "physical difference was intriguing, and popular authors made use of that appeal as they reached out to audiences" (Craton 37). These authors play upon the idea of physical deformities placed in their own world in order to show that this is not a foreign concept to have those who may be viewed as abnormal living among normal society.

During the nineteenth century, the Freak Show was steadily gaining in popularity, and the display of freaks and deformed persons was becoming common for entertainment purposes. Oddities from around the world would be put on display for the British to gaze upon and marvel at. Not only was this used as a form of amusement, it also allowed the British to separate themselves from the deformed and enjoy the fact that they were exempt from being a part of this subculture. The "displays of physical difference serve to demarcate the culturally drawn boundaries between categories of normal and abnormal and thus confirm the self-satisfaction of those close to the norm" (Craton 35). The closest that they would want to be to this world was by paying to view those strange creatures that were placed there for the purpose of distraction from the mundane existence that they were living.

Even though the British enjoyed viewing these so-called freaks, the idea that they were so close to home was discomfoting. They believed that now that they could witness these deformities up close, there was a possibility that they would incorporate themselves into British society and invade the normalcy of their lives by adding a distinct level of freakishness. The British both yearned for the chance to view the “other” and were repulsed by the possibility of their inclusion in society. This would mean an introduction of deformity and freakishness on a grander scale than was before present. With a larger community of deformed people, there would need to be the acknowledgement that the British were not the perfect citizens they believed themselves to be because their people were now suffering the same crippling lives as those who they gazed on at the local fair. The British no longer regarded the spectacle as a distinct entity apart from their own world but instead saw it as the possibility for a new reality that they must come to terms with. The fear was that the deformities could invade their bloodline and they would also become abnormal. This would expose the faults they already possessed which they were trying to keep secret, as well as add new levels of secrets that they would have to attempt to hide.

Donna Heiland in “Uncanny Monsters in the Work of Mary Shelley, John Polidori, and James Malcolm Rymer” believes that monsters “tend to function as warnings or admonitions of one sort of another. They function as uncanny doubles of our societies, reflecting back to us images of everything that we have cast out as undesirable or threatening to the status quo, and forcing us to face that which we would prefer to leave hidden” (100). The introduction of monsters forces society to confront the idea that not everyone follows the same pattern of normalcy. Normal can be defined differently for each culture, even down to each individual

person. This is a frightening prospect because it means that the “other” is its own class of normal and forces the world to face the unknown as part of existence rather than as an anomaly.

In addition, scientists threaten the normalcy of society because “in the free growth of the scientific mind lay potential disaster” (Fromm 164). The scientists “objective detachment from the natural world is a prerequisite for the practice of science” (Allman 127). These two aspects of scientific experimentation frightened people because they view scientists as part of the norm. Once the scientist begins experimenting against the norm, he becomes an aid to the insurgence of the other. Since “*isolation* is the dominant condition of all these scientists,” they are able to remove themselves from society and force the rest of humanity to lie in wait to see what they will create and how it will affect the rest of the world (Allman 127).

Peter K. Garret determines that “the monster is a symptom of cultural anxieties we no longer share, allowing us the opportunity for both detached diagnosis and self-congratulation” (91). Monsters allow society to determine right from wrong and allow humanity to believe that they are better than those who are unlike themselves. They follow Darwin’s advice of the survival of the fittest and feel better about themselves when they can look on these freaks and determine that they are different enough to be deemed the “other.” Once the monster comes too close to being like the rest of humanity, as does Frankenstein’s monster, Mr. Hyde, and various other creatures, it creates cause for alarm as to who is the “other” and who is the norm.

A Parent’s Love Is All One Can Hope For

The deformed body represents both a social enigma and a locus of fear. Society cannot fully comprehend what to make of a person with a disability or deformity. Rather than trying to determine the causation for the occurrence, man decides to shun the afflicted, causing them to

feel outcast and alone. This isolation can lead to harm and destruction, as witnessed in Lord Byron's *The Deformed Transformed* and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. When an afflicted person is spurned because of their physical difference, it causes them to withdraw into themselves and they are then unable to integrate into normal society. The outcast then becomes cause for alarm because of his or her potential to commit heinous acts as a result of this rejection.

Byron lived in fear of society's perceptions of those who were less able to function normally. In *Gothic Bodies: The Politics of Pain in Romantic Fiction*, Steven Bruhm points out that "Byron himself was constantly tormented by his own body and medical attempts to treat it. The pain in his right foot—a pain that tormented him all his life—proceeded from a deformity that he had reason to believe was not inevitable" (137). Byron's clubfoot, a birth defect, caused him a great deal of pain, both physically and socially. The affliction was very painful because it was not properly treated. Bruhm continues, "at his birth, the attending physician John Hunter pronounced that the deformity could not be cured; it could merely be treated with the right prosthetic shoe. However, eleven years later, the young Byron was told by Dr. Baillie that proper treatment in infancy might have corrected the malformation and relieved the child from years of pain" (137). Had the deformity been addressed at birth, he may have been left to live a normal life, rather than one of pain and suffering. However, since this did not happen, Byron had to live with pain as well as attempt to hide his affliction so that he did not incur damage to his pride as well. This deformity altered Byron's outlook on life, leading him to form a hardened exterior to prevent the ridicule that he felt he would encounter because of his disability. Rather than accepting the fact that he was born this way, Byron did everything in his power to hide the deformity, wearing special boots and adjusting his gait so as to hide his crooked walk.

This contempt towards deformity and the inability to successfully eliminate both the pain and shame of his affliction translates into Byron's work. Three of his most prevalent works that address the issue of deformity include *Don Juan*, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, and *The Deformed Transformed*. It is within the fragmented play *The Deformed Transformed* that Byron most showcases his desire to be freed from this torturous life. In this unfinished work, Byron's protagonist, Arnold, is desperate to gain the love and attention of his mother. Yet she wants nothing to do with her first born child because of his hunchback and cloven foot. She merely uses him for labor purposes and would much rather spend her time with his six younger brothers.

Bertha, the protagonist's mother, wants Arnold to survive so that she may use him as a servant, gathering firewood and other mundane tasks. Besides his role as servant, she feels no affection towards her child, claiming to have only nursed him for fear that she would not bear another child after him. Throughout his confrontation with his mother, Arnold reassures her that he still has emotions towards her, even though she may not reciprocate, proclaiming: "I love, or, at the least, loved you: nothing/ Save you, in nature, can love aught like me" (Byron 10). And yet, although she is supposed to present him with the utmost love because she is his mother and the only one who is forced to love him, she cannot because of his deformity. She declares his life a "monstrous sport of nature" and hopes that he is the only unearthly sight that she must encounter through her days (Byron 10).

When Bertha pronounces to Arnold that he is her "sole abortion" he wishes that "I had been so" (Byron 9). Her disinterest and disgust towards her offspring forces him to wish his removal from earth even before his appearance there so that he might not have caused such hatred in his mother's soul. Arnold loves this woman and only wishes for the same in return. Yet the portrayal of his deformity as a desired abortion illustrates Byron's "revolutionary ideals, for

required sympathetic identification with the visible, pained body” (Bruhm 146). Arnold’s ability to love paired with Bertha’s inability to do so, as seen in her desire for him to “call me not/ Mother” is an attempt to win compassion from the reader for the plight of the deformed (Byron 10). This then inflates Byron’s own ego in regards to his deformity. If his disabled characters are able to garner admiration, maybe he will too. This is Byron’s attempt to capitalize on deformity, glorifying it rather than adding to people’s repulsions for those who are different. Being deformed adds to individuality and owning that deformity avoids the repetition of victimization.

Byron attempts to cope with his own affliction by “reading fiction; he supplants one form of the aesthetic (experiential, ontological sentience, the pain in his foot) with another (art). But this move is not a simple deflection or repression. Rather, the fiction he writes in his last days emphasizes his concern for *physical* pain, pain without mitigation” (Bruhm 144). His attempt to escape the pain is shown in *The Deformed Transformed* through Arnold’s desire for a replacement body when the opportunity is presented to him. Bruhm contends that like “Frankenstein’s monster, who begins life in a blissful union with nature that is interrupted by the inexorable consciousness of suffering, the self in Romantic fiction seems to know itself only through acquaintance with physical agony” (147). Although it is not explicitly stated that Arnold is caused physical pain, he is emotionally scorned by his mother and family and feels that if they cannot love him, no one will be able to. This can be seen in Byron’s ideas about promiscuity. He too was trying to find acceptance and love within his sex life to replace his feelings of isolation and freakishness. Byron, like Arnold, sought acceptance and affirmation of his manhood and his position in society.

Byron presents Arnold going so far as to want to end his life rather than remain an outcast, forever feeling emotion but never receiving reciprocation. Arnold laments that he has

“no home, no kin, / No kind-not made like other creatures” (Byron 11). He is a rejected creature of the earth, unable to make connections within the society in which he was produced because he is a pariah. His choice to commit suicide will prevent his existence as a “burden to the earth, myself, and shame/ Unto what brought me into life” (Byron 11-12). He does not want to bring any further harm or deprecation to his beloved mother and so would rather end his presence on earth so that his mother may live on without the feeling of shame he has produced in her.

Rather than running towards death, Byron attempted to hide his affliction by wearing a prosthetic boot. As Paul Youngquist determines in *Monstrosities: Bodies and British Romanticism*, Byron’s “prosthetic boot transforms the form it simulates, making his body matter by means, not of human health and wholeness, but of artifice, otherness, materiality, inhumanity” (165). Byron’s life melded into the realm of the scientific when he chose this form of technology to aide in the concealment of his affliction. In an attempt to appear normal, Byron took on a form of the “other.” His prosthesis brought into question his humanity. By utilizing a machine to help him walk and eliminate pain, however, Byron became inhuman, in a sense. He was not a fully functioning being of his own accord. He had to rely on the assistance of manipulative methods to meet society’s notion of a normative lifestyle. Like Arnold, he sought the help of an “other” so that he could be accepted by his culture and peers.

Arnold’s “other” appears in the form of the Stranger. Their encounter reaffirms Arnold’s humanity as well as gives him the opportunity to embrace his being by transforming himself and escaping the world of the shunned. The Stranger reassures Arnold that although his deformities would not be unacceptable in the animal community, nature has made a mistake in imposing these injustices upon Arnold’s frame and that is why he is here to help him. The Stranger will not “mock what all are mocking” (Byron 15). Instead, he wants to allow Arnold to experience his

full potential. This is just as Byron does. As with Arnold's transformation, "Byron invents new forms by living his deformity...By insisting that such differences matter, Byron affirms the transformative life of monstrosities" (Youngquist 190). His attempt to hide his deformity and correct the suffering he must endure showcased that differences are important as well as correctable. It is no longer necessary to suffer through your lot in life when science, or the devil (in the form of a Stranger), is able to change your path. This illustrates his ideal that monsters can become whatever they desire, with the right tools and a little help.

It is ironic that Arnold chooses to take on the form of Achilles, the warrior with a weak heel. Achilles' disability and flaw lies within his foot, just as Byron's does. Byron believes that the fully functional or "proper body incarnates domination. Otherness, whether of deformity or nationality, simply doesn't matter. Byron identifies proper embodiment with historical tyranny and quietly indicts medicine and militarism as the means of its operations" (Youngquist 189). As Arnold becomes a warrior who battles for his country, Byron battles against improper medical treatment. His doctor's misdiagnosis of his condition frustrated Byron throughout his life. He was determined to disavow the medical industry in his writing throughout his life. This is illustrated in Arnold's choice to become a warrior after he gains a proper body. He too is combating the society that pushed him down because of his deformity and abhorrent appearance.

The most profound sentiment in *The Deformed Transformed* lies within a monologue presented by Arnold. He affirms that:

Had no power presented me
 The possibility of change, I would
 Have done the best which spirit may to make
 Its way with all Deformity's dull, deadly,

Discouraging weight upon me...

Nay, I could have borne

It all, had not my mother spurned me from her. (Byron 26)

These lines can be heard as an echo of Byron's own life. His one desire was to be accepted for who he was by all who surrounded him. That was the ultimate reason he chose to cover his deformity so that he would not be judged by it. However, Byron became a horrid person in spite of his deformity. His promiscuity, sexual deviance, and abhorrent manner caused others to separate from him, not his clubfoot.

Byron did not take the opportunities presented to him to be liked. Instead, he lived life as he pleased and suffered the consequences of being feared by others. Arnold chooses to take a different path. He desires to change his form so that he may be "feared-admired-respected-loved," all of which Byron also longed for. As Imke Heuer indicates in her article, "'Shadows of Beauty, Shadows of Power': Heroism, Deformity, and Classical Allusion in Joshua Pickersgill's *The Three Brothers* and Byron's *The Deformed Transformed*,"

from Arnold's point of view, the tragedy of his situation is not so much his deformity itself, but the fact that he is convinced he is unable to be loved. Arnold sees his status as an outcast as a direct result of his multiple disabilities. He does not question a society which excludes him from any community with other people because he accepts the notion of being 'Other' and therefore necessarily excluded. In connection to Burke's concept of the Beautiful and the Sublime, it is interesting to see that Arnold, in his own body, is convinced he could be admired and feared, but not loved. Thus, people would react to him as to a sublime presence, and the qualities that make a person lovable are outside him.

The major difference between the author and his character is that love was most important to Arnold, while Byron settled on the other three attributes. Arnold does for others whereas Byron did for himself. He seeks love and acceptance whereas Byron required respect.

Mary Shelley also lived in fear of the perceptions of her being by society. She was brought into this world by two greatly acclaimed writers and had to live up to the expectations that have been forced upon her by her parentage and the society she was born into. Furthermore, her marriage to Percy Shelley created challenges in her life. She hoped to be able to fulfill the role forced upon her by her straying husband, yearning to be as learned and prolific as she viewed him to be. Shelley's greatest fear was in the realm of motherhood and childbirth. Since she believed that she caused her own mother's death, Shelley dreaded the possibility of furthering this occurrence through her own childrearing. However, an even more horrific event occurred when she lost her child rather than her own life. Shelley's misfortunes lead to her remarkable ability to translate emotion into the pages of the most notable of her works, *Frankenstein*. Whether it is a birth myth, a tale of familial relations, or a story of homoerotic desire, *Frankenstein's* main focus lies on the monster and his search for both humanity and revenge.

As Anne K. Mellor explains in *Mary Shelley: Her Life, Her Fiction, Her Monsters*, Shelley's penning of *Frankenstein* gave her an outlet to express "her deepest fears. What if my child is born deformed, a freak, a moron, a 'hideous' thing? Could I still love it, or would I be horrified and wish it were dead again? What will happen if I can't love my own child" (Mellor 41)? The monster's deformity lets Shelley explore the possibility of such an event occurring in her own life. It allows her to work through her emotions on the topic from a fictitious standpoint so that she could see how things would play out in reality. Victor wishes for the monster's death

not for his deformed nature but for his flawed character. He is afraid of the monster and its ability to bring harm and destruction to those he loves. Yet Victor's neglect is what formed the monster into what he has become.

Mary Shelley begins her iconic novel, *Frankenstein*, with the statement: "for nothing contributes so much to tranquilize the mind as a steady purpose—a point on which the soul may fix its intellectual eye" (2). This "steady purpose" takes on a dual meaning for both the author and her characters. Shelley's "steady purpose" is that of crafting the perfect ghost story in an attempt to gain the rank of chief story-teller in her social circle. However, what she crafted instead is a tale which reflects her longing for perfection, and one of the leading stories about the mad scientist who confuses desire with reality. Victor Frankenstein's steady purpose is that of crafting a creature who will amaze the masses. However, his desire for excellence is overshadowed by his failure in reality, something he must come to terms with before he unleashes further creations on the world.

Frankenstein's creation, like Arnold, merely wants to be loved and accepted by society. He knows that if people could overcome the fear of his exterior, they would come to enjoy the interior he has crafted for himself, molded by the observation of the de Lacey's. Just as the monster had to find out for himself how to speak and feel, both physically and emotionally, so did Shelley. Since she lost her mother in childbirth, "Mary Shelley shared the creature's powerful sense of being born without an identity, without role-models to emulate, without a history" (Mellor 45). Shelley was abandoned just as the monster had been. The major difference is that Mary Wollstonecraft did not decide to detach herself from her child. Circumstances chose this path for her. Victor Frankenstein, however, chose to remove himself from his creation because he detested what he had done. His monster was an abomination that he wished had never

been produced. In his attempt to eradicate himself from the monster, he unleashes a force upon the world, and one that must rely on strangers to teach it right from wrong.

Upon the monster's first moments of existence, Frankenstein proclaims that he is "the miserable monster whom I had created" and flees from his bedchamber, afraid of what he has done (Shelley 35). He continues to live in "daily fear lest the monster whom [he] had created should perpetrate some new wickedness" after learning of the murder of his brother William at the hands of his own progeny (Shelley 62). Frankenstein fears what he has created because it is uncontrollable. Yet, if he had chosen to remain attached to this being he has brought to life, he might have been able to mold him into someone to be respected rather than feared. The inability to accept deformity and to judge a person based on appearance causes greater harm than if Frankenstein were able to assume responsibility for what he has done and guide the creature towards the right path. Frankenstein is most frightened by his creature because it reflects back to him who Frankenstein the person really is. He is not merely a scientist trying to manipulate nature. He is evil himself in his seclusion from his family and his frantic studies of that which should be beyond his reach.

Upon their meeting in the mountains of Chamounix, father and son are reunited, albeit not by choice of the father. Here, the monster is finally able to express what has happened in his life since he was abandoned by his creator. The events that have unfolded on his isolated journey have shaped the monster into the treacherous being he has now become. In this encounter, Shelley is able to unearth "her own buried feelings of parental abandonment and forced exile from her father. Her creature, disappointed in his long-cherished desire for a welcome from the de Lacey family, feels anger, then a desire for revenge, and finally a violent severing from all that is human, civilized, cultural" (Mellor 46). His one desire, to be accepted by civilization,

cannot be fulfilled because of the fear of his deformity. For an “advanced civilization” it would seem that the villages across Europe could accept a person for his interior rather than judging him on his outer appearance. Yet the inability to overcome the fear of the deformed prevents any substantial interaction between the monster and his compatriots.

Since the monster is shunned by the people he desires acceptance from, he becomes frustrated with mankind and civilization. He is trying to emulate their good behavior so that he may assimilate into their society. But their inability to overcome the fear of the unknown prevents his inclusion and leads to his fury. As the monster is “longing to participate in the loving relations of the De Lacey family, he imagines their warm reception could he just convince them that monstrosity is only skin deep” (Youngquist 54). Yet in his attempt to prove this to the family, they run screaming from his presence, furthering the notion that he can never truly be one of them.

The monster realizes that his countenance is terrifying. Upon viewing himself in a body of water he proclaims that he is “unable to believe that it was indeed I who was reflected in the mirror; and when I became fully convinced that I was in reality the monster that I am, I was filled with the bitterest sensations of despondence and mortification” (Shelley 80). He is mortified by his appearance because he does not appear as lovely or graceful as the cottagers he so dearly admires. And yet he knows that his personality and humanity could sway their feelings towards him if only they could leave behind their assumptions that deformity must immediately be associated with evil and wretchedness. Nancy Fredericks elaborates on the idea that “the only character in the book to speak out against the injustice of having one’s worth determined solely on the basis of one’s physical appearance is the monster” (179). Although he is aware of his horrifying appearance, he knows that it is not an acceptable basis for discrimination.

Appearances can be deceiving, and, to illustrate this point, the being with the least humanity is the main character. He is willing to incorporate himself into the world of humans, even though he realizes he is not like them. The de Lacey's and the rest of society are trying to keep him out because they fear his form.

In *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, Mary Wollstonecraft explores the idea that “physical beauty is merely an accident of birth, not an indicator of an individual's true worth as a being” (Fredericks 179). The monster is aware that beauty is not an important part of a person's overall being. What he most desires to know, however, is his parentage and why there are no others like him. For this, he needs Victor. He determines Frankenstein to be his creator and begs him for another being in his likeness so that he too may find happiness since it will not be granted to him by humans. Frankenstein's attempt to create a female monster and the subsequent destruction of this creature sends the monster into complete chaos. After much convincing of the necessity of a companion, the monster cannot believe that his creator would forsake him so. The one person who could finally fulfill his desire to feel love and acceptance in a world that abhors him rejects him a second time.

The monster remains “the miserable and abandoned, an abortion, to be spurned at, and kicked, and trampled on” (Shelley 165). His heinous acts committed against humanity are because of his denial into the civilized world. His desire for love is destroyed by the man who forced his life into existence and he will never be satisfied with being alive. As Judith Halberstam asserts, “by focusing upon the body as the locus of fear, Shelley's novel suggests that it is people (or at least bodies) who terrify people, not ghosts or gods, devils or monks, windswept castles or labyrinthine monasteries. The architecture of fear in this story is replaced by physiognomy, the landscape of fear is replaced by sutured skin, the conniving villain is

replaced by an antihero and his monstrous creation” (28-9). By forcing humanity to look upon the wretched and deformed as an infiltrator of society, Shelley is broadcasting the fear of the “other” subverting normal society and forcing themselves and their ways on tradition and heritage.

Shelley introduces the idea of “a steady purpose” in the beginning of the narrative and begins to build upon this idea with the interest of Victor in various fields of science. Although his father wants him to pursue a career in a science that would serve all of humanity, Victor becomes fascinated with the likes of Cornelius Agrippa, a scientist who believed that magic was the link to both God and nature. From this encounter, Victor’s fascination in learning what makes man work and how humans are created “demonstrates most blatantly the early-nineteenth-century obsession with the materiality of the body and the creation of life” (Engelstein 180).

Victor proclaims

the world was to me a secret which I desired to divine. Curiosity, earnest research to learn the hidden laws of nature, gladness akin to rapture, as they were unfolded to me, are among the earliest sensations I can remember. (Shelley 18)

This incident sparks the flame of his god-complex to follow.

After becoming acquainted with the world of science, Victor begins to “avoid a crowd, and to attach myself fervently to a few” (Shelley 19). He is beginning his life of isolation so that he may place all of his focus on his passion for knowledge and experimentation. Victor is “unable to share his interests with anyone; his studies take a direction of esoteric and secret inquiry. The pursuit of knowledge is characterized by taboos and prohibitions” (Frost 2). He proclaims that his “temper was sometimes violent, and passions vehement, but by some law in my temperature they were turned not towards childish pursuits but to an eager desire to learn...

the secrets of heaven and earth... my enquiries were directed to the metaphysical, or in its highest sense, the physical secrets of the world” (Shelley 19). Victor becomes attached to the idea that the world holds secrets which must be explored. He displays his own form of deformity, unable to function normally within the boundaries of society.

Victor dedicates his life and learning to finding out how the human body works. He believes that:

to examine the causes of life, we must first have recourse to death. I became acquainted with the science of anatomy; but this was not sufficient; I must also observe the natural decay and corruption of the human body... Darkness had no effect upon my fancy; and a churchyard was to me merely the receptacle of bodies deprived of life, which, from being the seat of beauty and strength, had become food for the worm. Now I was led to examine the cause and progress of this decay, and forced to spend days and nights in vaults and charnel-houses... I paused, examining and analyzing all the minutiae of causation, as exemplified in the change from life to death, and death to life, until from the midst of this darkness a sudden light broke in upon me—a light so brilliant and wondrous, yet so simple, that while I became dizzy with the immensity of the prospect which it illustrated. I was surprised, that among so many men of genius who had directed their enquires towards the same science, that I alone should be reserved to discover so astonishing a secret. (Shelley 30-31)

Victor “embarks on an arduous and methodical course of private research which leads, by slow degrees, to the discovery of the spark of life... The requirement for privacy is underlined by the very practical and prudent criterion that much of this research involves grave robbing and the

desecration and mutilation of corpses” (Frost 2). He must hide his laboratory away in order to hide his transgressions from society.

As he continues to toil in his laboratory, hidden away from the world so that he may dedicate his entire being to a life of science, Victor finally has answers to the questions of creation. He spends “days and nights of incredible labour and fatigue” upon which he finally succeeded in discovering the cause of generation and life; nay, more, I became myself capable of bestowing animation upon lifeless matter” (Shelley 31). Julia Kristeva, in *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, finds a corpse to be a “decaying body, lifeless, completely turned into dejection, blurred between the inanimate and the inorganic, a transitional swarming, inseparable lining of a human nature whose life is undistinguishable from the symbolic—the corpse represents fundamental pollution. A body without a soul, a non-body, disquieting matter, it is to be excluded from God’s *territory* as it is from his *speech*” (109). Victor’s creation, although it is an attempt to mimic God’s ability to create, can never live within God’s world because it is made from decayed corpses. These bodies without souls can never represent that which God has already created because they are not a full being. The monster will never be human not just because of his lack of natural creation but also because of the missing aspect of his being that marks humanity in God’s eyes: a soul.

After learning how to create, Victor has to come to terms with the idea that creation is not necessarily meant for the laboratory. He gains both knowledge and power over the spark of being and is now afraid of the danger that it holds. He warns others that they should “learn from me...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). He believes that man should remain small-minded in order to live a

peaceable life. Once the desire to break out of a comfort zone overcomes a being, it can only lead to danger and failure in Victor's eyes. Although he has come to fear knowledge, Victor still loves the power that accompanies it. He praises himself for being able to take his imagination and apply it to reality. Victor feels that although he may fear the power of knowledge, his "imagination was too much exalted by my first success to permit me to doubt of my ability to give life to an animal as complex and wonderful as man" (Shelley 32). He continues in his experimentation because he has tasted success and yearns for more. Although he may continue on with his study of creation, "*anxiety* is [Victor's] overwhelming emotion as he approached the realization of his fantasy of power" (Engelstein 1). Victor may believe that he is ready to possess the power to bestow new life upon the world, but his anxiety is over what society will think of him once his creation is unleashed.

Victor's work is conducted "in a solitary chamber, or rather cell, at the top of the house, and separated from all the other apartments by a gallery and staircase" and he indicts his laboratory as his "workshop of filthy creation" (Shelley 33). As a mad scientist in pursuit of knowledge, Victor also desires isolation and secrecy so that he may hide his experiments until he has reached the utmost level of perfection. He cannot allow society to see what he is crafting because he fears what they will think of his failures. It is not until he has honed his craft that he can unleash it on the world to be praised.

Throughout his crafting of this new being, Victor is excited by the prospect of his discovery. He is exultant over his inventiveness with the spark of being and wants his creation to be perfect. Yet in his confusion of desire and reality, Victor realizes what he has done once he "beheld the wretch—the miserable monster whom I had created" (Shelley 35). Once he views the being he has given life to, Victor begins to unravel, and describes his creation as "the living

monument of presumption and rash ignorance which I had let loose upon the world” (Shelley 53), “Devil” (Shelley 68), “vile insect” (Shelley 68), and a “miserable existence” (Shelley 68). Victor realizes that “the body ceases to *belong* to an individual whose rational control it serves and becomes an assemblage with a multitude of purposes or drives of its own that threaten to usurp the identity of the human” (Engelstein 2). His creation is so horrific because it is not merely one mass, but rather a group of varied parts, proving that a person’s identity is merely assumed rather than static. It can be contorted and controlled just as the monster is created.

Victor slowly begins to lose his sanity. After living so long in the secrecy of his laboratory, he now “lived in daily fear lest the monster whom I had created should perpetrate some new wickedness” upon the world (Shelley 62). His fear and “abhorrence of this fiend cannot be conceived. When [he] thought of him [he] gnashed my teeth, [his] eyes became inflamed, and [he] ardently wished to extinguish that life which [he] had so thoughtlessly bestowed” (Shelley 62). Theodora Goss and John Paul Riquelme posit that “the science that Frankenstein practices is a dark science, motivated by the technological imaginary’s imperative to overcome death. Rather than serving humanity, the denial of death contributes to the scientist’s effort to control life and death. Frankenstein attempts to metamorphose from a human into a superhuman by creating a superhuman being who worships him” (435). Yet once he comes face to face with the being he has created, he is terrified by the production of life and is unable to enjoy his work because of the dread the monster instills.

Frankenstein’s monster is aware of his disconnect from his maker and society. He sees himself as a monster and proclaims: “all men hate the wretched; how, then, must I be hated, who am miserable beyond all living things! Yet you, my creator, detest and spurn me, thy creature, to whom thou art bound by ties only dissoluble by the annihilation of one of us”

(Shelley 68). The monster cannot understand why the one person who is meant to have sympathy and compassion for him can turn from him so vehemently. Peter K. Garrett determines that “what convinces the creature of his monstrosity, drives him to violence, and leads him to demand a companion is his singularity, his painful lack of connection with others, while Frankenstein, who begins in a close domestic circle such as the creature yearns for and can never enjoy, leaves it for voluntary isolation to pursue his obsession” (95). What the creature so dearly wants, companionship and love, is the exact opposite of what Victor craves, isolation and privacy. In this lies the reason for the disconnect. Victor is unable to attach to his creation because it is his polar opposite, not just in appearance, but in personality. Victor takes himself away from the rest of humanity in order to practice his scientific craft. The monster wants to mingle with society and form bonds, whereas Victor cut all of his bonds in order to immerse himself in his study.

Victor continues to demonize his creation as an ““abhorred monster” proclaiming to him that “fiend that thou art! the tortures of hell are too mild a vengeance for thy crimes. Wretched devil! you reproach me with your creation; come on, then, that I may extinguish the spark which I so negligently bestowed”” (Shelley 68). For the society in which the monster was crafted,

the cultural significance of the Creature’s *monstrous* body has become a sort of free-floating signifier of the dominant anxieties of changing times, from Gothic fears of sexuality to fears of new technologies to an exemplar of Lacanian otherness. Thus Victor Frankenstein’s precocious desire for social perfection has become perverted in popular culture as leading to the creation of a monster who embodies modern fears of sloppy science run amok, the consequence of a science that lacks concern for the after-effects of experimentation. The irresponsible urge for headlong progress thus devolves into horror and destruction. (Brewster 75)

Victor's science is incomprehensible. It is unknown why he wants to create life from death when he could merely create life with a female companion in order to continue the race. His desire to learn something new and to go against societal norms backfires on him when he becomes disgusted by his creation rather than embracing his work. Victor both questions his experiments as well as the craft of the God he believes has created him and all of humanity.

The monster continues with his dismay over his being declaring: ““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”” (Shelley 91). Yet although the creature finds his outer appearance hideous, “what of Frankenstein himself? His outward form is conventional but there is something monstrous about his lack of compassion and his desertion of this creation, his consummate self-absorption, and his perseverance, despite the warnings and previous attacks on others close to him” (Filmer 22). Victor's a horrible parent and human being because he is unable to feel. He is so engrossed by his work that he detaches himself from any form of human emotion and rather than attempt to regaining control over this part of his being, he withdraws himself completely from society in his search for his creation in an attempt to stop him from further destruction.

The monster demands to know from his creator: ““why did you form a monster so hideous that even *you* turned from me in disgust? God, in pity, made man beautiful and alluring, after his own image; but my form is a filthy type of yours, more horrid even from the very resemblance”” (Shelley 93). If Victor is attempting to follow in God's plan of creation, he is attempting to demonstrate that God can create a perfect human because he is perfect. Stefani Engelstein, in *Anxious Anatomy: The Conception of the Human Form in Literary and Naturalist Discourse*, contests that “it is the human body in its reaction and relation to the Creature that

occupies the center of the novel. The humans in *Frankenstein* are revealed to be simultaneously animal and machine, adamantly material, and perhaps most importantly, affected in their reason and interpretation of the world by their physical organization” (180-181). Since it appears that Victor has unknowingly projected his inner horridness upon his creature’s outer appearance, it is as if he is showcasing man’s inner instability and treacherous nature and showing the world that monstrosity is not merely created, it lies dormant within each person, waiting for a reason to escape. Engelstein continues, claiming that “the Creature becomes monstrous by exposing the animality of the natural human, and never so clearly as when it displays its sophisticated mental life through the physical expression of passion in gesture and countenance” (196). Shelley shows the creature’s connection to humanity and his attempt to integrate himself into society as a display of the true spirit of human nature. The monster is attempting to garner some form of humanity while humanity is displaying its monstrosity by running away from the being and not allowing him to be accepted.

The monster craves companionship and happiness. He tells his creator: “I demand a creature of another sex, but as hideous as myself...Oh! my creator, make me happy; let me feel gratitude towards you for one benefit” (Shelley 105)! The creature is made less monstrous in his desire for a mate, someone who is like him so that he may know happiness as humans do. This desire showcases the creature’s connection with humanity and, as Engelstein points out,

not only do the physical processes he shares with humanity become in the Creature stark and unavoidable, but the mechanical nature of his all too human emotions also emerges. His most horrible features are those which most strongly suggest his kinship to humans. His eyes indicate his status as a sentient and indeed intelligent observed and cast the viewer into the position of the viewed.

His exterior provides access to his interior, both physical and mental. His ugliness is located in the revelation of what we would rather not know about ourselves.

(194)

The monster shows that he is like other people and in turn they are like him. Each person has the ability to be compassionate and monstrous, sympathetic and grotesque.

Lord Byron and Mary Shelley both convey in their works their own fears of rejection in normal, everyday society. Byron feared the inability to be accepted as a whole man because of his painful birth defect and Shelley feared her inability to form an identity as a woman because she was forced to grow up in a patriarchal society without the presence of a maternal figure to guide her through life. *The Deformed Transformed* and *Frankenstein* display these fears, allowing the authors to work through the scenarios that troubled them. By displacing their fears into the fictions they created, Byron and Shelley experienced what it would be like to allow their secret fears to escape and be enacted in a climate of rejection and denial. They were able to use their characters to show how life would be if their worst fears were to come true.

Science and Technology: The Modern Form of Disfigurement as Means for Disguise

Both Ellen Wood's *East Lynne* and Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* introduce the concept of modern forms of science or technology that could lead to deformity. In *East Lynne*, Isabel Vane is forced to take on the identity of Madame Vine after a horrible railroad accident leaves her face deformed and disfigured beyond immediate recognition. Stevenson's *Jekyll and Hyde* plays with the idea that science is as much a destroyer as it is a means to create anew when Dr. Jekyll's tampering with science leads to the emergence of the deformed and frightening Mr. Hyde out of his own person. The idea that scientific or

technologically-caused deformities could create a new level of disguise and secrecy was a frightening concept for the Victorians. It was unsettling to know that a person could become someone else based on a simple deformity. This allowed the world to see what had been wrong in the past and how modernity was making these disfigurements even more prevalent. Vision and sight throughout modernity allowed for the disclosing of secrets that centuries had struggled to keep. Science unlocking these secrets led to the issue of what appearance was true and natural and what was man-made and attempting to hide something.

Both Isabel Vane/Madame Vine and Dr. Jekyll/Mr. Hyde have secrets that are not meant to be brought to the surface. The ability to disguise themselves through their deformed bodies allows them to mingle with society in order to keep those secrets at bay and attempt to live a normal life. Yet the duality of their persons is what brings about their downfall. Attempting to keep two separate entities in check within one body becomes nearly impossible. Crossovers between the two personae threaten to reveal who they truly are. The ideal form of deformity would allow the person to completely change his or her personality and inner being as well as the outer features in order to avoid discovery, but this is not possible. The two entities must work together within the singular being in order to have complete control over their world. When one entity slips into the other at inappropriate times, it can lead to the discovery of the hidden duality as well as greater anxiety for the world that has been tricked by this secret.

Isabel Vane's facial disfigurement after the railway accident is a blessing in disguise for her horrid existence. Lady Isabel's deformity allows her to return to East Lynne and to her children as their governess after she has committed the heinous crime of abandoning them for a lover. Since she is unrecognizable, Lady Isabel is able to hide her identity and live among her children once more in order to regain a shred of happiness. Yet she remains in constant fear of

being discovered for the woman she truly is, a deserter and adulteress. Before her accident, during a visit with Lord Mount Severn, the earl proclaimed to Isabel “how utterly you have lost yourself!” (Wood 361). His exclamation provides the starting point for Isabel’s duality. In the recognition of her lost self, Isabel is able to separate into two entities before even realizing what that will mean for her in the end. She realizes the desire and yearning to be home with her children while at the same time understanding that as Lady Isabel Vane this can never be truly possible. She no longer wants to remain isolated and apart from society and that fateful railway accident provides her with an escape from isolation and brings her back to where she feels she belongs. In becoming deformed, Isabel is able to renew her existence and start a fresh life where she can enjoy her children growing up, albeit from the distance of a stranger thrust upon their family.

Before the horrible accident, Isabel is described as a beautiful woman, which leads to her acceptance in society. After her disfigurement, she veers away from the world of the beautiful and moves into the realm of ugliness. According to critic Anthony Synnott, “to be lovely is to be lovable and, by implication, to be loved. Conversely, to be unlovely is to be unlovable and unloved; and to be ugly is to be repulsive and to repel” (55). Yet she still retains a single shred of her past beauty which enables her to be accepted in the role of governess for the Carlyles and to be recognized for her true self by both Joyce and Cornelia. Even though Isabel attempts to use her deformity to transform herself into Madame Vine, she can never completely separate her two entities because a shred of her past remains lingering on her face, even through the scars and masks. Therefore, Isabel can never completely become the Madame Vine who society fears both for her deformity as well as her secrets.

Isabel takes on a mask when becoming the governess Madame Vine. Not only is she wearing a veil and blue glasses to hide her face but the scarring deformity from the accident becomes her literal mask, used to protect herself from discovery. For Isabel, there are “social necessities of wearing a mask in public, and therefore of seeming to be what one is not” (Synnott 61). Isabel attempts to change her person by using the mask of deformity to assume a new identity. Yet she is still looked at as a spectacle because of her absurd use of the veil and glasses. She cannot escape her true self nor can she escape being classified as an abnormal “other” who is trying too hard to hold in her deepest secrets. She becomes the spectacle and the object of the gaze because of the way she perceives her own deformity rather than because of the way others perceive it.

Synnott contends that the “social face is the public face, and requires the rapid changing of masks or expressions. Only under conditions of extreme emotion or alone or among friends does the mask ‘slip’ and the private face, the ‘real’ person appear. Thus the face will often be shielded, either with gestures or by veils or handkerchiefs” (61). Isabel uses her veil as a mask to hide her private face and therefore her true identity. Since she is comfortable with both Joyce and Cornelia to a certain degree, she allows her emotions to overcome her ability to mask her private face and they are able to see the true Isabel hidden beneath. Yet there remains a societal fear of secrecy as to “who or what is a wife, a mother, especially if her husband and children do not recognize her” (Gruner 315). Isabel must reveal herself to her former husband Carlyle in order for her true identity to be acknowledged. In this is displayed the blindness of affection, allowing her true persona to be shielded from those she is closest to so that they do not have to face the realization that the mother and wife they believed to be removed from this earth is truly returned to them. But because Isabel cannot keep up the appearance of the mask with the other members

of the family, she is not an overt threat to society's inability to acknowledge secrets. She too must let her secret out by allowing glimpses into her past through what is left of her previous appearance. Isabel depicts the open secrecy of monstrosity and deformity. The freakishness nature of humanity can never be completely hidden. It consistently finds a way to peek through in order to both undermine society as well as prove that monstrosity and deformity are not as scary as civilization believes them to be.

For Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, the only thing that allows them to remain within society after their science experimentation is their ability to use the deformed figure of Hyde as a disguise for Jekyll's wrongdoings. Jekyll and Hyde, like Lady Isabel and Madame Vine, represent man's ability to become a dual being and hide from society the private version of oneself. In Victorian culture, the duality of the freak was frightening. The freak was deemed monstrous "precisely because of the instability of its body: the freak could be male and female, white and black, adult and child, and/or human and animal at the same time" (Durbach 3). Hyde is said to be, by Mr. Enfield, "not easy to describe. There is something wrong with his appearance; something displeasing, something downright detestable...He must be deformed somewhere; he gives a strong feeling of deformity" (Stevenson 5). Hyde's appearance is not easily distinguishable because he is a manipulation of Jekyll. D. A. Miller posits that "the paranoid perception that the social world is a dangerous place to exhibit the inner self and on the aggressive precautions that must be taken to protect it from exposure. To be good, to be bad are merely variants of the primordial condition that either presupposes: to be *in camera*...the good can only be good, do good, in secret" (Miller 203). Hyde represents the animal nature that lives deep inside of man and is brought forth by a chemical reaction at the will of the mad scientist Jekyll.

Before the realization of Hyde being who he is, he is merely a creature who “had no face by which he might know it; even in his dreams, it had no face, or one that baffled him and melted before his eyes” (Stevenson 8). Hyde’s lack of a face elicits the anxieties of secrecy even more so than a mask would. To have no true identity by not being able to present a face leaves one as unrecognizable and a cause for alarm. Jekyll proves that “the abortive attempt to re-create himself leads Jekyll inevitably into subjection to his own creature...The insurgency of Jekyll’s monster is of a kind that can obliterate what remains of Jekyll’s already fragile identity...Human identity is merely an assemblage of ill-fitting fragments; that what we please to call the ‘individual’ is in fact endlessly divisible” (Baldick 145-146). Without an identity, one cannot be held accountable for actions which could lead to great danger for oneself or especially for the other members of society. Utterson believes that if he “could but once set eyes on him (Hyde), the mystery would lighten and perhaps roll altogether away, as was the habit of mysterious things when well examined...And it would be a face worth seeing: the face of a man who was without bowels of mercy” (Stevenson 8). The faceless man must be seen in order to determine the true depth of his beastliness. Yet to be seen would be to uncover the secret that Jekyll possesses.

The description of Mr. Hyde proves his displacement from normal society. He is said to be “pale and dwarfish” and gives “an impression of deformity without any nameable malformation” (Stevenson 10). Hyde’s use of appearance allows him to disguise his true person. He is not actually deformed, but he is able to manipulate others into perceiving him to be that way in order to move about society undetected for who he really is. Unlike Isabel, who is trying her hardest to remain unnoticed because of a true deformity, Hyde is able to assume a second identity from his actual person, which is more frightening than being aggressively disfigured by

something beyond one's control. Being able to control an assumed identity posits more anxiety into society for the simple fact that anyone could become someone different, as long as they tried hard enough to make it happen and kept up (false) appearances. Utterson imagines that "this Master Hyde, if he were studied, must have secrets of his own: black secrets, by the look of him; secrets compared to which poor Jekyll's worst would be like sunshine" (Stevenson 11). Yet it is Jekyll who has the darkest of secrets that cannot be revealed for fear of the consequences of his actions. Jekyll is dabbling in an irrational practice of science, attempting to modify humanity and revert it to its most basic and primitive form by drawing out the animal nature of man.

Hyde's appearance is distorted and everyone who views him has a different interpretation of it. They agree only on one point: "the haunting sense of unexpressed deformity with which the fugitive impressed his beholders" (Stevenson 17). Each person who comes into contact with Hyde sees his or her own manipulation of his evilness. They are projecting their own inner horrors onto this deformed creature and viewing the reflection of their past crimes. Dr. Jekyll, just as Hyde does, represents great anxiety to the Victorian age because of his ability to manipulate science in such a way as to form this disguise through the character of Hyde. Jekyll's ability to manipulate science for the purpose of evil (as it is presented through Hyde) frightens the Victorians, who believed that control was meant for the good of a productive society, not to distort reality and create evil personifications within the realm of the normal. Jekyll is a complex example of such anxiety because he is "woefully weighed down by self-deception, cruelly a slave to his own weakness, sadly a disciple of a severe discipline, a cry of Victorian man from the depths of the self-imposed underground" (Saposnik 721). Even more so than the anxiety of disguise is the anxiety towards a person who is consumed by modernity and the use of science to progress towards a world filled with deception. Jekyll is consumed by his scientific attempts and

yet they do not prove to better himself or society in any way. Jekyll and Hyde are the representations of “the inevitable conflict between natural urges and societal pressures” who are unable to control or master either of these two behaviors and therefore fall victim to one or the other (Saposnik 729). Ultimately, they fall victim to the world of the “other” and give in to their natural urges rather than upholding the societal order, producing a being that goes against all that society sets up as right, committing heinous crimes and destroying the notion that science is a power for good.

Jekyll begins to change his mind about what happens to Hyde after his second dreadful incident. Whereas he before wanted to see Hyde taken care of if he were to disappear, Jekyll now proclaims that he is “done with him in this world” and he does not “care what becomes of Hyde” (Stevenson 19). After his manipulation of science, Jekyll has “lost confidence” in himself and has learned quite a “lesson” from his experimentation (Stevenson 19). He does not “foresee the consequences and ramifications of [his] creation” and begins to realize the mistakes he has made in attempting to manipulate the boundaries of scientific investigation (Engar 136). After the murder in Soho, Hyde is “blotted out” and “now that the evil influence has been withdrawn, a new life begins for Dr. Jekyll. He comes out of his seclusion, renews relations with his friends, becomes once more their familiar” (Stevenson 22). One of the most notable differences in Jekyll’s habits is his newfound interest in religion. As Ann Engar concludes, “sometimes god-like scientists approach too near the godly in their creations. They violate the boundaries of the human” (135). It is as if after attempting and failing to take on the role of a god Jekyll must submit to a higher power to atone for his transgressions. He is yielding his might to what he believes to be the supreme creator and bowing out of his attempts to produce his own form of being.

Jekyll attempts to resist his urges to toil in the dark science he has become accustomed to. Yet he cannot refrain himself from continuing in his quest to separate the dualities of humanity. He plans to “lead a life of extreme seclusion” and proclaims to his friends that they must allow him to “go my own dark way” since he has “brought on myself a punishment and a danger that I cannot name” (Stevenson 23). Jekyll does not know where to go any longer because he feels that his scientific endeavors have finally gone too far and he cannot separate himself from his work and attempts to construct newness. Jekyll’s residence becomes “that house of voluntary bondage” because he locks himself away in his study in order to continue his work in solitude (Stevenson 24). He does not want anyone to disturb him in his enterprise.

Jekyll is heard by his servant to be in a great deal of pain during his transformation. He proclaims that “him or it, or whatever it is that lives in that cabinet, has been crying night and day for some sort of medicine and cannot get it to his mind” (Stevenson 29). Jekyll is experiencing physical pain as *Frankenstein's* Creature does emotionally. All creations suffer at the hands of the creator and all creators suffer because their creations do not meet their expectations.

Jekyll is completely transformed beyond recognition because of his manipulation of science. His servant proclaims: “if that was my master, why had he a mask upon his face?” which Utterson answers with the claim that

your master is plainly seized with one of those maladies that both torture and deform the sufferer; hence...the alteration of his voice; hence the mask and his avoidance of his friends; hence his eagerness to find this drug, by means of which the poor soul retains some hope of ultimate recovery. (Stevenson 30)

Jekyll is seized by the pain of the transformation and the “hideous nature of Mr. Hyde can only be known through the failed respectability of Dr. Jekyll” (Halberstam 53). Jekyll has become warped by Hyde’s control and he is no longer able to maintain his stability in society because of his actions in his laboratory.

Utterson and the servant find Hyde in Jekyll’s laboratory “contorted and still twitching... He was dressed in clothes too large for him, clothes of the doctor’s bigness; the cords of his face still moved with a semblance of life, but life was quite gone; and by the crushed phial in the hand, Utterson knew that he was looking on the body of a self-destroyer” (Stevenson 33). Both Jekyll and Hyde use each other as a mask for their respective lives. As Judith Halberstam notes in “Gothic Surface, Gothic Depth: The Subject of Secrecy in Stevenson and Wilde,”

although Hyde hides within Jekyll, Jekyll is hidden behind the mask of Hyde and the difference is crucial to the staking out of their particular identities. Hyde is an eruption which disfigures and disappears Jekyll and Jekyll is the reimposition of order which silences and muffles Hyde, pushing him back into, supposedly, the dark recesses of the self. Hyde is hidden but also hides, his secrecy and need for refuge suggest a criminality that inheres to his lack of place. Jekyll, since he is a place, since he has a place, has depth and interiority, the depth of self, the interiority of conscience, and both are flattened by the appearance of Hyde, of what should have remained hidden. (68)

The creator and the monster are interchangeable in this tale with the help of scientific experimentation. This frightens society more than if a monster merely appeared from another country or another world because it shows that monstrosity can be created at home. It is no

longer something to be imported from an outside territory but rather something that can happen in the inner sanctum of a scientist's laboratory and be unleashed at any moment.

Jekyll submits that the "moment I choose, I can be rid of Mr. Hyde" because he is in complete control of his experiment (Stevenson 13). Or so he thinks. It is hard to overcome the bestial nature of his multifaceted persona and vanquish the beast from his life when he has become so accustomed to allowing him to roam free. The human half of the bestial creation is a product of the bestial just as the bestial is a product of the human part. Normalcy and abnormality need each other in order to survive in the world. They are two forces that feed off one another. Yet the sight of the drugs that allow him to control the transformation causes him to utter "one loud sob of such immense relief" (Stevenson 40). The draught brings Jekyll back from the horrid world of Hyde, and vice versa, allowing the scientist to decide which of his natures he wants to be at any given moment. Jekyll realizes that the drug "severed in [him] those provinces of good and ill which divide and compound man's dual nature" and determines that man "will be ultimately known for a mere policy of multifarious, incongruous and independent denizens" (Stevenson 42-43). Jekyll early on wants to learn how to bring about the "separation of those elements" which splits man's inner beings into varied levels of humanity and monstrosity (Stevenson 43). He "embarks upon what he conceives of as a moral and scientific project, the dissociation of the 'polar twins' of the self" in order to control the various natures that man possesses (Halberstam 54). Through this separation society learns that within man there is an entity that may be ill-willed. This is witnessed when "Hyde is born bad and he is bad through and through; he also represents the evil core of his author, Mr. Jekyll" (Halberstam 57). Although Jekyll may have intended his experiment to be the good of mankind, it instead

showcases the idea that all men have some monstrous element to their being, which brings terror to a society who believes in the good of man.

Jekyll is unaware of what his true identity is now that he has tampered with his interiority. In his manipulation of science he has come to learn the evil side of human nature and can no longer separate what is more helpful to his scientific discovery, what he believes to be his true self and what he believes to be the manufactured evil he has pulled out of his being. Jekyll believes that

even as good shone upon the countenance of one, evil was written broadly and plainly on the face of the other. Evil besides (which I must still believe to be the lethal side of man) had left on that body an imprint of deformity and decay. And yet when I looked upon that ugly idol in the glass, I was conscious of no repugnance, rather of a leap of welcome. This, too, was myself. It seemed natural and human. In my eyes, it bore a livelier image of the spirit, it seemed more express and single, than the imperfect and divided countenance I had been hitherto accustomed to call mine. And in so far I was doubtless right. I have observed that when I wore the semblance of Edward Hyde, none could come near me at first without a visible misgiving of the flesh. This, as I take it, was because all human beings, as we meet them, are commingled out of good and evil: and Edward Hyde alone, in the ranks of mankind, was pure evil. (Stevenson 45)

As Halberstam posits, “by suggesting that identity itself is uncanny, that, indeed, the body resembles a haunted house, Stevenson’s novel shows the ideological dangers of trying to separate the haunted from the spook” (Halberstam 75). Jekyll is unable to differentiate who he

wants to be: the good doctor merely attempting to make a new scientific discovery or the monster he has created and uses for his own sick desires.

Finally, Jekyll's inability to see the outcome of his experiment proves the lack of control involved in trying to move towards modernity and a sense of a progressive society. Jekyll is "never able to see beyond his initial deception" and thus he "learns little about himself or about the essential failure of his experiment and remains convinced that the incompatible parts of his being can be separated" (Saposnik 724). In attempting to connect with himself, Jekyll creates his opposite being in the form of Hyde. This demonstrates people's inability to view their own secret beings, which are in a constant battle to escape from the public perception of themselves and demonstrate to the world the evil secrets that a private person can hold within. Hyde, as "the mirror of Jekyll's inner compulsions represents that shadow side of man which civilization has strive to submerge" (Saposnik 728). Like Lady Isabel/Madame Vine, Jekyll and Hyde present to Victorian society the fears of duality and the inability to control one's own person whether in private or in public, allowing their secrets to escape from them and become known to the rest of the world. This representation both allows for a secretive self in the eyes of society as well as allowing for the fantasy of control in the private sphere. In a "world where the explicit exposure of the subject would manifest how thoroughly he has been inscribed within a socially given totality, secrecy would be the spiritual exercise by which the subject is allowed to conceive of himself as a resistance: a friction in the smooth functioning of the social order, a margin to which its far-reaching discourse does not reach" (Miller 207). The secret allows the being to resist society as well as exert some level of control in their private existence in which they play with the idea of unleashing the secret and allowing others into their world. Therefore, "secrecy would

thus be the subjective practice in which the oppositions of private/public, inside/outside, subject/object are established, and the sanctity of their first term kept inviolate” (Miller 207).

Conclusions: Deformity as a Means to an End

Nineteenth-century authors such as Byron, Shelley, Wood, and Stevenson used ideas about deformity in order to examine the anxieties of the era and the notion that these anxieties were a necessary aspect of life. These writers utilized the idea of deformity in order to illustrate to their readership what was to be done in order to prevent such things from occurring. As Lillian Craton points out, “displays of freakish bodies had a firm hold over the Victorian imagination” (1). By being able to demystify the freakish body as a wonder and place it into the realm of possibility, nineteenth-century authors were providing the world with a new viewpoint.

Illustrating the ideas about deformity and freakishness as things that could occur in normal society showed humanity what to be wary of in terms of progress and acceptance. This was both good and bad, seeing that it could have allowed progress at a faster rate rather than forestalling it by removing the fears of the era rather than adding to them. Monstrosity also proves to be a productive aspect of society, producing the longing to keep forcing monsters and deformed beings into the position of “other.” It exemplifies society’s desire for protection, the yearning to keep secrets hidden, and the continued desire to exclude those who do not conform to normative behaviors and appearances.

Deformities and freaks were able to provide Romantic and Victorian society with an escape from the norm of their everyday lives. Monstrosity, for this era, was necessary to create normalcy. When the monsters seemed to be getting too close to integration into normative society, however, the British began to worry. To accept the form of the “other” into society

would be to concede the idea that perfection was no longer seen as obtainable, which is something the British would not readily accept. Likewise, the inability to provide a cure for every freak proved the unsuccessful nature of modern science and technology, since they did not hold the answers to all. Romantics and Victorians were skeptical both about the freaks living among them as well as the use of new forms of technology and science. Both fears held the British in a state of limbo, unsure what step to take next: to accept the freaks or remain set in the ways which they were used to in order to prevent the disruption of their lives.

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