

Title: The Monstrous Effects of Social Solitude: The Role of Isolation in Breeding Monstrous Minds in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and its Modern Parallels

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Analyzing Mary Shelley's gothic novel, *Frankenstein*, in a psychoanalytic lens offers a new interpretation of the centuries-old novel: the major role of isolation in developing monstrous qualities, portrayed through Victor Frankenstein and his creation. In defining monstrosity, Terry Kirk characterizes monsters as deviations from social norms. This is clearly epitomized in *Frankenstein*, seen in Victor's diversion from normal cognitive behavior during his time away from loved ones, as well as the creature's rage-induced rampage after being abandoned multiple times, ostracized by society. After reading *Paradise Lost*, an epic poem by John Milton, the creature likens itself to Adam, as beings inherently different from their surroundings. However, unlike Adam, the creature does not have the ability to socialize, exacerbating the development of its monstrous mind, amplified due to its solitude. The monstrous effects of isolation are also evident in Victor's overall mental condition; Frankenstein experiences recurring moments of abnormal thought and deteriorating mental state, resulting from his isolation, clearly deviating from his regular state of mind and veering closer to monstrous.

Drawing from scientific psychological research on health risks associated with social isolation—particularly the effects of social disconnectedness to deteriorating mental health—demonstrates an analogy to developing monstrosity in *Frankenstein*. We conclude that the concept of social monstrosity as a result of isolation is one existent beyond the fictional realm. The preservation of social interaction is thus of utmost importance in today's isolated, technology-centered world. Taking measures to effectively address mental health is hence crucial to avoid the mental monster.

Works Cited

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