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Final Portfolio

Dear Portfolio Assessment Committee,

Upon arriving to the first day of my freshman composition class, my professor asked the class to take out a sheet of paper and a writing utensil. She wanted us to simply reflect on our writing experiences from high school and our strengths and weakness as writers. In these few minutes, I discussed some of my interests as a writer, my understanding of creating thorough analysis, my skills in descriptive and abstract writing, and my common fault in maintaining concise, easy flowing language. As I reread this reflection after the semester long course, I drew two conclusions. The first conclusion was that I came in to this class with an array of writing experience and talent. I could not challenge the fact that I was a good writer upon entering the course and that I had been given a lot of tools to construct in-depth, insightful arguments and to demonstrate creativity. The second conclusion was that while I had a good deal of experience, much of the experience was one-dimensional and a lot of my talent was still relatively raw. Although I did flirt with writing in different modes and in different genres through high school, I often struggled to fully portray different perspectives and a different style other than my own. I could demonstrate effective summaries and synthesis of ideas, but I lacked an eye for counterarguments and accepting different points of view as a means to enhance my overall claim. Additionally, the process of writing had always felt like a struggle for me. Much of my work in high school were timed, in class samples of analysis that entailed quick thinking and jotting down rushed ideas with complementary explanations. I found myself lacking clarity and trying to jumble together as many words into a few sentences as I could fit. Additionally, this style carried over into a lot of my long term works, making my editing process a lot more complicated. I hoped that with continued exposure and practice with each of these techniques, I could improve my overall ability as a writer.

The first area of improvement in my writing was my ability to see text and various works of writing from different lenses, as well as to write according to different styles. My literary response letter from the novel *Super Sad True Love Story* represented an effort to take a passage from within the novel and change the audience to which the character was writing. Depending on the character chosen, I would either craft a more in depth insight into the character's emotions and reasoning; or the opposite, I would craft a shallower, less indulging perspective on their life. Additionally, the change in writing style would allow me to play with organization and to create a differently formatted work than the character's original conversation. In order to fulfill the assignment, I chose to change Eunice's audience from her friend to a diary. The diary style allowed her to disclose more information as she became the audience and could listen to her own thoughts, rather than to hold information back out of fear or embarrassment. For example, instead of stopping the conversation about her dad with the realization: "It's like the further I am away from my dad, the more he thinks he can get away with," I went a step further. I took the time to explain this point of view and illustrate the actual fears she possesses on the matter. I progressed the thought, stating: "I know deep inside how important I am to maintaining order and some happiness in my family. I have to go back to New York. Nowhere else. Not *with* my family, though. I want to live my life. But close enough to keep an eye on my mother and sister and an eye out for my dad. The problem is I don't know very many people in New York." Here, instead of stating her problem, she assessed the issue, uncovered the true meaning of the issue, and found at least some representation of a solution. I showed that this style was much more reflective and helpful than simply venting to her friend over online messaging.

My second area of improvement was my ability to clearly summarize and synthesize pieces of work, as well as the ability to create counterarguments for my claims. My Frankenstein

paper proposal, specifically the annotated bibliography, reflected both my most recent and most skilled work of synthesizing material and creating summaries. For example, in crafting my annotation for the article *Monstrosity, Suffering, Subjectivity, and Sympathetic Community in Frankenstein* and "The Structure of Torture," I immediately began by defining the notion of "individual subjectivity" – what I felt was the author's key point – as the "perspectives and feelings that are created out of a person's or, in this case, the creature's relationship with society." The definition at the beginning of the summary provided a strong baseline for the remainder of the explanation. I then explained this concept more thoroughly, mentioning its relationship to the book and how this concept is featured in the creature's life. I described that,

"The distinction in physical appearance between the creature and the accepted view of humans isolates the creature from any means of sympathetic connection during his upbringing, both through the denials of any idea of community by villagers and Frankenstein alike, driving the him into loneliness."

By providing concrete examples of the creature's existence, I could adequately progress the understanding of the authors key claim.

The other aspect of my improvement was crafting counterarguments in my writing. I came into this semester with very little experience in this area, presenting me with somewhat of a challenge. For our first blog post of the year, we had to create both an argument and a counterargument for the use of surveillance technology in response to the "Eye in the Sky" podcast. In an effort to thoughtfully write each of the arguments, I was forced to look objectively at the pros and cons of both the capability of such surveillance technology as well as some of the ethical issues it presented. Without explicitly taking a position on either of the arguments, I chose to first discuss the pros of the technology. Then, I used a variety of strategies in my writing

to demonstrate a counter to this argument. By starting with the phrase, “However, there is a clear negative argument of...,” I could set up the main claim. In this case, my claim had to do with the lack of “comfort that has resisted the urge from cities to agree to implement the system”. This cause and effect structure, reflecting a logos appeal, gave people a clear idea of the claim and the belief behind such an idea. It provided a logical reason, regardless of whether or not the reader agreed to the notion. I continued the counterargument by providing an emotional appeal to the claim, stating: “Many people fear that the cameras are too invasive and will cause a sense of uneasiness as everyday, innocent citizens will be spied on and will feel too great a sense of control on their actions”. By applying a pathos appeal, I developed a greater sense of interest from the audience. Those who believed in the claim or felt that it had some validity could sympathize with people’s fear of the project. Whether or not I believed in the counterargument, attempting to empathize with the opposing point of view allowed me to create an adequate argument.

The final and most vital aspect of my work this year was developing clarity in my pieces of writing. In order to accomplish this, I needed to develop a more structured and thorough writing process. By taking a step by step approach to my works, I was able to better track my progress and more easily determine where I needed to improve. The first step in this process was the ability to craft an outline that would “spell out” my thesis and topic sentences. This allowed me to more clearly see the progression of the essay and the actions I was going to take to further the analysis of my claims. After writing a draft, the most helpful step was reflecting on my work. Here I could see which parts of my content were unclear and where I could alter my phrasing to make my writing more sensible. In my reflection for my rough draft of my researched argument, I proposed a number of changes to my paper. I first discussed that

“While I am trying to argue a specific point throughout my paper, I am finding my analysis to be a little repetitive. I feel like I am using different words to restate the same notion that they all crave the same connection. Instead of using such generalizations, I would like to continue to further explore each of the character’s experiences and create more unique detail regarding each of the character’s individual experiences with mental health.”

By carefully analyzing my work, I could see that there were aspects of the content of the essay that could be bettered. In order to avoid repetition, I needed to attach more concrete, tangible statements from both other sources and myself. This, in turn, also helped me to create a more complete “researched” argument. I also mentioned in my reflection that “There are probably some areas where the language can be more concise and improved since I have not received an outsider’s perspective on my work at this point.” As a writer, I have often allowed my conscience to flow and put down words that directly come to mind, rather than to sort through my thoughts. This resulted in a lot of work that I could understand, but that remained unclear to another reader. I felt that my writing could be improved by finding these grey areas and being able to restructure my phrasing, making it more understandable. As I continued to draft, while I did not formally reflect on my work, my ability to track the progression of these improvements and to continue to find areas of my piece that I could enhance created more solid overall works.

Overall, this class was a really helpful way to transition into college writing. Not only have I been given a larger tool set for my work, but I can apply a lot of the same strategies that I learned to other areas of studies. I can more easily adapt to different writing styles, allowing me to adjust both my organization and formality within my writing. I have improved my ability to

summarize and have also grown my capacity to both detect and create counterarguments. This skill will not only enhance the overall quality of my works but will allow me to more clearly see controversial issues and claims from different perspectives. This will hopefully translate into more developed thoughts and a more understanding belief system as I continue to learn and grow as a student. Finally, my writing process has improved. I have learned the art of reflecting on my work and findings ways to improve both content and writing style as a result. This class has given me a strong base for my work and I look forward to improving my capabilities with further exposure to these skills.

Sincerely,

Noah Apter

## Literary Response Letter

Dear Diary,

Things have never been worse with my dad. Never. I'm afraid my family is really in danger. My mother is facing real abuse and suppressing the extent of the pain to try to make me happy. I'm not happy. Tears roll down my face as we finish each of our conversations. I can see through her facade. My sister is making matters worse by leaving and staying out of the house. It's my fault. I tried to escape my abusive past. She's trying to do the same, but leaving mom home in the meantime to face all the blame and guilt. I need to come home immediately to protect them. It's like the further I am away from my dad, the more he thinks he can get away with. I know deep inside how important I am to maintaining order and some happiness in my family. I have to go back to New York. Nowhere else. Not *with* my family, though. I want to live my life. But close enough to keep an eye on my mother and sister and an eye out for my dad. The problem is I don't know very many people in New York. It was hard enough getting away from my past, but now my connections are limited. Lenny is the only option. Ugh. I don't know how I feel about it. He keeps sending me these long messages about how much he loves my freckles and how he's going to cook me an eggplant. I might like him. I'll come back to this later.

I broke up with Ben. I couldn't handle the pressure of it. He is gorgeous, smart, and a rising star in Credit. All those things just make me so intimidated by him. I just feel small and unimportant in comparison. I want to let him into my mind and my heart, but I get sick to my stomach thinking about the way he'll judge me. Maybe I'm just afraid of all men in some way. Or all attractive men. Maybe, just men I think as authority or a higher standard. I don't know. It's probably my dad's fault and the lack of trust I have of him. I just feel like a mess. I feel fat,



disgusting, like a pitiful creature when I'm around Ben. I've been crying for days now. I just can't seem to find any happiness with him on my mind.

Back to Lenny: I think I like him. He may not have the best physical attributes, but he is sweet and he'll take good care of me. Maybe he is like the loving father, older figure I never had in my life. I feel safe with him. Comfortable. I can be myself because he is not the "perfect guy". The other day, I had a fantasy that I was having sex with him and just allowed myself to enjoy his sweet loving. I started breathing heavily, feeling his comfort wrapped around me and inside of me. I just relaxed and let the fantasy play out. I don't love him as much in a physical sense exactly, but his presence seems to make me feel warm right now. Like it just makes sense. When we were walking down this pretty street in Rome I noticed Lenny's shirt was buttoned all wrong, and I just reached over and re-buttoned it. I just wanted to make him seem a little more normal from a looks standpoint. But then, when he was talking to me at dinner, I just stopped listening to him and watched the way he moved his lips, his face. He was so EARNEST in the way he needed to tell me things. I've never felt that with another guy. He was like what Prof Margaux in Assertiveness Class used to call "a real human being." Honestly, I go a little back and forth on him, but he seems right for me now.

I'm going to come back to New York. I miss my family. I miss my best friend. I'll have to message Lenny. I'll wait until tomorrow though.

Sincerely,

Eunice Park

### **Reflection**

Although this diary contains the same general manner of speech in which Eunice communicates during her chats on her messaging system (abbreviations, capitalizations of

words, short, concrete sentences, insert words), I created a manner for Eunice to communicate a more-in-depth message. Here, she does not feel judgment, only listening. I want readers to feel that she is comfortable in that sense. Throughout the excerpt (pages 74-75), I removed much of context and excuses she portrays to her friend: such as pardoning herself for bothering her, for being a “downer”, and covering up her actual sentiments towards Lenny. Rather, she can simply spill the truth in respect to her fear and her thoughts on her romantic life. In its whole, a diary represents a free flow of words which allows raw, complete thought to be recorded. I used this idea towards the notion that she could develop reasoning towards her issues, rather than to suggest a problem and leave each one unresolved. She could instead ask herself questions such as why she left home in the first place, her reason for returning, and how personal and familiar struggles have caused her to struggle connecting with certain peers such as Ben. My weakness in this writing was the ability to enhance the level of emotional commitment towards the writing without changing from text-style writing. My strength was the manner in which I was able to create reasoning for her problems and find paths towards why she may or may not feel a certain way.

## Pecha Kucha Slides

1. Hello, my name is Noah Apter and I am presenting my Pecha Kucha on one of the opening pages for Sportscenter (under the ESPN corporation)'s "My Wish" episodes, which grants a Wish to a child who has or is currently suffering through a sort of life-threatening illness and or heartbreak. This specific episode reveals the story of a 10-year-old boy named Jailen.
2. My central argument is based on the idea that the heartfelt and genuine touch exposed in the opening page of the "My Wish" series creates a positive identity for the ESPN corporation and Sportscenter. This is accomplished by attracting greater support from viewership towards their favorable image. Now, how do they accomplish this feat?
3. For some context, Jailen's step-grandfather who had taught him how to play football and who was a die-hard Oakland raiders fan died of a heart attack. He was basically Jailen's best friend. Then at 8, Jailen was diagnosed with diabetes insipidus, causing frequent dehydration. The source was a brain tumor on his pituitary gland that required surgery at a young age.
4. Now healthy, his "Wish" is granted by spending a day with the Oakland Raiders football team, practicing with the team, getting his own locker, a personalized jersey, an autographed helmet, as well as assisting the coaching staff on the sidelines. Additionally, he holds his own press conference after the practice, sharing some knowledge and intuition about the team.
5. I'm going to start with the audience and viewership of this memorable TV series that airs every so often on Sports center to explain who would be watching this program and why?

Well, the answer is people like me. Sports lovers, fanatics, those who stay up late at night and wake up at the crack of dawn, eager to watch reruns of highlights and game analysis, regardless of their age.

6. From personal experience, the “My Wish” series was my absolute favorite part of the hour long episode of Sportscenter. Hearing the Rascal Flats rendition of the song ‘My Wish” and the shining front page sparked my eyes wide open. My emotions moved from near tears to joyous envy of the children’s wishes, starting right from the opening page.
7. Now, how does Sportscenter create such a heartfelt and genuine touch to this page? Let’s start with the Jailen’s expression and his eccentric ear to ear grin. Human interaction dictates the contagious effect of a smile in giving off a positive vibe. The simple act of smiling provides a responding feeling of joy and happiness as we are overcome by the radiance shown from others.
8. Furthermore, his eyes, watering and sparkling in joy truly lets us into his soul and the uplifting sense of spirit that he experiences. Overcome with excitement, his eyes are wide open to the magical sight he has been provided through his wish, spending a day with the Oakland Raiders: an experience he will never forget.
9. The next component that we are drawn to as an audience is the shining blue and white backdrop. These, peaceful colors draw a sense of comfort and solitude on the human mind. With these pigments, psychological thought directs are thinking towards elements such as water, waves, serenity, coolness, and reflection on life: all positive attributes
10. A personalized touch is then added through the cursive pronoun “My” which leads off into a shining star. This star adds a message of the specialty of this circumstance, as well as the notion of the wish coming true, this opportunity being his “shooting star” that he

wished upon, perhaps as he was searching for answers at a difficult time, demonstrating the magic of the situation.

11. The bold font incorporated to the word “Wish” adds a strong statement towards the power of this event and its lasting effect on Jailen. He is truly being given a sense of hope for a bright future in life. After spending years dealing with the pain of heartbreak, this represents an immense, impactful event on the road to full recovery.
12. A sense of true identity is then created through the incorporation of Jailen’s handwritten name under the “My Wish” logo. Through his autograph, he has given a stamp of approval towards the episode, saying this is my story and I approve: I am proud of this moment that I have been so graciously given.
13. These personalized aspects connected to the stamped Sportscenter logo within the opening page reveal a strong connection of the organization to truly help aid Jailen move past his hardships. It reveals great compassion on their part to interrupt regular programming to expose these impactful moments on a child’s life and well being.
14. Now how does this demonstration of genuineness attract greater viewership? ESPN, partnered with "My Wish" foundation, understands the focus of millions of Americans and billions worldwide to watch television and to utilize this medium and other devices such as smartphones, laptops, and tablets as their primary source for information, news, romance, and much of life in general.
15. While a great deal of social media networks such as Facebook, Instagram, Tumbler, Snapchat, and Yik Yak often find themselves filled with useless and sometimes damaging information, Sportscenter creates an argument that they can utilize such

moving stories and the technological foundation they have created through their network to create a positive outlook on themselves.

16. However, ESPN is often filled with filth similar to that of the mainstream social media networks. As it is well established, professional and amateur sports can often be brutal examples of violence and aggression. Prominent injuries such as concussions are very hot topics nowadays and has put the sports world under a spotlight, thus affecting its popularity in general.
17. These dangerous issues in addition to the violence and crime often committed by professional athletes, such as Aaron Hernandez, a former patriot's player now in prison for murder, demonstrates a strong sense of poor role-modeling. They create negative images on what sports are designed to accomplish at their core: creating enjoyment, leadership, and or a team effort
18. However, ESPN understands the power of the platform to change these potentially damaging views. Their branding on such moving, simple stories that retain the honest, emotional, pathos effect on the audience of changing a life demonstrates the positive view of sports. They clearly are portraying the fact that dreams do come true.
19. Jailen's story also provides a clear example towards the credibility and ethos ESPN and the sports world are able to deliver: good and sound moral values. These values resonate with the millions that follow the network through the various shows they deliver, mobile apps such as the picture of Derek Jeter shown above, as well as frequently televised sporting events.
20. Overall, there are some definite positives to technology and its ability to create stories that are genuine and thorough as argued by ESPN. The "My Wish" series takes the step

back to creating the heartfelt touch that we rarely are able to experience. It allows the viewers to watch in awe, to connect, and to vividly remember such touching moments.

## 21. Bibliography

## Blog Post 1

In the podcast discussion of “Eye in the Sky” technology, the podcasters highlight the capability of this, once restricted to military usage, camera system that allows a team, now known as Persistent Surveillance Systems, to rewind through time in order to solve crimes and target enemy groups. By sending undetectable, small planes into the sky with cameras for hours at a time, they are able to capture the entirety of a city and can trace the actions of every moving being within its limits. This system retained the ability to capture suicide bombers in the Iraqi war and trace the bombers movement to terrorist headquarters, as well as to shut down drug cartels in Mexico following stakeouts. The ability to analyze this footage can help lockdown city shootings, as well as robberies and large scale drug operations within the US to assist in creating safer neighborhoods. Additionally, in order to create a moral standard in defense of privacy the team refuses to upgrade the quality of the zoom on their cameras in order to preserve close-up detail of everyday normal life. Essentially, they are only able to detect movement through specs of color, and can see much less than everyday security cameras set up in the corners of every store and restaurant across the nation. They are looking to target real, dangerous crime that allow people to live with greater comfort and peace of mind

However, there is a clear negative argument of security versus privacy towards this technology and a duality of the notion of comfort that has resisted the urge from cities to agree to implement the system. Many people fear that the cameras are too invasive and will cause a sense of uneasiness as everyday, innocent citizens will be spied on and will feel too great a sense of control on their actions. Following incidents such as the NSA spying scandal through phones, there is a great lack of trust towards the government and larger-scale security agencies to be able to morally and justly handle these types of systems. Most people agree that bending the rules



such as staying out a little past curfew and sneaking out at night are adventurous and enjoyable aspects of life that mold us into more complete human beings. The fear resides in the idea that this sort of technology will destroy the possibility of normal, free living, if only because of the knowledge that it is there, right above their heads, at all times.

## Blog Post 2

Twenty and thirty years ago, acronyms such as “AFK”, “BFFL”, “YOLO”, “ROFLMAO”, and “TTYL” were hardly ideas that came to mind as full phrases. Instant messaging and texting were obsolete concepts, creating no use for acronyms such as “Away From Keyboard”. Many people had dear and best friends, but felt no reason to conceptualize it in 4 letters available to put next to a hashtag on an Instagram post (Best Friends For Life). People accepted the idea of *carpe diem* and living life to the fullest, but artist Drake had not yet coined a term that would be used in a large percentage of text and instant messaging conversations for teens (YOLO). The fact is, the acronyms, capitalizations, and phrases that are used with regularity in *Super Sad True Love Story* may not be as inappropriate, obsolete, or nearly as far-fetched as we may believe.

On page 88, Vishnu introduces the term/acronym FAC meaning Forming a Community. He states: “It’s, like, a way to judge people. And let them judge you. Essentially it’s a system that picks up blood pressure levels and “tells her how much you want to do her”. With the level of knowledge already available to the society about one another through the apparatus technology, this not-so far fetched idea caught on and was used several times by the group of guys in a matter of minutes. The same way our current society and culture ridicule such possibilities of connection and word usage, prior generations would have ridiculed our manner of communication and the types of phrases we have coined to create meaningless “shortcuts” in our everyday life. These acronyms and messaging concepts are simply the results of a more updated, faster, technologically updated culture that is not too dissimilar from our own.

## Blog post 6

Hale's key argument through the article "Constructing Connectedness: Gender, Sexuality and Race in Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein*" is the notion of pleasure. In the aspect of homosocial relationships, she portrays the idea that prominent male characters, including Walton, and Victor through both the creature and Henry Clerval, as well as the creature itself, exhibit a need and an urgency to find a man or a form similar to their own who can sympathize with them on an intellectual level and to balance and "perfectionate" them. In fact, they go as far to assume the perceived social roles of women such as caretaking and providing a level of intimacy or in the case of the creature, a lack there of.

Additionally, in promoting the concept of pleasure, Hale close reads the quote: "the gaze is the object in which the subject can see himself seeing himself" (14). Here, she moves past the romantic light to which a gaze often represents and into the notion of a mirror. More directly, she characterizes the transparent surface of the eyes as the ability for Victor to see his ego, his desire, and his conscious within another creature. In this case, he is looking upon the corpse of his dear friend Clerval and looking through the eyes of the mirror toward the creation of death, simultaneously imagining his relationship with life and death in the form of *his* creature.

Hale's explanation of the "pleasure principle" as argued by Sigmund Freud from the book "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" represents a strong use of a secondary source towards creating additional relevant information and adding credibility (ethos) towards her overarching argument through the work of a famous psychologist. She uses his principle to define the notion that all mental processes are concerned with "an avoidance of unpleasure" or in the same, but opposite notion, "a production of pleasure". She then uses this to characterizes the drive for

sexual desire and deprivation, as well as the creature's acts of murder to fulfill such needs of pleasure, be it sexually driven or not.

The term sanguinary (16) was unfamiliar to me and upon researching its definition through online dictionaries, I found its meaning to be "involving or causing much bloodshed".

## Blog Post 7

In the scholarly article *Moral and Myth in Mrs. Shelley's "Frankenstein"*, author M. A. Goldberg identifies topics of loneliness and isolation as she describes the morality of the central characters throughout the novel: Victor, the creature and Walton. In the case of Walton, he lacks an equal member of society who can provide him with a sense of compassion as he pursues his intellectual goals. He feels he retains no social connection from whom he can learn and from whom he can balance the one-dimensional perspective he previously contained. In a similar notion, Victor prior to his meeting with Walton felt a similar attraction to knowledge, curious towards philosophical principles and the hard sciences. This thirst towards his research, however, destroyed any remains of his social well-being through his scientific creation of what would be his servant or "shadow"-like creature. The creature demonstrates a similar theme, describing his pain resulting from the lack of attachment he was provided. The immediate abandonment from his creator and the clear difference/ uniqueness of his form placed him on an island to suffer alone for the duration of his existence. She argues overall that no character retains the ability to healthily function without connection and relationship.

In her article, M. A. Goldberg utilizes an excerpt from an 1817 Review of the book between Goodwin's Caleb Williams and Frankenstein, extending the notion of isolation of the individual, as well as themes of loneliness which contribute to the moral context of the book that she highlights in her own writing.

This article develops a lot of the same concepts I hoped to address in regards to the isolation felt by the three main characters as a result of their discoveries and the paths of life on which they have been guided. Under this main topic, the article also provides references to biblical stories and myths which provide strong correlation to the messages promoted in Mary

Shelley's Frankenstein.

<http://www.jstor.org.proxy.library.emory.edu/stable/pdf/30210049.pdf?acceptTC=true>

## Blog Post 8

One example where I quote from a primary source was in a discussion of communication from *Super Sad True Love Story*. I introduce the quote by providing context towards the text I am about to display, stating “On page 88, Vishnu introduces the term/acronym FAC meaning Forming a Community. He states”. After using the quote, I describe how this system of communication related to society and even provide a so what factor describing the use of similar phrases coined in modern society and how the progression of messaging is not that far off. However, I fail to fully explain the meaning of the quotation, but rather allow the quote to explain itself, as it does in a way, and continue to my further analysis. To fix this, I can use the template, “In other words, Shteyngart believes”, describing the quote by defining the system of FAC in other, more relatable terminology.

One example where I use a secondary source was in Blog Post 6 through integrating quotations from Hale’s article “Constructing Connectedness: Gender, Sexuality and Race in Mary Shelly’s *Frankenstein*” to comment on key concept of pleasure which she argues exists prominently in “*Frankenstein*”. In the second paragraph, I integrated the quotation “the gaze is the object in which the subject can see himself seeing himself” by stating “Additionally, in promoting the concept of pleasure, Hale close reads the quote”, demonstrating her purpose of the quote in promoting the notion of pleasure. I then analyze her quotation and her interpretation of the quotation to further my argument towards the meaning of her claim, introducing the analysis with “Here...”. In order to perhaps alter the sandwich I created I can change “Here” to “Hale’s point is that...” and then follow up with my analysis.

## Paper Proposal

**Working Title** - Frankenstein: The Effects of Isolation from Society on Psychological Well-being

In her book “Frankenstein”, Mary Shelley underlines the prominent role of society on an individual’s life and well-being. She argues that all three main characters struggle to survive in isolation, whether through their own doing or forced upon them as an imminent result of their creation. Walton, through his pursuit of knowledge becomes desperate for a compassionate member of society as he becomes aware of his lonely state of being. Frankenstein finds solitude in his passion for intellect, creating a wretched being that will inflict such a degree of harm that he loses his social circle of friends and family. He continues to isolate himself through seclusion from society by his own punishment, allowing the creature and its will on his own mental state to destroy him. The creature faces forced isolation as a result of his physical distinction from that of an accepted look of human life, becoming malevolent as a result of his lack of connection or sympathy from any member of society. Through this notion of isolation, I would like to create a deeper understanding of the manner in which individuals are able to and unable to exist without the presence of society in their life. Furthermore, I want to evaluate the manner in which compassion, sympathy, and affection from society or some member of society create pleasure and the potential for happiness in an individual’s life. My working thesis is that Shelley argues through “Frankenstein” that an individual’s connection or lack there of to a society retains an essential role on the psychological well-being of a person. This notion of the necessity of connection to the social realm was very prominent in Europe when Frankenstein was written as well as in our modern society. It is very important in a social structure of norms that govern our



behavior towards conforming to that of others expectations that people have a links or an attachment to some part of social life. Suicide becomes a prominent result of too weak of an attachment to any kind of group or, in the case of the book, self-destruction as a result of this reality for Frankenstein and the creature and near death in the case of Walton. In this paper, I will be using three scholarly sources which provide detailed analysis towards each of the character's isolation's and their need and or longing for affection in hopes of ultimate survival. In addition, I will be using an article from BBC online which discusses the theme of isolation, providing a broader perspective, but multiple different lenses, towards moments throughout the novel that resonate with the idea of solitude. Finally, I will be using direct quotations from the book as a primary source to create in my own analysis of the characters' development and destruction throughout the course of the novel.

#### Annotated Bibliography

Bernatchez, Josh. "Monstrosity, Suffering, Subjectivity, and Sympathetic Community in Frankenstein and "The Structure of Torture'" *Science Fiction Studies* 36.2 (2009): 205-16. *JSTOR [JSTOR]*. Web. 21 Oct. 2015. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/40649956>>. Josh Bernatchez in his article "Monstrosity, Suffering, Subjectivity, and Sympathetic Community in Frankenstein and "The Structure of Torture" discusses the manner in which "individual subjectivity" or the perspectives and feelings that are created out of a person's or, in this case, the creature's relationship with society. He argues that the distinction in physical appearance between the creature and the accepted view of humans isolates the creature him from any means of sympathetic connection during his

upbringing, both through the denials of any idea of community by villagers and Frankenstein alike, driving the him into loneliness. Through this article's focus on the evolution of the creature's awareness of himself as an imminent product of society, I can create a more profound analysis in regards to the various negative effects that are inflicted upon the creature's mental well being as a result of his forced solitude. The article will assist me in creating a more focused and descriptive view on the relationship between the creature and members of human society, as well as providing a more thought-out, careful reasoning towards his character's downfall into its ultimate, malevolent being.

"English Literature: Themes: Frankenstein." *BBC*. N.p., n.d. Web. 21 Oct. 2015.

<[http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/english\\_literature/prosefrankenstein/3prose\\_frankenstein\\_themerev4.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/english_literature/prosefrankenstein/3prose_frankenstein_themerev4.shtml)>. In this BBC article, the theme of "Isolation" in Frankenstein is defined by both the settings such as the massive, secluded arctic circle as well as to describe Walton, Victor, and the creature as victims of isolation whether through their own pursuits or at the expense of their creator. Walton and Victor isolate themselves as a result of their pursuit of intellect, Walton longing for true companionship and Victor falling victim to his own solitude by creating an essential weapon that will inflict permanent seclusion from society as a form of punishment, as well as the creature's isolation as a given to his physical appearance representing something completely distinguished and excluded from human society. I plan to use this article in order to create a general understanding of the evolution of each of their characters through their relationship with isolation and their attempt to move past such reality to find a notion of loving and sympathetic connection in their lives. The article will help to

provide a variety of aspects of the created isolation such as the use of setting to promote such solitude, as well as to examine the relationship between the three characters in their attempts to assist and impede each other's ability to find compassion from the midst of their suffering.

Goldberg, M. A. "Moral and Myth in Mrs. Shelley's "Frankenstein"" *Keats-Shelley Journal* 8.1 (1959): 27-38. *JSTOR [JSTOR]*. Web. 21 Oct. 2015.

<<http://www.jstor.org/stable/30210049>>. M. A. Goldberg, in the journal entry titled "Moral and Myth in Shelley's Frankenstein", highlights the conflict between the pursuit of knowledge versus compassion and sympathy from society in which Frankenstein, Walton and the creature all endure. Goldberg argues that as a result of these character's passions for intellect and knowledge, they have been ripped of the potential for social affection, exposing themselves to eminent solitude and loneliness in their own hellish forms. I plan to utilize Goldberg's analysis of the main character's malevolence and despair as an argument towards the gravity of the individual towards society as a whole. While it is not necessarily the case that such forms of connection remain necessary for the purpose of existence, humans and human-like forms must receive some sense of compassion in order to achieve happiness. This source enhances my purpose of demonstrating the negative power of isolation from the social realm on the basis of each of the three main character's lack of well-being throughout the novel.

Harvey, A. D. "'Frankenstein" and "Caleb Williams"" *Keats-Shelley Journal* 29 (1980): 21-27. *JSTOR [JSTOR]*. Web. 21 Oct. 2015. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/30212862>>. In comparing the novels "Frankenstein" and "Caleb Williams", author A. D. Harvey discusses the intolerable inner guilt and punishment that Frankenstein places on himself

after allowing his intellectual pursuit to lead to the destruction of his well-being and the physical death of his friends and family. While Frankenstein's deliberate isolation allowed him to achieve sharpness and clarity in his work, Harvey argues that this notion of solitude and isolation from his social life is that which also causes his suffering. I plan to use this journal entry to expand on my premise that isolation from society and the social construct negatively affects the mental well-being of human life. As Harvey proposes through Frankenstein's deep longing for his dearest friends that he will be punished by his ultimate neglect of those who provided him with sympathy, I can share a deeper understanding of Victor's deliberate self-destruction by the creation of his own death.

## Researched Argument Rough Draft

Frankenstein: The Harmful Psychological Effect of Isolation

“No man is capable, without the aid of society, of supplying his own wants; and those wants, acting upon every individual, impel the whole of them into society, as naturally as gravitation acts to a centre” (Goldberg, 34). Thomas Paine argues in his work *The Rights of Man* that our “wants” in life are based on values that have been constructed by society. As humans, we often believe that each of us possesses a unique set of morals and principles from the rest of our social group. However, all of our choices stem from overarching norms that dictate each of our behaviors. These often unspoken guidelines inform us the correct manner in which to act, to treat other people, and to relate to other individuals. Without these rules, social order would cease to exist. In return for following these routine customs, we become accepted into society and are able to both create and maintain connections to other individuals. These relationships provide stability in the form of comfort and pleasure, forming an individual’s positive overall well-being.

In Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, we learn of three main characters who failed to acknowledge this integral relationship to society. Rather, they suffered miserably as a result of their separation. Victor Frankenstein, originally finding solitude in his passion for intellect, created a wretched being that later destroyed his friends and family. His mental health then declined by secluding himself from society as a form of self-punishment. The creature faced forced isolation as a result of his distinguished physical differences and became malevolent in response to his lack of sympathy from humans. Walton, through his intense pursuit of

knowledge, grew lonely and eventually desperate for a compassionate friend. Isolation drove these characters to madness, if not also to death. Their stories argue that not only does a lack of attachment from social influence lead to a distorted view of acceptable and morally correct behavior, but that satisfaction is not possible in the long run without sympathy from others.

**Shelley argues through *Frankenstein* that an individual's physical and emotional connection or lack thereof to a society plays an essential role on the psychological well-being of a person, including his ability to find happiness.**

In *Frankenstein*, Victor was sent away from his native Geneva to Ingolstadt to complete his education. While anxious to leave his friends and family behind, he was quickly consumed by his studies of natural philosophy and then a greater focus on the hard sciences. Victor argues that "...in a scientific pursuit there is continual food for discovery and wonder. A mind of moderate capacity, which closely pursued one study must infallibly arrive at great proficiency in that study; and I, who continually sought the attainment of one object of pursuit and was solely wrapped up in this, improved so rapidly, that, at the end of two years, I made some discoveries in the improvement of some chemical instruments, which procured me great esteem and admiration at the university" (Shelley, 30). On one side, Victor's academic success demonstrates the power of the individual. Left alone with his thoughts, he could retain full capacity of his intellect and his ability, allowing him to pursue greater levels of creativity. In order to attain such success, however, he was forced to let go of his friends and family. He strove towards his passion with relentless, undisturbed force and received both knowledge and praise in return.

Nevertheless, Victor's scientific achievements simply do not reflect the isolated pursuit of knowledge that we are led to believe. On page 29 of *Frankenstein*, Victor describes his mentor towards his studies, stating: "In M. Waldman I found a true friend. His gentleness was

never tingles by dogmatism, and his instructions were given with an air of frankness and good nature, that banished every idea of pedantry. In a thousand ways he smoothed for me the path of knowledge, and made the most abstruse enquiries clear and facile to my apprehension” (Shelley). On his path to success, Victor needed a friend. He required guidance from another individual with whom he could relay thoughts, explain new ideas, and obtain suggestions for the proper books to study. Above all, Waldman accepted Victor’s passion for intellect. While much of Victor’s drive represented intrinsic motivation, he felt comfortable and determined to continue by knowing that he was on the “right” path. Additionally, the awards he gained from the university represent his strong appeal for recognition towards his work. He was once again reinforced by society for his great work, not by his own voice.

In continuation of his pursuit of knowledge, Victor then changed his main focus to anatomy. In an effort to fully uncover the subject matter, he secluded himself solely to his books and notes. In describing the intensity of his work, Victor explains that “... this discovery was so great and overwhelming, that all the steps by which I had progressively led to it were obliterated and I beheld only the result... learn from me, if not by my precepts, at least by my example, 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). In retrospect, Victor deeply regretted the suffering through which he forced himself. He was so consumed with his obsession that he ignored the sane vision he had been given for his studies. In describing these “steps” as “obliterated”, he hints towards the rejection of his original innocence as an eager student, and guidance from his mentor. Rather, he pushed through his research as he saw fit. As he progressed in his experimentation, he discovered the potential for rebirth: the ability to create a living being out of the dead. Victor, while amazed at

his own accomplishments, quickly detected the horrid mess which he had created. Additionally, by simultaneously bending the laws of nature and isolating himself from society for an extended period of time, his physical health dropped to dangerous depths. He was simply unable to bear the extreme burden that his work creation placed on him.

This nightmare which he had created, however, was far from over. As argued by M.A. Goldberg, “His labors have already denied him the sympathies of society in general; now, the monster succeeds in depriving him, one by one, of those whom he loves most dearly: first, his brother William, then innocent Justine, his benevolent father his friend Clerval, and finally...his betrothed Elizabeth” (31). Through his own work, not only did he abandon his cherished friends and family, but killed them off one by one. His pursuit towards unbounded science and experimentation lead him to create something so horrid and evil at its mere appearance that he immediately fled from his creation. Later hearing the creature’s tale, Victor acknowledged that much of the responsibility for the creature’s malevolence was his fault. In abandoning the creature after his birth, he also abandoned his work as a creator to nurture and care for his offspring. He could not, however, bring himself to accept such a creature as part of society, and deprived him of potential relationship or attachment. Victor faced the imminent guilt of his choices, driving the creature towards hatred which, in turn, resulted in his family’s systematic murder. M.A. Goldberg quotes *Frankenstein* on page 31: “His father had wished him ‘to seek amusement in society [but] I abhorred the face of man,’ *Frankenstein* admits. ‘I felt that I had no right to share their intercourse. Now, he reveals only the desire to avoid society’ and fly ‘to solitude, from the society of every creature’ (199-202). He is ‘immersed in solitude.’ For he perceives an insurmountable barrier’ between him and his fellow man... Though his inner-being longs for the compassion and sympathy that society affords, his guilt has already driven him out



of love's garden". Following his detrimental actions, Victor felt deserving of equal punishment to that which he had caused. Although he required consolation in his time of mourning, he refused to relive himself of the culpability and regret which he faced. Creating a "barrier" between him and society was the only way he felt that he could acceptably reconcile his crime. He understood the importance of moral support and comfort from society, but he would not allow himself this pleasure. Instead, his pain would accumulate and leave him disturbed and deranged. He grew obsessed with the dread of his creature and passionate for vengeance. While he eventually died from physical ailments acquired as he intensely chased the creature, his separation from society was the principle cause of his death.

While Victor's isolation was self-imposed, the creature was forced into his solitude. Immediately disowned at birth, he was left to learn language, speech, movement, and gesture by himself. Through modeling of other humans, he hoped to demonstrate socially acceptable behavior to society and gain their approval. On page 133 of *Frankenstein*, the creature confesses "My heart yearned to be known and loved by these amiable creatures; to see their sweet looks directed towards me with affection was the utmost limit of my ambition" (Shelley). The creature longed for a means to feel loved and appreciated. Just as Victor later realized, the creature understood that his happiness presided in the compassion that a mere friend could provide. However, with more knowledge of the social order and the learned understanding that he was in fact a "monster" by their categorization, the more he felt like an outcast. Multiple times he attempted to gain entry into this dominant society, finally determining that his rejection was imminent. The creature became enraged with cruel passion, referencing his powerful motivation: "'From that moment I declared everlasting war against the species,' he admits. 'I, like the arch-fiend, bore a hell within me; and, finding myself sympathized with, wished to... spread havoc

and destruction” (Goldberg, 36). His lonesome misery led him to cruelty. While the creature remained thoughtful at his core, his malicious actions reflected his last hope to connect to human society. His creator, Victor, further contributed to his corruption by not only detaching himself at birth, but also denying the creature a potential companion like himself with whom he could connect. As a result, his central motive was to create the same horrid reality of isolation for *Frankenstein* that he faced. Sensing regret and culpability towards his malevolence, the creature felt deserving of such suffering which he faced, and believed he too should die as ultimate punishment.

While desperately chasing the creature, Victor was rescued by Walton’s ship. He discovered Walton on a similar pursuit of knowledge to that which caused his own illness. In taking a dangerous trip to the northern regions of Earth in search of “eternal light”, where “the sun is forever visible”, Walton had left his sister behind. He wrote multiple letters to her regarding his state of being and the potential dangers he might face as the trip progressed. Most significantly, he discussed his search for a member of society with whom he could adequately connect. In finding this connection through Victor, M.A. Goldberg references that “this conflict – between his thirst for knowledge which increasingly carries him away from society and a thirst for social love which is frustrated by his pursuit of knowledge – appears happily reconciled” (29). While Victor’s presence temporarily solved Walton’s longing for sympathy, his imminent death causes the reemergence of this troubled situation. Victor attempts to warn him of the dangers that a path to such dangerous knowledge may create. He also pleads with him to maintain his link to society. He hoped that by explaining his failure to maintain his sanity, that Victor can convince Walton to return home and lead a healthy life. As solid ice formed around the ship, Walton came very near to death. Fortunately, the ice broke and Walton, although reluctantly,

decides to venture home. While his craving for discovery was left on hold, his potential for happiness and good survived, unlike that of Victor and the creature.

Overall, Shelley's *Frankenstein* demonstrates the essential existence of the social structure and maintaining the social order in which we live. Victor learned too late that he needed to maintain close contact with his support group of friends, families and his mentor. Instead, he lost his mind to an uncontrollable desire for knowledge and created such devastation that he could not allow himself the potential for pleasure. The creature possessed a good sense of the importance in finding a connection to a being with which he can relate. Denied, however, by his appearance and by his creator, his only option was to turn to malevolence. Walton craved greater understanding and intellect similar to Victor, but also grew hungry for a compassionate member of society as a companion. Upon receiving this friend, he was able to save himself from losing his sanity just before his impending death. His potential to find happiness was salvaged. These characters, while traversing very distinct and different paths, all create the same argument: Happiness, let alone the ability to function, can not be maintained without the involvement of society.

### **Bibliography:**

Goldberg, M. A. "Moral and Myth in Mrs. Shelley's "Frankenstein"" *Keats-Shelley Journal* 8.1 (1959): 27-38. *JSTOR [JSTOR]*. Web. 21 Oct. 2015. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/30210049>>.

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### **Reflection:**

The strongest element of my paper thus far has been my ability to incorporate very meaningful passages from the book, my primary source, as well as evidence from my secondary sources in order to further my analysis. These passages have helped to guide a great deal of my thought in regards to each of the characters and understand their individual relationship to society. My close reading of each of these quotations is evident and are all contextually appropriate for the sake of my intended argument.

On the other hand, there are some weaker points to my essay which I would like to improve. While I am trying to argue a specific point throughout my paper, I am finding my analysis to be a little repetitive. I feel like I am using different words to restate the same notion that they all crave the same connection. Instead of using such generalizations, I would like to continue to further explore each of the character's experiences and create more unique detail regarding each of the character's individual experiences with mental health. Additionally, there are probably some areas where the language can be more concise and improved since I have not received an outsider's perspective on my work at this point.

## Researched Argument Final Draft

Frankenstein: The Harmful Psychological Effect of Isolation

“No man is capable, without the aid of society, of supplying his own wants; and those wants, acting upon every individual, impel the whole of them into society, as naturally as gravitation acts to a centre” (Paine 58). Thomas Paine argues in his work *The Rights of Man* that our “wants” in life are based on values that have been constructed by society. All of our choices stem from overarching norms that dictate each of our behaviors. These often unspoken guidelines inform us as to the correct manner in which to conduct ourselves, to treat other people, and to relate to other individuals. Without these rules, social order would cease to exist. In return for following these routine customs, we become accepted into society and are able to both create and maintain connections to other individuals. These relationships provide stability in the form of comfort and pleasure, forming an individual’s positive overall well-being.

In Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, we learn of three main characters who fail to acknowledge this integral relationship to society. Rather, they suffer miserably as a result of their separation. Victor Frankenstein, originally finding solitude in his passion for intellect, creates a wretched being that later destroys his friends and family. His mental health then declines by secluding himself from society as a form of self-punishment. The creature faces forced isolation as a result of his distinguished physical differences and becomes malevolent in response to the lack of sympathy from humans. Walton, through his intense pursuit of knowledge, grows lonely and eventually desperate for a compassionate friend. Isolation drives these characters to madness, if not also to death. Their stories argue that not only does a lack of attachment from

social influence lead to a distorted view of acceptable and morally appropriate behavior, but that satisfaction is not possible in the long run without sympathy from others. **Shelley argues through *Frankenstein* that an individual's physical and emotional connection, or lack thereof, to a society plays an essential role on the psychological well-being of a person, including his ability to find happiness. In an effort to retain this pleasure, we must value human connection over the independent pursuit of knowledge.**

In *Frankenstein*, Victor is sent away from his native Geneva to Ingolstadt to complete his education. While anxious to leave his friends and family behind, he is quickly consumed by his studies of natural philosophy and, later a greater focus on the hard sciences. Victor argues that

“...in a scientific pursuit there is continual food for discovery and wonder.

A mind of moderate capacity, which closely pursued one study must infallibly arrive at great proficiency in that study; and I, who continually sought the attainment of one object of pursuit and was solely wrapt up in this, improved so rapidly, that, at the end of two years, I made some discoveries in the improvement of some chemical instruments, which procured me great esteem and admiration at the university” (Shelley 30).

On one side, Victor's academic success demonstrates the power of the individual. Left alone with his thoughts, he could retain full capacity of his intellect and his ability, allowing him to pursue greater levels of creativity. In order to attain such success, however, he is forced to let go of his friends and family. He strives towards his passion with relentless, undisturbed force and receives both knowledge and praise in return.

Nevertheless, Victor's scientific achievements simply do not reflect the isolated pursuit of knowledge that we are lead to believe. On page 29 of *Frankenstein*, Victor describes his relationship with his mentor at the university, stating:

“In M. Waldman I found a true friend. His gentleness was never tingles by dogmatism, and his instructions were given with an air of frankness and good nature, that banished every idea of pedantry. In a thousand ways he smoothed for me the path of knowledge, and made the most abstruse enquiries clear and facile to my apprehension” (Shelley 29).

On his path to success, Victor needs a friend. He requires guidance from another individual with whom he can relay thoughts, explain new ideas, and obtain suggestions for the proper books to study. Above all, Waldman accepts Victor's passion for intellect. While much of Victor's drive represents intrinsic motivation, he feels comfortable and determined to continue by knowing that he is on the “right” path. Additionally, the awards he attains from the university reinforce his strong appeal for recognition of his work. He is once again supported by society for his great work, not by his own voice.

In continuation of his pursuit of knowledge, Victor ultimately changes his main focus to anatomy. In an effort to fully uncover the subject matter, he secludes himself solely to his books and notes. In describing the intensity of his work, Victor explains that

“... this discovery was so great and overwhelming, that all the steps by which I had progressively led to it were obliterated and I beheld only the result... learn from me, if not by my precepts, at least by my example, 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).

In retrospect, Victor deeply regrets the suffering through which he forces himself. He is so consumed with his obsession that he ignores the sane vision he is given for his studies. In describing these “steps” as “obliterated,” he hints towards the rejection of his original innocence as an eager student, and guidance from his mentor. Rather, he pushes through his research as he sees fit. As he progresses in his experimentation, he discovers the potential for rebirth: the ability to create a living being out of the dead. Victor, while in awe at his own accomplishments, also realizes the horrid mess, which he creates. Additionally, by simultaneously bending the laws of nature and isolating himself from society for an extended period of time, his physical health deteriorates dramatically. He is simply unable to bear the extreme burden that his work creation places on him.

This nightmare which he creates, however, is far from over. As argued by M.A. Goldberg,

“His labors have already denied him the sympathies of society in general; now, the monster succeeds in depriving him, one by one, of those whom he loves most dearly: first, his brother William, then innocent Justine, his benevolent father, his friend Clerval, and finally...his betrothed Elizabeth” (31).

Through his own work, not only does he abandon his cherished friends and family, but kills them off one by one. His pursuit of unbounded science and experimentation leads him to create something that exhibits such a horrifying and evil appearance that he immediately flees from his creation. Later hearing the creature’s tale, Victor acknowledges that much of the responsibility for the creature’s spitefulness is his fault. In abandoning the creature after his birth,



Victor also abandons his work as a creator to nurture and care for his offspring. He can not, however, bring himself to accept such a creature as part of society, and deprives him of potential relationship or attachment. Victor faces the imminent and unavoidable guilt of his choices, driving the creature towards hatred which, in turn, results in his family's systematic murder.

M.A. Goldberg quotes *Frankenstein* on page 31:

“His father had wished him ‘to seek amusement in society [but] I abhorred the face of man,’ Frankenstein admits. ‘I felt that I had no right to share their intercourse. Now, he reveals only the desire to avoid society’ and fly ‘to solitude, from the society of every creature’. He is ‘immersed in solitude.’ For he perceives ‘an insurmountable barrier’ between him and his fellow man... Though his inner-being longs for the compassion and sympathy that society affords, his guilt has already driven him out of love’s garden” (31).

Following his detrimental actions, Victor feels deserving of equal punishment to that which he causes. Although he requires consolation in his time of mourning, he refuses to relive himself of the culpability and regret that he faces. Creating a “barrier” between him and society is the only way he feels that he can acceptably reconcile his crime. He understands the importance of moral support and comfort from society, but he can not allow himself this pleasure. Instead, his pain accumulates and leaves him disturbed and deranged. He grows obsessed with the dread of his creature and passionate for vengeance against his creature's actions. As a result, He chooses to intensely chase his creature in an effort to destroy him. On page 26 of *Frankenstein* and “Caleb Williams”, A.D. Harvey adds to Victor's quest for isolation, arguing that by “pursuing his creature into the ‘everlasting ices of the north’ he is merely seeking the ultimate solitude” (26). The remote setting represents an escape from Victor's hellish past.

Additionally, the sublime landscape reinforces the awesome power of nature over the individual, deeming Victor powerless. Frankenstein surrenders his life to the will of the creature by creating the adequate level of isolation of which he feels deserving. While he eventually dies from physical ailments as a result of his mission, his separation from society remains the principle cause of his death.

While Victor's isolation is self-imposed, the creature is forced into his solitude. Immediately disowned at birth, he is left to learn language, speech, movement, and gesture by himself. Through modeling of other humans, he hopes to demonstrate socially acceptable behavior to society and gain their approval. On page 133 of *Frankenstein*, the creature confesses "My heart yearned to be known and loved by these amiable creatures; to see their sweet looks directed towards me with affection was the utmost limit of my ambition" (Shelley 133). The creature longs for a means to feel loved and appreciated. Just as Victor later realizes, the creature understands that his happiness resides in the compassion that a mere friend can provide. However, with more knowledge of the social order and the learned understanding that he is in fact a "monster" by their categorization, the more he feels like an outcast. Multiple times he attempts to gain entry into this dominant society, finally determining that his rejection is inevitable. The creature becomes enraged with cruel passion, referencing his powerful motivation: "From that moment I declared everlasting war against the species," he admits. "I, like the arch-fiend, bore a hell within me; and, finding myself sympathized with, wished to... spread havoc and destruction" (Goldberg 36). His lonesome misery leads him to cruelty. While the creature remains thoughtful at his core, his malicious actions extinguishes his last hope to connect to human society. His creator, Victor, further contributes to his corruption by

“[denying] his Creature’s needs when he insists that there can be no community between them because the creature is fiendish and undeserving of compassion. Victor compounds the problem when he destroys the female companion, denying his creation an alternate community” (Bernatchez 208-209).

As a result, his central motive is to create the same horrid reality of isolation for *Frankenstein* that he faced: the absence of a social community. Sensing regret and culpability towards his own malevolence, however, the creature feels deserving of the suffering, which he faces. He believes he too should die as ultimate punishment.

While desperately chasing the creature, Victor is rescued by Walton’s ship. He discovers Walton on a similar pursuit of knowledge to that which caused Victor’s own illness. In taking a dangerous trip to the northern regions of earth in search of “eternal light,” where “the sun is forever visible,” Walton leaves his sister behind. He writes multiple letters to her regarding his state of being and the potential dangers he might face as the trip progresses. Most significantly, he discussed his search for a member of society with whom he can adequately connect. In finding this connection through Victor, M.A. Goldberg references that “this conflict – between his thirst for knowledge which increasingly carries him away from society and a thirst for social love which is frustrated by his pursuit of knowledge – appears happily reconciled” (29). While Victor’s presence temporarily solves Walton’s longing for sympathy, Victor’s imminent death causes the reemergence of this troubled situation. Victor attempts to warn Walton of the dangers that a path to such dangerous knowledge may create. He also pleads with him to maintain his link to society. Victor hopes that by explaining his failure to maintain his sanity, that Victor can convince Walton to return home and lead a healthy life. As solid ice forms around the ship, Walton comes very near to death. Fortunately, the ice breaks and Walton, although reluctantly,

decides to venture home. While his craving for discovery is left on hold, his potential for happiness and good survives, unlike that of Victor and the creature.

Overall, Shelley's *Frankenstein* demonstrates the integral existence of the social group and maintaining a strong attachment to other members of society. Victor learns too late the need to maintain close contact with his support group of friends, family and his mentor. Instead, he loses his mind to an uncontrollable desire for knowledge and creates such devastation that he can not allow himself to experience pleasure. The creature possesses a good sense of the importance in finding a connection to a being with which he can relate. Denied, however, by his appearance and by his creator, his only option is to turn to maliciousness. Walton craves greater understanding and intellect similar to Victor, but also grows hungry for a compassionate member of society as a companion. Upon receiving this friend, Walton is able to save himself from losing his sanity just before his own impending death. Walton's capacity to find happiness is salvaged. These characters, while traversing very distinct and different paths, all forge the same argument: Happiness, let alone the ability to function, can not be maintained without the involvement of society.

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### Revisions reflection

In order to create a final draft for my researched argument based on the book *Frankenstein*, I had to make a few key revisions in relation to style and content. To begin with, my rough draft lacked the necessary number of secondary sources in order to make the paper a complete "researched argument". While I included four different secondary sources in my paper proposal, I neglected to use all of them in my analysis. This error not only did not meet the requirements of the assignment, but made parts of my paper one-dimensional. To fix this mistake, I added analysis from two of my other secondary, while still maintaining the existing content. This addition created a more complete argument for my claims and allowed me to avoid generalizations in my writing.

My next set of revisions were style-related. One of the problems throughout my essay was that the verb tenses were switching back and forth between past and present. As I learned, literature is referred to in the present tense and this should carry throughout the entire essay as a means of attaining consistency. I went through the essay and fixed wherever I noticed this mistake.

Another issue I faced was using quotations and in-text citations in coordination with MLA formatting. I needed to use block quotes for two of the key passages I analyzed. In

addition, I neglected to put the page number after a quotation on some occasions and I frequently put a comma in between the author's name and the page number.