

Karol Oviedo

Professor Marlo Starr

English 181

Tuesday, December 15, 2015

Reflective Portfolio Cover Letter

Coming from a Spanish-speaking housing project in San Juan, Puerto Rico, expressing my thoughts and formulating my arguments using the English rhetoric is not very simple. I incorporate, unconsciously, some common Spanish idioms into my English compositions -- which is not rational. It is not until the Professor Marlo Starr points out my faults that I notice my error. Later, an assistant from the Writing Center explains that the best way I could prevent the errors thinking in Spanish and writing in English causes is by reading what I have written out loud. The process of reading what one has written out loud also includes revising sentences that sound incorrect either grammatically or content-based. Entering the course English 181: Writing about Science Fiction Literature and Film, I am able to develop certain skills that contribute to the evolution of my English writing. I am able to write in distinct genres like letters, Pecha Kucha presentations, research argument proposal with annotated bibliography, and blogposts. In these distinct genres I am able to summarize, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the ideas of others and produce my own arguments. But more than that, I finally understood that writing is a process and that one can never cease to revise, and edit a paper.

Outcome 1: Rhetorical Composition.

As a student of the course English 181: Writing about Science Fiction Literature and Film, I explore different genres as different modes of communication. These distinct genres range from a letter, to a Pecha Kucha presentation, to a research argument proposal with an

annotated bibliography. Each of these genres have their particular characteristics, purpose, audience, tone, and constraints. Allow me to walk you through. To be able to understand my difficulties while exploring these modes of communications, one must comprehend the modes of communications themselves. The Literary Response Letter is an informal media with the intention to communicate emotional and personal information with the purpose of exploring how individuals express themselves differently depending on the recipient of the letter. The letter has some constraints: it has to be two to three pages long, cannot bring new situations not included in the novel read in class, the tone had to fit the novel, and it had to follow the plot of the story. For instance, to express the protagonist of the book *Super Sad True Love Story*, Lenny Agramov, towards his beloved Eunice, I wrote:

"Dear Eunice,

Sorry to say this in this way but, I have been dead. [...] I swore I could acquire immortality, that I could endure life's greatest hits and hurts, yet I have come to the conclusion that in my fight for life, I had been dead all along. Every day, every minute, every second of my existence has the voice of Eunice imprinted. When I do gain the courage to write to you Eunice, my words don't convey what I really want to say.

[...]

Yours truly,

Lenny Abramov"

In this quote I am able to bring life to Lenny's subconscious by expressing his feelings to Eunice while maintaining with the constraint of remaining truthful to the book's plot. Also, I write this letter with the format that most letters contain: the salutation, the body, and the farewell with the author's signature. Contrary to the written letter, the Pecha Kucha is an, informal oral presentation that judges a particular topic with the purpose of exercising critical thinking, close reading, and presentational skills. The audience is simply the group of students in class and the instructor, but even though it is a small audience, even a Theater Studies Major like me gets

nervous. I incorrectly allow my anxiety take a lead in the creation and presentation of this Pecha Kucha. Below is a sentence from my Pecha Kucha reflection before my live presentation. This sentence demonstrates how I am mistaken. I believe that I am ready to present, when actually, my nerves rejects me:

"[...] the process of making this Pecha Kucha was full of misunderstandings from my part, frustration with the organization, the creation of a thesis statement, and the proximity of the deadline. Other than that, I feel prepared to present this Tuesday."

Besides learning that Pecha Kuchas are not very simple to present, I also learn that the tone of the Pecha Kucha is primarily persuasive, yet it depends on the topic the student wants to present. The major constraints in the presentation are the limit of twenty slides for twenty seconds each. In exchange, the research argument proposal with an annotated bibliography is a formal mode of communication where the author creates an argument they want to explore. The purpose of the proposal is to practice the writer's critical thinking skills while evaluating a topic. I take interest on how literature is so versatile that it also relates in an interesting way to the psychology course I am currently taking. In the psychology course, we are talking about the importance of happiness to every human and how one's desires could influence greatly other aspects of our lives. In my research proposal, I begin by explaining what I intend to do with this relation of the psychology of desire and the current reading of *Frankenstein*:

"'Detrimental Human Being Desires: an Approach to Address the Social Issues of Desire'

The effects of desire

This research attempts to answer whether the psychology of desire, as shown in *Frankenstein*, is detrimental to human beings. Even though human beliefs, desires, and intentions have proved to be positive drives to accomplish one's goals, these can also bring negative consequences which affect the author of the behavior and their surroundings. [...]"

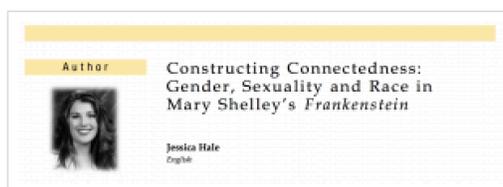
After reading this small exhibition of my proposal, one could notice that the audience is not limited to one person. The instructor, the classmates, and any other reader interested in this topic

compose the audience for this proposal. The tone tends to be persuasive while remaining in the constraints of two to three pages of a proposal and an annotated bibliography. In short, in this English 181: Writing about Science Fiction Literature and Film course I have been able to compose texts in multiple genres, using multiple modes that possess different characteristics, purposes, audiences, tones, and constraints.

Outcome 2: Critical Thinking and Reading Resulting in Writing.

As a student of the course English 181: Writing about Science Fiction Literature and Film, I delve into searching, reading, and inquiring scholarly works. With these scholarly works, I summarize, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the ideas of those scholars in order to produce my own arguments. An example of when I summarize a scholarly article is when I recap Jessica Hale's article on "Constructing Connectedness: Gender, Sexuality and Race in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*." My summary is located in the Karol Oviedo Post #6 presented below:

Karol Oviedo Post #6



In her paper "Constructing Connectedness: Gender, Sexuality and Race in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*," the college student Jessica Hale presents the interesting argument of the inarguable homosocial relationships. Her main point with this argument is that "the most intimate relationships on the novel occur not between husbands and wives, but between men and their male friends." (parr. 5)

Besides summarizing, I am able to adopt the writers' argument to either extend on what they have previously said or take an opposing position. In class, Professor Starr constantly mentions that writing is a social activity where different writers engage in conversations. I implement this idea to my 'Karol Oviedo Post #4' where I continue with the conversation of the dystopian society in the book *Super Sad True Love Story* by Gary Shteyngart. I say,

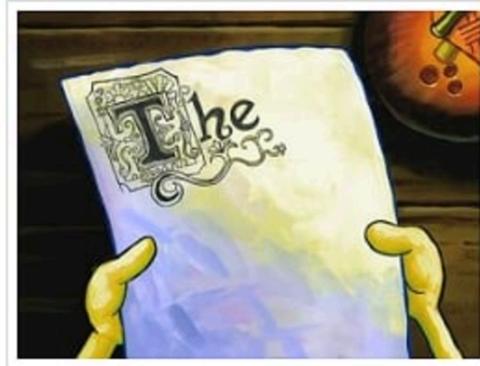
"[...] according to girls' behavior in this book, they have to receive respect by having their significant other be aware that they could have an affair with others also. To this day, that action is not deserving of respect [...]' This quote emphasizes how Grillbitch allows herself to be mocked. As a way of demonstrating she deserves respect, she decided to make herself look like she is surrounded by other men who are taking advantage of her. I contributed to this conversation by saying that this immorality comes from the dystopian society she lives in."

In the artifact above, I am able to not only summarize the occurrences of the section, but also provide an insight on my opinions about Grillbitch's behavior. In short, I am able to engage in scholarly inquiry in order to produce my own arguments.

Outcome 3: Writing as Process.

As a student of the course English 181: Writing about Science Fiction Literature and Film, I understand and practice writing as a process. As a consequence, I implement strategies of research, drafting, revision, edition, and reflection. I express my sentiment of this process when I wrote on Karol Oviedo Post #11,

Karol Oviedo Post #11



"There, I'm done!" says Karol as she finishes the first draft of her paper. "No wait, let me fix these typos first... does this sentence make sense with the rest of the paragraph... should I include more details to make my ideas more clear... should I replace this sentence with this one..." Finally, writing is a process. The moment where you, as a writer, feel that your final draft is complete, that is the perfect moment to return to your writing and improve it.

Writing is not very simple, but with much revision, one's paper could reach its fullest potential. In my first draft, I changed a few things to be able to submit a clearly written final paper for my research argument. Represented on the image below is my first draft with the professor's comments and the final paper with the edits made. This way, the evolution of my research argument is made.

First draft

Karol Oviedo

Professor Marlo Starr

English 181

Thursday, November 12, 2015

Researched Argument Rough Draft

"Detrimental Human Being Desires: an Approach to Address Hedonic Treadmill in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1831)"

Every man's enemies are his deep wishes. A painter who believes that once he creates his masterpiece, he will be extremely pleased will gather the white canvas, the paint, and the brushes to be able to create this masterpiece. He will press the colored brush against the pale canvas. Minutes, hours, days might pass by and he will be very engaged in the process of creating this painting. He will barely notice the amount of time he will in this masterpiece. He will apply the last strokes of paint on the canvas and will pronounce the words, "I'm done," with a tone of victory. He will sit on his chair and will observe his final product with a smile. As time proceeds, that smile will become a frown. This painter will notice all the imperfections of his once-beautiful painting. Then, he will not find satisfaction in the painting he spent a long time creating. Similar to this anecdote, Mary Shelley develops the book *Frankenstein* (1831), where the protagonist Victor Frankenstein experiences the roller coaster of emotions when he is done creating his monster. This wave of emotions is best explained by a term in psychology called

Marlo Starr 11/18/2015 6:50 PM
Comment [1]: Maybe condense and get to the novel sooner? In fact, I think it might lead in to your thesis better if you started by describing Victor's predicament.

Final paper

Karol Oviedo

Professor Marlo Starr

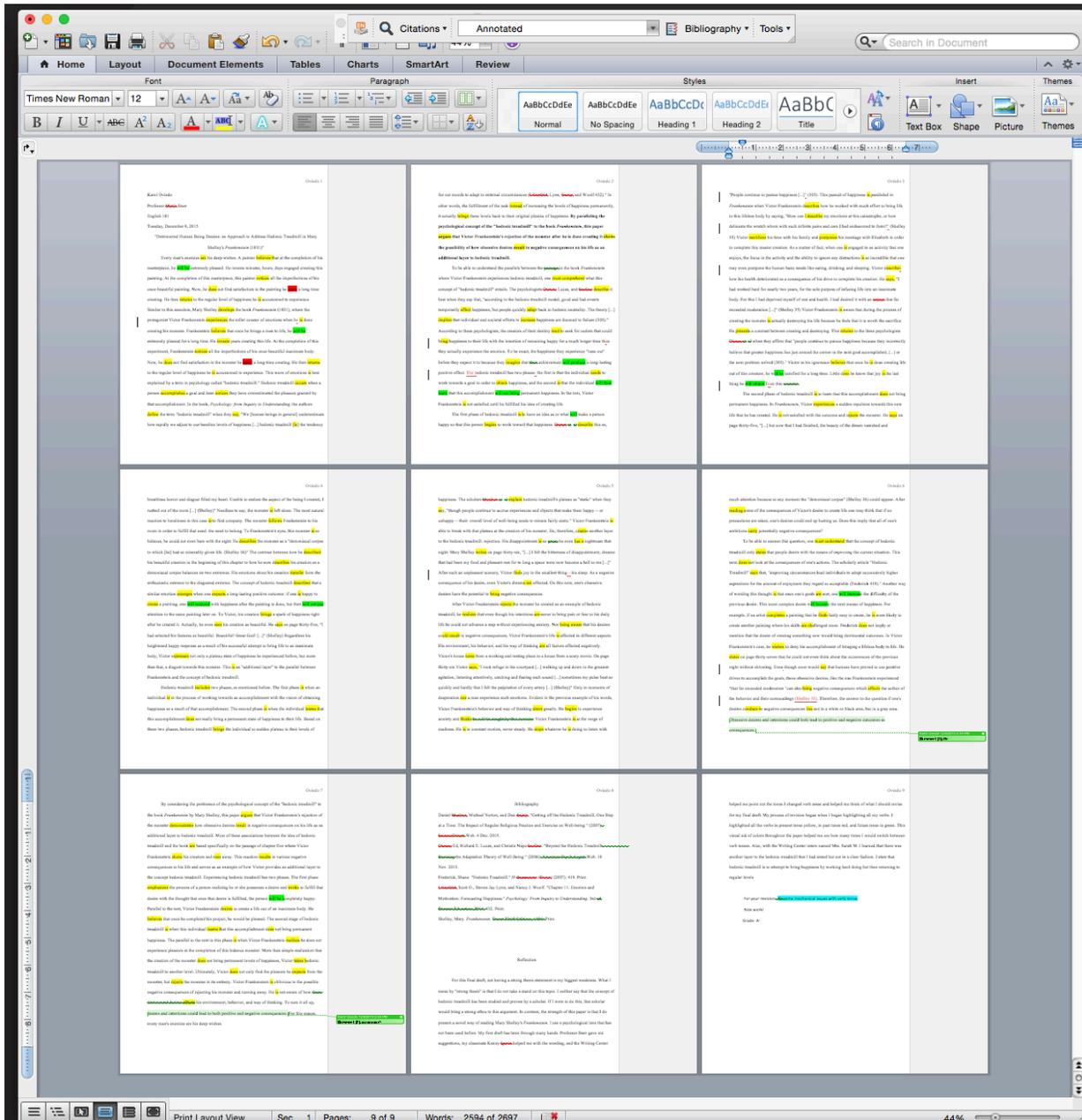
English 181

Tuesday, December 8, 2015

"Obsessive Human Being Desires: an Approach to Address Hedonic Treadmill in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1831)"

Every man's enemies are his deep wishes. A painter believes that at the completion of his masterpiece, he will be extremely pleased. He invests minutes, hours, days engaged creating this painting. At the completion of this masterpiece, this painter notices all the imperfections of his once-beautiful painting. Now, he does not find satisfaction in the painting he spent a long time creating. He then returns to the regular level of happiness he is accustomed to experience. Similar to this anecdote, Mary Shelley develops the book *Frankenstein* (1831), where the protagonist Victor Frankenstein experiences a roller coaster of emotions when he is done creating his monster. Frankenstein believes that once he brings a man to life, he will be

On the First draft image, Professor Starr suggests that I should condense the highlighted section in red to be able to focus the scope of the writing to the novel *Frankenstein* sooner. I agree with her suggestions and proceed to modify the paper. Also, Professor Marlo Starr notices that I tend to jump from one verb tense to another, so what I do to prevent this is to highlight all of my verb tenses and color code them. The verbs written on the past tense would go on red, present in yellow, and future in green. This is how it looks like:



The purpose of highlighting all of these tenses is to convert most or all of them into yellow (present tense). This technique does consume a lot of time, but it helps me personally. Therefore, I will adopt this for other courses. In the long run, understanding today that writing is composed of a series of processes that cannot, or should not be ignored, I implement the skills I acquire and develop such as drafting, revising, editing, and reflecting.

To conclude, writing is a personal challenge given that my first language is Spanish and I incorrectly tend to translate Spanish idiom to English. Most of the times, the translation becomes a complete disaster! This tendency impedes me from writing a complete and clean English piece of writing, but as I use some of the templates provided on the book *They Say I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*. Nonetheless, I do not allow my imperfections to dull my willingness to write. Entering the course English 181: Writing about Science Fiction Literature and Film helps me see the evolution of my writing. Writing in different genres, using different scholarly articles, summarizing, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating others' work has aided me to auto-evaluate my own work and produce my own arguments. The ability to understand that writing is composed of many steps, I feel more confident of my writing now than when I enter this course.

Karol Oviedo

Professor Marlo Starr

English 181

Tuesday, September 15, 2015

Literary Response Letter

FROM THE DIARIES OF LENNY ABRAMOV (based on page 97)

Dearest Diary,

If only I could write to Eunice true words from the heart, I would write her this:

Dear Eunice,

Sorry to say this in this way but, I have been dead. I was adamant that I would not die, that I had the perfect formula to build a protection against the evils of death. I swore I could acquire immortality, that I could endure life's greatest hits and hurts, yet I have come to the conclusion that in my fight for life, I had been dead all along. Every day, every minute, every second of my existence has the voice of Eunice imprinted. When I do gain the courage to write to you Eunice, my words don't convey what I really want to say. When I do write to you, I am very careful with my diction, I try to abbreviate some words the way you would, I sound indifferent. I write things like: "Oh hire there. It's Lenny Abramov. Again. I'm sorry to be bothering you. I teened you a little while back and I didn't hear from you..." But enough! I will tell you what I am going through. You, you who I met and let in without worrying about the risks I was bargaining. This is what I actually want to say: "My endless sun Eunice, it's your lover Lenny thinking about you. Again. I'm sorry to not have told you before, but I enjoy talking with you because you are my kind of women. I teened you a little while back and felt I had lost you because I had not heard

from you..." How I desire to culminate with this nonsense madness they call love. You will be my undoing.

You will never belong to an old man like me who gets rated a 120 out of 800 on FAC. One of the honorable actions I want to do on earth is to fulfill my Point No. 4: Care for Your Friends. As Joshie once said, "Good relationships make you healthier. And the point is not just being cared for, but learning to return that care." I had not seen my friends in a long time and decided it was time to give some care to this Point No. 4. My closest friends are Noah and Vishnu. I thought spending time with them would fill the void you left. But that was not the case. Eunice, I want you!

I was reading the other day in one of my books that love is one of the worst evils. It can cause your death. It has caused my death. Eunice, I would write to you about our night together something like: "I keep thinking about that night we spent in Rome, about every second minute of it, and I guess it's become like this foundation myth for me. So I'm trying to stop it and think about my job/financial situation, which is very complicated right now, and my parents, who are not as difficult as yours but let's say we're not a happy family either." What I really felt about our night together goes deeper than that simple thought. The night I was able to open the petals to your flower and smell its grace, I felt hypnotized so all I could do was possess it for the few minutes I could. I caressed your human blessing that makes you a fierce one. Oh, how I felt like a thirsty dog finally in front of a bowl of water... the water of life. Like this dog, I licked and licked my breath out. Now, I live no longer.

I lie. I don't want to stop thinking about our night to think about my financial status. That is just ideal thinking, but real life is nowhere near it. Oh, and my parents are a true disaster, but they are nothing compared to the pain you feel for yours. Eunice, allow me to hear your heart.

Grant me the trust I feel I deserve. I know your father gets unbearable when he is infuriated. And how terrified I would feel whenever his fiery eyes would allow his heavy hand to fall on my face. I know how it feels.

I miss you, Eunice. I miss your immature cries of "Shut up, Lenny!" And "You're such an idiot!" I miss the way you would judge me for not knowing how to brush my teeth. Well, I guess I have told you this before, but there would be no other women that could be my perfect wife if it is not you. Your freckles get me drunk. Each and every one of them is a drop of alcohol that messes with my consciousness. Oh, Eunice without you, I am no one!

Love,

Lenny

Diary, I cannot contain all of this that I feel. I wish to drown myself in the ocean, to rip my heart out of me, to be the cliff hanger and simply set loose and fall into the abyss. Why can't I just tell her? No, I should not. I might scare her even more and she could not talk to me any more. I cannot risk that. But maybe, just thinking to myself, maybe she could allow herself to give me a chance! I can imagine that maybe just the sense of her next to me would be enough. Maybe if she sat down and read books with me and debate on FAC together, and play with our äppärät and play with each other... But she is not with me, and that is why I say I have been dead.

Yours truly,

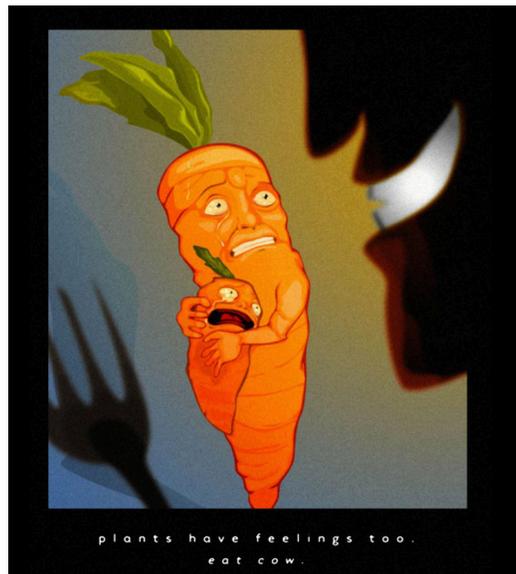
Lenny Abramov

Reflection

Lenny Abramov has much more to say to Eunice Park. What I have written is merely the introduction to an entire book of pain and love. I wanted to emphasize how Lenny feels. He is portrayed as the outsider in the entire story and it seemed fair for his character to be devoted

some words. The main rhetorical device used was pathos. The audience is anyone who knows how it feels to write something to the love of your life when you actually mean another. This verbal irony is torn apart when, in this writing, Lenny finally tells Eunice what he feels, when he felt it, why he felt it, and what he wants to do about it. To develop this letter, I made sure I myself was clear with what Lenny was trying to say on page ninety-seven of the book *Super Sad True Love Story*. Then, I began describing some of the instances Lenny experienced with Eunice and how it made Lenny feel. After that, I mentioned the family differences he has and encourages Eunice to not feel alone. I concluded the letter practically saying how Lenny would love to marry Eunice. The strength of this letter is how it describes in detail Lenny's heart, but the main weakness is that I did not abound in the logos or in the ethos of rhetorical triangle. I enjoyed impersonating Lenny for three hours. One thought is certain: I would not want to be him.

Pecha Kucha



"Pecha Kucha Reflection/Rationale"

In life, one has to be driven by a purpose in everything one desires to do. Therefore, the purpose of my presentation is to convey the darkness of my artifact while presenting the idea that no matter if plants hurt or not, it is not a sufficient argument as to continue eating animals, even though the author does not really care about this, he only created his post for the sake of a joke. In that thought, I want to get the audience engaged in my thesis to then destroy their entire mentality by saying that the author was only joking. In the creation of the presentation, I had to have an idea of how I wanted to outline the information. In fact, in the organization is where I feel that I lack strength because everything is very correlated, making my presentation be weak and at times repetitive. Nonetheless, the strength like engaging images included in the presentation. Overall, the process of making this Pecha Kucha was full of misunderstandings from my part, frustration with the organization, the creation of a thesis statement, and the proximity of the deadline. Other than that, I feel prepared to present this Tuesday.

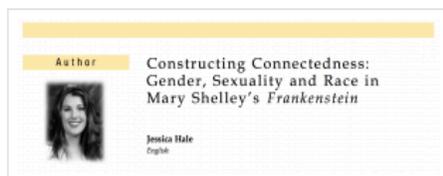
Karol Oviedo Post #4

In the book *Super Sad True Love Story*, the author incorporates various scenes that appear to be dystopian flashes his piece of literature. An example of these scenes is provided on page 146 when Grillbitch is writing to Euni-Tard about her depression. She says the main cause of her sadness is that her boyfriend Gopher is having an affair "with this Mexican betch that I saw blowing him, and then I figured out his password on Teens..." The dystopic aspect about his scene is how Grillbitch handles the situation. Usually, women will stay silent of their knowledge and make her guilty partner blur out some evidence that she could use against him. Other times, women take their partner's phone with or without their permission and begin to search the messages and the phone calls. Then, they would ask the typical questions: who is this number, why were you talking for so long with this person, why does your shirt have lipstick stains, why did you come home so late last night, etc. On the other hand, the author Gary Shteyngart plays a twist on this situation and makes Grillbitch say the following, "I went on this new Teens site called 'D-Base' where they can digitize you like covered in shit or getting fucked by four guys at once and I sent Gopher all these Images of myself getting fucked by four guys at once." According to girls' behavior in this book, they have to receive respect by having their significant other be aware that they could have an affair with others also. To this day, that action is not deserving of respect. Actually, Grillbitch could be despised by society today for not respecting herself and her dignity.

This image (taken from pixabay.com) demonstrates a vivid image of an affair where the girl behind the wall could represent Grillbitch and the man could represent Gopher having an affair with the Mexican girl.



Karol Oviedo Post #6



In her paper "Constructing Connectedness: Gender, Sexuality and Race in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*," the college student Jessica Hale presents the interesting argument of the inarguable homosocial relationships. Her main point with this argument is that "the most intimate relationships on the novel occur not between husbands and wives, but between men and their male friends." (parr. 5)

Jessica Hale has these exemplary sections of the passage that undoubtedly support her argument of the presence of homosocial relationships. One of the close readings of the passage from *Frankenstein* is "many a long were the conversations between Lord Byron and Shelley to which I was a devout but nearly a silent listener." (xxiv) The author uses this passage to describe that probably, Mary Shelley's experience seeing Lord Byron and Shelley "provided material" (parr. 5) for the proclaimed homosocial interactions in *Frankenstein*.

Besides referencing her primary source, which in this case is the text *Frankenstein* itself, Jessica Hale uses secondary sources. She explained Berthold Schoene-Harwood's perspective when she quotes, "the predicament of the individual male psyche under patriarchal pressure." (parr. 5) The purpose of this secondary source was to describe, using evidence, that the pressure Victor flees is "the role of a husband and father providing for and perpetually tied to a nuclear family." (parr. 5)

In the very first sentence of this literary study, Jessica Hale uses the term "encroached." As an English language learner, one cannot refuse to search up the dictionary for the definition. Not possessing a physical dictionary, accessing the web in "dictionary.reference.com," the definition of encroached in my own words is to be able to go beyond the limits the environment establishes.

To recap, Jessica Hale empowers a main argument which she evidences with close reading and utilizes secondary sources and appropriate terms in order to voice her points.

This entry was posted in [Student Posts](#) by [koviedo](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#).

Karol Oviedo Post #7

Link of the article: <http://jhp.sagepub.com/content/41/4/57.full.pdf+html>

"Making Daemons of Death and Love: Frankenstein, Existentialism, Psychoanalysis"

By Will W. Adams, Psychologist

Summary of the author's argument:

Both existentialism and psychoanalysis play a huge role in the creation and development of the characters in the book *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley. The reader might take note of the topics such as death-repression, the return of the repressed and the daemonic. In *Frankenstein*, the Mary Shelley challenges death (in the living creature Victor Frankenstein has created), love (in the isolation Victor faces), nature (in how Victor evades it), and spirit (in the alterations of real spiritual encounters). The author Mary Shelley was able to channel her conflicts and desires into an everlasting book.

Critic:

The author Will W. Adams uses Rollo May (1969)'s observation that "The daemonic "is potentially creative and destructive at the same time" (Adams 62) In this case, the author is extending what the critic Rollo May suggested. He affirms that "daemonic energy is available for us to take up, respond to, and channel as best we can." He suggests that the manner in which a person reacts to the presence or the idea of a daemon will affect the outcome of the behavior of that daemon. Will W. Adams says, "If we respond with openness and understanding, then our daemons tend to be integrated as benevolent, creative, energetic guides to transformation and health. But if we react with defensive avoidance, they tend to appear as malevolent, destructive sources of suffering."

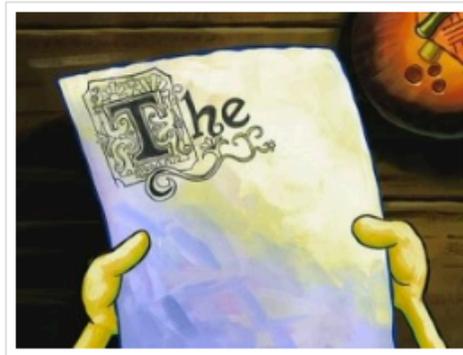
Develop an angle for your own paper:

I would like to explore the identity of both the narrator Victor Frankenstein and his monster using this article to help me develop a psychoanalysis. By extending, or sometimes refuting, on what the author Will W. Adams portrays in his research, I will be able to formulate my own opinions and have them backed up by other researchers.

In other words, Will W. Adams will aid me to engage in the conversation he forms part of when it comes to the identity and psychoanalysis in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

This entry was posted in [Student Posts](#) by [koviedo](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#).

Karol Oviedo Post #11



"There, I'm done!" says Karol as she finishes the first draft of her paper. "No wait, let me fix these typos first... does this sentence make sense with the rest of the paragraph... should I include more details to make my ideas more clear... should I replace this sentence with this one..." Finally, writing is a process. The moment where you, as a writer, feel that your final draft is complete, that is the perfect moment to return to your writing and improve it.

Writing is a challenge given that my first language is Spanish and I constantly translate my ideas from Spanish to English. Most of the time this works, but other times it is a complete disaster! Spanish idioms are completely different from English idioms. This difference impedes me from completing a clean English piece of writing. Nonetheless, I do not allow my imperfections to dull my willingness to write. In class, Professor Starr constantly mentions that writing is a social activity where different writers engage in conversations. I implemented this idea to my "Karol Oviedo Post #4" where I continue with the conversation of the dystopian society in the book *Super Sad True Love Story* by Gary Shteyngart. I say, "according to girls' behavior in this book, they have to receive respect by having their significant other be aware that they could have an affair with others also. To this day, that action is not deserving of respect [...]" This quote emphasizes how Grillbitch allows herself to be mocked. As a way of demonstrating she deserves respect, she decided to make herself look like she is surrounded by other men who are taking advantage of her. I contributed to this conversation by saying that this immorality comes from the dystopian society she lives in.

Another way to look at how writing is a conversation is when one is discussing the reading. The most imperative deed when engaging in a group discussion is to listen to what others have to say in order to react to it. If one does not listen, the conversations will remain one-sided.

Karol Oviedo Post #10

Reflect on your past writing:

On my past writing in general, I tried to generate an inverted pyramid of importance. The first sentence would place a general idea that would leave the readers curious. This curiosity would leave the reader with a desire to read the entire first paragraph — and hopefully the entire paper. Then, I tried to develop a description for the topic and end with the thesis statement. My idea of the structure is set, but my difficulty is bringing that idea to reality. As to the my conclusions in past writing, I tried to restate the thesis and present the points I mentioned in the writing that explained and supported my thesis.

A piece of writing:

"Multiple Personality Murder" by Deborah Karczewski

This monologue, for the sole purpose of a clear theatrical structure, is written with clear annotations noted throughout the play. Focusing on the introduction, the author uses the chronological system of organization to allow the reader follow on her flow of words. She guides the reader through the setting of the place by providing a spatial description of the room and represented each movement as parallel as possible with each word the character would utter. This is an example of her spatial description, "The first is her 'guard' beside her, and the second is the 'psychiatrist,' placed eye level beyond the audience..." This quotes offers both the location of the actress and the location of the imaginary psychiatrist and guard. After this spatial description, the author proceeds with the play. She creates a character that has multiple personalities. Each personality contributes to what will happen later in the plot, but the author does not explicitly say what will occur as the monologue advances because she wants to hook the reader. Personally, I would like to incorporate her diction to attract the attention of my readers with a nice hook.

Karol Oviedo Language is Alive poetry reading



My response to this sparkful night is in verse
Because in verse is how the curse
Is able to disperse and the nurse
named Translator can cure
This pure and at times obscure
Words that flow free as birds

Language
You are the one to blame
And the one to thank

I blame you for not being enough
I thank you for allowing the tough
Task of communication
So diverse and converse
So great and limited
So spacious and narrow

Dear Language,
You have many last names
Sir English and Mother Spanish
From one to the other poetry goes
As a boat stranded at sea
From one to the other words flow
Sometimes losing its essence
From one to the other language grows
Sometimes losing its melody
From one to the other glows
Sparkle, dull, soft and numb
Yet always preserving its purpose

Language, altered throughout time
What a crime to be the spine of
All the vice that once sublime
And lost in the climb of a pine
Sometimes losing the prime
Desire to comply with your own shine

My response to this night is in rhyme
Because in rhyme we could
Taste the sweet lemon of words
Smell the aromatic black print
Touch the paper in tears
Hear the beat of letters
See the author's heart

Karol Oviedo

Professor Marlo Starr

English 181

Tuesday, October 27, 2015

Paper Proposal and Annotated Bibliography

"Detrimental Human Being Desires: an Approach to Address the Social Issues of Desire"

The effects of desire

This research attempts to answer whether the psychology of desire, as shown in *Frankenstein*, is detrimental to humans beings. Even though human beliefs, desires, and intentions have proved to be positive drives to accomplish one's goals, these can also bring negative consequences which affect the author of the behavior and their surroundings. The significance of understanding the psychology of desire comes form the consequence of how the person committing the behavior could be affected as well as the conditions around that person. To be able to demonstrate the negative relations between desire and the social interactions, I will use the book *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley as a primary resource. I will include scholarly articles that will serve as reliable sources to describe the psychology of desire, and other secondary resources with important historical figures that have contributed to the importance of desire and its consequences to the human race.

The effects of desire: Annotated Bibliography

Fairweather, Nicholas. "Hitler and Hitlerism: A Man of Destiny." *Atlantic* 2015. Web. 26 Oct. 2015.

In this magazine entry, the author intends to annotate in Adolf Hitler's own words what he was intending to do with his Nazi party, what he was defending with the mass genocide, and how he controlled so many people with his power. The author of this magazine entry Nicolas Fairweather summarizes Hitler's agenda in ten points.

This magazine entry has a level of bias, understandable for the type of source it comes from. I intend to associate the psychology of desire and its possible negative effects on the surroundings with Adolf Hitler. I especially want to focus on how Adolf Hitler's belief-desire-intention plays a huge role to the downgrade of an entire group of people.

Genzlinger, Neil. "Shaping His Genius to Transform Everyday Life." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 26 Jan. 2015. Web. 27 Oct. 2015.

This newspaper article recognizes the great influence that was Thomas A. Edison and how his inventions are still used today.

This source seems to be bias, but given it is a newspaper article the author's objectivity is not at the maximum level. I plan to use this source to be able to provide evidence for my counter argument. My counter argument would be that desire, beliefs, and intentions most of the times do not have a negative effect and Thomas A. Edison is exemplary to represent that idea.

Martinez, Michael. "Cheating Arises from Desires, Incentives, Pressures - CNN.com." *CNN*. Cable News Network, 18 Jan. 2013. Web. 25 Oct. 2015.

The article focuses on how people are dishonest as a consequence of desires and incentives such as pressures on careers, family, or personal wishes.

This article seems to be a reliable source to explain how one's desires causes one to even take the "wrong" decisions when it comes to ethics. This source seems to fit in well, especially since the article has examples on general situations we humans face where we tend to cheat without even noticing.

Nadelhoffer, Thomas. "Desire, Foresight, Intentions, and Intentional Actions: Probing Folk Intuitions." *Journal of Cognition and Culture* 6.1-2 (2006): 133-57. Print.

Philosophers have conducted empirical studies aimed at proving intuitions. In the search in general, the author discusses how some experiments examine intuitions about the relationship between desire, foresight, intent, intentional action, and moral considerations.

I plan to incorporate this scholarly resource in order to provide another view of desire -- through the philosopher's and psychologist's perspective. Also, this article aids me to thoroughly discover the psychology behind desire.

Rao, Anand S., and Michael P. Georgeff. "BDI Agents: From Theory to Practice." *Proceedings of the First International Conference on Multiagent Systems ICMAS-95* (1995): 312-19.

Print.

The paper possesses abundant information about the rational agent Belief-Desire-Intention (BDI) agent and sees the management application in light of both theoretical and implementation perspective.

I plan to incorporate this scholarly resource by extracting its information about the belief-desire-intention and extending on what it provides. Celebrating the higher level of

objectivity, mainly, this source will provide with the basis of how humans use desires to predict behavior or view the behavior and try to predict the intentions.

Karol Oviedo

Professor Marlo Starr

English 181

Thursday, November 12, 2015

Researched Argument Rough Draft

"Detrimental Human Being Desires: an Approach to Address Hedonic Treadmill in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1831)"

Every man's enemies are his deep wishes. A painter who believes that once he creates his masterpiece, he will be extremely pleased will gather the white canvas, the paint, and the brushes to be able to create this masterpiece. He will press the colored brush against the pale canvas. Minutes, hours, days might pass by and he will be very engaged in the process of creating this painting. He will barely notice the amount of time he will in this masterpiece. He will apply the last strokes of paint on the canvas and will pronounce the words, "I'm done," with a tone of victory. He will sit on his chair and will observe his final product with a smile. As time proceeds, that smile will become a frown. This painter will notice all the imperfections of his once-beautiful painting. Then, he will not find satisfaction in the painting he spent a long time creating. Similar to this anecdote, Mary Shelley develops the book *Frankenstein* (1831), where the protagonist Victor Frankenstein experiences the roller coaster of emotions when he is done creating his monster. This wave of emotions is best explained by a term in psychology called "hedonic treadmill." In the book, *Psychology: from Inquiry to Understanding*, the authors define the term "hedonic treadmill" when they say, "We [human beings in general] underestimate how rapidly we adjust to our baseline levels of happiness [...] hedonic treadmill [is] the tendency for our moods to adapt to external circumstances (Lilienfeld, Lynn, Namy, and Woolf 432)." These

authors explain that hedonic treadmill occurs when a person accomplishes a goal and later notices they have overestimated the pleasure granted by that accomplishment. In other words, the fulfillment of the task instead of increasing their happiness permanently actually brought them back to their original state of happiness. **By applying the psychological concept of the "hedonic treadmill" to *Frankenstein*, this paper argues that Victor Frankenstein rejects the monster after he is done creating it, which shows the possibility of negative consequences on his life as a result of ignorance.**

To be able to understand the parallels between the passage in the book *Frankenstein* where Victor Frankenstein experiences hedonic treadmill, one must comprehend what this concept of "hedonic treadmill" entails. The psychologists Diener, Lucas, and Scollon describe it best when they say that, "according to the hedonic treadmill model, good and bad events temporarily affect happiness, but people quickly adapt back to hedonic neutrality. The theory [...] implies that individual and societal efforts to increase happiness are doomed to failure (305)." According to these psychologists, the creators of their destiny tend to seek for outlets that could bring happiness to their life with the intention of remaining happy for a much longer time than they actually experience the emotion. To be exact, the happiness they experience "runs out" before they expect it to because they imagine that their achievement will produce a long-lasting positive effect. The hedonic treadmill has two phases: the first is that the individual needs to work towards a goal in order to obtain happiness, and the second is that the individual will then learn that this accomplishment will not bring permanent happiness. In the text, Victor Frankenstein would not be satisfied until he fulfilled his idea of creating life.

The first phase of hedonic treadmill was to have an idea as to what will make a person happy and then this person will begin to work toward that happiness. The three psychologists

referred to this as, "People continue to pursue happiness [...]" (Diener, Lucas, and Scollon 305).

This pursuit of happiness is paralleled in *Frankenstein* when Victor Frankenstein describes how he worked with much effort to bring life to this lifeless body by saying, "How can I describe my emotions at this catastrophe, or how delineate the wretch whom with such infinite pains and care

I had endeavored to form?" (Shelley 35) Victor had sacrificed his time with his family and

postponed his marriage with Elizabeth in order to complete this master creation. As a matter of fact, when one is engaged in an activity that one enjoys, the focus in the activity and the ability to block other sounds is so incredible that one may even postpone the human basic needs like

eating, drinking, and sleeping. Victor describes how his health deteriorated as a consequence of his drive to complete his creation. He says, "I had worked hard for nearly two years, for the sole purpose of infusing life into an inanimate body. For this I had deprived myself of rest and health.

I had desired it with an ardour that far exceeded moderation [...]" (Shelley 35)" Victor

Frankenstein was aware that during the process of creating the monster he was actually

destroying his life. He presents a contrast between creating and destroying. This returns to the three psychologists Diener, Lucas, and Scollon, when they say that "People continue to pursue happiness because they incorrectly believe that greater happiness lies just around the corner in the next goal accomplished, [...] or the next problem solved (305)." Victor in his ignorance

believed that once he was done creating life out of this creature, he would be satisfied for a long time. Little did he know that joy was the last thing he would obtain from this monster.

The second phase of hedonic treadmill was to learn that this accomplishment will not bring permanent happiness. In *Frankenstein*, Victor experiences a sudden repulsion towards this new life that he has created. He is not satisfied with the outcome and rejects the monster. He says on page thirty-five, "[...] but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished and

breathless horror and disgust filled my heart. Unable to endure the aspect of the being I created, I rushed out of the room [...] (Shelley)" Needless to say, the monster was left alone. The most natural reaction to loneliness in this case is to find company. The monster follows Frankenstein to his room in order to fulfill that need: the need to belong. To Frankenstein's eyes, this monster was so hideous, he could not even bare with the sight. He describes the monster as a "demoniacal corpse to which [he] had so miserable given life. (Shelley 36)" The contrast between how he described his beautiful creation in the beginning of this chapter to how he now describes his creation as a demoniacal corpse balances on two extremes. His emotions about his creation transfer form the enthusiastic extreme to the disgusted extreme. The concept of hedonic treadmill describes that a similar emotion would emerge when one expects a long-lasting positive outcome: if one is happy to created a painting, one will respond with happiness after the painting is done, but then will not pay attention to the same painting later on. To Victor, his creation did not even bring a spark of happiness right after he created it. His disappointment was so great, he even had a nightmare that night. Mary Shelley writes on page thirty-six, "[...] I felt the bitterness of disappointment; dreams that had been my food and pleasant rest for to long a space were now become a hell to me [...]" After such an unpleasant scenery, Victor would find joy in the smallest thing—his sleep. As a negative consequence of his desire, even Victor's dreams were affected.

On this note, one's desires could bring negative consequences.

After Victor Frankenstein rejects the monster he created as an example of hedonic treadmill, he realizes that even though his intentions were never to bring pain or fear to his daily life he could not advance a step without experiencing anxiety. Not being aware that his desires could result in negative consequences, Victor Frankenstein's life were effected in different aspects. His environment, his behavior, and his way of thinking were all factors affected

negatively. The environment turned from a working and resting place to a house from a scary movie. On page thirty-six Victor says, "I took refuge in the courtyard [...] walking up and down in the greatest agitation, listening attentively, catching and fearing each sound [...] sometimes my pulse beat so quickly and hardly that I felt the palpitation of every artery [...] (Shelley)" Only in moments of desperation can a man experience such emotions. Evident in the previous example of his words, Victor Frankenstein's behavior and way of thinking altered greatly. He began to experience anxiety and think he will be caught by this monster. Victor Frankenstein was at the verge of madness. He was in constant motion, never steady. He would stop whatever he was doing to listen with much attention because at any moment the "demoniacal corpse" (Shelley 36) could appear. After reading some of the consequences of Victor's desire to create life one may think that if no precautions are taken, one's desires could end up hurting us. Does this imply that all of one's desires carry negative consequences?

To be able to answer this question, one must understand that the concept of hedonic treadmill only states that people desire with the means of *improving* the current situation. This term does not look at the consequences of one's actions. The section "hedonic treadmill" from the scholarly article says that, "improving circumstances lead individuals to adopt successively higher aspirations for the amount of enjoyment they regard as acceptable (Frederick 419)." Another way of wording this thought is that once one's goals are met, one will increase the difficulty of the previous desire. This more complex desire will become the next means of happiness. For example, if an artist has completed a painting that he found fairly easy to create, he will most likely create another painting where his skills are challenged more. Nowhere does it imply or mention that the desire of creating something new would bring detrimental outcomes. In Victor Frankenstein's case, he wishes to deny his accomplishment of bringing a lifeless body

to life. He states on page thirty-seven that he could not even think about the occurrences of the previous night without shivering. Even though most would say that humans have proved to use positive drives to accomplish the goals, these obsessive desires, like the one Frankenstein experienced "that far exceeded moderation" can also bring negative consequences which affect the author of the behavior and their surroundings (Shelley 35). Therefore, the answer to the question if one's desires conduce to negative consequences lies not in a white or black area, but in a gray area. Desires and intentions could both lead to positive and negative outcomes as consequences.

By considering the pertinence of the psychological concept of the "hedonic treadmill" to the book *Frankenstein* (1831) by Mary Shelley, this paper presents reasons why one should consider to be more aware of the consequences of one's actions. Most of these associations between the idea of hedonic treadmill and the book were based specifically on the passage of chapter five where Victor Frankenstein shuns his creation and runs away. This reaction results in various negative consequences to his life as a result of ignorance. Experiencing hedonic treadmill has two phases. The first phase emphasizes the process of a person realizing he or she possesses a desire and will work to fulfill that desire with the thought that once that desire is fulfilled, the person will be completely happy. Parallel to the text, Victor Frankenstein desired to create a life out of an inanimate body. He believed that once he completed his project, he would be pleased. The second stage is when this individual learns that this accomplishment did not bring permanent happiness. The parallel to the text in this phase is when Victor Frankenstein realizes he does not experience pleasure at the completion of this hideous monster. Victor Frankenstein was oblivious to the possible negative consequences of rejecting his monster and running away. He was not aware of how those detrimental desires affected his environment, behavior, and way of thinking.

To sum it all up, desires and intentions could lead to both positive and negative consequences. For this reason, every man's enemies are his deep wishes.

Bibliography

Diener, Ed, Richard E. Lucas, and Christie Napa Scollon. "Beyond the Hedonic Treadmill: Revising the Adaptation Theory of Well-Being." (2006). *American Psychologist*. Web. 10 Nov. 2015.

Frederick, Shane. "Hedonic Treadmill." *H-Baumeister (Encyc)* (2007): 419. Print.

Lilienfeld, Scott O., Steven Jay Lynn, and Nancy J. Woolf. "Chapter 11: Emotion and Motivation: Forecasting Happiness." *Psychology: From Inquiry to Understanding*. 3rd ed. Pearson Education, 2014. 432. Print.

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. Dover Thrift Editions, 1994. Print.

Reflection

Before creating this paper, I wanted to examine the psychology behind a desire. Upon reading the passage in chapter five, I noticed how interesting it is to for a human being to desire something with all of their might as to be able to sacrifice sleep and food in order to accomplish it. What struck me the most was not the desire to accomplish that goal itself, but the reaction after it is accomplished. The process of writing this paper was very complicated. I had a clear idea of what I wanted to argue, but not how I would argue it. Not having a potential non-falsifiable thesis statement is the biggest weakness of the paper. In my attempt of explaining the term hedonic treadmill and how it correlates with the Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1831), the

goal of establishing an arguable thesis could have been affected. On the other hand, the strength could be the structure of the paper itself. I use different structure techniques such as the chronological narration, comparison, definition, cause and effect, problem and solution, and assertion with examples. These are all implemented so the reader could understand the series of points I wanted to emphasize.

This is a very strong draft, Karol. You present a unique reading of *Frankenstein* by applying the psychological frame of the "hedonic treadmill" to examine Victor's motivations and actions. As mentioned in class, using an unexpected frame or strategy is a good way to establish your argument as new and interesting. Additionally, you organized your paper in a logical way, with clear topic sentences, even pacing, and clear main points for each paragraph that connect back to your thesis. For your revision, I'd like to see you clarify some of your terms. As I mentioned in my margin notes, the word "desire" seems to vague/general at times. In your conclusion, you say that it is Victor's lack of awareness about his actions that brings negative consequences. You can strengthen your overall argument by refining that point in your thesis and in the body of your essay. Is it mere desire that brings destruction or is it pursuing desires blindly without considering outcomes? Additionally, you'll need to incorporate one more secondary source and also fix some mechanical issues with verb tense, which I noted above. Nice work!

Grade: A-

Karol Oviedo

Professor Marlo Starr

English 181

Tuesday, December 8, 2015

"Obsessive Human Being Desires: an Approach to Address Hedonic Treadmill in Mary Shelley's
Frankenstein (1831)"

Every man's enemies are his deep wishes. A painter believes that at the completion of his masterpiece, he will be extremely pleased. He invests minutes, hours, days engaged creating this painting. At the completion of this masterpiece, this painter notices all the imperfections of his once-beautiful painting. Now, he does not find satisfaction in the painting he spent a long time creating. He then returns to the regular level of happiness he is accustomed to experience. Similar to this anecdote, Mary Shelley develops the book *Frankenstein* (1831), where the protagonist Victor Frankenstein experiences a roller coaster of emotions when he is done creating his monster. Frankenstein believes that once he brings a man to life, he will be extremely pleased for a long time. He invests years creating this life. At the completion of this experiment, Frankenstein notices all the imperfections of his once-beautiful inanimate body. Now, he does not find satisfaction in the monster he spent a long time creating. He then returns to the regular level of happiness he is accustomed to experience. In fact, he feels disgust towards this monster. This wave of emotions is best explained by a term in psychology called "hedonic treadmill." Hedonic treadmill occurs when a person accomplishes a goal and later notices they have overestimated the pleasure granted by that accomplishment. In the book, *Psychology: from Inquiry to Understanding*, the authors define the term "hedonic treadmill" when they say, "We [human beings in general] underestimate how rapidly we adjust to our baseline levels of

happiness [...] hedonic treadmill [is] the tendency for our moods to adapt to external circumstances (Lilienfeld, Lynn, Namy, and Woolf 432)." In other words, the fulfillment of the task instead of increasing the levels of happiness permanently actually brings these levels back to their original plateau of happiness. **By paralleling the psychological concept of the "hedonic treadmill" to the book *Frankenstein*, this paper argues that Victor Frankenstein's rejection of the monster after he is done creating it shows the possibility of how obsessive desires result in negative consequences on his life as an additional layer to hedonic treadmill.**

To be able to understand the parallels between the passage in the book *Frankenstein* where Victor experiences hedonic treadmill, one must comprehend what this concept of "hedonic treadmill" entails. The psychologists Diener, Lucas, and Scollon describe it best when they say that, "according to the hedonic treadmill model, good and bad events temporarily affect happiness, but people quickly adapt back to hedonic neutrality. The theory [...] implies that individual and societal efforts to increase happiness are doomed to failure (305)." According to these psychologists, the creators of their destiny tend to seek for outlets that could bring happiness to their life with the intention of remaining happy for a much longer time than they actually experience the emotion. To be exact, the happiness they experience "runs out" before they expect it to because they imagine that their achievement will produce a long-lasting positive effect. The hedonic treadmill has two phases: the first is that the individual needs to work towards a goal in order to obtain happiness, and the second is that the individual will then learn that this accomplishment will not bring permanent happiness. In the text, Victor is not satisfied until he fulfilled his idea of creating life.

The first phase of hedonic treadmill is to have an idea as to what will make a person happy so that this person begins to work toward that happiness. Diener et. al describe this as,

"People continue to pursue happiness [...]" (305). This pursuit of happiness is paralleled in *Frankenstein* when Victor describes how he worked with much effort to bring life to this lifeless body by saying, "How can I describe my emotions at this catastrophe, or how delineate the wretch whom with such infinite pains and care I had endeavored to form?" (Shelley 35) Victor sacrifices his time with his family and postpones his marriage with Elizabeth in order to complete this master creation. As a matter of fact, when one is engaged in an activity that one enjoys, the focus in the activity and the ability to ignore any distractions is so incredible that one may even postpone the human basic needs like eating, drinking, and sleeping. Victor describes how his health deteriorated as a consequence of his drive to complete his creation. He says, "I had worked hard for nearly two years, for the sole purpose of infusing life into an inanimate body. For this I had deprived myself of rest and health. I had desired it with an ardour that far exceeded moderation [...]" (Shelley 35) Victor is aware that during the process of creating the monster is actually destroying his life, but he continues to work on this project because he feels that it is worth the sacrifice. He presents a contrast between creating and destroying. This returns to the three psychologists Diener et. al when they affirm that "people continue to pursue happiness because they incorrectly believe that greater happiness lies just around the corner in the next goal accomplished, [...] or the next problem solved (305)." Victor in his ignorance believes that once he is done creating life out of this creature, he will be satisfied for a long time. Little does he know that joy is the last thing he will obtain from this monster.

The second phase of hedonic treadmill is to learn that this accomplishment does not bring permanent happiness. In *Frankenstein*, Victor experiences an admiration for the monster, but follows this admiration with a sudden repulsion towards this new life that he has created. The contrast between how he describes his beautiful creation in the beginning of this chapter to how

he then describes his creation as a demoniacal corpse balances on two extremes. His emotions about his creation transfer from the enthusiastic extreme to the disgusted extreme. The concept of hedonic treadmill describes that a similar emotion emerges when one expects a long-lasting positive outcome: if one is happy to create a painting, one will respond with happiness after the painting is done, but then will not pay attention to the same painting later on. To Victor, his creation brings a spark of happiness right after he created it. Actually, he even sees his creation as beautiful. He says on page thirty-five, "I had selected his features as beautiful. Beautiful! Great God! [...]" (Shelley) Regardless his heightened happy response as a result of his successful attempt to bring life to an inanimate body, Victor expresses not only a plateau state of happiness he experienced before, but more than that, a disgust towards this monster. This is an "additional layer" to the parallel between Victor and the concept of hedonic treadmill. Victor is not satisfied with the outcome and rejects the monster. He says on page thirty-five, "[...] but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart. Unable to endure the aspect of the being I created, I rushed out of the room [...]" (Shelley)" Needless to say, the monster is left alone. The most natural reaction to loneliness in this case is to find company. The monster follows Frankenstein to his room in order to fulfill that need: the need to belong. To Frankenstein's eyes, this monster is so hideous, he could not even bare with the sight. He describes the monster as a "demoniacal corpse to which [he] had so miserably given life. (Shelley 36)" This sudden hatred is an "additional layer" to the concept of hedonic treadmill.

Hedonic treadmill includes two phases, as mentioned before. The first phase is when an individual is in the process of working towards an accomplishment with the vision of obtaining happiness as a result of that accomplishment. The second phase is when the individual learns that this accomplishment does not really bring a permanent state of happiness to their life. Based on

these two phases, hedonic treadmill brings the individual to sudden plateau in their levels of happiness. The scholars Daniel Mochon, Michael Norton, and Dan Ariely explain hedonic treadmill's plateau as "static" when they say, "though people continue to accrue experiences and objects that make them happy – or unhappy – their overall level of well-being tends to remain fairly static." Victor is able to break with that plateau at the creation of his monster. He, therefore, creates another layer to the hedonic treadmill: disgust, or even rejection. His disappointment is so great that he even has a nightmare that night. Mary Shelley writes on page thirty-six, "[...] I felt the bitterness of disappointment; dreams that had been my food and pleasant rest for so long a space were now become a hell to me [...]" After such an unpleasant scenery, Victor finds joy in the smallest thing – his sleep. As a negative consequence of his desire, even Victor's dreams are affected. On this note, one's obsessive desires have the potential to bring negative consequences.

After Victor rejects the monster he created as an example of hedonic treadmill, he realizes that even though his intentions are never to bring pain or fear to his daily life he could not advance a step without experiencing anxiety. Not being aware that his desires could result in negative consequences, Victor's life is affected in different aspects. His environment, his behavior, and his way of thinking are all factors affected negatively. Victor's house turns from a working and resting place to a house from a scary movie. On page thirty-six Victor says, "I took refuge in the courtyard [...] walking up and down in the greatest agitation, listening attentively, catching and fearing each sound [...] sometimes my pulse beat so quickly and hardly that I felt the palpitation of every artery [...] (Shelley)" Only in moments of desperation can a man experience such emotions. Evident in the previous example, Victor's behavior and way of thinking alters greatly. He begins to experience anxiety and thinks this monster will find him.

Victor is at the verge of madness. He is in constant motion, never steady. He stops whatever he is doing to listen with much attention because at any moment the "demoniacal corpse" (Shelley 36) could appear. After reading some of the consequences of Victor's desire to create life one may think that if no precautions are taken, one's desires could end up hurting us. Does this imply that all of one's ambitions carry potentially negative consequences?

To be able to answer this question, one must understand that the concept of hedonic treadmill only states that people desire with the means of *improving* the current situation. This term does not look at the consequences of one's actions. The scholarly article "Hedonic Treadmill" says that, "improving circumstances lead individuals to adopt successively higher aspirations for the amount of enjoyment they regard as acceptable (Frederick 419)." Another way of wording this thought is that once one's goals are met, one will increase the difficulty of the previous desire. This more complex desire will become the next means of happiness. For example, if an artist completes a painting that he finds fairly easy to create, he is more likely to create another painting where his skills are challenged more. Frederick does not imply or mention that the desire of creating something new would bring detrimental outcomes. In Victor's case, he wishes to deny his accomplishment of bringing a lifeless body to life. He states on page thirty-seven that he could not even think about the occurrences of the previous night without shivering. Even though most would say that humans have proved to use positive drives to accomplish the goals, these obsessive desires, like the one Frankenstein experienced "that far exceeded moderation" can also bring negative consequences which affects the author of the behavior and their surroundings (Shelley 35). Therefore, the answer to the question if one's desires conduce to negative consequences lies not in a white or black area, but in a gray area. One's ambitions could both lead to positive and negative outcomes as consequences.

By considering the pertinence of the psychological concept of the "hedonic treadmill" to the book *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley, this paper argues that Victor's rejection of the monster demonstrates how obsessive desires result in negative consequences on his life as an additional layer to hedonic treadmill. Most of these associations between the idea of hedonic treadmill and the book are based specifically on the passage of chapter five where Victor shuns his creation and runs away. This reaction results in various negative consequences to his life and serves as an example of how Victor provides an additional layer to the concept hedonic treadmill.

Experiencing hedonic treadmill has two phases. The first phase emphasizes the process of a person realizing he or she possesses a desire and works to fulfill that desire with the thought that once that desire is fulfilled, the person will be completely happy. Parallel to the text, Victor desires to create a life out of an inanimate body. He believes that once he completed his project, he would be pleased. The second stage of hedonic treadmill is when this individual learns that this accomplishment does not bring permanent happiness. The parallel to the text in this phase is when Victor realizes he does not experience pleasure at the completion of this hideous monster. More than simple realization that the creation of the monster does not bring permanent levels of happiness to his life, Victor takes hedonic treadmill to another level by adding a reaction of disgust. Ultimately, Victor does not only find the pleasure he expects from the monster, but rejects the monster in its entirety. Victor is oblivious to the possible negative consequences of rejecting his monster and running away. He is not aware of how those detrimental desires affect his environment, behavior, and way of thinking. To sum it all up, desires and intentions could lead to both positive and negative consequences. For this reason, every man's enemies are his deep wishes.

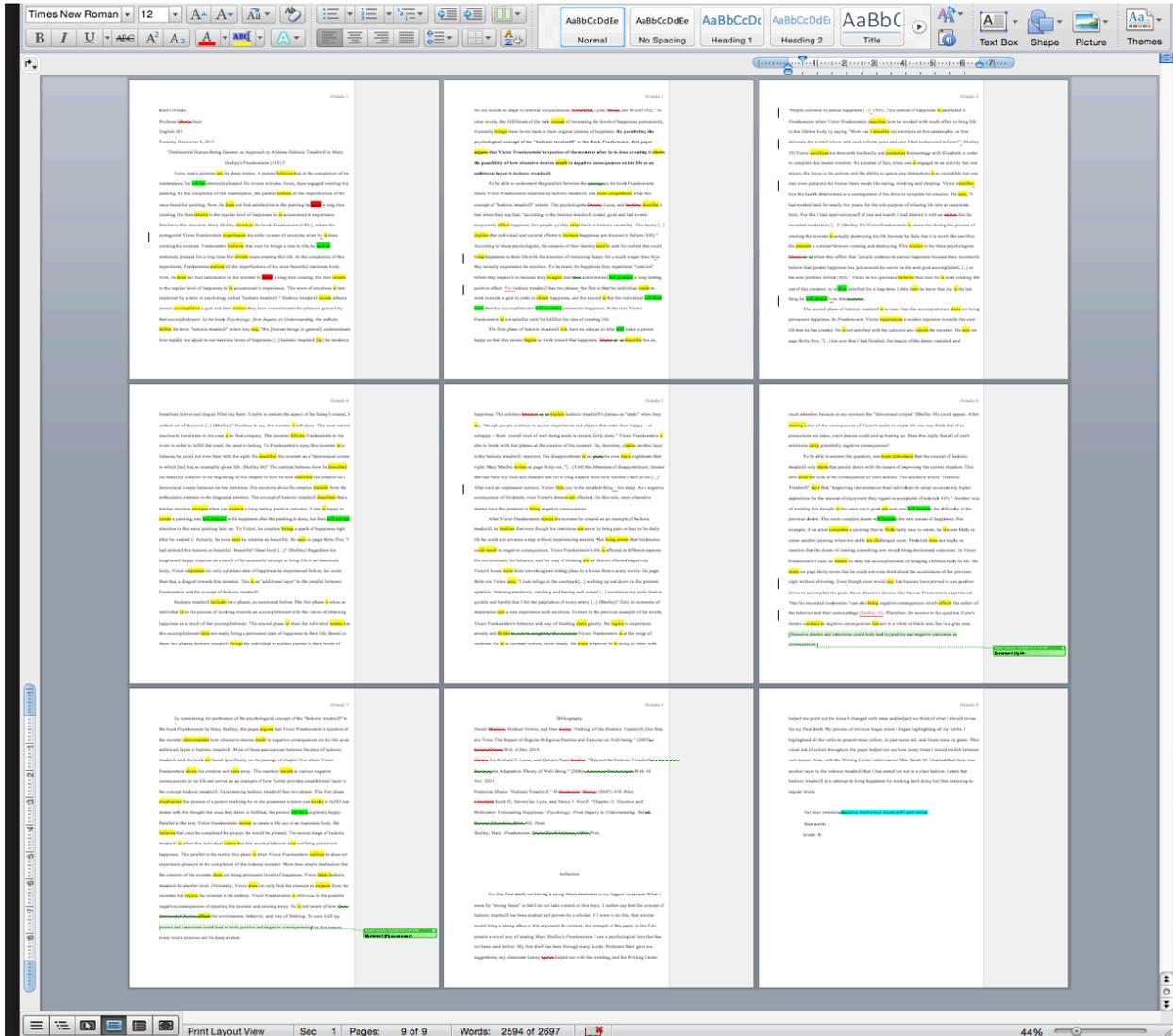
Works Cited

- Daniel Mochon, Michael Norton, and Dan Ariely. "Getting off the Hedonic Treadmill, One Step at a Time: The Impact of Regular Religious Practice and Exercise on Well-being." (2007). ScienceDirect. Web. 4 Dec. 2015.
- Diener, Ed, Richard E. Lucas, and Christie Napa Scollon. "Beyond the Hedonic Treadmill: Revising the Adaptation Theory of Well-Being." (2006). American Psychologist. Web. Nov. 2015.
- Frederick, Shane. "Hedonic Treadmill." *H-Baumeister (Encyc)* (2007): 419. Print.
- Lilienfeld, Scott O., Steven Jay Lynn, and Nancy J. Woolf. "Chapter 11: Emotion and Motivation: Forecasting Happiness." *Psychology: From Inquiry to Understanding*. 3rd ed. Pearson Education, 2014. 432. Print.
- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. Dover Thrift Editions, 1994. Print.

Reflection

For this final draft, not having a strong thesis statement is my biggest weakness. What I mean by "strong thesis" is that I do not take a stand on this topic. I neither say that the concept of hedonic treadmill compared to the passage of *Frankenstein* has been studied and proven by a scholar. If I were to do this, that scholar would bring a strong ethos to this argument. In contrast, the strength of this paper is that I do present a novel way of reading Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. I use a psychological lens that has not been used before. My first draft has been through many hands. Professor Starr gave me suggestions, my classmate Kenny Igarza helped me with the wording, and the Writing Center helped me point out the times I changed verb tense and helped me think of what I should revise for my final draft. My process of revision began

when I initiated the task of highlighting all my verbs. I highlighted all the verbs in present tense yellow, in past tense red, and future tense green. This visual aid of colors throughout the paper helped me see how many times I would switch between verb tenses. It looked like this:



Also, with the Writing Center intern named Mrs. Sarah M. noticed, and so did Professor Starr, that there was another layer to the hedonic treadmill that I had stated but not elaborated in a clear fashion. Thus, having a “very strong draft,” according to Professor Starr was a huge aid for the process of revision.