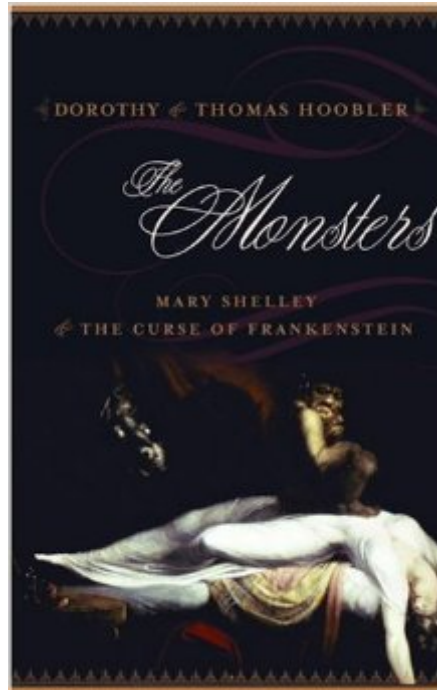


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The Monsters: Mary Shelley And The Curse Of Frankenstein



Synopsis

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Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The authors did a fantastic job assembling the fascinating lives of Mary Shelley, Percy, and Lord Byron. After reading Frankenstein, I could not believe such a young woman had written the story, and wanted to know more about the author. This book answers the question of how a young woman could develop and write such a story. Her life story and the people that surround her make for a very interesting read. I was shocked and surprised by many facts throughout this work. For a non fiction book, it was a real page turner and I thoroughly enjoyed every bit of it.

I bought this book because I was curious as to the origins of "Frankenstein" and walked away with a desire to learn a lot more about the central figures. The authors do an excellent job of recalling the life of Mary Shelley (which was tragic) and the rest of the group that met that "dark and stormy night" in 1816 to tell ghost stories. Lord Byron, Percy Shelley and John Polidori were all figures I knew marginally but the Hooblers have made them live in the pages of this wonderfully diverse study. They were fascinating people. I recommend this book wholeheartedly. There are very few biographies as engaging as "The Monsters". Anyone with an interest in literature, monsters or just interesting people will enjoy this book.

Great book for Mary Shelley, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Lord Byron, Mary Wollstonecraft, William

Godwin, Frankenstein and Vampire enthusiasts. Read this for a humanities class. If you are interested in horror and how the genre of gothic horror, romanticism, and other monsters came about, this book - *The Monsters* is a must read. It is an in depth, biography on all of their lives and how Frankenstein 1818 and 1831 versions came to be. Learn the true horrors behind it all.

The Monsters by Dorothy & Thomas Hoobler is a fascinating read about the creation of the book *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley. The book traces Mary's family tree as well as the other members of the Diodati circle in a way that gives a great deal of insight into their characters. Both Percy Bysshe Shelley and Lord Byron come off as the foolish geniuses they were. The authors spend a great deal of time sorting out the two men's various affairs, but apparently that's what they had to do as well! The real victim of these men and their foibles were their children. Percy and Mary lost four of their five children before the age of four. And Byron's abandonment of his daughter seems especially tragic as she died not long after. The Hooblers do a terrific job of analyzing *Frankenstein* in a way relevant for our time as well as Mary's, and they see parallels between Percy, William Godwin (Mary's father) and Dr. Victor Frankenstein. The insightful writing gives the reader extreme sympathy for Mary. She identified with the monster in her book because it had been rejected by its father figure, much as Mary was not only by her father, but also by her mentor Percy. The monsters in this book are not the kind of nightmares; they are the monster from Mary's famous book. Every one of them felt alone and cut off from the world, just like the monster. It's a universal human feeling, which is why *Frankenstein* has resonated through the years more strongly than Shelley's or Byron's poems, and the young woman who was ignored by the poets has outshone them finally.

I was a little worried when I bought this book, which had been recommended by a friend, that the writers might delve into the more salacious aspects of these writers/poets...and there was a good lot of room for that with Byron being a factor, but it was very factually presented. It's fascinating to see the buildup to the narrative of *Frankenstein*. The authors did an excellent job of weaving together the history to show how Mary's creation evolved. Her parents and her relationship with them. Her many losses of children. Her relationship with others. They did a really thorough platform for the influence of her life in *Frankenstein*. I'm not a scholar so I can't speak to its historical authenticity, but I was convinced by this...and I'd love to see similar books that delve into the "why" and "how" great classic literature came to be. While I highlighted a ton of this book, I thought this was one of the more interesting quotes: Victor Frankenstein realizes that the creature is his doppelgänger--an insight that seems to have extended to readers and audiences, for today the name "*Frankenstein*" is

popularly applied not only to the creator, but to the monster, who is never named in the book.

The title and first review may give the false impression that the Hooblers argue that those who were with Mary Shelley at Lake Geneva were literally, supernaturally cursed. This is not so; the term "cursed" is used here and there, but the authors are quite secular and provide plenty of all-natural reasons why those who lived fast died young. Rather, the Hooblers argue that Frankenstein was rather more a reflection of Mary Shelley's tumultuous parentage, upbringing and life than even she may have realized, and they make a good case for that. The book starts off slowly, but by the time it begins to chronicle Mary Shelley's life for the period before and after Lake Geneva, it settles into a smooth, informative narrative which truly gives a sense of how frantic these young lives were.

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