

Bioethical Issues in *Frankenstein* and *Mutation*

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Abstract

In this research paper we focus on bioethical issues in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Robin Cook's *Mutation*. Mary Shelley wrote her famous novel against technology and medical treatments that harm more than good. Mary Shelley's work is an eye opener to our society. The issue she raises that how scientific progress harm our society. The main theme of his work is how technology turns into distraction which now-a-days is related to fear of terrorism and bioterrorism and so other disastrous things. Robin Cook who is the master of medical thriller has written *Mutation* on the same theme. His strategies are similar with Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

Keywords- Bioethical Issues, Techno Thriller, Genetic Engineering, Bioterrorism

Introduction

Ethics is a part of philosophy study basically it is the study about what is good for society and what is bad for society and values. Ethics related to the field of science and technology are known as bioethics. Bioethics is the study of ethical issues regarding biomedical science and technology. Bioethics focuses on basic human values. The basic motif of this approach is the reaction of science and technology on human life. It is concerned the principal of biotechnology as xenotransplantation, cloning and bioterrorism use of animal model as research. Human dignity, moral sufferings, unavoidable trust on health care system, technology and its premises and the impact of science, social justice, right to life etc. are the main aspects of bioethics. In bioethics we focus on the balance between human need and scientific progress. Mary Shelley who is the writer of *Frankenstein* wanted to show the value of human life. In this book she raises very serious issues regarding human life and technology. Nature and its value in human life, the main aspect of her novel is don't play with the laws of nature. Here we can see the value of female in man's life. Scientific knowledge and its better use for our society. She wants to teach how to handle technology in the proper way. This is the main

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motif of this work which she wants to share with us. Certain issues which she raised in this work are for the betterment for our society. These issues are known as bioethical issues. It is the story of Victor who deals with grief because of his mother's death of Scarlet fever. So he decided to impart life into non living things. Eventually he created a humanoid, his madness of science and technology, converted him into inhuman and technology freak. His hunger of knowledge takes him to access the secrets of the mystery of life and death which is against the human laws or we can say it is unnatural. At this point he created a monster, who has qualities like Victor but because of his bad appearance he is hiding from people. At this point his master crossed all human limits. Victor Frankenstein, the father figure abandons his monster child. The nameless Monster reflects on these final words to Captain Walton, that his experiment might not have failed if the creature help him to appear lovable. The main theme of this novel is that modern science has power over the natural world. In this novel Shelly gives us the view points of both creator and teacher, the science and nature. Frankenstein is a different type of Romance. The main theme of this novel is balance between human needs and scientific progress.

The greatest paradox and most astonishing achievement of Mary Shelley's novel is that the monster is more human than his creator. This nameless being, as much a modern Adam as his creator is a modern Prometheus, is more lovable than his creator and more hateful, more to be pitied and more to be feared, and above all able to give the attentive reader that shock of added consciousness in which aesthetic recognition compels a heightened realization of the self (Frankenstein 215). At last when we read this novel we ask ourselves are we trying to play God the main theme of this novel is science and religion are misunderstood and misused. As the title shows mutation means change of genetic material. Just like Frankenstein the similar aspects we can see in Mutation by Robin Cook. Robin Cook, the master of medical thriller was born in Brooklyn New York he received an MD from Columbia University and did post graduate work at Harvard Medical School cook has written about hot issues in the involving medical field. Mutation is his 10th novel which is published in 1989, although it is not so popular but it had the same aspect like Frankenstein. Just like Frankenstein we have the character of VJ in mutation. Both are obsessed with greed for power and position. It is a techno thriller by Robin Cook defined personalities that drive them to excel and dangerous because they recognize no moral constraints at all. VJ is not an ordinary child his father produces him with the help of technology he is a surrogatory child of Dr Victor Frank, the father to be is exceptionally nervous throughout the course of the delivery.

When he silently prays to himself please make the baby normal, As a child psychiatrist, she knew she could not expect her child to develop in a certain way, but she often found herself wishing VJ were a more openly affectionate child. Since he had been an infant he had been unnaturally

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independent. He would occasionally let her hug him, but sometimes she longed for him to climb onto her lap and cuddle the way David had (*Mutations* 301).

The issue which raises in *mutation* is genetic engineering who change our life. Human body is created by different cells and tissues but when man with the help of science and technology try to mould it with their convenience. We can see negative impact upon us. It created a worldwide questions that what we can or cannot do. The result of this process is human mind or the other part of body grows in an unnatural way just like the main character of Robin Cook's novel VJ, who has unnatural growth and thoughts in itself. Genetic progression seemed to be very normal but by the time or at the end it will be hazardous.

Shelley's book is a warning for society to change otherwise we destroy everything with one's hand. It is the questions for our life and the issue of debate. Cloning (creating a genetic duplicate). In 1996 the first mammal, Dolly the sheep, was cloned from a cell of an adult animal by Scottish researcher at Roslin Institute. There was widespread excitement in the scientific community, but also there was considerable speculation about the downside of this technology. Were we aware of the risks? What kind of restraint would we put on this type of scientific power? Because of intense publicity on the issue in all broadcast media, President Bill Clinton issued a moratorium on human cloning pending a National Bioethics Advisory Commission investigation. (B.A.M. I.I. L.11).

Other social issues in mutation and Frankenstein are how we misunderstood and misused our technology and scientific discoveries. Creating something without thinking is called Prometheus syndrome. Other social issues emerge from Frankenstein, including how science and religion are misunderstood and misused; how human prejudice toward repulsive appearance leads to desolation and striking our; and even, in feminist terms, how the male scientist is seen metaphorically as raping natural resources perceived as feminine. Nonetheless, the most relevant bioethical theme centers on the Prometheus syndrome of creating technology without thinking ahead of the consequences. Frankenstein, a term coined by the popular press, warns us about the inherent dangers of technology going away and the potential for chaos in mainstream science. (B.A.M.I.I.L 10).

Robin Cook is delivered a familiar warning against these issues, that the picture what we see is very different from actual image. Development has a dangerous picture. Bioterrorism is an important part of bioethics because terrorist can use these techniques easily and they can easily harm our society.

To conclude bioethical issues are the new term in Literature. Now a days when we read fiction it give us a lesson that Technology not beyond on nature when we think that we mould nature according to our space but, nature proves us wrong because the dreams of Science can sometimes turn to nightmare. Science fiction with horror and suspense the development of new technologies can

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certainly be expected to raise questions that science is good for our society or bad but, when somebody is obsessed with something just like the character of Victor in Frankenstein and the character of VJ in mutation sometime of course to the point of Madness.

Biotechnology continues to promise dazzling changes in modern society but some fear its power to lead the human race down a slippery slope, making it vitally important for everyone –not just scientists and the clergy-to understand this new knowledge and to decide how we want to use it. (B.A.M.I.I.L.29).

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