

ang071: S/Ü "Introduction to the Critical and Scholarly Discussion of Literature"
Assignment 3: "Analysing Fiction"

This assignment is a mandatory part of your portfolio and needs to be handed in on time. You can receive feedback upon request and, additionally, a sample solution will be published on the Institutswiki

Upload your assignment on Stud.IP in one single file. Every assignment must include a cover sheet and the statement on plagiarism. You may write up to three pages (tasks 1-7). Any text beyond the first three pages will be ignored. Then add the bibliography (see task 8) on a separate page and format it according to the specifications of our stylesheet.

Formal and Media-specific Analysis

(1) Narration

(a) Preliminary Contextualisation: On the basis of your knowledge of the entire text, please identify the three main narrators in Shelley's *Frankenstein* and categorise each narrator according to narrative level and extent of participation.

Narrators, Narrative Levels, and Extent of Participation

- Robert Walton: extradiegetic narrator, narrating the diegetic level; homodiegetic narrator
- Victor Frankenstein: intradiegetic narrator, narrating the hypodiegetic level; homodiegetic narrator
- The Creature: hypodiegetic narrator, narrating the hypohypodiegetic level; homodiegetic narrator

Function of hypo-/hypohypodiegetic levels

- Function of hypodiegetic level:
 - Victor presents himself as someone overcome by misfortune, while refusing to acknowledge his own contribution to the disaster
 - revelation of events to Robert Walton arguably influences Walton's decisions concerning the costs of his expedition; aspects of cautionary tale (actional function; thematic function)
- Function of hypohypodiegetic level: the Creature's tale marks a counter narrative to Victor Frankenstein's version of events and in it, the Creature asks Victor for a companion (actional, explicative, and thematic functions)

(b) Identify and categorize the narrator of this passage according to the typology of narrators and comment on the function of the narrative level.

- ulterior narration
- narrative level: intradiegetic narrator, narrating the hypodiegetic level
- extent of participation: homodiegetic narrator
- perceptibility:
 - description of setting: "London was our present point of rest"; "wonderful and celebrated city"
 - temporal summary: "we determined to remain several months"
 - identification of characters: Clerval; himself; men of genius; the most distinguished natural philosophers
 - definition of characters: "Clerval desired the intercourse of the men of genius and talent who flourished at this time"; "I was principally occupied with the means of obtaining the information necessary for the completion of my promise"; etc.
- reliability:
 - personal involvement
 - personal agenda

(2) Focalization: Identify and comment on the use of focalization in the given passage.

Modes of focalisation, Focalisers

- Dominant mode of focalisation: internal focalization (character-focaliser: Victor Frankenstein)
"London was our present point of rest"
- Shifts in focalisation: external focalization (narrator-focaliser: Victor Frankenstein)
"If this journey had taken place during my days of study and happiness, it would have afforded me inexpressible pleasure."

Focalised

- Focalized: Frankenstein from within
- Focalized: Clerval, others from outside

(3) Characterization: Who is characterized by whom and with what techniques?

Victor Frankenstein:

- not sociable; isolated
 - direct definition: "Company was irksome to me"
 - reinforcement by analogy (contrast: Victor Frankenstein vs. Henry Clerval): "Clerval desired the intercourse of the men of genius and talent who flourished at this time; but this was with me a secondary object [...]"
- obsessed, fixated
 - indirect presentation (action): "I was principally occupied with the means of obtaining the information necessary for the completion of my promise [...]"
 - direct definition [or indirect presentation]: "this subject in which my interest was so terribly profound"
- burdend; depressed
 - reinforcement by analogy (contrast: Victor Frankenstein [old] vs. Young Victor): "If this journey had taken place during my days of study and happiness, it would have afforded me inexpressible pleasure. But a blight had come over my existence[...]"
 - direct definition: "despair to my heart"; "filled my soul with anguish"
- egotistic; selfish; using others
 - indirect presentation (action): "quickly availed myself of the letters of introduction that I had brought with me, addressed to the most distinguished natural philosophers"; "I only visited these people for the sake of the information they might give me"
- self-deceptive; deliberately fooling himself; delusional
 - indirect presentation (action): "when alone, I could fill my mind with the sights of heaven and earth"; "I could thus cheat myself into a transitory peace"

Henry Clerval:

- sociable; lively; cheery
 - indirect presentation (action): "Clerval desired the intercourse of the men of genius"
 - reinforcement by analogy (contrast: Victor Frankenstein vs. Henry Clerval): "Clerval desired the intercourse of the men of genius and talent who flourished at this time; [...] I was principally occupied with the means of obtaining the information necessary for the completion of my promise"
- loyal; caring
 - indirect presentation (manner of speech): "the voice of Henry soothed me"

Functional Analysis: Toward a Problem-oriented Sample Analysis

Build your functional analysis on the data generated through your formal analysis and suggest a possible problem orientation:

(4) Formulate a research problem on the basis of your formal analysis and

(5) Produce a close reading of the passage that is sensitive to relevant contexts and references suitable secondary material.

Comparison: Correspondence and/or Contrast

(6) Suggest one other passage from the novel that corresponds and/or contrasts with the given passage in an aspect relevant to the research problem you have specified.

(7) Briefly discuss how both passages relate to this problem. Address potential differences in representation and their possible functions.

Lecture

(8) Use the MLA to compile a bibliography of six scholarly sources including journal articles, book chapters and monographs on Shelley's *Frankenstein* that are relevant for the research problem you have specified above. Format the sources according to our style sheet and attach the bibliography to your three-page assignment.

(9) Which subgenre(s) of the novel could be relevant for a reading of Shelley's *Frankenstein*?

- Gothic Novel/ Gothic Fiction
- Science Fiction