Willis T. Allstead

CH 202

Response 4

2 October 2016

**Group 1, Question A**

Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* is a great work of the early 1800’s, demonstrating the ideas of Romanticism in literature. Romanticism was a movement that directly addressed the changes the Enlightenment had brought, along with the then-developed industrial revolution. Victor Frankenstein touches on this movement’s philosophy when he says “… how dangerous is the acquirement of knowledge and how much happier that man is who believes his native town to be the world, than he who aspires to become greater than his nature will allow” (Shelley 53). This quote encompasses many aspects of Romanticism, posing (in my mind) the question of whether the search for extraordinary knowledge can sometimes lead to unnatural or unnerving answers.

**Group 2, Question A**

Nature versus nurture, a very old yet still relevant concept in psychology is nodded to by Shelly when Victor Frankenstein abandons his creature in nature at “birth” with no sense of who or where he was. The creature tells Victor his story, starting with him learning how to harness his various senses in this infinitely variable world. Nothing the creature does or thinks about could be considered violent until he interacts with humans that have been socialized. In fact he is initially awe-struck by human nature when he peers into the cottage in which a family lives together, and goes on to make efforts to aid them in their work secretly. The only reason he becomes violent is due to the reaction others have to him based on their unsubstantiated prejudices. These prejudices plagued the past as they do modern times. Some of these prejudices are only being brought to light in the last century, such as the fight for equal rights for women.

**Group 3, Question B**

“The Tables Turned; an Evening Scene, on the same subject.” is a light and brisk work by William Wordsworth, written to reject the ideas brought forth by the Enlightenment while spreading new ideas such as the simplistic beauty of nature. One component that drew my eye was the fact that he capitalized nature in “Come forth into the light of things, Let Nature be your teacher” (Wordsworth lines 15-16). This is an example of how Romanticists viewed the beauty and infinite variability of nature as a representation of God and religion. Nature could “teach” you. This is in direct contrast with how Enlightenment era scholars and artists searched for knowledge and perfection in science and math as a way to develop their personal religious beliefs.

**Group 4**

In Caspar David Friedrich’s *Woman before the Rising Sun*, we see a woman standing before a long full field of grass. Her posture is strong and rigid. She, along with the rolling hills behind the field, block the sun. The sun is either rising or setting, and the way the woman and the hills block the sun produce small tunnels of light seemingly coming off of her open arms. All of these components work together to build an image of sublimity, a key aspect of the Romantic movement, specifically in art.

Works Cited

Shelley, Mary | <https://ares.library.unr.edu/ares/ares.dll?SessionID=C094321183Q&Action=10&Type=10&Value=64743>

Wordsworth, William | <http://literature.proquest.com.unr.idm.oclc.org/searchFulltext.do?id=Z200543947&divLevel=2&area=poetry&DurUrl=Yes&forward=textsFT&queryType=findWork>

Friedrich, Caspar | http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Caspar\_David\_Friedrich\_-\_Woman\_before\_the\_Rising\_Sun\_(Woman\_before\_the\_Setting\_Sun)\_- \_WGA08253.jpg