

Frankenstein in Ingolstadt

4 Fragen für die Zukunft

Dr. Julia Wiedemann



KATHOLISCHE UNIVERSITÄT
EICHSTÄTT-INGOLSTADT

Future Festival 25

SCIENCE IN THE CITY

Am Zukunftscampus
im Georgianum, Ingolstadt

13.11.25
ab 09:30 Uhr

m+ Covid alert! New 'super-contagious Frankenstein' variant has rocketed four-fold in just a month...experts warn it could be most infectious yet

• **READ MORE:** WHO says it can't rule out Covid having come from a Chinese lab

By JOHN ELY, DEPUTY HEALTH EDITOR

PUBLISHED: 16:51 GMT, 3 July 2025 | UPDATED: 22:51 GMT, 3 July 2025



Summers D. 2021. "Political Cartoon Depicting COVID Variants. Tribune Content Agency."

<https://flipboard.com/@startribune/opinion-fiq6lrc2z/editorial-cartoon-dana-summers-on-covid-variants/a-Mig1J7aYQGCKuWfYSkIFhg%3Aa%3A3281877821-28e1fb3c95%2Fstartribune.com>.

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BUG BEAR Cases of new 'Frankenstein' Covid variant quadruple in weeks – as experts warn it could be most contagious yet

Plus, what to do if you think you've got Covid

Eliza Loukou, Health Reporter
Published: 13:52, 4 Jul 2025 | Updated: 14:19, 4 Jul 2025

Frankenstein

Used allusively as a typical name for a monster which terrorizes and ultimately destroys its originator (sometimes more fully **Frankenstein monster**). Also *attributive*.

1838–

transitive. To assemble (disparate or ill-matching parts) to form a whole in a manner resembling the creation of Frankenstein's monster; to create or construct in this way.

1827–

Franken-

— COMBINING FORM —

Forming nouns with the sense 'genetically modified —'; (also occasionally) '— relating to genetic modification'. Esp. in **Frankenfood**; cf. **Frankenstein food** *n*.

1992 Ever since Mary Shelley's baron rolled his improved human out of the lab, scientists have been bringing just such good things to life. If they want to sell us Frankenfood, perhaps it's time to gather the villagers, light some torches and head to the castle.

P. Lewis in *New York Times* 16 June a24/5 ...



FIGURE 1 Anti-GM protester dressed as Frankenstein's 'being'. (*The Guardian*, 18 Feb. 1999; © Raymonds Press Agency.) In: Hammond (2004: 182).



Dr. Frankenstein's Mystery Tour

Das Jahr ohne Sommer

Aktionstag

29. – 30.8.2025
SCHUTTERHOF · ALTSTADT · AUDI PROGRAMMKINOFRANKENSTEIN
WEEKENDLive-Shows · Frankenstein-Touren
Postkutschenfahrt · Ausstellungen
Aftershow-Party · Filmvorstellungen
Kurioses & Kostümiertes

EINTRITT FREI

ausgenommen Kutschenfahrten, Touren,
Audi Programm Kino und Aftershow-Partyinklings
JAHRBUCH FÜR LITERATUR UND ÄSTHETIK 36Frankenstein 1818 · 2018 –
Parabel der Moderne /
Parable of the Modern Age

Symposium 2018 in Ingolstadt



PETER LANG

AUF DEN SPUREN FRANKENSTEINS
EINE KLEINE REISE DURCH DAS
ROMANTISCHE EUROPA IN MARY SHELLEYS ROMAN19. JULI 2018
(VERNISAGE)

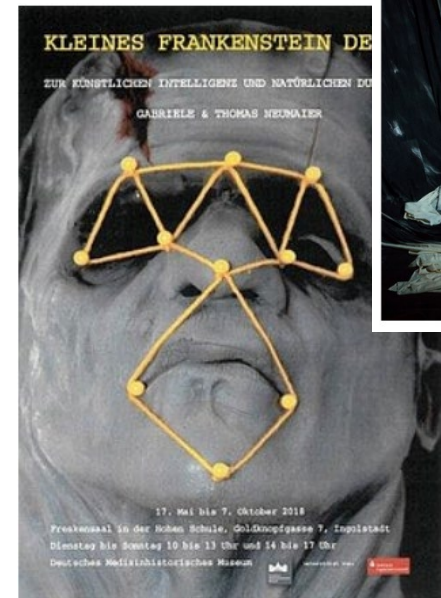
BÜRGERHAUS INGOLSTADT

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85049 INGOLSTADTEUROPEAN STUDIES
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AKTUELLES/KATHOLISCHE UNIVERSITÄT
EICHSTÄTT-INGOLSTADT

Die Story

1799 in Ingolstadt: Ein junger Student namens Viktor **Frankenstein** macht auf sich aufmerksam: Er behauptet, tote Materie zum Leben erwecken zu können! Doch geht er zu weit? **Genie und Wahnsinn** liegen gefährlich nah beieinander! Findet Beweise dafür, ob **Frankenstein künstliches Leben erschaffen** kann! Sputet euch! Er könnte schon bald die Stadt verlassen und die **Geheimnisse um seine gefährlichen Experimente** mit sich nehmen...

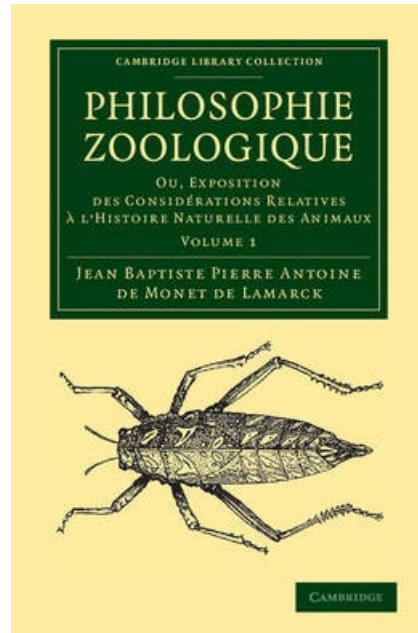
Stadtrallye Ingolstadt



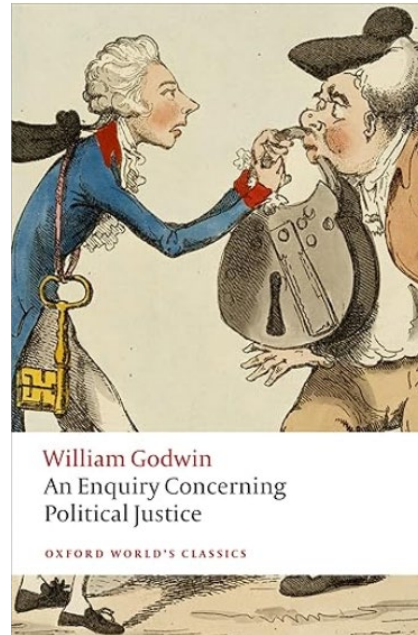
1. Was ist der Mensch?



1794



1809



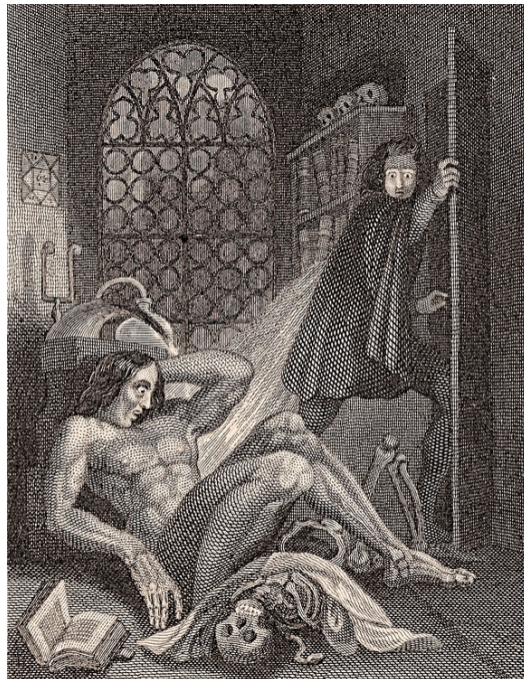
1793

- „It was on a dreary night of November that I beheld the accomplishment of my toils” (55)
- “bones from charnel houses” + “material from dissecting room and the slaughter-house” (52)
- “shape of man” (23) vs. „gigantic” (73) + „deformity”, „distorted in its proportions” (211)

- „daemoniacal corpse“ (56)
- „A mummy again endued with animation could not be so hideous as that wretch“ (56)
- “miserable monster” (56) / „abhorred monster“ (95)
- “filthy daemon” (73), „[w]retched devil“ (95)
- “vile insect” (95)

1. Was ist der Mensch?

“I had admired the **perfect** forms of my cottagers—their grace, beauty, and delicate complexions; but how was I terrified when I viewed myself in a transparent pool! At first I started back, unable to believe that it was indeed I who was reflected in the mirror; and when I became fully convinced that I was in reality the **monster** that I am, I was filled with the bitterest sensations of despondence and mortification.” (109)



Victor Frankenstein becoming disgusted at his creation. Illustration from the frontispiece of the 1831 edition. Public Domain.

1. Was ist der Mensch?



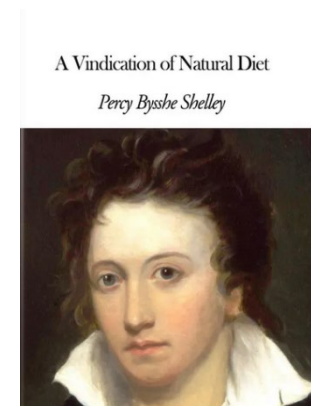
“Once I falsely hoped to meet with beings who, pardoning my outward form, would love me for the **excellent qualities** which I was capable of unfolding. I was nourished with high thoughts of **honour** and **devotion**. But now crime has degraded me beneath the **meanest animal**.”
(213)

“Was man, indeed, at once so powerful, so **virtuous**, and magnificent, yet so **vicious** and base? He appeared at one time a mere scion of the **evil** principle and at another as all that can be conceived as **noble** and **godlike**. To be a great and virtuous man appeared the highest honour that can befall a sensitive being; to be base and vicious, as many on record have been, appeared the lowest degradation, a condition more abject than that of the blind mole or harmless worm. For a long time I could not conceive how one man could go forth to murder his fellow, or even why there were laws and governments; but when I heard details of vice and bloodshed, my wonder ceased and I turned away with **disgust and loathing**.” (115)

2. Wie ist unser Verhältnis zur Natur?

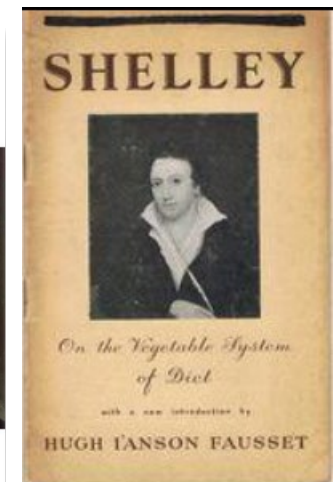
- “The desert mountains and dreary glaciers are my refuge.” (96)
- “I was not even of the same nature as man. I was more agile than they, and could subsist upon coarser diet; I bore the extremes of heat and cold with less injury to my frame; my stature far exceeded theirs. [...] Was I, then, a monster [...]? (116)
- „My food is not that of man; I do not destroy the lamb and the kid, to glut my appetite; acorns and berries afford me sufficient nourishment” (141)

It is only by softening and disguising dead flesh by culinary preparation that it is rendered susceptible of mastication or digestion, and that the sight of its bloody juices and raw **horror** does not excite intolerable **loathing and disgust**. Let the advocate of animal food force himself to a decisive experiment on its fitness, and, [...] tear a **living lamb** with his teeth, and plunging his head into its vitals, slake his thirst with the steaming **blood**; when fresh from the deed of **horror**, let him revert to the irresistible instincts of nature that would rise in judgment against it, and say, Nature formed me for such work as this. Then, and then only, would he be consistent. (13)



1813

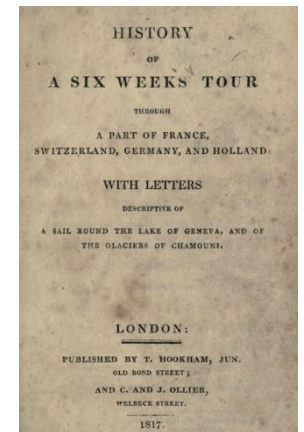
 The Perfect Library



1814-15

2. Wie ist unser Verhältnis zur Natur?

„I descended upon the glacier. The surface is very uneven, rising like the waves of a **troubled sea**, descending low, and interspersed by rifts that sink deep. [...] above it rose Mont Blanc, in **awful majesty**. [...] The sea, or rather the vast **river of ice**, wound among its dependent mountains, whose **aerial summits** hung over its recesses. Their icy and glittering peaks shone in the sunlight over the clouds. My heart, which was before sorrowful, now swelled with something like joy [...].“ (94)



„We have returned from visiting the glacier of Motanvert, or as it is called, the **Sea of Ice** [...] Lines of dazzling ice occupy here and there their perpendicular rifts, and shine through the driving vapours with inexpressible brilliance : they pierce the clouds like things **not belonging to this earth**. [...] This vast mass of ice has one general progress, which ceases neither day nor night; it breaks and bursts for ever [...]; it is never the same. The echo of rocks, or of the ice and snow which fall from their overhanging precipices, or roll from their **aerial summits**, scarcely ceases for one moment. One would think that Mont Blanc [...] was a vast **animal**, and that the frozen blood for ever circulated through his stony veins.“ (*Six Weeks' Tour*, 164-167)

2. Wie ist unser Verhältnis zur Natur?

„I try in vain to be persuaded that the pole is the seat of frost and desolation; it ever presents itself to my imagination as the region of **beauty** and **delight**. [...] there snow and frost are banished; and sailing over a **calm sea**, we may be wafted to a land surpassing in **wonders** and **beauty** every region hitherto discovered on the habitable globe. [...] What may not be expected in a country of **eternal light**?“ (13)

Thomas Seweel Robins, *HMS Assistance in the Ice*, 1853, Public Domain.

„We are still surrounded by mountains of ice, still in imminent **danger** of being crushed in their conflict. The cold is **excessive**, and many of my unfortunate comrades have already found a grave amidst this scene of **desolation**.“ (206)



3. Welche Verantwortung hat die Wissenschaft?

- „Curiosity, earnest research to learn the hidden laws of nature, gladness akin to rapture, as they were unfolded to me, are among the earliest sensations I can remember.“ (35)
- “what glory would attend the discovery if I could banish disease from the human frame and render man invulnerable to any but a violent death!” (39)
- „a resistless and almost frenetic impulse urged me forward“ (52)
- Kreatur = „result of my curiosity and lawless devices“ (78)

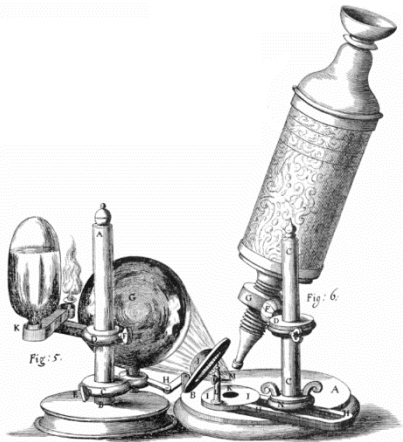


Anon., FRANKENSTEIN AT WORK IN HIS LABORATORY, 1922. Public Domain.

“I shall satiate my ardent curiosity with the sight of a part of the world never before visited, and may tread a land never before imprinted by the foot of man [...] I feel my heart glow with an enthusiasm which elevates me to heaven.” (14)

3. Welche Verantwortung hat die Wissenschaft?

But these philosophers, whose hands seem only made to dabble in dirt, and their eyes to pore over the **microscope** [Robert Hooke] or crucible, have indeed performed **miracles**. They **penetrate** into the recesses of nature and show how she works in **her** hiding-places. They ascend into the heavens; they have discovered how the **blood circulates** [William Harvey], and the nature of the **air** we breathe [Robert Boyle]. They have acquired new and almost **unlimited powers**; they can **command** the thunders of heaven, **mimic** the earthquake, and even **mock** the invisible world with its own shadows.” (46)



Robert Hooke's microscope.
From Scheme I. of his 1665
Micrographia. Public Domain.

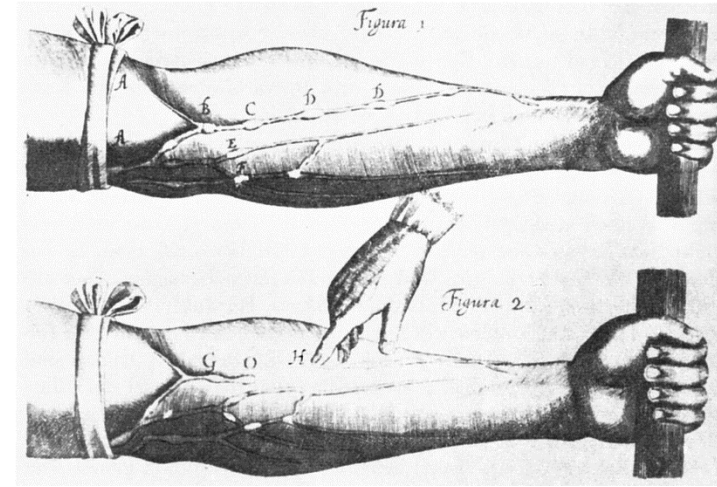
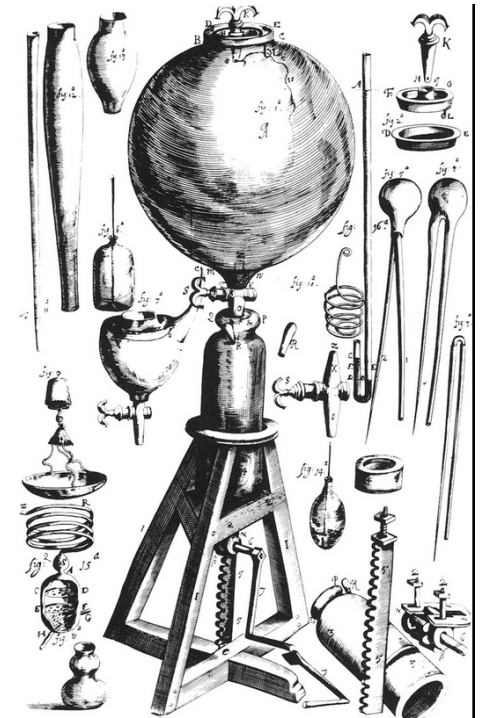


Image from Harvey's *Exercitatio Anatomica de Motu Cordis et Sanguinis in Animalibus*, 1628. Public Domain.



Drawing of Robert Boyle's air pump. *New Experiments Physico-Mechanical: Touching the Spring of the Air and their Effects*, 1660. Public Domain.

3. Welche Verantwortung hat die Wissenschaft?

‘Unhappy man! Do you share my madness? Have you drunk also of the intoxicating draught?’ (27)



Christian Griepenkerl, Beseelung der menschlichen Tonfigur durch Athena, 1877/78. Public Domain.

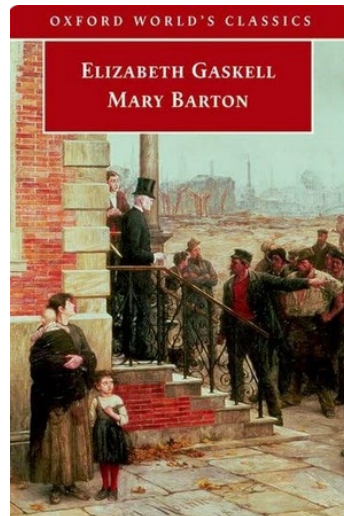


Paolo Farinati. Pandora offers the jar to Epimetheus. 16. Jh. Public Domain.

„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.” (51)

“The actions of the uneducated seem to be typified in those of Frankenstein, that monster of many human qualities, ungifted with a soul, a knowledge of the difference between good and evil. The people rise up to life; they irritate us, they terrify us, and we become their enemies. Then, in the sorrowful moment of our own triumphant power, their eyes gaze on us with mute reproach.

Why have we made them what they are; a powerful monster, yet without the inner means for peace and happiness?” (Gaskell, 199)



“HOW NEAR MEN MIGHT COME TO THE HIGH DISTANCES OF GOD”
(see p. 310). To face page 258.

Wells, *A Modern Utopia*, 1905.

4. Wie ist (nachhaltiges) Zusammenleben möglich?

“It is pleasant to think of one's puzzling the organised wisdom of so superior a planet as this Utopia, this moral monster State my Frankenstein of reasoning has made, and to that pitch we have come.”
(Wells, 236)



Franken-Ingolstadt, Marshall 2020: 16.

4. Wie ist (nachhaltiges) Zusammenleben möglich?

„wet, ungenial summer“ (*Preface*, 6)

The bright sun was extinguish'd

the icy earth

Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air

Even of their mutual hideousness they died,
Unknowing who he was upon whose brow
Famine had written Fiend.

FRANKENSTEIN URBANISM

Eco, Smart and Autonomous Cities, Artificial
Intelligence and the End of the City

FEDERICO CUGURULLO



“Climate change is the
monster we made. We are
Victor Frankenstein.”
(Wysession, 2017)

4. Wie ist (nachhaltiges) Zusammenleben möglich?

Frankenstein is a tragedy that provides a lesson for us now. [...] Perhaps it was a mistake to make the creature in the first place, but having done so, the more serious mistake was for Victor to refuse to take responsibility for his creation. That is one reading of the novel. A different one is that we do not have to continue to make the same mistakes, over and over again. As with Captain Walton, we can choose to turn back.

Frankenstein serves as a warning to young Victors (and Victorias) everywhere. Modern biomedicine and bioengineering actually do give 22-year-olds the power to play with the rules of life itself and dare to be godlike, but the lesson of Frankenstein is that scientific power must be tempered with social responsibility.

We, all of us, are now playing god with our planet, and we are making a mess of it. Still, it is not too late. We can learn the lesson Mary Shelley put forth for us. We do not have to deny our monster, run from it, or feel shame for it. We can learn from Victor's mistakes, take responsibility for global warming, and work to stop it.
(Wysession, 2018)



Toons, 2013,
https://de.toonpool.com/cartoons/Recycling_204240