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Frankenstein: A Cultural History

Susan Tyler Hitchcock

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#669050 in Books W. W. Norton Company 2007-10-17 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.50 x 1.20 x 5.90l, 1.18 #File Name: 0393061442400 pages Great product! | File size: 63.Mb

Susan Tyler Hitchcock : Frankenstein: A Cultural History before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Frankenstein: A Cultural History:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I don't care who you are- READ IT By MadHattressOkay. This text was assigned for a course at my college in which we studied monsters/Gods in popular culture. This book does an amazing job of discussing the Frankenstein myth from a huge variety of viewpoints- in terms of gender expression, corporate structure, etc. This is a text that I will be thrilled to read a second or third time, which is something I very rarely say of "school books" (the other exception, of course, being those involved in a dystopian literature class I took

last year). For anyone who is curious about this book or who adores the modern Prometheus... Just read this. Seriously, now. 6 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Prometheus Unhinged By Samuel D. Uretsky Frankenstein and Dracula were born on the same night -- sort of. The story of how Mary and Percy Shelley, Lord Byron, and Byron's physician, John Polidori, spent an evening in the Villa Diodati, which resulted in the creation of these two seminal horrors has been told often enough, but probably never as well as Ms. Hitchcock does. After that, she goes on to discuss the book, and the frequent reiterations that have helped the Monster adapt to changing social mores and cultural needs. She writes well, and for the most part accurately, making this small cultural icon a fascinating subject. If there is a flaw to the book, and I can't say for certain that there is, it seems as if Ms. Hitchcock has focused narrowly on her subject, and may, perhaps, have accepted general opinions regarding subject that were merely peripheral to the primary theme. A case in point is her dismissal of Lord Byron's treatment of his illegitimate daughter Allegra Byron (Byron chose this spelling as a way of acknowledging parenthood without conferring legitimacy.) Ms. Hitchcock seems to accept the conventional wisdom that Byron was unfeeling and uncaring, as tossed the poor child aside to be raised by a group of Italian nuns -- an opinion which is largely trounced in Doris Langley Moore's "Lord Byron -- Accounts Rendered". I have no convenient way of testing other minor details -- and it's hard to say whether this type of thing really matters given the focus of the book. Since most people haven't read the original novel (it's not an easy read) Ms. Hitchcock gives an excellent understanding of Ms. Shelley's inspiration and creation, and her discussion of the subsequent interpretations of the work is lively and interesting. This is a good academic work suitable for casual reading, and probably a must read for fans of horror movies and horror fiction. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Fire, Good! Frankenstein: A Cultural History, Very Good! By C Baker Hitchcock has provided us with a concise, entertaining, fresh new perspective on one of the most famous monsters of all time. My husband and I thoroughly enjoyed this book and read it aloud to each other (a la the story tellers gathered at Villa Diodati that fateful summer.) The book follows a linear timeline starting with background and a lovely biographical portrait of Mary Shelley. Hitchcock demonstrates excellent research and analysis on the reception and cultural influence of the novel. One of the best Frankenstein books I have ever read, and I've read a few! This book is not merely for the literary scholar but can be enjoyed by anyone who has an appreciation for the novel, history, and/or culture at large. I highly recommend this book! Thank you, Ms. Hitchcock, for such a great read :D

A lively history of the Frankenstein myth, tracing its evolution from a Romantic nightmare to its prominence in today's imaginative landscape. Frankenstein began as the nightmare of an unwed teenage mother in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1816. At a time when the moral universe was shifting and advances in scientific knowledge promised humans dominion over that which had been God's alone, Mary Shelley envisioned a story of human presumption and its misbegotten consequences. Two centuries later, that story is still constantly retold and reinterpreted, from Halloween cartoons to ominous allusions in the public debate, capturing and conveying meaning central to our consciousness today and our concerns for tomorrow. From Victorian musical theater to Boris Karloff with neck bolts, to invocations at the President's Council on Bioethics, the monster and his myth have inspired everyone from cultural critics to comic book addicts. This is a lively and eclectic cultural history, illuminated with dozens of pictures and illustrations, and told with skill and humor. Susan Tyler Hitchcock uses film, literature, history, science, and even punk music to help us understand the meaning of this monster made by man. 68 illustrations

From Publishers Weekly Literary historian Hitchcock (*Mad Mary Lamb: Lunacy and Murder in Literary London*) leads readers on a guided tour of Frankenstein appearances in this colorful and consistently entertaining narrative. The history begins, appropriately, with the monster's unlikely creation by Mary Shelley as a result of a ghost story challenge (also taken up by John William Polidori, whose tale of a vampyre would later inspire Bram Stoker). Hitchcock then lays bare the publishing world of the 19th century, a veritable Wild West of unauthorized stage adaptations, parodies and continuations in which Frankenstein thrived. James Whale's Karloff classic gets its due, as do the disturbing and innovative 1910 Edison Company production and the 1952 live television broadcast starring a drunk Lon Chaney Jr. Running throughout the book is the parallel story of the invocation of Frankenstein in the public discourse as a metaphor for subjects ranging from the Crimean war to genetically modified organisms. While some Frankenstein dilettantes might find the narrow focus of the book somewhat tedious, there are enough strange and delightful anecdotes to keep most readers engaged. Bw illus. (Oct.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. About the Author Susan Tyler Hitchcock's last book was *Mad Mary Lamb: Lunacy and Murder in Literary London*. Married with two children, she lives near Charlottesville, Virginia.