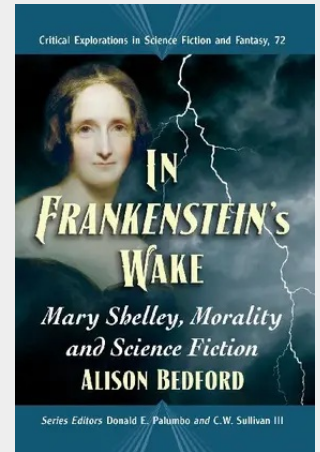


In Frankenstein's Wake

Mary Shelley, Morality and Science Fiction

Just over two hundred years ago on a stormy night, a young woman conceived of what would become one of the most iconic images of science gone wrong, the story of Victor Frankenstein and his Creature. For a long period, Mary Shelley languished in the shadow of her luminary husband, Percy Bysshe Shelley, but was rescued from obscurity by the feminist scholars of the 1970s and 1980s. This book offers a new perspective on Shelley and on science fiction, arguing that Shelley both established a new discursive space for moral thinking and laid the groundwork for the genre of science fiction. Adopting a contextual biographical approach to understand the factors that enabled Shelley to create Frankenstein, and undertaking a close reading of the 1818 and 1831 editions of the text, gives readers insight into how this famous story synthesizes many of the concerns about new science that were prevalent in Shelley's time. Using Michel Foucault's concept of discourse, this work argues that Shelley should be credited with not only the foundation of a genre but recognized as a figure who created a new cultural space for readers to explore their fears and negotiate the moral landscape of new science.

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