

The Bride of Frankenstein
Protagonist: Henry Frankenstein
Personality Model: Raymond Cattell

1. Personality

Doctor Henry Frankenstein is a troubled man. At the beginning of the movie he is almost killed by something he has secretly worked long and hard to create—a man he managed to bring back to life, assembled from dead tissue, stolen from graves. This man, actually this monster Frankenstein made, killed many people before it was presumed destroyed in a fire. It is revealing that Frankenstein's anguish is not for the carnage his monster perpetrated—a consequence that he seems indifferent to—but for the utter failure of his experiment to create a man he could control and master. In fact, Frankenstein seems generally insensitive to the feelings of others, including the feelings of his fiancée, Elizabeth, and remains consumed by the desire to apply his knowledge of science to invent something that no one else has ever come close to inventing.

Because of his devastating failure, Frankenstein is at first reluctant to assist his former professor, Dr Pretorius, to make another monster. His resistance is short lived, and soon he becomes obsessed with the new challenge. He pools his knowledge with Pretorius and works with the same intensity and energy, when making his first creature, to create a bride for that monster.

This description of Frankenstein can be restated using Cattell's sixteen Major Source Traits which he proposed are the primary factors underlying all behavior.

As a scientist Frankenstein appears to have strong Reasoning (Factor B) and

Abstractedness (Factor M) traits. These are traits reflective of an imaginative academic mind, certainly qualities essential for conceiving of a way to bring the dead back to life. However, he does not work in an university or other academic setting but far away and out of touch with other scientists. This suggests that his personality would be high for Privatness (Factor N) and Self-Reliance (Factor Q2) revealing a man who is nondisclosing and solitary. As he noted at one point, "I work better alone." He is also a perfectionist and also a risk taker, indicative of Perfectionism (Factor Q3) and counter indicative of Apprehension (Factor O). Frankenstein's agreeing to help Dr Pretorius create a mate for his monster, although he was distressed by the failure he realized when his own monster ran amok, reveals that he is still willing to take risks and try again to do something daring. Frankenstein also appears moderately high on Dominance (Factor E) that is revealed by his relationship with those around him. (This point will be described in detail below.)

As noted, Frankenstein is a troubled man and has abnormal qualities as defined by Cattell's Major Abnormal traits. He clearly possess High Brooding Discontent, revealed by his restlessness and the excitement he experiences when doing something risky as when he creates a monster using extreme amounts of electricity pulled from the sky during a lightning storm. His behavior also suggest High Anxious Depression, indicated by his general state of tension and by how easily he is upset by setbacks and obstacles.

2. Motivation (i.e., what promotes the protagonist to do whatever he or she does?)

Cattell proposed that both innate and environmentally formed dynamic traits motivate a person to behave in certain ways. Each person has a different profile of these dynamic traits, some which are stronger or weaker in relation to each other. Each individual then will respond

differently to events, reacting with varying degrees of motivation to the various stimuli he or she encounters in his or her environment.

What motivates Frankenstein is revealed in his statement:

If only I could get it out of my mind! I have been cursed for delving into the mysteries of life. . . What a wonderful vision it was. . . I dreamed to be the first to give to the world the secret that God is so jealous of. The formula of life. Think of the power to create a man, and I did it! I created a man. I could have trained him to do my well. I could have created a race. I may have even found the secret of internal life.

This statement reveals that Frankenstein has considerable inborn self assertionness or belief in himself. He has no doubt in himself and his abilities. The monster, in Frankenstein's mind, is proof that he is right—however misformed and destructive that monster is. This statement also reveals his innate explorational nature or curiosity which has an obsessiveness quality. He is driven to investigate the unknown. He does this with a tendency that reveals generally a low self-submissiveness tendency (except when around superior intellectual minds like Dr Pretorius who had a great deal of influence on his life's work---i.e., creating life from dead tissue). In fact, Dr Pretorius and other gifted minds at the university no doubt had a consider impact on the formation of a metaerge, the environmental-formed-motivation-sentiment concerning science and unlocking the secret of life. This appears to be an expansion of sentiments, described in the next section, he formed earlier in his life.

3. Developmental experiences or issues that help explain who the person is as an adult

We know nothing about Frankenstein's childhood other than he grew up in a community in which his family had power and influence. His father was a baron and they lived in a castle. He appears to be an only child, but if he is not, he is likely the oldest or favorite because he is able to do pretty much what he wants, including setting up a laboratory in an old keep, probably

owned by his family for generations. Cattell proposed that early life experiences promote the formation of sentiments---important metaerges. It is reasonable to conclude that young Frankenstein, growing up in a rural area, witnessed the birth and death of both creatures and humans. Observing this from the lofty vantage of his family's castle, he likely became fascinated and desirous to understanding the mystery of life. Being able to acquire a superior education from childhood on, one would suspect that he was taught to consider rational answers to questions about matters like life and came to reject from an early age the superstitions that were generations old and common in his community. By the time he went to the university he was primed to learn rational, scientific explanations for matters that the common folk looked at with superstition and wives tales.

In the intellectual environment of the university (and possibly private schools) young Frankenstein was likely exposed to daring ideas including those of philosophers (like Dr Pretorius) who challenged the notion that there were certain things that God had no intension for man to know.

4. Response to perceived threat (i.e., a threat as defined by the protagonist).

Failure is probably the greatest threat to Frankenstein. Not just any failure but failure to master the mystery of life that he obsesses over. This reflect his determination to not only bring the dead back to life, the focus of his rational, scientific mind and perfectionism, but to control and master his creation.

At this stage in his life, Frankenstein thinks as a scientist and believes he has a mastery that makes it possible for him to do something that normal men would consider impossible. His first monster, one that just won't go away, is living proof of his ability but also of his failure

because of his inability to control the thing. To create another monster Frankenstein puts himself at risk of failing again but does so to demonstrate that the experience with the first monster did not mean that he was a failure. He could master life and prove that he was right.

5. The nature of the relationships with others.

Frankenstein is dominated by the arrogant and domineering Dr Pretorius, to whom he is still like a insecure pupil, despite his own advancements as a scientist. This is an unsettling situation for Frankenstein, given his tendency to dominant those around him. Dr Pretorius has basically forced himself onto Frankenstein who is neither in the position nor state of mind to resist his old professor's persistence.

Normally Frankenstein gravitates toward people who tend to be passive, submissive, or who acquiesce. These are people that he can control. He fell in love with his fiancée, Elizabeth, because he could dominate her. When troubled, she pleads ineffectively with him to stop obsessing on his dangerous experiments, but he respond to her as if she were a child. Even Igor, his lab assistant and "gofer," does what Frankenstein tells him, although the hunchback possesses high psychopathic deviation, is cruel to those inferior to him, and assists his employer in antisocial ways like robbing graves and stealing. In other circumstances Igor is likely less submissive but his boss probably offers him position and opportunity.

Frankenstein's monster creates a serious crisis for Frankenstein because, as has been stated, he cannot control the thing. This failure reflects something about Frankenstein's own personality. We know that the monster can be dociled by kindness and understanding (remember the blind hermit), but these are qualities that Frankenstein lacks. He treats the monster as a thing and the monster respond accordingly, resisting attempt to be controlled.