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## Harold Frederic's The Damnation of Theron Ware: A Study Guide with Annotated Bibliography

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# Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*:

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A best-seller in the 1890s, *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, or *Illumination* as it is known in England, was heralded as “the great American novel,” for its portrayal of the people--their speech, customs, and beliefs--who inhabit the Mohawk Valley in upstate New York, and as “anti-American” in its

subversion of the traditional American myths of the “American Adam” and the “self-made man.”

Rich in complexities, *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is the story of a Methodist minister who loses his faith when he makes the acquaintance of a Catholic priest, a post-Darwinian scientist, a New Woman, and a pragmatic con artist. In the end, critics are in disagreement about the extent of Theron Ware’s damnation or illumination and the degree to which his new friends are responsible for changes in his beliefs and behavior.

An important work of American fiction that deserves greater critical attention, *The Damnation of Theron Ware* must be read within its historical, literary, and cultural context. Significant events and discoveries in the fields of science, technology, religion, philosophy, art, and literature shaped Frederic’s thinking and writing, particularly the events and characters of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. An understanding of this milieu is critical to understanding the issues of this topical yet universal masterpiece.

**Links of Interest****My Bio****Home****Scope**

A study guide with an annotated bibliography of criticism devoted specifically to *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, this ongoing project and research tool is divided into six main sections: (1) the home page, which briefly introduces users to the site, identifies the scope of the project, and provides links to other pages; (2) "Harold Frederic," which includes a [biography](#) of the author, a [timeline of significant events during his lifetime](#), a select [bibliography](#) of his writing, and a sampling of interviews with and articles on [Frederic as author and critic](#); (3) "[Bibliographical Studies](#)," which lists bibliographies, checklists, catalogues, critical overviews, and online resources; (4) "*The Damnation of Theron Ware*," which includes a discussion of the contemporaneous [critical reception](#) of the novel, an annotated [bibliography of criticism](#) in list form and broken down by subject, a bibliography of [dissertations and theses](#), and recommended [discussion questions](#) or topics for essays; (5) a "[Glossary](#)," which includes terms that may be unfamiliar to students; and (6) "[Links of Interest](#)," which directs users to other websites relevant to a study of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.

Partial material is included on contemporaneous reviews (a few are cited in "[Critical Reception](#)" to give readers a sense of the literary environment in which the novel appeared) and dissertations and theses (a complete [bibliography](#) is provided, but without annotations because of the difficulty of obtaining the works from libraries). Hopefully, a section listing conference papers on *The Damnation of Theron Ware* can be added as users contribute bibliographical entries.

I owe a debt of gratitude to those scholars who have invested countless hours researching and compiling the bibliographies, checklists, catalogues, critical overviews, and online resources that have served as the foundation for my own work on Frederic's novel.

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“Harold Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware: A Study Guide with Annotated Bibliography*” is a Master’s Thesis intended as a research tool for high school and undergraduate students and their teachers.

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Submissions, either annotated bibliographical entries or titles, from authors who have written about *The Damnation of Theron Ware* or from anyone who is aware of criticism that has been inadvertently overlooked in this website, are welcome. Respondents will be credited for their contributions. I particularly welcome abstracts of dissertations and theses, since these works are not always readily available from libraries. Suggestions, comments, and corrections are also welcome.

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**Biography of Harold Frederic (1856-1898)**

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## Glossary

Harold Henry Frederic—he dropped the “k” from his name by 1878, possibly earlier—was born in upstate New York to Presbyterian parents, attended a Methodist church, but maintained a skeptical view toward religion most of his life. Frederic was four when the Civil War began and later stated that some of his earliest memories were about the war: “recollections of the hideous anxiety which prevailed among the people round me, recollections of the effect that each piece of news from the seat of war made on my own home-circle” (qtd. in Sherard 64). Frederic dreamed of becoming an artist, but instead turned to journalism and fiction. He has, however, been described as “a worker with the brush,” capable of creating atmosphere, not mere description (Wardwell 227).

Raised primarily by his mother (his father was killed in a train accident when Frederic was only 18 months old), Frederic was encouraged to be independent and to develop habits that would lead to success. A precocious child, he claims to have taught himself to recognize the alphabet from letters on “the label on an old soap-box” and to read by “studying the tradesmen’s signboards” before the age of six (qtd. in Sherard 64). Reading was Frederic’s principal pastime as a child. Indeed, until the age of six Frederic was discouraged from playing with the other children in the neighborhood, which was a mix of German, Welsh, and Irish-Catholic families. He probably started school at age six—Frederic recalls that he was only four—and completed his education at fifteen, when he decided to learn a trade. He considered wood turning, worked briefly for a confectioner, and

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finally settled upon photography “as a practical outlet for his artistic talent” (Myers 9). Frederic spent the next four years as a photographic touch-up artist in his hometown of Utica and later in Boston.

In 1875, Frederic began work as a proofreader for the *Utica Herald* and then the *Utica Daily Observer*. Among his early publications in the *Observer* are five short stories (all appearing between 1876 and 1879) and fifteen articles, twelve of which address sensational subjects, such as murders and hangings. At the age of 24, Frederic was named editor of the *Utica Daily Observer*, a position he held from 1880 until 1882, when he took over the editorship of the more prestigious *Albany Evening Journal*.

Fiercely in favor of reform and frustrated with the machine politics that nominated Republican Charles J. Folger for Governor over the popular incumbent, Frederic, as editor of the *Albany Evening Journal*, was able to influence the traditionally Republican newspaper to support Democrat Grover Cleveland for Governor of New York. When Cleveland won the election, Frederic urged the Governor to recognize that he was “called to the head of the State to serve it, not as a Democrat, nor because he is a Democrat, but as a good citizen, and because his fellow citizens of New York trust him on honor not to do anything else” (qtd. in Myers 30). Frederic defended his continued support for a Democratic Governor to his Republican readers by labeling Cleveland an anomaly among Democrats, a “stray sheep” among “a gang of goats” (qtd. in Myers 31). While Frederic’s outspoken views, particularly those advocating free trade, and his favorable reportage of the Democratic President eventually cost him his job at the *Albany Evening Journal*—he was fired in 1884 when the paper was sold to the son of a Republican Senator—Frederic’s journalism career, and later his reputation as an author, brought him

into contact with many powerful and famous people. Cleveland was elected 22nd President of the United States the same year. Frederic's friendship with Cleveland served him well when he moved to England to become London Correspondent for the *New York Times*, and the President's letter of introduction opened doors for Frederic as he established himself in England.

Shortly after his arrival in England, Frederic made his international reputation as a journalist with coverage of the cholera epidemic in France and Italy, filing over twenty stories (most of these his regular weekly dispatches) on the epidemic between mid-1884 and 1885. Freed from the burden of writing daily editorials, Frederic hoped to devote more time to writing fiction and eventually to earn "a living by honest work in good humane literature" (qtd. in Donaldson viii). He remained a journalist—credited with approximately 1,500 articles, features, and reviews—until his death in 1898, but he also published ten novels between 1887 and 1899 (the year after his death), twenty-three short stories, and two volumes of non-fiction.

Three years after relocating to England, Frederic published his first novel, *Seth's Brother's Wife* (1887)—a story involving adultery, politics, and journalism—"as an experiment" in preparation for writing *In the Valley* (1890), an historical novel set during the Revolutionary War that took eight months to write but, according to Frederic, "represented eleven years of work and preparation" (qtd. in Sherard 67). *The Lawton Girl* was also published in early 1890. Reviews of *Seth's Brother's Wife* were favorable: "The pictures of newspaper life are vivid and amusing. The story is generally admitted to be one of the best of the year" (*Baltimore News*, 6 Nov. 1887). Frederic was particularly pleased with *In the Valley*. In a letter to Cleveland, Frederic wrote, "I myself have so great a liking for its political side that if I could be sure

that every young man in the United States would read it, I should feel like working day and night to provide everyone of them with a free copy” (qtd. in Myers xii). William Dean Howells judged *In the Valley* to be “uncommonly well written,” but not as good as Frederic’s earlier two novels (Howells 800). During the next few years, Frederic published two non-fiction volumes, *The Young Emperor William II of Germany; A Study in Character Development on a Throne* (1891) and *The New Exodus; A Study of Israel in Russia* (1892); an Irish romance, *The Return of the O’Mahony* (1892); two more stories set during the Civil War, *The Copperhead* (1893) and *Marsena* (1894); and a collection of sixteen sketches set in England, *Mrs. Albert Grundy; Observations in Philistia* (1896).

Frederic is best known, however, for his 1896 novel, *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, or *Illumination* as it was known in England, a masterpiece of fin-de-siècle American fiction. Its critical reception was quite favorable: *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is “the strongest book of the year” (“Chronicle and Comment,” Nov. 1896); it is “a really remarkable book” (Eccles 10). The novel became a best seller. Based on Frederic’s personal observations of the relations between Protestants and Irish Catholics, the events and characters in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* were also shaped by changes in scientific and religious thought that were emerging at the end of the nineteenth century. If this were the only novel Frederic had written, it would still be enough to place him alongside writers like Nathaniel Hawthorne, Mark Twain, Henry James, William Dean Howells, and Stephen Crane in the nineteenth-century American canon.

Frederic published two more collections of war stories, *In the Sixties* (1897) and *“The Deserter” and Other Stories; A Book of Two Wars* (1898). However, all of the novels Frederic published after



*The Damnation of Theron Ware—March Hares* (1896), *Gloria Mundi* (1898), and *The Market-Place* (1899)—are set abroad. Perhaps a dozen years as an expatriate influenced Frederic’s change of setting, or perhaps he had simply told the stories he wanted to tell about his beloved Mohawk Valley. In any case, there is no question about Frederic’s literary success.

Frederic married Grace Green Williams in 1877, and they had five children. Unfortunately, “[t]he temperaments of Grace and Harold [Frederic] were unevenly matched from the beginning.” Robert M. Myers suggests that Frederic was a *bon vivant* and that Grace was a shy woman who “proved to be a social liability” to her rising-star husband (19). Sometime in 1889 or 1890, Frederic met fellow-expatriate Kate Lyon, who became his mistress. Frederic and Lyon established a second household in Surrey in 1891 and lived openly together; they had three children. Despite Frederic’s position as London Correspondent for the *New York Times* and his success as a fiction writer, maintaining two households was financially difficult for the journalist-author as evidenced by the public pleas for financial contributions for the children after Frederic’s death. Ironically, *The Market-Place*, published posthumously in 1899, was a “brilliant financial success” (“Personal and Miscellaneous Gossip” 8).

After a summer of illness culminating in a stroke, Frederic died on October 19, 1898. Instead of calling for the doctors to treat Frederic during his two-month-long illness, Lyon and Athalie Mills, practitioners of Christian Science, tried to heal him through faith. Both were charged with manslaughter and arrested, but acquitted. Newspaper coverage of the trial lasted two months, during which time many of the details of Frederic’s living arrangements were made public. Bridget Bennett notes in her study of Frederic, “His life was a series of attempted escapes—from obscurity in



small-town America, from newspaper journalism, from an unsatisfactory marriage. [. . .] He had set himself up as an example of successful escape but on his death—a victim, the newspapers argued, of Christian Science—he was presented as a slave to delusion and folly” (4).

Frederic, sometimes unconventional or even controversial, lived his life by his own rules. He absorbed the lessons his mother taught him and worked hard to become a successful journalist and, especially, writer of fiction. He took the statement of purpose that described the *Albany Evening Journal's* political stand, “Republican, but fearlessly independent,” and made it his own credo (qtd. in Myers 30). He claimed in an 1897 interview, “I live wholly to myself because I like to live an unshackled life. A stiff shirt is to me a badge of servitude. You see that I have the courage to wear a soft one, even in town” (qtd. in Sherard 68). An anonymous writer in one of Frederic’s obituaries writes, Frederic’s death “deprives literary London, in its less conventional moods, of a man of strong activities, both in his personality and in his writings” (“Mr. Harold Frederic” 572). Fortunately, however, modern readers have the pleasure of remembering Frederic through his “great American novel,” *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.

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# Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware:*

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## A Timeline of Significant Events during Harold Frederic's Lifetime

### Harold Frederic

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Most timelines include major political and economic events that shape history, or at least one version of history. In some respects, this timeline is no different. Also included, however, are significant events and discoveries in the fields of science, technology, religion, philosophy, art, and literature that affected the world Harold Frederic knew and wrote about in his journalism and fiction. In particular, the events and characters in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* are shaped by scientific, religious, literary, and philosophical developments in the latter half of the nineteenth century. It is my intent to identify some of the events that may have informed Frederic's writing and, in the process, situate his writing within an historical and cultural context.

Entries begin with 1856, the year of Frederic's birth, and end with 1899, the year after Frederic's death when his last novel was published. Because Frederic spent most of the first 28 years of his life in New York and the last 14 years in and around London, I have included events both in and out of the United States. In addition, events are color-coded and classified as follows:



- Political
- Economic
- Scientific and Technical
- Religious and Philosophical
- Artistic
- Literary
- Other

Items directly involving Frederic are printed in black and are located in either the "United States" or "Outside the United States" columns depending on whether the event (1) occurred in the U.S. and pertained to a U.S. author or issue, or (2) occurred outside the U.S. and pertained to a non-U.S. author or issue.

Year	United States	Outside the United States
1856	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harold Henry Frederick (he dropped the "k" from his name by 1878, possibly earlier) was born August 19 in Utica, New York (d. 1898).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sigmund Freud was born in Austria (d. 1939).</li> <li>• Neanderthal skull was found in Feldhofer Cave near Düsseldorf.</li> </ul>

<b>1857</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irish Republican Brotherhood (the Fenians) was founded in New York.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Portrait Gallery was opened in London.</li> <li>• Victorian and Albert Museum was opened in London.</li> <li>• Transatlantic pipeline installation began (construction continued through 1866).</li> </ul>
<b>1858</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theodore Roosevelt, 26th President of the United States (1901-1909), was born in New York (d. 1919).</li> <li>• Frederic's father was killed in a railroad accident.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Blessed Virgin Mary was reputed to have appeared to Bernadette Soubirous (1844-1879) at Lourdes, France.</li> </ul>
<b>1859</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Origin of Species</i>, by Charles Darwin (1809-1882), was published.</li> <li>• German Emperor William II was born in Germany (d. 1941).</li> </ul>
<b>1860</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) was elected 16th President of the United States (1861-1865).</li> <li>• Free Methodism was established.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 424,000 people from Britain and 914,000 people from Ireland immigrated to the United States (between 1850-1860).</li> </ul>
<b>1861</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil War began on April 12.</li> <li>• United States' population numbered 32 million.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Royal Academy of Music was founded in London.</li> <li>• Great Britain's population numbered 23 million.</li> </ul>
<b>1862</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Edith Wharton was born in New York (d. 1937).</li> </ul>	
<b>1863</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Emancipation Proclamation" became effective on January 1.</li> <li>• National Academy of Sciences was founded in Washington, D.C.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• London Underground Railroad construction began.</li> </ul>
<b>1864</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) was re-elected President of the United States (1865).</li> <li>• Nathaniel Hawthorne died (b. 1804).</li> <li>• "In God We Trust" first appeared on U.S. coins.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pope Pius IX (1792-1878) issued <i>Syllabus Errorum</i>, which condemns Liberalism, Socialism, and Rationalism.</li> </ul>
<p> • Political • Economic • Scientific &amp; Technical • Religious &amp; Philosophical • Artistic • Literary • Other</p>		
<b>1865</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confederate States of America formally surrendered at Appomattox on April 9.</li> <li>• Abraham Lincoln was assassinated on April 14 (b. 1809).</li> <li>• Andrew Johnson (1808-1869) became 17th President of the United States (1865-1869).</li> <li>• Civil War ended on May 26.</li> <li>• Thirteenth Amendment to U.S. Constitution abolished slavery.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christian Revival Association was organized in London (renamed The Salvation Army in 1878).</li> </ul>

1866	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• American Evangelical Alliance was founded.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• London Stock Exchange experienced "Black Friday."</li> </ul>
1867	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Russia sold Alaska to the United States for \$7,200,000.</li> <li>• Gold was discovered in Wyoming.</li> <li>• Father Edward McGlynn (1837-1900) of New York advocated an "American Ideal" in Catholicism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fenian outrages occurred in Ireland and Manchester.</li> <li>• British North American Act established Dominion of Canada.</li> <li>• Pope Pius IX (1792-1878), on the 18th centenary of St. Peter and St. Paul, announced his intention to hold an ecumenical council.</li> </ul>
1868	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885) was elected 18th President of the United States (1869-1873).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881) became British Prime Minister (resigned same year).</li> <li>• William E. Gladstone (1809-1898) succeeded Benjamin Disraeli as British Prime Minister.</li> <li>• Revolution began in Spain.</li> <li>• Skeleton of Cro-Magnon man from Upper Paleolithic age (first homo sapiens in Europe, successor of Neanderthal man) was found in France.</li> </ul>
1869	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Innocents Abroad</i>, by Mark Twain (1835-1910), was published.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parliamentary system was reintroduced in France.</li> <li>• <i>Culture and Anarchy</i>, by Matthew Arnold (1822-1888), was published.</li> </ul>
1870		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Vatican Council officially announced the dogma of papal infallibility.</li> </ul>
1871	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic's formal education ended in the eighth grade.</li> <li>• Frederic began working for various photographers (until 1875).</li> <li>• P. T. Barnum (1810-1891) opened his circus, "The Greatest Show on Earth," in Brooklyn, New York.</li> <li>• Stephen Crane was born in New Jersey (d. 1900).</li> <li>• Theodore Dreiser was born in Indiana (d. 1945).</li> <li>• The Great Fire destroyed large portions of Chicago.</li> <li>• United States' population numbered 39 million.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• William I (1797-1888), King of Prussia, was proclaimed German Emperor at Versailles.</li> <li>• <i>The Descent of Man</i>, by Charles Darwin (1809-1882), was published.</li> <li>• Great Britain's population numbered 26 million.</li> <li>• Ireland's population numbered 5.4 million.</li> <li>• Italian Law of Guarantees, allowing the Pope possession of the Vatican, was established.</li> <li>• First Congress of Old Catholics met in Munich.</li> </ul>
1872	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885) was re-elected President of the United States (1873-1877).</li> <li>• The Brooklyn Bridge was opened.</li> <li>• Horace Greeley, famous for his saying, "Go West, young man," died (b. 1811).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil War began in Spain.</li> <li>• Germany expelled the Jesuits.</li> </ul>



1873	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic moved to Boston (until 1874).</li> <li>• <b>Financial panic occurred in New York in September.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Republic was proclaimed in Spain.</b></li> <li>• <b>Financial panic occurred in Vienna in May.</b></li> </ul>
1874		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Winston Churchill (future British Prime Minister and author) was born in England (d. 1965).</b></li> <li>• <b>Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881) became British Prime Minister for the second time (until 1880).</b></li> </ul>
1875	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic began working as a proofreader for the <i>Utica Herald</i> and the <i>Utica Daily Observer</i>.</li> <li>• Frederic attended a Methodist camp meeting and wrote an essay about his experience.</li> <li>• <i>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer</i>, by Mark Twain (1835-1910), published.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Public Health Act was passed in Britain.</b></li> <li>• <b>London's main sewage system was completed.</b></li> <li>• <i>Le Protestantisme et le Catholicisme (Protestantism and Catholicism)</i>, by Emile Laveleye, was published.</li> <li>• <b>Prussia abolished religious orders.</b></li> </ul>
1876	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic published his first story, "The Two Rochards," in the <i>Utica Daily Observer</i>.</li> <li>• Frederic reviewed a number of novels by William Dean Howells (1837-1920) for the <i>Utica Daily Observer</i>.</li> <li>• <i>Roderick Hudson</i>, by Henry James (1843-1916), was published.</li> <li>• <b>Alexander Graham Bell (1847-1922) invented the telephone.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>George Sand died (b. 1804).</b></li> </ul>
1877	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic married Grace Green Williams on October 10. (They had five children.)</li> <li>• <b>Rutherford B. Hayes (1822-1893) was inaugurated as 19th President of the United States (1877-1881), after a disputed electoral vote.</b></li> <li>• <b>Thomas Edison (1847-1931) invented the phonograph.</b></li> <li>• <i>The American</i>, by Henry James (1843-1916), was published.</li> </ul>	
1878		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Pope Pius IX died (b. 1792).</b></li> <li>• <b>Cardinal Count Pecci was elected Pope Leo XIII (1810-1903).</b></li> <li>• <b>Humbert I (1844-1900) was crowned King of Italy (until 1900).</b></li> </ul>
1879	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"Daisy Miller,"</i> by Henry James (1843-1916), was published.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Anti-Jesuit Laws were introduced in France.</b></li> <li>• <b>St. Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274) was proclaimed a Doctor of the Roman Catholic Church.</b></li> </ul>



• Political • Economic • Scientific & Technical • Religious & Philosophical • Artistic • Literary • Other

<b>1880</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic was named Editor of the <i>Utica Daily Observer</i> (a position held until August 1882).</li> <li>• James Garfield (1831-1881) was elected 20th President of the United States (1881).</li> <li>• Electricity lit the streets of New York for the first time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transvaal declared itself independent of Britain.</li> <li>• Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881) resigned as British Prime Minister.</li> <li>• William E. Gladstone (1809-1898) became British Prime Minister for the second time.</li> </ul>
<b>1881</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• James Garfield was assassinated in September (b. 1831).</li> <li>• Chester Arthur (1830-1886) became 21st President of the United States (1881-1885).</li> <li>• <i>Portrait of a Lady</i>, by Henry James (1843-1916), was published.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vatican first opened its archives to scholars.</li> <li>• Freedom of press was established in France.</li> <li>• Benjamin Disraeli died (b. 1804).</li> </ul>
<b>1882</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic was named Editor of the <i>Albany Evening Journal</i> (a position held until March 1884).</li> <li>• Frederic persuaded his newspaper to support Grover Cleveland for Governor of New York.</li> <li>• Ralph Waldo Emerson died (b. 1803).</li> <li>• United States banned Chinese emigration for 10 years.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fenians murdered Lord Frederick Cavendish and T. H. Burke in Phoenix Park, Dublin.</li> <li>• Charles Darwin died (b. 1809).</li> </ul>
<b>1883</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Northern Pacific Railroad line was completed.</li> <li>• First skyscraper was built in Chicago (10 stories).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Souvenirs d'enfance et de jeunesse (Recollections of My Youth)</i>, by Ernest Renan (1823-1892), was published.</li> </ul>
<b>1884</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grover Cleveland (1837-1908) was elected 22nd President of the United States (1885-1889).</li> <li>• <i>Huckleberry Finn</i>, by Mark Twain (1835-1910), was published.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic moved to England to become London Correspondent for the <i>New York Times</i> (until his death in 1898).</li> <li>• Frederic covered the cholera epidemic in France and Italy.</li> </ul>
<b>1885</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic began correspondence with William Dean Howells (1837-1920).</li> <li>• Ulysses S. Grant died (b. 1822).</li> <li>• Sinclair Lewis was born in Minnesota (d. 1951).</li> </ul>	
<b>1886</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installation of hydroelectric facilities began at Niagara Falls.</li> <li>• <i>The Bostonians</i>, by Henry James (1843-1916), was published.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bonaparte and Orléans families were banished from France.</li> <li>• British Prime Minister William E. Gladstone (1809-1898) introduced bill for Home Rule in Ireland.</li> <li>• <i>Das Kapital</i>, by Karl Marx (1818-1883), was published in English.</li> </ul>

<p><b>1887</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic reviewed <i>Princess Casamassima</i>, by Henry James (1843-1916).</li> <li>• <b>Father McGlynn (1837-1900) was excommunicated.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic's <i>Seth's Brother's Wife</i> was published.</li> <li>• Queen Victoria (1819-1901) celebrated her Golden Jubilee.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1888</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benjamin Harrison (1833-1901) was elected 23rd President of the United States (1889-1893).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• German Emperor William I died in March; Frederick III, who succeeded William I, died in June.</li> <li>• William II (1859-1941), the "Kaiser," succeeded Frederick III (gave up throne when Germany was defeated in 1918).</li> <li>• <b>Matthew Arnold died (b. 1822).</b></li> <li>• "Jack the Ripper" murdered five women in London.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1889</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court</i>, by Mark Twain (1835-1910), was published.</li> <li>• <b>Catholic University was opened in Washington, D.C.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>London Dock Strike occurred.</b></li> <li>• <b>British South Africa Company, headed by Cecil Rhodes (1853-1902), was granted a royal charter.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>1890</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Principles of Psychology</i>, by William James (1842-1910), was published.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic's <i>In the Valley</i> was published.</li> <li>• Frederic's <i>The Lawton Girl</i> was published.</li> <li>• <i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i>, by Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), was published.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1891</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>American Protective Association (APA) was established to promote anti-Catholicism (through 1897).</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic established a second household with mistress Kate Lyon. (They had three children.)</li> <li>• Frederic's <i>The Young Emperor William II of Germany; A Study in Character Development on a Throne</i>, a non-fiction work, was published.</li> <li>• <b>First submarine telephone cable connected London with Paris.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>1892</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grover Cleveland (1837-1908) was elected 24th President of the United States (1893-1897) for a second non-consecutive term.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic's <i>The Return of the O'Mahony</i> was published.</li> <li>• Frederic's <i>The New Exodus; A Study of Israel in Russia</i>, a non-fiction work, was published.</li> <li>• William E. Gladstone (1809-1898) became British Prime Minister for the third time.</li> <li>• <b>Ernest Renan died (b. 1823).</b></li> </ul>

<p><b>1893</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Henry Ford (1863-1947) built his first car.</li> <li>• Father McGlynn (1837-1900) reconciled with the Catholic Church.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic's <i>The Copperhead</i> was published.</li> <li>• Franco-Russian alliance was signed.</li> <li>• Second Irish Home Rule Bill was passed by Commons but rejected by Lords.</li> <li>• "Art Nouveau" appeared in Europe.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1894</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Father McGlynn (1837-1900) was assigned to St. Mary's parish in upstate New York.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic's <i>The Copperhead and Other Stories of the North During the American War</i> was published.</li> <li>• Frederic's <i>Marsena and Other Stories of Wartime</i> was published.</li> <li>• Nicholas II (1868-1918) became Czar (until the revolution in 1917).</li> </ul>
<p><b>1895</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• London School of Economics and Political Science was founded.</li> <li>• Oscar Wilde unsuccessfully sued the Marquis of Queensberry for libel.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1896</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic's <i>The Damnation of Theron Ware</i> was published.</li> <li>• Frederic reviewed <i>The Red Badge of Courage</i>, by Stephen Crane (1871-1900).</li> <li>• William McKinley (1843-1901) was elected 25th President of the United States (1897-1901).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic's <i>The Damnation of Theron Ware</i> was published in England under the title <i>Illumination</i>.</li> <li>• Frederic's <i>March Hares</i> was published.</li> <li>• Frederic's <i>Mrs. Albert Grundy; Observations in Philistia</i> was published.</li> <li>• Frederic's <i>Marsena</i> was published.</li> <li>• Marchese Guglielmo Marconi (1874-1937) patented the wireless telegraph.</li> <li>• Czar Nicholas II visited Paris and London.</li> <li>• Klondike gold rush began.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1897</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic met Stephen Crane (1871-1900). (They became close friends.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic's <i>In the Sixties</i> (a collection of stories) was published.</li> <li>• Severe famine devastated India.</li> <li>• Queen Victoria (1819-1901) celebrated her Diamond Jubilee.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1898</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• United States declared war on Spain over Cuba.</li> <li>• Spain ceded Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines to the United States for \$20 million.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frederic died on October 19 at the age of 42 after an extended illness.</li> <li>• Lyon was charged and acquitted for manslaughter in the negligent death of Frederic.</li> <li>• Frederic's <i>Gloria Mundi</i> was published posthumously (a condensed version of this novel was published in 1913 under the title <i>Pomp and Vanities</i>).</li> <li>• Frederic's <i>"The Deserter" and Other Stories; A Book of Two Wars</i> was published.</li> <li>• William E. Gladstone died (b.</li> </ul>

		1809).
1899	• Horatio Alger died (b. 1832).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Frederic's <i>The Market-Place</i> was published posthumously.</li><li>• Frederic's wife, Grace, died of cancer on March 17.</li><li>• Pope Leo XIII (1810-1903) issued <i>Testem Benevolentiae</i>, which condemns "Americanism."</li></ul>

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# Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware:*

A Study Guide with Annotated Bibliography

## A Select Bibliography of Writings by Harold Frederic

### Harold Frederic

- Biography
- Timeline of Significant Events
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#### *The Damnation of Theron Ware (1896)*

### Critical Reception

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### Areas of Criticism

- Biographical Influences
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### Dissertations & Theses

### Discussion Questions or Topics for Essays

### Glossary

As a journalist and writer of fiction, Frederic produced a great quantity of work between 1876, when his first short story, "The Two Rochards," was published in *The Observer*, and 1898, the year of his death. The following select bibliography of writings by Harold Frederic includes his

- novels (ten published, two posthumously; one more contracted but unwritten),
- short stories (twenty-three published; many republished, some in collections; several unfinished),
- collections (five published during Frederic's lifetime; one in 1966),
- poetry (two; one published and one unpublished),
- plays (four; all unfinished and unpublished), and
- non-fiction books (two published).

It does not include his personal correspondence; 1,144 features and news stories appearing in *The Observer* and *The New York Times*; or some 279 essays, mail letters, and features contributed to nineteen journals and newspapers—such as *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, *Appleton's Journal*, the *Evening Journal* [Albany], *The Pall Mall Gazette*, *The New York Times*, *The Pall Mall Budget*, *The Observer* [Utica], *The Youth's Companion*, *Scribner's Magazine*, *The Welsh Review*, *The Fortnightly Review*, *The Illustrated London News*, *The Saturday Review* [London], *The English Illustrated Magazine*, *The New York Times - Sunday Magazine Supplement*, *The*



## Links of Interest

## My Bio

## Home

*Bookman, The Literary Digest, The Million, and Pearson's Weekly.*

## Fiction

**Novels:** Frederic's ten novels (two sometimes designated "novellas") are listed according to the date when they first appeared in book form, with serialization and other significant publication information in parentheses. Frederic's unwritten novel, tentatively entitled *Kenley*, is listed last.

**Short Stories:** Twenty-three short stories are listed as individual works, with publication and collection information in parentheses. Unfinished stories are included at the end of the listing.

**Collections:** Frederic's six collections are listed according to the date when they first appeared in book form as collections, with other significant publication and collection information in parentheses.

**Poetry:** Frederic's two known poems are listed. One was published in 1879. The other is dated 1888. Additional information is included in parentheses.

**Plays:** These unfinished and unpublished works are listed individually. Descriptive information is included in parentheses.

**Non-fiction Books:** Frederic published two full-length works of non-fiction in addition to his shorter essays, features, and news stories. Both works were serialized in *The New York Times*

before they were available in book form. One is a biography of William II of Germany; the other is a study of the treatment of Jews in contemporary Russia. Additional publication information is included in parentheses.

### **Novels**

**1887** *Seth's Brother's Wife*

(Novel serialized in *Scribner's Magazine* between January-November 1887. Published in book form in New York and London in 1887. Republished in London in 1888. An Australian publication announced in 1890, but no surviving copy is known.)

**1890** *In the Valley*

(Novel serialized in *Scribner's Magazine* between September 1889-July 1890. Published in book form in New York and London in 1890. Reportedly republished in London in 1891, but no surviving copy is known. Republished with an introduction by William Senior in Australia and London in 1891.)

*The Lawton Girl*

(Novel; not serialized. Published in book form in New York and London in 1890. Reportedly republished in Australia in 1891, but no surviving copy is known.)

**1892** *The Return of the O'Mahony*

(Novel serialized in *The New York Ledger* between April-July 1892. Republished in New York in three series: The Ledger Library No. 71 and The Choice Series No. 71, both in 1892, and The Popular Series No. 108 in 1897. Republished in London in 1893. An Australian publication announced in 1893, but no surviving copy is known. Reportedly republished in London in 1896, but no surviving copy is known. Republished in New York in 1899.)

1893 *The Copperhead*

(Novel, or novella, serialized in *Scribner's Magazine* between July-November 1893. Published in New York in 1893. See also "Collections.")

1896 *Marsena*

(Novel, or novella, serialized in *The New York Times* between April-June 1894; also serialized in *Irish Catholic and Nation* between May-June 1894. Published in London in 1896. See also "Collections.")

*The Damnation of Theron Ware, or  
Illumination*

(Novel; not serialized. Published in Chicago under the title of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and in London and Leipzig under the title of *Illumination*, all in 1896. Subsequent printings in the United States add the subtitle "*or Illumination.*")

*March Hares*

(Novel; not serialized. English edition published in London in 1896 under the pseudonym "George Forth"; beginning with the third edition, issued under Harold Frederic's name. American edition reportedly published in New York in 1896 under the pseudonym, but no surviving copy is known.)

1898 *Gloria Mundi*

(Novel serialized in *The Cosmopolitan* between January-November 1898. Published in Chicago, New York, and London in 1898. A condensed version of the novel was published in 1913 under the title *Pomp and Vanities*.)

1899 *The Market-Place*

(Novel serialized in *The Saturday Evening Post* between December 1898-June 1899 and *The West-End* between February-June 1899. Published in New York and London in 1899.)

*Kenley*

(An unwritten novel. Frederic signed a contract with Heinemann, his London publisher, in July 1898 for this novel that he planned but never wrote.)

**Short Stories**

1876 "The Two Rochards"

(Published in *The Observer* [Utica] on September 30 and October 7 under the pseudonym "Edgar.")

**“A Fortunate Confidence”**

(Published in *The Observer* on November 18 under the pseudonym “Edgar.”)

**“Barbette’s Christmas”**

(Published in *The Observer* on December 23.)

**1877 “The Blakelys of Poplar Place, A Legend of the Mohawk”**

(Published in *The Observer* on June 30.)

**1879 “Brother Sebastian’s Friendship”**

(First published in *The Observer* on September 6. Subsequently published in *The Evening Journal* [Albany] on April 21, 1883; *Stories by American Authors* in 1884; *Library of American Fiction* in 1904; *Short Story Classics (American)* in 1905; and *Great American Short Stories* in 1931.)

**1882 “The Jew’s Christmas”**

(Published in *The Evening Journal* [Albany] on December 23.)

**1886 “Brother Angelan”**

(Published in *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* in September.)

**1888 “The Editor and the Schoolm’am”**

(Published in *The New York Times* on September 9.)

**1890 "The Martyrdom of Maev"**

(Published in *The New York Ledger* on March 22 and 29. Abridged as "The Martyrdom of Fair Maev Carew" in *The Ledger Monthly* in March and April 1899.)

**1891 "The Song of the Swamp-Robin"**

(Published in *The Independent* on March 12 and 19.)

**"Where Avon Into Severn Flows"**

(Published in *Black and White* on October 17 and 24. Included in the collection "*The Deserter*" and *Other Stories; A Book of Two Wars* published in 1898.)

**1892 "My Aunt Susan"**

(Published in *The Independent* on June 9. Included in the collections "*Marsena*" and *Other Stories of the Wartime* published in 1894; "*The Copperhead*" and *Other Stories of the North During the American War* published in 1894 and 1896; *In the Sixties* published in 1897; and *Harold Frederic's Stories of York State* published in 1966.)

**"How Dickon Came By His Name. A Tale of Christmas in the Olden Time"**

(First published in *The Youth's Companion* on November 3, 10, 17, and December 1. Subsequently published in *Irish Catholic and Nation* on January 20 and 27, 1894. Included in the collection "*The Deserter*" and *Other Stories; A Book of Two Wars* published in 1898.)



**1893 "The Eve of the Fourth"**

(First published in *St. Nicholas Magazine* in July 1893. Subsequently published in *American Short Stories* in 1904; *The Young Man in American Literature: The Initiation Theme* in 1969; and *The American Tradition in Literature* in 1974. Included in the collections "*Marsena*" and *Other Stories of the Wartime* published in 1894; "*The Copperhead*" and *Other Stories of the North During the American War* published in 1894 and 1896; *In the Sixties* published in 1897; and *Harold Frederic's Stories of York State* published in 1966.)

**"The War Widow"**

(First published in *The Independent* on October 12 and 19. Subsequently published in *The Illustrated London News* on October 14 and 21 and *Great Short Works of American Realism* in 1968. Included in the collections "*Marsena*" and *Other Stories of the Wartime* published in 1894; "*The Copperhead*" and *Other Stories of the North During the American War* published in 1894 and 1896; *In the Sixties* published in 1897; and *Harold Frederic's Stories of York State* published in 1966.)

**"Cordelia and the Moon"**

(Published in *The First Book of the Authors Club: Liber Scriptorum*.)

**1894 "The Deserter"**

(First published in *The Youth's Companion* on January 4, 11, 18, 25, and February 1, 8, and 15. Subsequently published in *Irish Catholic and Nation* on March 24 and 31 and April 1 and 14. Included in the collections "*The Deserter*" and *Other Stories*; *A Book of Two Wars* published in 1898 and *Harold Frederic's Stories of York State* published in 1966.)

1895 "A Day in the Wilderness"

(First published in *The Youth's Companion* on May 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30. Subsequently published in *Irish Catholic and Nation* on June 1, 8, 15, and 22. Included in the collections "*The Deserter*" and *Other Stories*; *A Book of Two Wars* published in 1898 and *Harold Frederic's Stories of York State* published in 1966.)

"The Path of Murtoogh"

(First published in *The Idler* in May. Subsequently published in *Tales of Our Coast* in 1896 and 1901 and *There is Sorrow on the Sea* in 1921.)

"The Truce of the Bishop"

(First published in *The Yellow Book* in October. Subsequently published in *The Yellow Book: Quintessence of the Nineties* in 1964.)

"In the Shadow of Gabriel"

(First published in *The New York Ledger* on December 21. Subsequently published in *Black and White* on December 25.)

1896 “The Wooing of Teige”

(First published in *The Pall Mall Magazine* in November. Subsequently published in *Little’s Living Age* on November 14 and *Great Love Stories by Famous Authors* in 1940.)

“The Connoisseur”

(First published in *The Saturday Review* [London] on December 25. Subsequently published in *The New York Ledger* on January 2, 1897, and *The Pocket Magazine* in March 1897.)

?? “Brother Theobald’s Favorite Pupil”

(a manuscript fragment of an unpublished short story)

“Brother Pancras”

(a manuscript fragment of an unpublished short story)

“Dr. Ramsdal’s Friends”

(an unfinished, unpublished short story)

“The Story of Peter Zarl”

(an unpublished early short story)

Civil War stories

(unfinished and untitled short stories)

**Collections**

**1894** *"The Copperhead" and Other Stories of the North During the American War*

(Collection containing *The Copperhead*, "The War Widow," "The Eve of the Fourth," and "My Aunt Susan"; published in London in 1894 and 1896. See also "Novels.")

*"Marsena" and Other Stories of the Wartime*

(Collection containing *Marsena*, "The War Widow," "The Eve of the Fourth," and "My Aunt Susan"; published in New York in 1894. See also "Novels.")

**1896** *Mrs. Albert Grundy; Observations in Philistia*

(Collection of sixteen sketches serialized in *The National Observer* between February 1892-December 1893. Published English and American editions in book form in London and New York in 1896.)

**1897** *In the Sixties*

(Collection containing "Preface to a Uniform Edition," *The Copperhead*, *Marsena*, "The War Widow," "The Eve of the Fourth," and "My Aunt Susan"; published in 1897.)

**1898** *"The Deserter" and Other Stories; A Book of Two Wars*

(Collection containing "The Deserter," "A Day in the Wilderness," "How Dickon Came By His Name," and "Where Avon Into Severn Flows"; published in 1898.)

1966 *Harold Frederic's Stories of York State*

(Collection containing an Introduction by Edmund Wilson, *The Copperhead*, "The Deserter," *Marsena*, "A Day in the Wilderness," "The War Widow," "The Eve of the Fourth," and "My Aunt Susan"; published in 1966.)

**Poetry**

1879 "The Opium-Eater"

(Published in *The Observer* on January 19. Reprinted in the *Frederic Herald* in January 1968.)

1888 "August 19"

("From the birthday book of Ruth Frederic," this is an unpublished 6-line poem dated March 4.)

**Plays**

?? *Strathbogie*

(an unfinished play; Act I and part of Act II)

Problem play about an American painter in Europe with his wife (untitled and unfinished; three acts)

Historical play about Sithberga of the Franks (untitled and unfinished; fragments of Acts I and III)

Contemporary play with a setting at Fernslope (untitled and unfinished; fragment)

### **Non-Fiction**

1891 *The Young Emperor William II of Germany; A Study in Character Development on a Throne*

(Serialized in *The New York Times* between June-August 1890 under the title "An Empire's Young Chief." Published in New York and London in 1891. Second revised edition published in New York and London in 1892. French translation entitled *Un Jeune Empereur, Guillaume II d'Allemagne* published in 1894.)

1892 *The New Exodus; A Study of Israel in Russia*

(Serialized in *The New York Times* between September-December 1891 under the title "An Indictment of Russia." Published in New York and London in 1892.)

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# Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*:

A Study Guide with Annotated Bibliography

## Harold Frederic and His Contemporaries: On Writing

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Many articles are available that reveal Frederic's and his contemporaries' views on writing. The first section below cites articles and interviews in which Frederic comments on his writing; the second, articles in which Frederic discusses Henry James and Stephen Crane; and the third, editorials and articles in which a range of writers comment on Frederic's work.

### Frederic on His Writing

The following articles contain insights into Frederic's writing methods and habits as revealed by the author himself. The interviews with Arthur Warren and Robert Sherard are most informative. The July 1896 article in *Bookman* quotes liberally from the Warren interview; the article in *Current Literature* is simply a reprinted excerpt of the same interview. The March 1897 article in *Bookman* is primarily a brief response to Robert Barr's view of the length of a short story.

Warren, Arthur. "An American Journalist in London. A Chat with Mr. Harold Frederic." *The Sketch*. March 13, 1895. Rpt. in Morace, Robert A. "Arthur Warren's and Robert Sherard's Interviews with Harold Frederic." *American Literary Realism* 11.1 (1978): 52-70.

Warren observes that Frederic "seem[s] to have more leisure than a member of the House of Peers, and yet [. . . turns] out a prodigious amount of 'copy.'" When asked how he manages it, Frederic responded, "System, my boy, system" (59). Frederic's mornings and evenings are spent writing—certain days are dedicated to his newspaper writing while other days are devoted to his novel writing. A portion of every day is reserved for reading. On the subject of how he prepares to write a novel, Frederic responded that he starts by getting to know his characters "through and through. They make the story 'off their own bat' once they have been started." He is also a thorough researcher. For *In the Valley*, a story of "American life during the colonial period," Frederic claims to have "made eleven years' study of the domestic and political history of that time, the records, the 'costumes and properties.'" Referring to his work-in-progress, *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, Frederic stated,

I am now writing a novel, the people of which I have been carrying about with me, night and day, for fully five years. After I had got them grouped together in my

mind, I set myself the task of knowing everything they know. As four of them happen to be specialists in different professions, the task has been tremendous. For instance, one of them is a biologist, who, among many other things, is experimenting on Lubbock's and Darwin's lines. Although these pursuits are merely mentioned, I have got up masses of stuff on bees and the cross-fertilization of plants. I have had to teach myself all the details of a Methodist minister's work, obligations, and daily routine, and all the machinery of his Church. Another character is a priest, who is a good deal more of a pagan than a simple-minded Christian. He loves luxury and learning. I have studied the arts he loves as well as his theology; I have waded in Assyriology and Schopenhauer; pored over palimpsests and pottery; and, in order to write understandingly about a musician who figures in the story, I have bored a professional friend to death getting technical musical stuff from him. I don't say this is the right way to build novels; only, it is my way.

According to Frederic, his novels shape themselves: "It [the novel] shapes itself as I go along. Then I write as I go along an elaborate sketch of what is just before me, chapter by chapter, noting down the incidents, leading bits of conversation, descriptions of characters and localities, straight up to the finish" (60). "[W]hen it's finished," stated Frederic, "I'm sorry. The pleasure of a novelist's life is living with his characters. [. . .] Then the people go out into the world, and he loses sight of them, and has to begin all over again, and create a new set of friends" (60-61).

"Chronicle and Comment." *Bookman* (New York) 3 (July 1896): 383-84.

Most of the material is borrowed from the Warren interview in *The Sketch*. "Mr. Frederic takes great pains with his manuscript," the writer paraphrases. "The penmanship is very minute and clear, and as fine as copperplate" (384).

"Harold Frederic: Author of *Theron Ware*." *Current Literature* 20 (July 1896): 14.

Warren's interview with Frederic is excerpted. No new material is presented.

"How to Write a Short Story: A Symposium." *The Bookman* 5 (Mar. 1897): 42-46. With Robert Barr, Harold Frederic, Arthur Morrison, and Jane Barlow. Rpt. in "On Historical Novels, Past and Present."

*The Bookman* (New York) 8 (Dec. 1898): 330-33.

Frederic's comments are a polite response to Robert Barr's view that short stories should be short, less than 6,000 words: "The term 'short story' is used now to cover indiscriminately the small novel of fifteen thousand words and the yarn of twenty-five hundred. Somewhere in this wide range, after hunting about a good deal, the individual writer finds the sort of thing that he is most effective and at home in." Speaking for himself and his own practices, Frederic writes, "I may say that for a number of years I have declined to accept any commission for a short story under five thousand words. This means simply that I cannot turn myself round inside narrower limits, with results at all satisfactory to my conception of what I ought to be doing. It may be answered very logically that this shows I cannot write short stories, but I should have an equal right to retort that short stories begin at five thousand words, and that under that limit of length they are yarns." (45)

Sherard, Robert H. "Harold Frederic." *The Idler*. November 1897. Rpt. in Morace, Robert A. "Arthur Warren's and Robert Sherard's Interviews with Harold Frederic." *American Literary Realism* 11.1 (1978): 52-70.

Sherard writes that Frederic "was an extraordinarily precocious child" who taught himself to "read by studying the tradesmen's signboards" (64). His earliest recollections are about the Civil War, and these recollections inform his books *The Copperhead* and *Marsena*. Erckmann, Chatrian, and Hawthorne are described as Frederic's literary parents: "It was they," Frederic explained, "who made me determine that I too would write" (66). After throwing out more than fifty thousand words that represent numerous false starts to *In the Valley*, Frederic realized that he "did not know how to make a book, how to cover a canvas." He wrote *Seth's Brother's Wife* "off-hand, and purely as an experiment" (67). On poetry, Frederic refers to "that passage in Meredith's *Emilia in England* where it [poetry] is compared to the Polar bear, who walks up and down his cage, and is brought to a halt every time he has taken a few paces ahead." Frederic claims to have "never written two lines of poetry" in his life, but in fact he did write at least two poems. According to Frederic, "the author's responsibility is becoming greater day by day, and it is his duty, such is my firm conviction, to do nothing which is not better than the things among which people live, to write nothing which does not suggest thought and tell them the truth, and bear their minds cleanly and honest good company" (68).

### **Frederic on the Writing of His Contemporaries**

In addition to being a journalist and a writer of fiction, Frederic was also a literary critic. Below are some examples of Frederic's

comments on works written by his contemporaries.

“European Gossip.” *The New-York Times*, 3 July 1887: 10.

“Some years ago, when a caustic pen first sketched ‘Daisy Miller’ for the public gaze and Americans were in the early flush of their indignation at what they regarded as a cruel caricature, I remember having shared very keenly the almost national indignation of the period. Nobody was able to believe that the picture of the Millers was other than a biting burlesque. Yet we all said to ourselves or in print: ‘Even if it were true to the letter, no American should have written it. Let the Dickenses and Mrs. Trollopes and Lepel Griffins lampoon us if they like; it is their nature to. But the American himself should have too much pride to say such things about his countrymen, even if they seem to him to be true.’ I dare say this still represents very fairly the general American view about ‘Daisy Miller’ and kindred books of satire, humorous or sorrowful, upon the American abroad. And there may be some risk in making the confession that the longer one lives over here [in England] the more he finds mingled amazement and pain in the character which the tourist Americans, as a whole, contrive to give to Brother Jonathan in European eyes.”

“Old World Gossip.” *The New-York Times*, 23 Oct. 1887: 13.

“Henry James’s new novel, ‘The Princess Casamassima,’ appears to have attracted more attention here than has been given it in the United States. There is the general reason for this that the book is cheaper here than it is on the other side, where people pay cast iron publishers’ prices. Here it is published nominally at 6s. (\$1.30) but nobody dreams of paying that price for it, when at every other bookstall he can get the quarter discount, which puts it down to \$1.10. Then, again, there are the facts of the circulating libraries, and of the cheap paper editions of Mr. James’s other novels, which have given him thirty readers in Europe to one in his own country. They know our chief writers—that is, the ones who are supposed to be worth pirating—vastly better here than we do at home. The average leader writer in an English paper points his articles with quotations from ‘The Biglow Papers’ and ‘The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table’ every other day. He knows his Lowell as well almost as he does his Shakespeare, and is surprised to find that the casual American scarcely knows him at all. But if the Englishman had to pay \$2 for his Lowell instead of 9 cents, perhaps he wouldn’t know him so well.

“But the chief interest in Mr. James’s new story here is in the admirable sketches of out-of-door London it contains. Some of these have never been equaled, I think, by any other hand, and the slightest of them has the stamp of a master’s touch. In human interest perhaps the book will not appeal to readers as does, for example, Walter Besant’s ‘Children of Gibeon.’ Both books deal with



people who are engaged with more or less success and sincerity in the task of ameliorating the condition of London's poor. Mr. Besant is tremendously in earnest over this task; he is eager to see it carried forward, and every line in his picture is made to end toward this object. His good people are almost lay figures, so engrossed is their creator in the work he makes them do, and so little does he care for their personalities outside this work of theirs. Mr. James, on the other hand, displays not a vestige of enthusiasm for the humanitarian aims which his chief characters profess and discuss. His heart may all the time be throbbing as vehemently as Mr. Besant's itself over the miseries and wrongs of this great modern Babylon, but if that were the case, he dissembles his emotions with perfect skill. He takes a group of these philanthropists and agitators, and puts them under a microscope. We get a startling sense not only of the sharp differences of mind, nature, and soul which separate them, but of deformities existing side by side with the good traits which dictate their general reforming tendencies. Each of them had seemed to be on the whole a beneficent creature, upon casual inspection. Thrown together on the disc and studied through the pitiless magnifying glass, they become terrible and hideous—playing a drama which now repels, now attracts, and is never really comprehensible, and ending with a central tragedy only a little more painful than the suggestion of broken hearts which form it all about. It seems to me as if 'The Princess Casamassima' had been written under the influence of a prolonged course of reading in Russian novels. It is as vivid and comprehensive as Tolstoi—as hopeless and badly cynical as Dostoieffsky. As I have said, it is the novel of the year here.

“One figure in the book, the simple spinster daughter of an Earl, who devotes her whole life to doing good, is particularly fine as a realistic study. I say this because to most American readers she will doubtless seem the closest approach in the novel to a caricature. It is natural enough for us at home, brought up in an atmosphere which is too rarified to support an aristocracy, to assume that people of noble birth must at least have mastered the trick of self-possession in their carriage and manners; that whatever else they may be, they will surely have learned how to manage their hands and feet and appear at their ease. Nothing has interested me more about the British aristocrat—whom I like very much to study when chance affords, much as a wild monkey would enjoy studying a cage-bred cousin—than the fact that he is not, as a rule, easy in his bearing, and is apt to be highly self-conscious. The Lady Angela in Mr. James's novel is a perfect picture, so far as her diffident ways, her awkward twitching of shoulders and wagging of head go, of a large number of her class. The inward fire of devotion to humanity which glorifies her shambling gait and plain face is not quite so common.

“Yet the aristocracy, as a whole, do a great deal for the poor. There is such a prodigious mass of acute poverty here that one gets easily into the habit of giving. I should think that the ordinary family with an

annual income of \$5,000 counts upon giving away \$200 or \$300 each year, partly in subscriptions to organized charities, partly in donations to relieve individual cases of suffering. It is not that the Englishman is a softer hearted man than any other, but he has a semi-feudal state of society about him of which alms-giving is a natural and necessary part. The poor charwoman or sweep who is taken ill or falls into difficulties applies at once for charity to the big houses which give them sporadic employment, quite as the unlucky negro in the South looks to the 'big house' for help in his troubles. There is no feeling of degradation about it—no sense of a loss of independence or self-respect. There has never been any assumption of independence in the first place. The sweep touches his hat to you; it is quite a matter of course that when he gets into trouble you should recognize your responsibility toward him in return, and give him half a crown. It is the price you pay for belonging to your class.

“As I have said, the English nobility, as a rule recognize this obligation cordially, and give away large sums of money. But there are not many among their women who engage in personal philanthropic work, like the character in Mr. James’s novel, and there seems no successor to Lord Shaftenbury among the men of the peerage. Lord William Compton is indeed a very distinguished and estimable young worker in the slums, and the recent death of his brother has made him the heir to the title and property of his father, the Marquis of Northampton. But he seems to have strayed off into socialistic sympathies which cannot but militate against his success in organizing any great and lasting good for the wretched of London.”

*The New-York Times*, 12 Jan. 1896.

(Two weeks before Frederic reviewed Stephen Crane’s *The Red Badge of Courage*, the following short note appeared among other general news in Frederic’s weekly dispatch from London.)

“The general reader, however, is talking a hundred times more about ‘The Red Badge of Courage,’ written by Stephen Crane, who is presumably an American, but is said to be quite young and unknown, though he is understood to be living here. I have never known any other book to make its own way among the critics so absolutely swiftly. Everybody who reads it talks of nothing else. *The Saturday Review* gives it nearly two pages at the head of its list today, and everywhere else it is getting exceptional attention.”

“Stephen Crane’s Triumph.” *The New-York Times*, 26 Jan. 1896: 22.

“Who in London knows about Stephen Crane? This question is one of genuine interest here. It happens, annoyingly enough, that the one publishing person who might throw some light on the answer is



for the moment absent from town. Other sources yield only the meagre [sic] information that the name is believed to be real, and not an assumed, one, and that its owner is understood to be a very young man, indeed. That he is an American, or, at least, learned to read and write in America, is obvious enough. The mere presence in his vocabulary of the verb 'loan' would settle that, if the proof were not otherwise blazoned on every page of his extraordinary book. For this mysteriously unknown youth has really written an extraordinary book.

“‘The Red Badge of Courage’ appeared a couple of months ago, unheralded and unnoticed, in a series which, under the distinctive label of ‘Pioneer,’ is popularly supposed to present fiction more of less after the order of ‘The Green Carnation,’ which was also of that lot. The first one who mentioned in my hearing that his ‘Red Badge’ was well worth reading happened to be a person whose literary admirations serve me generally as warnings what to avoid, and I remembered the title languidly from that standpoint of self-protection. A little later others began to speak of it. All at once, every bookish person had it at his tongue’s end. It was clearly a book to read, and I read it. Even as I did so, reviews burst forth in a dozen quarters, hailing it as extraordinary. Some were naturally more excited and voluble than others, but all the critics showed, and continue to show, their sense of being in the presence of something not like other things. George Wyndham, M. P., has already written of it in *The New Review* as ‘a remarkable book.’ Other magazine editors have articles about it in preparation, and it is evident that for the next few months it is to be more talked about than anything else in current literature. It seems almost equally certain that it will be kept alive, as one of the deathless books which must be read by everybody who desires to be, or to seem, a connoisseur of modern fiction.

“If there were in existence any books of a similar character, one could start confidently by saying that it was the best of its kind. But it has no fellows. It is a book outside of all classification. So unlike anything else is it, that the temptation rises to deny that it is a book at all. When one searches for comparisons, they can only be found by culling out selected portions from the trunks of masterpieces, and considering these detached fragments, one by one, with reference to the ‘Red Badge,’ which is itself a fragment, and yet is complete. Thus one lifts the best battle pictures from Tolstoi’s great ‘War and Peace,’ from Balzac’s ‘Chouans,’ from Hugo’s ‘Les Miserables,’ and the forest fight in ‘93,’ from Prosper Merimee’s assault of the redoubt, from Zola’s ‘La Debacle’ and ‘Attack on the Mill,’ it is strange enough that equivalents in the literature of our own language do not suggest themselves, and studies them side by side with this tremendously effective battle painting by the unknown youngster. Positively they are cold and ineffectual beside it. The praise may sound exaggerated, but really it is inadequate. These renowned battle descriptions of the big men are made to seem all wrong. The ‘Red Badge’ impels the

feeling that the actual truth about a battle has never been guessed before.

“In construction the book is a original as in its unique grasp of a new grouping of old materials. All the historic and prescribed machinery of the romance is thrust aside. One barely knows the name of the hero; it is only dimly sketched in that he was a farm boy and had a mother when he enlisted. These facts recur to him once or twice; they play no larger part in the reader’s mind. Only two other characters are mentioned by name—Jim Conklin and Wilson; more often even they are spoken of as the tall soldier and the loud soldier. Not a word is expended on telling where they come from, or who they are. They pass across the picture, or shift from one posture to another in its moving composition with the impersonality of one’s chance fellow-passengers in a railroad car. There is a lieutenant who swears new oaths all the while, another officer with a red beard, and two or three still vaguer figures, revealed here and there through the smoke. We do not know, or seek to know, their names, or anything about them except what, staring through the eyes of Henry Fleming, we are permitted to see. The regiment itself, the refugees from other regiments in the crowded flight, and the enemy on the other side of the fence, are differentiated only as they wear blue or gray. We never get their color out of our mind’s eye. This exhausts the dramatis personae of the book, and yet it is more vehemently alive and heaving with dramatic human action than any other book of our time. The people are all strangers to us, but the sight of them stirs the profoundest emotions of interest in our breasts. What they do appeals as vividly to our consciousness as if we had known them all our life.

“The central idea of the book is of less importance than the magnificent graft of externals upon it. We begin with the young raw recruit, hearing that at last his regiment is going to see some fighting, and brooding over the problem of his own behavior under fire. We follow his perturbed meditations through thirty pages, which cover a week or so of this menace of action. Then suddenly, with one gray morning, the ordeal breaks abruptly over the youngster’s head. We go with him, so close that he is never out of sight, for two terribly crowded days, and then the book is at an end. This cross-section of his experience is made a part of our own. We see with his eyes, think with his mind, quail or thrill with his nerves. He strives to argue himself into the conventional soldier’s bravery; he runs ingloriously away; he excuses, defends, and abhors himself in turn; he tremblingly yields to the sinister fascination of creeping near the battle; he basely allows his comrades to ascribe to heroism the wound he received in the frenzied ‘sauve qui peut’ [stampede] of the fight; he gets at last the fire of combat in his veins, and blindly rushing in, departs himself with such hardy and temerarious valor that even the Colonel notes him, and admits that he is a ‘jim-hickey.’ These sequent processes, observed with relentless minutiae, are so powerfully and speakingly portrayed that they seem the veritable

actions of our own minds. To produce this effect is a notable triumph, but it is commonplace by comparison with the other triumph of making us realize what Henry saw and heard as well as what he felt. The value of the former feat has the limitation of the individual. No two people are absolutely alike; any other young farm boy would have passed through the trial with something different somewhere. Where Henry fluttered, he might have been obtuse; neither the early panic nor the later irrational ferocity would necessarily have been just the same. But the picture of the trial itself seems to me never to have been painted as well before.

“Oddly enough, *The Saturday Review* and some other of the commentators take it for granted that the writer of the ‘Red Badge’ must have seen real warfare. ‘The extremely vivid touches of detail convince us,’ says *The Review*, ‘that he has had personal experience of the scenes he depicts. Certainly, if his book were altogether a work of imagination, unbased on personal experience, his realism would be nothing short of a miracle.’ This may strike the reader who has not thought much about it as reasonable, but I believe it to be wholly fallacious. Some years ago I had before me the task of writing some battle chapters in a book I was at work upon. The novel naturally led up to the climax of a battle, and I was excusably anxious that when I finally got to this battle, I should be as fit to handle it as it was possible to make myself. A very considerable literature existed about the actual struggle, which was the Revolutionary battle of Oriskany, fought only a few miles from where I was born. This literature was in part the narratives of survivors of the fight, in part imaginative accounts based on these by later writers. I found to my surprise that the people who were really in the fight gave one much less of an idea of a desperate forest combat than did those who pictured it in fancy. Of course, here it might be that the veterans were inferior in powers of narration to the professional writer. Then I extended the test to writers themselves. I compared the best accounts of Franco-German battles, written for the London newspapers by trained correspondents of distinction who were on the spot, with the choicest imaginative work of novelists, some of them mentioned above, who had never seen a gun fired in anger.

“There was literally no comparison between the two. The line between journalism and literature obtruded itself steadily. Nor were cases lacking in which some of these war correspondents had in other departments of work showed themselves capable of true literature. I have the instance of David Christie Murray in mind. He saw some of the stiffest fighting that was done in his time, and that, too, at an early stage of his career, but he never tried to put a great battle chapter into one of his subsequent novels, and if he had I don't believe it would have been great.

“Our own writers of the elder generation illustrate this same truth. Gen. Lew Wallace, Judge Tourgée, Dr. Weir Mitchell, and numbers of others saw tremendous struggles on the battlefield, but to put the

reality into type baffles them. The four huge volumes of The Century's 'Battles and Leaders of the Civil War' are written almost exclusively by men who took an active part in the war, and many of them were in addition men of high education and considerable literary talent, but there is not a really moving story of a fight in the whole work. When Warren Lee Goss began his 'Personal Recollections of a Private,' his study of the enlistment, the early marching and drilling, and the new experiences of camp life was so piquant and fresh that I grew quite excited in anticipation. But when he came to the fighting, he fell flat. The same may be said, with more reservations, about the first parts of Judge Tourgée's more recent 'Story of a Thousand.' It seems as if the actual sight of a battle has some dynamic quality in it which overwhelms and crushes the literary faculty in the observer. At best, he gives us a conventional account of what happened; but on analysis you find that this is not what he really saw, but what all his reading has taught him that he must have seen. In the same way battle painters depict horses in motion, not as they actually move, but as it has been agreed by numberless generations of draughtsmen to say that they move. At last, along comes a Muybridge, with his instantaneous camera, and shows that the real motion is entirely different.

"It is this effect of a photographic revelation which startles and fascinates one in 'The Red Badge of Courage.' The product is breathlessly interesting, but still more so is the suggestion behind it that a novel force has been disclosed, which may do all sorts of other remarkable things. Prophecy is known of old as a tricky and thankless hag, but all the same I cannot close my ears to her hint that a young man who can write such a first book as that will make us all sit up in good time."

(For electronic versions of the short note that appeared in Frederic's regular *New York Times* column and the full-length review that appeared two weeks later under the title "Stephen Crane's Triumph," see

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/CRANE/reviews/frederic.html>.

)

### **Frederic's Contemporaries on His Writing**

Frederic earned accolades both as a journalist and as a writer of fiction. Below is a sampling of what his contemporaries had to say on the subject of his journalism, his fiction, and his abilities as a writer. All citations in this section are quoted in Thomas F. O'Donnell, Stanton Garner, and Robert H. Woodward, eds., *A Bibliography of Writings By and About Harold Frederic* (Boston, MA: G. K. Hall, 1975).

Editorial. *Boston Post*. 22 Nov. 1881.

Frederic is “the leading editorial writer” for the *Utica Observer* and “one of the brightest political writers in the country” (206).

*Syracuse Herald*. 11 July 1882.

Written on the occasion of Frederic’s leaving the *Utica Observer* to take the position of Editor at the *Albany Evening Journal*, this article states that Frederic is “a journalist of high attainments” who will be difficult to replace (207).

Editorial. *Utica Observer*. 31 Aug. 1882.

Frederic is described as “an editorial writer, [. . . who] is direct, buoyant and aggressive, with a choice vocabulary and a bright humor adorning all his lines” (207).

*Albany Argus*. 3 Sept. 1882.

Frederic “is a stout friend, an effective enemy, and a charming companion. Journalism stands to him for creed, both in politics and religion, and his conduct in it has been as candid and courteous as it has been instinct [sic] with strength and tact” (207).

Editorial. *New York Star*. 29 Apr. 1884.

Frederic “is well acquainted with European politics, and has keen powers of observation, excellent judgment, a rare literary sense, and a delightful style” (211).

*Albany Union*. 6 Feb. 1886.

Edmund J. Moffat observes that, “[a]mong the notables of London [. . . Frederic] is equally popular, and is the best informed man in Great Britain on the Irish question, and one to whom we all look for pointers” (213).

“Say, That Reminds Me.” *Auburn Dispatch* [New York]. 12 Apr. 1886.

Frederic’s “letters to the *Times* are brim-ful [sic] of interest, gossip and decidedly entertaining” (214).

“Notes.” *Critic* N. S. 9 (31 Mar. 1888): 159.

Frederic intends, “[o]n the strength of his first novel’s success, a literary, rather than a journalistic, career” (219).

Droch [Robert Bridges]. “Bookishness. Middle-State Realism.” *Life* 12 (22 Nov. 1888): 288.



Droch credits Frederic as being one among a group of writers in the Middle States who is “doing careful work in the study of local character and tradition” (220).

Wardwell, M. E. “Harold Frederic.” *Citizen* 3 (Sept. 1897): 152-53.

Wardwell acknowledges that Frederic has the potential to write “the great American novel,” but he contends that Frederic “should come back to his native soil” to write the novel. Frederic is “more a worker with the brush,” whereas William Dean Howells “is ‘photographic,’ a dealer in ‘dogged realism.’” Wardwell concludes that Frederic succeeds “where Howells frequently fails, in creating atmosphere which is altogether a different thing from local color” (227).

“Frederic as a Novelist.” *Utica Morning Herald*. 21 Oct. 1898: 3.

Written two days after Frederic’s death, this article suggests that Frederic maintained “a thorough Americanism of thought and view in his novels of American life” (231).

Barr, Robert. “Harold Frederic, the Author of *The Market-Place*.” *Saturday Evening Post* 171 (17 Dec. 1898): 396-97.

Barr notes that Frederic “researched his books thoroughly, outlined them chapter by chapter, and then wrote with ‘considerable rapidity,’ following which he read passages aloud before revising” (243).

Howells, William Dean. “Problems of Existence in Fiction.” *Literature* 4 (10 Mar. 1899): 193-94.

Howells describes Frederic as a writer who could handle “the problems of existence” without “staggering around or stuttering” (245).

McCarthy, Justin, M. P. *Reminiscences*. 2 vols. London: Chatto & Windus, 1899, II, 78-81; New York and London: Harper, 1900, II, 67-70.

Member of Parliament Justin McCarthy recalls meeting Frederic before Frederic had written any novels: “[A]nybody might have seen that he was born to be a teller of stories, and of stories that should find their material alike in the heart of humanity and in the hard, prosaic realities of human life” (205).



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# Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*:

A Study Guide with Annotated Bibliography

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### Frederic Resources

I am indebted to the following scholars, and many others, for their work on Harold Frederic and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. Their bibliographies, checklists, catalogues, critical overviews, and online resources represent years of research and serve as the foundation for my own work on Frederic's novel. I am grateful to each of them for paving the way for later Frederic scholars.

In 1968, the editors of *American Literary Realism*, under the leadership of Clayton L. Eichelberger, compiled the first annotated bibliography of secondary criticism on Harold Frederic and his work: "Harold Frederic (1856-1898): A Critical Bibliography of Secondary Comment." In 1970, Robert H. Woodward's "Harold Frederic: Supplemental Critical Bibliography of Secondary Comment" was published in *American Literary Realism*.

For a complete bibliography of writings by and about Frederic, see Thomas F. O'Donnell, Stanton Garner, and Robert H. Woodward's *A Bibliography of Writings By and About Harold Frederic*. See also O'Donnell's *The Merrill Checklist of Harold Frederic* for a select, although now somewhat dated, bibliography of writings by and about Frederic.

Noel Polk's *Literary Manuscripts of Harold Frederic: A Catalogue* identifies and locates Frederic's extant manuscripts.

For a complete listing of letters to and from Frederic, see George Fortenberry, Charlyne Dodge, Stanton Garner, and Robert H. Woodward's *The Correspondence of Harold Frederic*.

Thomas F. O'Donnell's "Harold Frederic (1856-1898)" is a review of the state of Frederic scholarship from the late-1930s through the 1960s. Glenn D. Klopfenstein's "'The Flying Dutchmen of American Literature': Harold Frederic and the American Canon, a Centenary Overview" is a review of the state of Frederic scholarship since the 1950s.

And, finally, Donna Campbell maintains an excellent bibliography of criticism about Frederic, 1958 to the present, on her web site <http://www.gonzaga.edu/faculty/campbell/howells/fredbib.html>.

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Crisler, Jesse S. "Harold Frederic." *American Literary Realism* 8 (1975): 250-55.

Fortenberry, George, Charlyne Dodge, Stanton Garner, and Robert H. Woodward, eds. *The Correspondence of Harold Frederic*. Fort Worth, TX: Texas Christian UP, 1977.

Graham, Don. "'A Degenerate Methodist': A New Review of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 9 (1976): 280-84.

"Harold Frederic (1856-1898): A Critical Bibliography of Secondary Comment." *American Literary Realism* 2 (1968): 1-70.

Klopfenstein, Glenn D. "'The Flying Dutchman of American Literature': Harold Frederic and the American Canon, a Centenary Overview." *American Literary Realism* 30.1 (1997): 34-46.

Morace, Robert A. "Harold Frederic's 'Degenerate Methodist.'" *Markham Review* 5 (1976): 58.

O'Donnell, Thomas F. "Harold Frederic (1856-1898)." *American Literary Realism* 1 (1967): 39-44.

O'Donnell, Thomas F., ed. *The Merrill Checklist of Harold Frederic*. Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill, 1969.

O'Donnell, Thomas F., Stanton Garner, and Robert H. Woodward, eds. *A Bibliography of Writings By and About Harold Frederic*. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1975.

Polk, Noel. *The Literary Manuscripts of Harold Frederic: A Catalogue*. New York: Garland, 1979.

Stronks, James. "Supplements to the Standard Bibliographies of Ade, Bierce, Crane, Frederic, Fuller, Garland, Norris, and Twain." *American Literary Realism* 16.2 (1983): 272-77.

Stronks, James. "Supplements to the Standard Bibliographies of Crane, Dreiser, Frederic, Fuller, Garland, London, and Norris." *American Literary Realism* 11.1 (1978): 124-33.

Stronks, James B. "Addenda to the Bibliographies of Stephen Crane, Dreiser, Frederic, Fuller, Garland, Herne, Howells, London, and Norris." *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 71.3 (1977): 362-68.

Woodward, Robert H. "The Frederic Bibliographies: Errata." *The Frederic Herald* 3.1 (1969): 3-4.

Woodward, Robert H. "Harold Frederic: Supplemental Critical Bibliography of Secondary Comment." *American Literary Realism* 3.2 (1970): 95-147.

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Crisler, Jesse S. "Harold Frederic." *American Literary Realism* 8 (1975): 250-55.

Crisler's article is a bibliographical review of twelve dissertations on Harold Frederic and his writing. Charles C. Walcutt's "Naturalism in the American Novel" (U of Michigan, 1938), the first dissertation to address Frederic's novels, "views Frederic in connection with other 'naturalistic' writers" and, according to Crisler, is "valuable only as a prologue to later dissertations." Paul Haines' "Harold Frederic" (New York U, 1945) is the first dissertation to treat Frederic solely, "sets a worthy precedent in terms of research, content, technique, and presentation," and is the only record for some of Frederic's manuscripts that are apparently no longer extant (250). Marvin O. Mitchell's "A Study of Romantic Elements in the Fiction of Edgar Watson Howe, Joseph Kirkland, Hamlin Garland, Harold Frederic, and Frank Norris" (U of North Carolina, 1953) argues that Frederic's novels "mix romantic elements with realistic ones" (251). Robert H. Woodward's "Harold Frederic: A Study of His Novels, Short Stories, and Plays" (U of Indiana, 1957) employs extensive use of the Harold Frederic Papers, housed in the Library of Congress, in a critical analysis of Frederic's works. Thomas F. O'Donnell's "The Regional Fiction of Upstate New York" (Syracuse U, 1957) addresses in one chapter Frederic's works set in the U.S.. Charles B. Hands' "Harold Frederic: A Critical Study of the American Works" (U of Notre Dame, 1959) draws upon earlier studies of Frederic in the "first completely critical treatment of the novelist" (252). Crisler dismisses Ralph R. Rogers' "Harold Frederic: His Development as a Comic Realist" (Columbia U, 1961) because Rogers concludes that Frederic was a comic realist and appears to overlook Frederic's use of irony that "more often than not transforms apparent comedy into gripping tragedy." William J. Holmes' "A Study of the Novels of Harold Frederic" (U of Iowa, 1962) supports the argument that Frederic was a realist; Crisler ranks Holmes' study with Haines' as "one of the best in its field."

Austin E. Briggs' "The Novels of Harold Frederic" (Columbia U, 1963) approaches Frederic's novels "from a 'comic' standpoint in which realism and romance are always combined." According to Crisler, Stanton B. Garner's "Harold Frederic: The Major Works" (Brown U, 1963) is "of extreme importance to Frederic criticism" (253) and "indispensable to evaluations of Frederic and his work" (254). Fred G. See's "Metaphoric and Metonymic Imagery in Nineteenth Century American Fiction: Harriet Beecher Stowe, Rebecca Harding Davis, and Harold Frederic" (U of California, Berkeley, 1967) examines Frederic's novels within the framework of a late-nineteenth-century movement from romantic to realistic imagery. Crisler finds little value in Nancy Siferd's "Textual Range in the Novels of Harold Frederic" (Bowling Green, 1970), with the exception of the chapters in which she investigates character motivation.

Fortenberry, George, Charlyne Dodge, Stanton Garner, and Robert H. Woodward, eds. *The Correspondence of Harold Frederic*. Fort Worth, TX: Texas Christian UP, 1977.

Fortenberry, Dodge, Garner, and Woodward's bibliography contains a complete file of letters to and from Harold Frederic, organized by date. In addition to the texts of the letters, the editors provide biographies of some of the correspondents, samples of letterhead used by Frederic, a list of "Known and Inferred Private Correspondence, Not Located," and an index. The editors discovered five letters after this book had been published; the letters are listed in Noel Polk, *The Literary Manuscripts of Harold Frederic: A Catalogue* (New York: Garland, 1979) 104-07.

Graham, Don. "A Degenerate Methodist': A New Review of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 9 (1976): 280-84.

Graham's bibliographical article identifies and reprints an 1896 book review of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* previously unlisted in Frederic bibliographies. The unidentified reviewer labels the book "an important novel" (281) and proceeds to summarize the plot, concluding that "we suspect the probabilities of such unconscious degeneration; it seems impossible that the conditions postulated should precipitate so involuntary a downfall. It seems so useless the game these various characters play against the unfortunate minister; his disillusion is so gratuitous, so merciless" (284).

"Harold Frederic (1856-1898): A Critical Bibliography of



Secondary Comment." *American Literary Realism 2* (1968): 1-70.

The editors of *American Literary Realism*, under the leadership of Clayton L. Eichelberger, along with twenty-four other contributors, compiled the first annotated bibliography of secondary criticism on Harold Frederic and his work. Sources for the bibliography include books, dissertations, and periodical articles; newspaper articles are specifically omitted. This bibliography provided the foundation upon which later bibliographies were compiled (see Thomas F. O'Donnell, Stanton Garner, and Robert H. Woodward's *A Bibliography of Writings By and About Harold Frederic*, 1975).

Klopfenstein, Glenn D. "The Flying Dutchman of American Literature': Harold Frederic and the American Canon, a Centenary Overview." *American Literary Realism* 30.1 (1997): 34-46.

Klopfenstein's bibliographical article opens with a brief review of the state of Frederic scholarship since the 1950s. His reference to "the Flying Dutchman" is borrowed from Austin Briggs: "Harold Frederic, unless the interest of the 1960's abides, seems doomed to play the Flying Dutchman of American literature. Over the decades he has been enthusiastically sighted again and again, only to disappear into the fogs of obscurity" (35). According to Klopfenstein, the exclusion of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* from the American canon can be attributed to "changing critical (aesthetic) standards and political (institutional) forces" (36); it has been exacerbated by Vernon Louis Parrington's negative criticism of the novel in *Main Currents in American Thought* (1927). Klopfenstein further speculates that the novel and its author may have been marginalized prior to the work's brief revival in the 1960s because Frederic, an expatriate living in England, was not American enough and his effeminate antihero was not masculine enough to appeal to critics. While lamenting that Frederic has been pigeonholed as a regionalist, a realist, and a naturalist, and that his novel has become "fodder for the reductions of literary theorists and specialists," Klopfenstein praises Stanton Garner's theory that Frederic's "true descent" was from Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville and holds out hope that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* may yet be resurrected in the coming years by a new generation of Frederic enthusiasts (43).

Morace, Robert A. "Harold Frederic's 'Degenerate Methodist.'" *Markham Review* 5 (1976): 58.

Morace's bibliographical note reprints a portion of a long review



of Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware* that appeared in the *San Francisco Wave* on April 25, 1895. The anonymous reviewer writes, "Indeed, considering the book, there can be no question of its great ability, or of the vivid interest its narrative inspires. There is serious doubt, however, of the truth of the situations; we suspect the probabilities of such unconscious degeneration; it seems impossible that the conditions postulated should precipitate so involuntary a downfall" (58).

O'Donnell, Thomas F. "Harold Frederic (1856-1898)." *American Literary Realism* 1 (1967): 39-44.

O'Donnell's article is a brief overview of the state of Frederic studies up to the 1960s. His bibliographical essay credits Paul Haines with the "rediscovery of Frederic" in 1945, when he wrote his "pioneer dissertation at New York University" (39). In the 1950s, about a half-dozen dissertations and articles continued the Frederic revival. Then from 1960 to 1965, the annual *PMLA* bibliographies listed thirty items of Frederic scholarship; O'Donnell briefly mentions most of them.

O'Donnell, Thomas F., ed. *The Merrill Checklist of Harold Frederic*. Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill, 1969.

O'Donnell's bibliography, a brief 34-page checklist, is a select compilation of writings by or about Harold Frederic "intended to provide students with the tools that will give them access to the most meaningful published resources for the study of an author" (iii). Divided into eight sections, the checklist begins with "Books and Major Separate Publications" (1-2), which includes both fiction and non-fiction, followed by "Uncollected Writings" (2-6), which includes fiction, poetry, reviews, and articles. Section III (6-7) lists "Editions" of Frederic's works. Section IV, "Letters" (7), directs readers to Robert H. Woodward's "Harold Frederic: A Bibliography." (In 1969, *The Correspondence of Harold Frederic* had not been published.) Section V, "Special Journal" (7), lists a single journal, *The Frederic Herald*, devoted to short biographical, critical, and bibliographical notes on Frederic; nine issues were published between April 1967 and January 1970. Section VI (7-8) is "Bibliographies and Checklists"; Section VII (8) lists "Biographies." The last and largest section, "Scholarship and Criticism" (9-34), lists books and articles about Frederic's major works, arranged in sub-sections by title.

O'Donnell, Thomas F., Stanton Garner, and Robert H. Woodward, eds. *A Bibliography of Writings By and About Harold Frederic*. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1975.

O'Donnell, Garner, and Woodward's compilation is the most recent and comprehensive Harold Frederic bibliography published. It includes writings by and about Frederic and is "[i]ntended to be of use to the scholar, student, or interested general reader of Harold Frederic by providing various kinds of bibliographical information not previously available, or available only in periodicals and pamphlets." "Writings by Frederic" (1-105) identifies Frederic's books (fiction and non-fiction), shorter works (short fiction, essays, letters, and features), journalism (articles, editorials, and reviews in *The Observer*, *New York Times*, and *The Manchester Guardian*), and editions. "Writings about Frederic" (109-308) lists bibliographies; reviews and notices; writings to 1900 (books, newspapers, and periodicals); books, parts of books, monographs, and pamphlets (1900-1973); dissertations and theses; manuscripts, letters, library holdings, and likenesses; and *The Frederic Herald*. The compilers claim the book "lists every piece of published writing attributable to Frederic at this time (1974). [ . . . ] It identifies and locates all of Frederic's manuscripts, letters, and related documents that could be uncovered by a lengthy and wide-ranging search. It lists—with brief objective annotations—most of the biographical, critical, and bibliographical comment about Frederic that appeared in print between 1879 and 1 January 1974. It also lists all those doctoral dissertations the compilers were able to identify as containing significant discussion of Frederic's work, as well as a number of master's theses" (v).

Polk, Noel. *The Literary Manuscripts of Harold Frederic: A Catalogue*. New York: Garland, 1979.

Polk's bibliography identifies and locates Harold Frederic's extant novel manuscripts. An examination of Frederic's working papers shows him "to have been a disciplined, methodical worker and an unusually meticulous craftsman" (xi). Most of Frederic's extant manuscripts are now located in the Library of Congress; however, Polk identifies the exceptions (thirteen locations in the U.S. and the U.K.). The manuscripts of *Seth's Brother's Wife* and *The Lawton Girl* are either lost or no longer extant. Paul Haines' 1945 New York University dissertation, "Harold Frederic," is the only source for descriptions and quotations from these manuscripts. Section A lists Frederic's novels; Section B, stories; Section C, non-fiction prose; Section D, poetry; Section E, unpublished fiction; Section F, unpublished plays; Section G, unpublished poetry; and Section H, unpublished non-fiction prose. Section I lists miscellaneous items in the Library of Congress, such as three of Frederic's diaries for the years 1891, 1892, and 1893; the Frederic-Heinemann (his London publisher) Papers; Frederic-Brown, Shipley & Co. Papers; miscellaneous, unclassifiable papers;

Frederic's will (not in Frederic's hand); and a "photograph of Frederic and an unidentified woman, possibly Kate Lyon" (102). Section J is a guide to correspondences written by Harold Frederic. Polk directs readers to *The Correspondence of Harold Frederic* (1977) for a complete file of Frederic's correspondence.

Stronks, James. "Supplements to the Standard Bibliographies of Ade, Bierce, Crane, Frederic, Fuller, Garland, Norris, and Twain." *American Literary Realism* 16.2 (1983): 272-77.

Stronks' bibliographical note cites five additions to *A Bibliography of Writings By and About Harold Frederic* by Thomas F. O'Donnell, Stanton Garner, and Robert H. Woodward (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1975).

Stronks, James. "Supplements to the Standard Bibliographies of Crane, Dreiser, Frederic, Fuller, Garland, London, and Norris." *American Literary Realism* 11.1 (1978): 124-33.

Stronks' bibliographical note cites three additions to *A Bibliography of Writings By and About Harold Frederic* by Thomas F. O'Donnell, Stanton Garner, and Robert H. Woodward (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1975).

Stronks, James B. "Addenda to the Bibliographies of Stephen Crane, Dreiser, Frederic, Fuller, Garland, Herne, Howells, London, and Norris." *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 71.3 (1977): 362-68.

Stronks' bibliographical note cites one addition to *A Bibliography of Writings By and About Harold Frederic* by Thomas F. O'Donnell, Stanton Garner, and Robert H. Woodward (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1975).

Woodward, Robert H. "The Frederic Bibliographies: Errata." *The Frederic Herald* 3.1 (1969): 3-4.

Woodward's note identifies bibliographic errors in three published bibliographies of secondary comment on Frederic: "Harold Frederic: A Bibliography" by Robert H. Woodward (*Studies in Bibliography* 13 [1960]: 247-57); "Harold Frederic (1856-1898): A Critical Bibliography of Secondary Comment," compiled by the editors of *ALR* and numerous contributors (*American Literary Realism* 2 [1968]: 1-70); and "Frederic's Collection of Reviews: Supplement to the Checklist of Contemporary Reviews of Frederic's Writings" by Robert H.

Woodward (*American Literary Realism* 2 [1968]: 84-89).

Woodward, Robert H. "Harold Frederic: Supplemental Critical Bibliography of Secondary Comment." *American Literary Realism* 3.2 (1970): 95-147.

Woodward's critical bibliography is the first supplement to the bibliography compiled by the editors of *American Literary Realism* in 1968 ("Harold Frederic [1856-1898]: A Critical Bibliography of Secondary Comment"). This bibliography expands on the earlier compilation in that it includes newspaper articles and theses on Frederic. It is divided into three categories: books (including dissertations and theses), periodicals (including magazines and newspapers), and errata (corrections of known errors in the first Frederic bibliography).

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# Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware:*

A Study Guide with Annotated Bibliography

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### Glossary

Harold Frederic's novel met, for the most part, with favorable critical reception upon its publication in 1896. A selection of contemporaneous reviews by fellow authors, journalists, and critics is provided below to give readers an appreciation of the literary atmosphere in which Frederic's novel appeared. Following this glimpse of the late-1890s zeitgeist is a summary of the more than four dozen reviews published in 1896 and a list of journals in which one can find contemporaneous reviews of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. Lastly are excerpts from three 1960s reviews of reprinted editions of the novel, which ushered in a resurgence of popularity for Frederic's novels.

Here, as in other portions of my project, I owe a debt of gratitude to Thomas F. O'Donnell, Stanton Garner, and Robert H. Woodward for their compilation of reviews in *A Bibliography of Writings By and About Harold Frederic* (Boston, MA: G. K. Hall, 1975).

### Select Contemporaneous Reviews of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*

Howells, William Dean. "My Favorite Novelist and His Best Book." *Munsey's Magazine* 17 (Apr. 1897): 28. Rpt. in *W. D. Howells as Critic*. Ed. Edwin H. Cady. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973. 268-30.

American novelist, editor, critic, and poet William Dean Howells lists *The Damnation of Theron Ware* among his favorite books. Howells' comment on Frederic's novel is often quoted by critics: "I was



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particularly interested in the book, for when you get to the end, although you have carried a hazy notion in your mind of the sort of man Ware was, you fully realize, for the first time, that the author has never for a moment represented him anywhere to you as a good or honest man, or as anything but a very selfish man” (qtd. in Cady 278).

“Four New Novels.” *Atlantic* 78 (Aug. 1896): 269-76.

The unidentified critic writes, “This minister, Theron Ware, with his ambition and his immaturity, is partially introduced [in the opening chapters]; at least so the reader comes to think afterward, for on looking back, at the end of the story, he is reminded of the rather slight intimations given of Theron’s native character before it is brought to the test” (270). The critic praises Frederic’s depiction of Reverend Ware as “a task performed with unusual skill” and the depiction of Father Forbes as convincing. However, the critic argues that “in the half-sketch of Dr. Ledsmar there is too much left for [. . . readers] to guess” and the characterization of Celia Madden is a “distortion of nature.” The character of Michael Madden, on the other hand, is “admirably drawn,” as are the “highly entertaining” Soulsbys. “Theron Ware damns himself,” argues the critic, while the trio “seem to get off scot-free” (272). (For an electronic version of this review, [click here](#) for link.)

Peck, Harry Thurston. *Bookman* 3 (June 1896): 351-52.

---. “A Literary Event and its Significance.” *Cosmopolitan* 21 (August 1896): 438-39.

American classicist, poet, writer, and translator Harry Thurston Peck wrote two reviews of



Frederic's novel. The first untitled review claims *The Damnation of Theron Ware* "is distinctly a great novel," but that the author "borrowed the theme that forms the central motive from Robert Elsmere." In the later review, Peck writes, Frederic's "vivid, strong, and masterful delineation of a corner of American life as it actually is—the good and the bad, the fine and the crude, the enlightened and the ignorant—in one finely drawn, consistent picture imbued with penetrating power" makes *The Damnation of Theron Ware* "a literary event of very great importance" (qtd. in O'Donnell, et al. 175).

Waugh, Arthur. "London Letter." *Critic* N.S. 25 (2 May 1896): 316.

English publisher, editor, and critic Arthur Waugh argues that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is one of the best books of the year: "Were it not for a few blemishes, and those removable, [it] ought to be called a masterpiece" (qtd. in O'Donnell, et al. 176).

Zangwill, Israel. "Men, Women and Books. Mr. Frederic's '*Illumination*.'" *Critic* N.S. 26 (12 Sept. 1896): 156.

English author and Jewish leader Israel Zangwill judges Frederic's novel as "not only a good novel, but a good novel of the best kind." While Zangwill expresses slight discontent with the depictions of Celia Madden and Alice Ware, he praises the sketches of the Methodist society, the Soulsbys, and Jeremiah Madden as "memorable" (qtd. in O'Donnell, et al. 176).

Payne, William Morton. "Recent Fiction." *Dial* 20 (1 June 1896): 336.

Critic, teacher, translator, and Associate Editor of

the *Chicago Dial* from 1892 to 1915, William Morton Payne describes *The Damnation of Theron Ware* as “one of the most striking and impressive novels of the year, or of several years,” with its title character the subject of “one of the subtlest studies of moral disintegration that have been made” (qtd. in O’Donnell, et al. 176-77).

Hutton, Laurence. “Literary Notes.” *Harper’s* 93 (Sept. 1896): Supplement 3-4.

Author and critic Laurence Hutton compares *The Damnation of Theron Ware* to Robert Elsmere: “Ware would have worked out the serious problems of his life if Mr. Elsmere had never existed.” Hutton concludes, however, that Theron Ware is an “original creation” (qtd. in O’Donnell, et al. 177).

Bridges, Robert [“Droch”]. “A Letter to a Gibson Girl.” *Life* 27 (28 May 1896): 442.

American journalist, poet, and *Scribner’s Magazine* editor Robert Bridges, who wrote under the nom de plume “Droch,” claims, “The novel is a remarkable piece of what is called realism, and shows the degeneration of a certain kind of flabby, masculine mind when brought in contact with an advanced modern woman of a rather unusual type” (qtd. in O’Donnell, et al. 178).

Porter, Charlotte. “Notes on Recent Fiction.” *Poet-lore* 8 (Aug. 1896): 459-61.

Editor of *Shakespeariana*, Charlotte Porter characterizes Frederic’s writing method as “impressionistic” and “‘up-to-date’ [. . .] in that it is so shiftily based on an element in life peculiarly appreciated by the modern mind—relativity” (qtd. in O’Donnell, et al. 181).

Mabie, Hamilton W. "Some Estimates of the Year's Literary Output." *Review of Reviews* 14 (Dec. 1896): 742.

Author and critic Hamilton W. Mabie writes, *The Damnation of Theron Ware's* "popularity is easily explicable; it is unconventional in matter, direct and forcible in style, and it deals with material of no common kind." While the novel is "full of energy, vitality and originality," it is "not free from crudity and a certain coarseness of method which jars the nerves of the reader" (qtd. in O'Donnell, et al. 182).

Johnston, Charles. "The True American Spirit in Literature." *Atlantic Monthly* 86 (July 1899): 29-35.

Critic and journalist Charles Johnston criticizes American novelists writing in Europe in general and Frederic's novel in particular for its "religious atmosphere" and "higher culture," or treatment of aristocracy. Johnston claims that there is no place in the American spirit for such elements. He concludes, however, that Frederic "has written one of the very best stories in the American spirit, which one could very well use, to show how new and how excellent that spirit is" (33). (For an electronic version of this essay where Frederic is mentioned only briefly, [click here](#) for link.)

### **An Overview of Contemporaneous Reviews of *The Damnation of Theron Ware***

*A Bibliography of Writings By and About Harold Frederic* lists 51 contemporaneous reviews of Frederic's novel. Of these, 55 percent are clearly favorable. Critics have judged *The Damnation of Theron Ware* as "a great novel," "the strongest

book of the year” (*Bookman* [New York], June 1896; Nov. 1896), and “a literary event of very great importance” (*Critic*, 25 Apr 1896). The *London Daily Chronicle* describes Frederic as “a man born to write fiction,” “a keen observer, a genuine humorist, a thinker always original and sometimes even profound,” and “a man who has thoroughly learned the use of his own pen” (Third Edition, May 1896).

Another 41 percent of the reviews are either mixed or neutral. Critics claim *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is “a great novel, though inconsistent in its presentment of the principal woman’s character” (*Edinburgh Review*, April 1898); not really a “good novel,” but it is a “clever work,” “original and full of pictures of ways of life with which [. . . readers] on this side of the Atlantic are not familiar” (*London Morning Post*, 18 Apr. 1896). Celia Madden’s characterization is “brilliant but unconvincing,” whereas that of Sister Soulsby is a “triumph” (*London Daily News*, 29 Apr. 1896).

Only 4 percent of the contemporaneous reviews are decidedly negative in tone. The *Nation’s* critic complains that the novel “leads nowhither” (3 Sept. 1896). The *Independent’s* critic writes, *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is “a rehash of what has become offensively stale in recent English fiction. [. . . After] the note of illicit love is struck, [. . .] the story is neither original nor interesting. Theron Ware shrivels into a mere nymphomaniac, dancing a lust-dance around a handsome and soulless Irish girl; and the whole story becomes an insipid echo of a hundred and one French and English novels of the past decade” (4 June 1896).

Following is a list of the journals in which Frederic’s contemporaneous reviews can be found. Most of the reviews of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* appeared in print between March and December 1896.

*Academy* (4 July 1896)  
*Athenaeum* (21 March 1896)  
*Atlantic* (August 1896)  
*Beacon* (date unknown)  
*Bookman* [London] (August 1896)  
*Bookman* [New York] (June; November 1896)  
*Chicago Evening Journal* (18 April 1896)  
*Chicago Evening Post* (date unknown)  
*Cleveland World* (date unknown)  
*Cosmopolitan* (August 1896)  
*Critic* (25 April; 2 May; 2 May; 12 September 1896)  
*Current Literature* (July 1896)  
*Dial* (1 June 1896)  
*Edinburgh Review* (April 1896)  
*Godey's Lady's Book* (July 1896)  
*Harper's* (September 1896)  
*Independent* (4 June 1896; 4 June 1896)  
*Life* (28 May 1896)  
*Literary Digest* (30 May 1896)  
*Literary News* (May 1896)  
*London Daily Chronicle*, Third Edition (1 May 1896; date unknown)  
*London Daily News* (29 April 1896)  
*London Daily Telegraph* (date unknown)  
*London Morning Post* (18 April 1896)  
*Manchester Guardian* (14 May 1896)  
*Methodist Times* [London] (28 May 1896)  
*Munsey's Magazine* (June 1896)  
*Nation* (3 September 1896)  
*Daily Picayune* [New Orleans] (13 April 1896)  
*New York Times* (26 April; 29 April 1896)  
*New York Times Saturday Review of Books and Art* (14 November; 5 December 1896; 14 January 1899)  
*Nineteenth Century* (November 1896)  
*Overland Monthly* (August 1896)  
*Pall Mall Gazette* (2 April 1896)  
*Poet-lore* (August 1896)  
*Public Opinion* (21 May 1896)  
*Review of Reviews* (July; December 1896)  
*Saturday Review* [London] (21 March 1896)  
*Spectator* (4 April 1896)  
*St. James Gazette* (date unknown)  
*Westminster Gazette* (date unknown)

## **Reviews of Reprinted Editions of *The Damnation of Theron Ware***

The review published in the *San Francisco Sunday Chronicle* is favorable: *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is “one of the ‘lost classics’ in our literature” (qtd. in O’Donnell, et al. 183). The review published in *Modern Language Review* is mixed: “The novel is much more than a period piece, even though Celia Madden’s estheticism is mishandled. Variants in usage between the American and English texts provide an interesting study in language differences at the time” (O’Donnell, et al. 183). The review published in the *San Jose Mercury-News* is negative: “It seems to us now like a novel in which innocence is too much like ignorance, the scientific spirit too niggling, sex—however much it shocked 1890s readers—too tepid and the church too hide-bound” (qtd. in O’Donnell, et al. 183).

*Modern Language Review* (October 1961)

*San Francisco Sunday Chronicle, This World* (18 September 1960)

*San Jose Mercury-News* [California] (30 October 1960)

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# Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*:

A Study Guide with Annotated Bibliography

## Bibliography of Criticism: Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*

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Note: I have listed the author's name for each entry (as opposed to using three hyphens to denote subsequent entries by the same author) because the annotations, when broken down by categories, are not always sequential.

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# Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware:*

A Study Guide with Annotated Bibliography

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Bennett, Bridget. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware* or *Illumination* (1896)." *The Damnation of Harold Frederic: His Lives and Works*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse UP, 1997. 174-97.

Carter, Everett. Introduction. *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. By Harold Frederic. 1896. Cambridge: Belknap P of Harvard UP, 1960. vii-xxiv.

Carter, Everett. "Naturalism and Introspection." *Howells and the Age of Realism*. Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1966. 239-45.

Donaldson, Scott. Introduction. *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. By Harold Frederic. 1896. New York: Penguin, 1986. vii-xxx.

Garner, Stanton. "The Other Harold Frederic." *Upstate Literature: Essays in Memory of Thomas F. O'Donnell*. Ed. Frank Bergmann. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse UP, 1985. 129-41.

Hirsh, John C. "The Frederic Papers, The McGlynn Affair, and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 17.1 (1984): 12-23.

Lackey, Lionel. "Redemption and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *South Atlantic Review* 55 (1990): 81-91.

Myers, Robert M. "Antimodern Protest in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 26.3 (1994): 52-64.

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**Theron Ware.** *Reluctant Expatriate: The Life of Harold Frederic.* Westport, CT: Greenwood P, 1995. 115-34.

O'Donnell, Thomas F. "The Baxter Marginalia: Theron Ware a Clef." *Frederic Herald* 1.3 (1967): 5.

O'Donnell, Thomas F, and Hoyt C. Franchere. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware.*" *Harold Frederic.* New York: Twayne Publishers, 1961. 108-17.

Rees, John. "'Dead Men's Bones, Dead Men's Beliefs': Ideas of Antiquity in Upstate New York and *Theron Ware.*" *American Studies* 16.2 (1975): 77-87.

Watson, Douglas. "Folk Speech, Custom, and Belief in Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and *Stories of York State.*" *New York Folklore* 3 (1977): 83-99.

Wilson, Edmund. "Two Neglected American Novelists: II—Harold Frederic, the Expanding Upstarter." *The New Yorker* (6 June 1970): 112-34.

Wilson, Edmund. "Two Neglected American Novelists: Harold Frederic, the Expanding Upstater." *The Devils and Canon Barham: Ten Essays on Poets, Novelists and Monsters.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1973. 48-76.

Woodward, Robert H. "Some Sources for Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware.*" *American Literature* 33.1 (1961): 46-51.

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Bennett, Bridget. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware* or *Illumination* (1896)." *The Damnation of Harold Frederic: His Lives and Works.* Syracuse, NY: Syracuse UP, 1997. 174-97.

Bennett approaches her analysis of Frederic's novel from a biographical and cultural perspective. In Chapter 5, she claims the novel "is an embodiment of its own message—the difference between appearance and reality"—because both Theron Ware and the reader are misled with respect to his "illumination" (174). Bennett hypothesizes that Frederic expresses empathy for his main character, the "badly treated" Reverend Ware, probably because he too felt victimized by life's circumstance (175). According to the Harold Frederic Papers in the Library of Congress, the author originally intended to kill off the title character by having him jump off the Brooklyn Bridge (built in 1883); however, Bennett contends that suicide might have made Ware appear to be a decadent hero. Death by alcohol would have been conventional and melodramatic. Thus the unexpected ending Frederic chose for Ware reflects the author's pessimism regarding the Gilded Age and ironically perpetuates the themes of illumination and damnation. Bennett observes, "Theron is less illumined, as he believes, than literally blinded by the people and ideas that he encounters. It is in this debilitated state of hysterical blindness that he seems most like a moth helplessly circling a source of light that he believes to be the catalyst of his illumination, singeing himself every time he gets too close to it, and inevitably foundering into it" (178). This analysis reflects Frederic's disillusionment with the Edenic myth of America and the corruption and falseness of its political and religious leaders—beliefs that are revealed through the characters in the novel. According to Bennett, "Theron's anxiety about how others perceived him, his eagerness to please and naive belief in his own intellectual and social advances captured a painfully familiar aspect of American national character" (186). Bennett notes that similar themes may be found in the writing of Nathaniel Hawthorne and Henry James.

Carter, Everett. Introduction. *The Damnation of*

*Theron Ware*. By Harold Frederic. 1896. Cambridge: Belknap P of Harvard UP, 1960. vii-xxiv.

Carter's oft-cited introduction opens with a biographical survey of Frederic's life before it moves on to a cultural and a moral examination of the trio of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden as "seducers of innocence" (xxi). Carter claims that Theron Ware falls from innocence into knowledge, "a fall into the religious and scientific knowledge" and "the dark knowledge of the flesh" (xxi). Father Forbes is responsible for Ware's religious crisis, while Dr. Ledsmar—a Darwinian atheist—introduces Ware to the writings of Renan. According to Carter, Celia Madden's role in Theron Ware's damnation is "evil" (x). The critic's bibliography is a good source for contemporaneous reception of the novel: most of the citations are reviews or articles from the 1890s.

Carter, Everett. "Naturalism and Introspection." *Howells and the Age of Realism*. Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1966. 239-45.

Carter combines biographical and genre criticism in his chapter that examines Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. According to Carter, Frederic "thought of himself as a realist," a disciple of William Dean Howells. Howells preached "a fidelity to the life one knew, an immersion in one's own experience, an unswerving loyalty to the truth and a hatred of the false and sentimental." Like Howells, Frederic looked to his own life and region for inspiration. Unlike Howells, however, Frederic "found his interest going from the social to the individual, from the inequities in relations between men to the tormenting self-divisions within man, from an analysis of the normal and commonplace to a concern with those hidden recesses of the individual soul where cower lust and fear and primitive ignorance" (240). Frederic observed "a

society in turmoil” due to social, economic, and scientific advances, which prompted a “struggle within the individual [. . .] attended by possibilities of evil as well as possibilities of good” (241). Theron Ware’s illumination results in his fall rather than his salvation. Because the characters of Ware, Father Forbes, and Celia Madden, as well as the scenes of New York State life, are “drawn from life,” Carter identifies *The Damnation of Theron Ware* as a work of “realism” (244-45). However, because Frederic also sought to explore a “psychological rather than a social truth” in his portrayal of Father Forbes, Celia Madden, Dr. Ledsmar, and the Soulsbys, he transforms the characters into archetypes (245).

Donaldson, Scott. Introduction. *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. By Harold Frederic. 1896. New York: Penguin, 1986. vii-xxx.

Donaldson’s introduction to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* combines biographical and genre criticism with a brief character study. Part I is a biography of Harold Frederic: journalist, novelist, bon vivant, and polygamist. Part II opens with Donaldson’s acknowledgment that Frederic’s literary reputation generally rests upon a single novel, *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, a situation he regrets as unfortunate because *Seth’s Brother’s Wife* (1890), *In the Valley* (1890), and *The Market-Place* (1899) “represent major achievements” as well (xii). Donaldson states that Frederic’s novels “resist pigeonholing as works of realism, naturalism, or romance” and further asserts that *Damnation* “reveals traces of all three approaches” (xvi). Parts III, IV, and V explore the character development of Theron Ware, as well as of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, Celia Madden, and Sister Soulsby. The novel is described as a “subtle study of moral disintegration” (xviii), in which Ware “abandons his faith and seems at the end to have learned almost nothing from his ordeal” (xix).

Garner, Stanton. "The Other Harold Frederic." *Upstate Literature: Essays in Memory of Thomas F. O'Donnell*. Ed. Frank Bergmann. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse UP, 1985. 129-41.

Garner's chapter is a biographical sketch of Frederic that acknowledges his achievements as an editor and a journalist, but concentrates upon Frederic's literary contributions as a writer of fiction. Joseph Conrad characterized Frederic as "a notable journalist (who had written some novels)." Garner contends that Conrad's comment is an example of how Frederic's fiction has been, and continues to be, misunderstood and underappreciated (130). In Garner's opinion, Frederic is a "fine stylist" who, "in the ease and fluency of his language [. . .], belongs in the camp of Mark Twain" (133). Garner examines genre in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, *Gloria Mundi*, and *The Market-Place* to show Frederic's growth as an author. Frederic's early works set in upstate New York establish him as a regionalist; however, most of Frederic's later works are set abroad and are a "fusion of types," borrowing elements of regionalism, realism, and romance (135). For example, elements of realism and romance flavor *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, one of Frederic's later novels (although set in New York), with provocative social and moral issues. The setting of *Gloria Mundi* and *The Market-Place*, Frederic's last two novels, moves beyond the Mohawk Valley to "the ancient European cradle out of which [. . . Frederic's regional American] culture had risen" and on to "the future of the West and of mankind" in the character of Joel Thorpe. Garner concludes "that in addition to the regionalist we know there was another Harold Frederic whose vision grew much broader" (140).

Hirsh, John C. "The Frederic Papers, The McGlynn Affair, and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 17.1 (1984): 12-23.

Hirsh combines textual and biographical approaches in his examination of the Frederic Papers, preserved in the Library of Congress, “to help illuminate some of the more important structural and thematic concerns of the novel, particularly those affecting Fr. Forbes and the Catholics” (12). In his article, Hirsh produces excerpts from the author’s early notes that indicate some of the relationships that Frederic intended to develop, among them Theron Ware, Father Forbes and Dr. Ledsmar; Celia Madden and Father Forbes; Father Forbes and his Bishop. Hirsh cites Paul Haines’ 1945 unpublished dissertation that identifies Father Edward Terry, a priest whom Frederic knew in Utica, as a possible source for the development of Father Forbes. However, Hirsh suggests that a more influential source may have been Father Edward McGlynn, an Irish-Catholic priest in New York who made newspaper headlines in the 1880s for his political activism and American ideal of Catholicism (he was excommunicated in 1887 and reconciled with the church in 1893). The character of Father Forbes, as it emerged in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, is forceful, powerful, and sophisticated. Elements of the role that were in Frederic’s working notes but eliminated from the novel include public condemnation of the priest for a scandalous relationship with Celia Madden and serious political activism.

Lackey, Lionel. “Redemption and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *South Atlantic Review* 55 (1990): 81-91.

Lackey’s biographical and psychological study examines Frederic’s portrayal, and possible redemption, of Theron Ware. Lackey’s article is a sympathetic reading of Ware is influenced by his opinion that Frederic never achieved total honesty in his own life; thus “the author neither expected nor achieved total honesty in his characters” (81).



Frederic's practices regarding money, friendships, and extra-marital relationships, for example, are reflected in Ware's desire for financial freedom, cultured friends, and a liaison with Celia Madden. Because Ware lacks "the financial access to culturally enlightened circles that would have afforded him the expertise and discretion to enter into moral ambiguities gracefully and knowingly—on Forbes' and Celia's own level," they judge him a bore (85). Sister Soulsby consoles Theron Ware after his rejection by Celia Madden and Father Forbes. Some critics see this consolation as "a prelude to renewed vanity, delusion, and failure" (86), but Lackey prefers to believe "there is ground for hope that Theron may after all have learned something valuable from his mistakes [. . .]. Having lost his life, Theron may yet save it" (87). Lackey speculates that Frederic may have intended the ending to be ambiguous in order to pave the way for another book, perhaps "The Redemption of Theron Ware." In any case, Lackey chooses "to place the best construction on the various ambivalences Frederic positions in the concluding chapters" (88).

Myers, Robert M. "Antimodern Protest in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 26.3 (1994): 52-64.

Myers combines biographical and cultural criticism in his article to examine Frederic's portrayal of nineteenth-century America, particularly the country's attitude toward religion. According to Myers, many earlier critics of Frederic's works "tended to see Frederic as an objective critic standing outside of his culture"; he, however, detects in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* the author's concern for the effect of "overcivilization and fragmentation of modernism" on American cultural institutions (52). Frederic undertook extensive research on Methodism, Catholicism, and higher Biblical criticism in order to be as accurate as possible in his portrayal of a minister and a

priest. Myers notes that Frederic's sources on comparative religion "map a decline in traditional faith" resulting in "a profound ambivalence about the psychological and social effects of faithlessness." Frederic's own views on religion "altered between contempt for religious superstition and a recognition of the social value of religion" (54). In the 1890s, tensions between liberal Methodists, who "adopted the modern optimistic belief in the inevitability of progress," and conservative Methodists, who protested the "modernizing trends of the liberals," were dividing the church. Reverend Ware's attempt to bring "modern ideas" to the Methodists of Octavius is thwarted by "a strong conservative faction" (56). Partly in reaction to his frustration with primitive Methodism, Ware embraces Celia Madden's aesthetic paganism. He is also exposed to Father Forbes' Catholicism, described by Myers as "a useful social institution" (59), and Sister Soulsby's pragmatism, "based on social utility rather than theology." Myers observes, "Father Forbes, Doctor Ledsmar, Celia, and Sister Soulsby all contribute to Theron's destruction by consistently overestimating his ability to assimilate a modern view of religion." Catholicism can tolerate a Father Forbes in its midst because the "corporate ethic of the Catholic Church de-emphasizes the significance of the individual priest" (60). Reverend Ware does not have that luxury in Methodism: "if the minister be corrupt his ministry will be corrupt also." Myers concludes, "Forbes' vision of a national church, focused on the needs of the consumers rather than doctrinal disputes with other religions, parallels simultaneous developments in American business. [. . .] The pragmatic approach to religion that emerges from Theron Ware points to a church strikingly similar to the modern corporation, an institution that took shape in the late nineteenth century" (61).

Myers, Robert M. "Author of *The Damnation of Theron Ware.*" *Reluctant Expatriate: The Life of*

*Harold Frederic*. Westport, CT: Greenwood P, 1995. 115-34.

Myers' biographical essay examines the influence of events in Harold Frederic's life on the writing of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. In this chapter, Myers notes that Frederic's attempts to keep the circumstances of his unconventional life private—specifically, the maintenance of two households—may have “contributed to his conception of the difficulties Theron Ware faced as he began to separate his public from his private self” (116). A decade of expatriation may also have afforded Frederic an outsider's perspective with regard to American culture; he was particularly concerned that “America had become overcivilized and that the homogenous American spirit was being torn apart by such factors as the growing class unrest and the increasing conflict between the sexes” (119). According to Myers, these concerns are reflected in Frederic's novel. Having perused Frederic's notes on “extensive readings in science, comparative religion, and the history of Methodism,” collected in *The Frederic Papers* in the Library of Congress, Myers also theorizes that Frederic may have used the characters of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden to express his own views on religion, philosophy, and American culture (120).

O'Donnell, Thomas F. “The Baxter Marginalia: Theron Ware a Clef.” *Frederic Herald* 1.3 (1967): 5.

O'Donnell's note relates some of the brief marginalia contained in a copy of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (Herbert S. Stone, 1899) acquired by O'Donnell and believed to have belonged to one of Harold Frederic's close friends and first cousin, John Baxter. The marginalia are generally biographical in nature, referring to events, people, buildings, streets, or places that appear in Frederic's novel and are also familiar to Baxter. For

example, next to the text that reads, “[. . .] my very particular friend, Dr. Ledsmar,” the margin note reads, “My mother’s name and of course his mother’s as well spelled backwards” (underlined in original). Frederic’s and Baxter’s mothers’ maiden names were Ramsdell. Opposite the name “Father Forbes” on one page, Baxter wrote “Father Terry,” and next to “Octavius,” he wrote “Utica.” In two places, Baxter seems to identify elements in the book directly with Frederic: opposite the text that reads, “[. . .] and a copy of ‘Josephus’ which had belonged to his grandmother,” Baxter penned the words, “My grandmother’s book. Here he makes himself Theron”; opposite the text that reads, “[. . .] it did have a curious effect upon Theron Ware,” Baxter wrote, “Harry,” the name by which friends and family members knew Harold Frederic. O’Donnell states that the marginalia “demonstrate the extent to which F[rederic] relied on his memories of Utica as he wrote the novel” (5).

O’Donnell, Thomas F, and Hoyt C. Franchere. “*The Damnation of Theron Ware.*” *Harold Frederic*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1961. 108-17.

O’Donnell and Franchere’s chapter on *The Damnation of Theron Ware* combines biographical and cultural criticism in an examination of the writing and reception of the novel. The essay opens with a survey of the novel’s contemporaneous reviews in both England and the United States, then moves on to speculate upon the genesis of the work, which took Frederic “five years of conscious, careful, and silent planning” to write. O’Donnell and Franchere believe the idea for the novel may have occurred to Frederic “as far back as his Utica days when his long conversations with Father Terry, the brilliant and candid priest, had so stimulated him” (110). They point out that Frederic observed the growth of religious skepticism in the 1870s and 1880s—fueled by Darwin’s theories, higher Biblical criticism, aestheticism, and intellectual epicureanism—and incorporated these

influences in the characters of Dr. Ledsmar, Father Forbes, and Celia Madden, with disastrous results for his title character. Unable to reconcile “currents of thought that are disturbing the very universe of his time [. . .] Theron brings about his own damnation,” conclude O’Donnell and Franchere (116).

Rees, John. “Dead Men’s Bones, Dead Men’s Beliefs’: Ideas of Antiquity in Upstate New York and *Theron Ware*.” *American Studies* 16.2 (1975): 77-87.

Rees’ biographical and psychological approach to the last of Frederic’s New York State novels leads him to speculate in this article that a “special regional consciousness” in areas like “religion, history, [. . . and] legend” contributes to the “psychological interest” of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (78). Father Forbes claims that the “idea that humanity progresses” is “utterly baseless and empty.” Theron Ware confesses to Sister Soulsby, “It oppresses me, and yet it fascinates me—this idea that the dead men have known more than we know, done more than we do; that there is nothing new anywhere” (79). Rees contends that Frederic believed the past is constantly imposing itself on the present and that “beneath the rising American republic lay an empire of the dead” (83). Beliefs, for example, about pre-Columbian America—including the theory that “the Indians were descended from the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel” and the Mound-builders were a “physically and mentally superior race”—promoted a sense of “religious antiquarianism” in residents of upstate New York, the regional consciousness that permeates Frederic’s novel (82-85).

Watson, Douglas. “Folk Speech, Custom, and Belief in Harold Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and *Stories of York State*.” *New York Folklore* 3 (1977): 83-99.

Watson's linguistic and biographical study of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and *Stories of York State* examines the materials and processes of folklore—specifically speech, customs, and beliefs. Watson reasons in his article, “Frederic’s life provided him with both a natural and a practiced awareness of the ‘folk,’ and his fiction became a medium for recording the particulars of that awareness.” Folk speech is “used for the purposes of characterization and establishment of setting.” It portrays Brother Pierce’s upstate New York fundamentalism: “We are a plain sort o’ folk up in these parts. [. . .] We ain’t gone traipsin’ after strange gods [. . .]. No new-fangled notions can go down here” (84). Sister Soulsby’s figurative expressions and use of proverbial sayings—“You’ve got to take folks as you find them,” and “you’ve got to find them the best way you can”—“express her understanding of human nature and her attitude toward overcoming its limitations” (86). Watson notes three distinct dialect patterns in *Stories of York State*: the upstate New York dialect (similar to Pierce’s in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*), the Irish immigrant dialect, and the German immigrant dialect. In addition to using folk speech patterns to create realistic characters, Frederic also used folk beliefs and customs, such as the rustics’ opposition to intellectualism and the Methodists’ suspicions of the Irish and the Italians. Folk customs in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* include the camp meeting, the lovefeast, donation parties, and the rental of pews. According to Watson, Frederic attended a Methodist camp meeting in 1875 and wrote an essay attacking “the hypocrisies of the barely religious event” (96). “Frederic’s use of the folklore of his native Mohawk Valley,” asserts Watson, “appears to be not only extensive, but basically accurate as well” (97).

Wilson, Edmund. “Two Neglected American Novelists: II—Harold Frederic, the Expanding Upstarter.” *The New Yorker* (6 June 1970): 112-34.



Wilson's biographical criticism of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* likens the title character to his creator, Harold Frederic. Wilson dedicates a large portion of his article to Frederic's biography and a chronological review of Frederic's literary works. Drawing parallels between events in Frederic's life and events in his novels, Wilson states that Frederic "violates the genteel conventions by allowing sex often to figure in its rawest, least romantic form" (114). To support his point, Wilson cites Frederic's public defense of prostitution in London and his maintenance of two households—one with his legally-married wife and children, the other with his common-law wife and children. *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is described as "amusing, absorbing, rather shocking" (124). Wilson identifies the "three tempters" (Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden) as the agents of Ware's damnation and Sister Soulsby as the only "redeeming element among Theron's mischief-making friends" (125-26). Ware's "illumination" is a feeble version of the "intellectual and imaginative expansion" Frederic himself experienced. Furthermore, Frederic and Ware shared a "kind of disregard of consequences"; Wilson cites the serious debt both faced as an example (126). Wilson concludes that "Theron Ware was an unself-flattering version of Harold Frederic as a young provincial eager to widen his social, aesthetic, and intellectual scope and to make for himself a career" (133).

Wilson, Edmund. "Two Neglected American Novelists: Harold Frederic, the Expanding Upstater." *The Devils and Canon Barham: Ten Essays on Poets, Novelists and Monsters*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1973. 48-76.

Wilson's chapter was first published as an article in *The New Yorker* (6 June 1970): 112-34.

Woodward, Robert H. "Some Sources for Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literature* 33.1 (1961): 46-51.

Woodward combines textual, biographical, and cultural criticism in his examination of Frederic's writing methods and sources. The article opens with a statement Frederic made in an interview published in *Literary Digest* in which he describes his research: "I seek to know my people through and through. [. . .] I set myself the task of knowing everything they knew. [. . .] I have got up masses of stuff." Among the background works Frederic studied, Woodward cites Samuel Laing's *Human Origins* (1892) as the source for Father Forbes' Abraham speech and Zénaïde A. Ragozin's *The Story of Chaldea from the Earliest Times to the Rise of Assyria* (1886) for Forbes' discussion of eponyms. In the case of Dr. Ledsmar's conversation with Theron Ware, all the German and French historians he refers to are among those listed in Mme. Ragozin's book. The books Dr. Ledsmar loans to Reverend Ware, with the exception of the one written by Ernest Renan, are also on the list. According to Woodward, Celia Madden's classification of people as Greeks or Jews comes from Renan's *Recollections of My Youth* (1883). Frederic relied upon his readings in the *Northern Christian Advocate*, a Methodist journal, for "all the details of a Methodist minister's work, obligation, and daily routine, and all the machinery of his church" (46). Sister Soulsby's woodchuck story is quoted almost verbatim from an 1893 issue of that journal. Woodward concludes that Frederic's characters "had to reveal themselves—their intellectual selves as well as their personalities—through their conversation," and that Frederic, "to make his characters speak convincingly, had to know what they would know" (50-51).

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# Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*:

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Raleigh, John Henry. "The Damnation of Theron Ware." *Time, Place, and Idea: Essays on the Novel*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1968. 75-95.

Raleigh, John Henry. Introduction. *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960. vii-xxvi.

Suderman, Elmer F. "Modernization as Damnation in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Ball State University Forum* 27.1 (1986): 12-19.

Watson, Douglas. "Folk Speech, Custom, and Belief in Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and *Stories of York State*." *New York Folklore* 3 (1977): 83-99.

Woodward, Robert H. "Some Sources for Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literature* 33.1 (1961): 46-51.

Ziff, Larzer. "Overcivilization: Harold Frederic, the Roosevelt-Adams Outlook, Owen Wister." *The American 1890s: Life and Times of a Lost Generation*. New York: Viking P, 1966. 206-28.

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Auchincloss, Louis. "Harold Frederic." *The Man Behind the Book: Literary Profiles*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996. 114-23.

Auchincloss' chapter entitled "Harold Frederic" is a psychological analysis that reflects Frederic's multifarious thinking and the cultural milieu in which he was writing *Seth's Brother's Wife* and *The*

*Damnation of Theron Ware*. For example, the portrayal of Father Forbes and the Catholic Church reflects Frederic's views of priests and Catholicism. The "crux" of the novel lies in Theron Ware's recognition of a "turning point in his career," "the sensation of having been invited to become a citizen of [. . . the] world" of intellect, culture, and grace to which Father Forbes, Celia Madden, and Dr. Ledsmar belong (119-20). Sister Soulsby is "a tough, realistic but kindly woman who has been through the toughest mills of life and emerged as a noisy but effective church fund raiser" (120). Celia Madden is little more than a separate banking account, while Levi Gorringer is the voice of the reader in his speech condemning Theron Ware as "a man who's so much meaner than any other man" (121). Auchincloss describes *The Damnation of Theron Ware* as a book, unlike Frederic's other novels, in which the author "addresses himself to the bewilderment and ultimate absurdity of a semi-educated American would-be idealist struggling in the arid culture of a northern New York State small town towards the end of the nineteenth century" (116-17). He concludes that Theron Ware has learned nothing and continues to delude himself with fantasies about using "his gift as a preacher" to become a Senator by the time he is forty (121).

Bennett, Bridget. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware or Illumination* (1896)." *The Damnation of Harold Frederic: His Lives and Works*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse UP, 1997. 174-97.

Bennett approaches her analysis of Frederic's novel from a biographical and cultural perspective. In Chapter 5, she claims the novel "is an embodiment of its own message—the difference between appearance and reality"—because both Theron Ware and the reader are misled with respect to his "illumination" (174). Bennett hypothesizes that Frederic expresses empathy for his main character, the "badly treated" Reverend Ware, probably because he too felt victimized by life's circumstance



(175). According to the Harold Frederic Papers in the Library of Congress, the author originally intended to kill off the title character by having him jump off the Brooklyn Bridge (built in 1883); however, Bennett contends that suicide might have made Ware appear to be a decadent hero. Death by alcohol would have been conventional and melodramatic. Thus the unexpected ending Frederic chose for Ware reflects the author's pessimism regarding the Gilded Age and ironically perpetuates the themes of illumination and damnation. Bennett observes, "Theron is less illumined, as he believes, than literally blinded by the people and ideas that he encounters. It is in this debilitated state of hysterical blindness that he seems most like a moth helplessly circling a source of light that he believes to be the catalyst of his illumination, singeing himself every time he gets too close to it, and inevitably foundering into it" (178). This analysis reflects Frederic's disillusionment with the Edenic myth of America and the corruption and falseness of its political and religious leaders—beliefs that are revealed through the characters in the novel. According to Bennett, "Theron's anxiety about how others perceived him, his eagerness to please and naive belief in his own intellectual and social advances captured a painfully familiar aspect of American national character" (186). Bennett notes that similar themes may be found in the writing of Nathaniel Hawthorne and Henry James.

Bramen, Carrie Tirado. "The Americanization of Theron Ware." *Novel* 31.3 (1997): 63-86.

Bramen's analysis of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* situates Frederic's novel within a cultural and literary context. She notes in her article that for nearly twenty years after its publication, many critics and writers lauded *The Damnation of Theron Ware* as the "great American novel," while others claimed that it was, in fact, Americanism that Frederic was criticizing. *The Damnation of*

*Theron Ware* “can be read as Frederic’s attempt to prove that he was not just a local colorist [. . .], but a ‘national writer.’” Her essay is an exploration of how Frederic came “to signify a nationalist spirit of inviolate Americanism” with the publication of a novel that is clearly ambivalent in its representation of Theron Ware, an American who is assimilated by Irish Catholics. Bramen focuses on the “contrast between Americanism and alienism [read Protestantism and Catholicism], between the familiar and the unfamiliar” to demonstrate the subversive nature of Frederic’s novel. She offers an extended structural analysis of how Ware crosses cultural boundaries by simply walking in spaces such as roads, sidewalks, and the countryside as support for his reverse assimilation by the Catholics. According to Bramen, relocation to the “West”—a place where one need not worry about “foreignizing influences”—is the author’s remedy for countering Theron Ware’s reverse assimilation. (Note: The above is from WilsonSelect, an electronic database that does not include *Novel’s* page numbers.)

Carter, Everett. Introduction. *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. By Harold Frederic. 1896. Cambridge: Belknap P of Harvard UP, 1960. vii-xxiv.

Carter’s oft-cited introduction opens with a biographical survey of Frederic’s life before it moves on to a cultural and a moral examination of the trio of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden as “seducers of innocence” (xxi). Carter claims that Theron Ware falls from innocence into knowledge, “a fall into the religious and scientific knowledge” and “the dark knowledge of the flesh” (xxi). Father Forbes is responsible for Ware’s religious crisis, while Dr. Ledsmar—a Darwinian atheist—introduces Ware to the writings of Renan. According to Carter, Celia Madden’s role in Theron Ware’s damnation is “evil” (x). The critic’s bibliography is a good source for contemporaneous

reception of the novel: most of the citations are reviews or articles from the 1890s.

Davies, Horton. "Harold Frederic." *A Mirror of the Ministry in Modern Novels.* New York: Oxford UP, 1959. 71-78.

Davies' chapter entitled "Harold Frederic," although largely a summary of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, is also a character study and a cultural critique of religion and science, examining particularly the "conflict between the old faith and the new knowledge." Comparing Frederic's novel to Mrs. Humphrey Ward's *Robert Elsmere*, Davies states that Theron Ware's "lapse," unlike Robert Elsmere's, "was moral not theological" (71). Further, "Frederic's novel gives a much more sympathetic account of the older generation in religion" than is found in the novels of his contemporaries Mrs. Humphrey Ward and William Hale White; it also presents a "sophisticated treatment of the role of the Catholic enclave in a predominantly Protestant America" (72). Davies' reading of the "genuine Soulsbys" (78) is quite favorable: "The Soulsbys prove in the end [. . .] to be the best friends of Ware and his wife" (76). Davies concludes, "This novel, then, is not so much a study of the agonizing problem of correlating traditional faith with the new scientific and historical knowledge; it is chiefly a study of the disintegration of a minister through succumbing to vanity, in the form of intellectual ambition" (78).

Dooley, Patrick K. "Fakes and Good Frauds: Pragmatic Religion in *The Damnation of Theron Ware.*" *American Literary Realism* 15.1 (1982): 74-85.

Dooley approaches his analysis of Frederic's novel from a cultural and philosophical perspective. In this article, he defines pragmatism as "a technical

and sophisticated epistemological position designed to settle the perennial questions of the nature and meaning of Truth” (74). For William James, the “truth of religion and religious belief is its beneficial consequences and valuable effects” (75). Dooley contends that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* “is a remarkable cultural document and an illuminating philosophical critique,” in which the author illustrates the nature of the difficulties of James’ “tender-minded” pragmatism and “the effects, beneficial and otherwise, of believing a lie” (74-76). According to Dooley, “Frederic stresses two facts: religious experiences are manufactured, and second, one does not have to be pious to produce religious experiences” (79). In fact, none of the central religious characters in this novel—Theron Ware, Father Forbes, and the Soulsbys—really believes in God, and all are, or aspire to be, “good frauds” (81). The essay traces the events leading to and following Ware’s counter-conversion. Dooley examines Father Forbes’ and Sister Soulsby’s pragmatic claims that truth is always relative. This perspective is illustrated in Father Forbes’ attitude toward the Catholic church and its secular function and in Sister Soulsby’s revelation about performance. Dooley concludes that Frederic does not resolve the question of whether or not a pragmatic account of religion—believing a lie if its effects are beneficial—is a satisfactory philosophy. Frederic leaves that for the reader to decide.

Krause, Sydney J. “Harold Frederic and the Failure Motif.” *Studies in American Fiction* 15.1 (1987): 55-69.

Krause’s cultural and psychological approach to Frederic’s novel juxtaposes the American myth of success with American novelists’ fascination with failure. Published during the period when “Horatio Alger stories were still at the ‘zenith of their fame’” (57), Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware* “represents that counter-phenomenon in the

American tradition wherein knowledge not only fails to set someone free, it actually enslaves him to a false notion of the freed Self” (56). A key element in Theron Ware’s failure, according to Krause’s article, is “his inability to accept a negative image of himself for wrongs done” (59). Sympathetic to Ware’s motives for wanting “to cultivat[e] his mind till it should blossom like a garden,” Krause acknowledges “Frederic’s strategy of ambiguity,” wherein Ware’s desire for “personal enrichment” is hindered by his complete lack of self knowledge (61). Krause argues that Celia Madden’s musical seduction of Ware “becomes such a blatantly erotic performance as to constitute a rape of his senses” (62). For those “characters who fall socially and thereafter rehabilitate themselves, [ . . . Frederic] provides moral redemption” or, if necessary, a graceful death. However, those characters “who fall morally and fail to acknowledge it,” such as Ware, must live with their ignominy (63). Krause concludes that Theron Ware’s “failure is fundamental and national; it is his persisting in the American illusion that there is no final failure, that success only awaits a new beginning elsewhere” (64).

Myers, Robert M. “Antimodern Protest in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literary Realism* 26.3 (1994): 52-64.

Myers combines biographical and cultural criticism in his article to examine Frederic’s portrayal of nineteenth-century America, particularly the country’s attitude toward religion. According to Myers, many earlier critics of Frederic’s works “tended to see Frederic as an objective critic standing outside of his culture”; he, however, detects in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* the author’s concern for the effect of “overcivilization and fragmentation of modernism” on American cultural institutions (52). Frederic undertook extensive research on Methodism, Catholicism, and higher Biblical criticism in order to be as accurate

as possible in his portrayal of a minister and a priest. Myers notes that Frederic's sources on comparative religion "map a decline in traditional faith" resulting in "a profound ambivalence about the psychological and social effects of faithlessness." Frederic's own views on religion "altered between contempt for religious superstition and a recognition of the social value of religion" (54). In the 1890s, tensions between liberal Methodists, who "adopted the modern optimistic belief in the inevitability of progress," and conservative Methodists, who protested the "modernizing trends of the liberals," were dividing the church. Reverend Ware's attempt to bring "modern ideas" to the Methodists of Octavius is thwarted by "a strong conservative faction" (56). Partly in reaction to his frustration with primitive Methodism, Ware embraces Celia Madden's aesthetic paganism. He is also exposed to Father Forbes' Catholicism, described by Myers as "a useful social institution" (59), and Sister Soulsby's pragmatism, "based on social utility rather than theology." Myers observes, "Father Forbes, Doctor Ledsmar, Celia, and Sister Soulsby all contribute to Theron's destruction by consistently overestimating his ability to assimilate a modern view of religion." Catholicism can tolerate a Father Forbes in its midst because the "corporate ethic of the Catholic Church de-emphasizes the significance of the individual priest" (60). Reverend Ware does not have that luxury in Methodism: "if the minister be corrupt his ministry will be corrupt also." Myers concludes, "Forbes' vision of a national church, focused on the needs of the consumers rather than doctrinal disputes with other religions, parallels simultaneous developments in American business. [. . .] The pragmatic approach to religion that emerges from Theron Ware points to a church strikingly similar to the modern corporation, an institution that took shape in the late nineteenth century" (61).

O'Donnell, Thomas F, and Hoyt C. Franchere. "*The*



*Damnation of Theron Ware.*” *Harold Frederic*.  
New York: Twayne Publishers, 1961. 108-17.

O'Donnell and Franchere's chapter on *The Damnation of Theron Ware* combines biographical and cultural criticism in an examination of the writing and reception of the novel. The essay opens with a survey of the novel's contemporaneous reviews in both England and the United States, then moves on to speculate upon the genesis of the work, which took Frederic “five years of conscious, careful, and silent planning” to write. O'Donnell and Franchere believe the idea for the novel may have occurred to Frederic “as far back as his Utica days when his long conversations with Father Terry, the brilliant and candid priest, had so stimulated him” (110). They point out that Frederic observed the growth of religious skepticism in the 1870s and 1880s—fueled by Darwin's theories, higher Biblical criticism, aestheticism, and intellectual epicureanism—and incorporated these influences in the characters of Dr. Ledsmar, Father Forbes, and Celia Madden, with disastrous results for his title character. Unable to reconcile “currents of thought that are disturbing the very universe of his time [. . .] Theron brings about his own damnation,” conclude O'Donnell and Franchere (116).

Raleigh, John Henry. “*The Damnation of Theron Ware.*” *American Literature* 30 (1958): 210-27.

Raleigh's analysis of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* situates Frederic's writing within a cultural context. In his article, Raleigh argues that the novel reflects American history and culture on three levels: (1) its representation of nineteenth-century America, (2) its representation of the nineteenth-century American and “his relationship to Europe,” and (3) its “metaphorical statement about the essential polarities of all human existence” (213). On the first level, Raleigh describes Theron Ware

as an anachronism: “an Emersonian, a Romantic, a lover of nature” (215). Ware’s “lingering intuitionism” and “reliance upon feelings” are challenged by Celia Madden’s aestheticism and Dr. Ledsmar’s Darwinism (214). On the second level, Frederic’s novel “shows Irish Catholicism conquering American Protestantism,” an unusual perspective in the nineteenth century. In theme, the novel resembles Henry James’ *Roderick Hudson*; in the character of Sister Soulsby, Frederic has captured the essence of Mark Twain’s Huck Finn. On the third level, Raleigh asserts that the “highest and strongest” (223) attitudes in the novel belong to Father Forbes, “the voice of history, of tragedy, of loneliness, [. . .] of the mysteries that surround and encompass us,” and to Sister Soulsby, “the spokesman for the here-and-now, for life as a comedy, for the efficacy of common sense” (226). “As psychological surrogates,” Raleigh proposes, “Father Forbes is the ‘father,’ while Sister Soulsby is the ‘mother.’” He concludes that “the two forces represented by Father Forbes and Sister Soulsby are not antithetical but complementary.” Both are “right,” and neither subscribes to “Absolute Truths” (227).

Raleigh, John Henry. “*The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *Time, Place, and Idea: Essays on the Novel*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1968. 75-95.

Raleigh’s chapter is a reprint of his article entitled “*The Damnation of Theron Ware*” that appeared in *American Literature* 30 (1958): 210-27.

Raleigh, John Henry. Introduction. *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960. vii-xxvi.

Raleigh’s introduction is a reprint of his article entitled “*The Damnation of Theron Ware*” that appeared in *American Literature* 30 (1958): 210-

27.

Suderman, Elmer F. "Modernization as Damnation in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Ball State University Forum* 27.1 (1986): 12-19.

Suderman's thematic consideration of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* focuses upon the way in which modernism causes "man" to think "differently about the nature of man, of the universe, of God," and of "the different way in which he relates to himself and others, to the community and its institutions, and to God" (12). According to Suderman's article, modern attitudes have already damned Celia Madden, Sister Soulsby, Dr. Ledsmar, and Father Forbes when they are introduced to the reader. Furthermore, technological advancement and urbanization lead to the "damnation of community, a church, and a minister who discovers that his substitution of modern personality traits for traditional ones does not help him cope with an intractable world" (18). Suderman concludes that Theron Ware has no place in either modern or traditional society.

Watson, Douglas. "Folk Speech, Custom, and Belief in Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and *Stories of York State*." *New York Folklore* 3 (1977): 83-99.

Watson's linguistic and biographical study of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and *Stories of York State* examines the materials and processes of folklore—specifically speech, customs, and beliefs. Watson reasons in his article, "Frederic's life provided him with both a natural and a practiced awareness of the 'folk,' and his fiction became a medium for recording the particulars of that awareness." Folk speech is "used for the purposes of characterization and establishment of setting." It portrays Brother Pierce's upstate New York

fundamentalism: “We are a plain sort o’ folk up in these parts. [. . .] We ain’t gone traipsin’ after strange gods [. . .]. No new-fangled notions can go down here” (84). Sister Soulsby’s figurative expressions and use of proverbial sayings—“You’ve got to take folks as you find them,” and “you’ve got to find them the best way you can”—“express her understanding of human nature and her attitude toward overcoming its limitations” (86). Watson notes three distinct dialect patterns in *Stories of York State*: the upstate New York dialect (similar to Pierce’s in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*), the Irish immigrant dialect, and the German immigrant dialect. In addition to using folk speech patterns to create realistic characters, Frederic also used folk beliefs and customs, such as the rustics’ opposition to intellectualism and the Methodists’ suspicions of the Irish and the Italians. Folk customs in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* include the camp meeting, the lovefeast, donation parties, and the rental of pews. According to Watson, Frederic attended a Methodist camp meeting in 1875 and wrote an essay attacking “the hypocrisies of the barely religious event” (96). “Frederic’s use of the folklore of his native Mohawk Valley,” asserts Watson, “appears to be not only extensive, but basically accurate as well” (97).

Woodward, Robert H. “Some Sources for Harold Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literature* 33.1 (1961): 46-51.

Woodward combines textual, biographical, and cultural criticism in his examination of Frederic’s writing methods and sources. The article opens with a statement Frederic made in an interview published in *Literary Digest* in which he describes his research: “I seek to know my people through and through. [. . .] I set myself the task of knowing everything they knew. [. . .] I have got up masses of stuff.” Among the background works Frederic studied, Woodward cites Samuel Laing’s *Human Origins* (1892) as the source for Father Forbes’

Abraham speech and Zénaïde A. Ragozin's *The Story of Chaldea from the Earliest Times to the Rise of Assyria* (1886) for Forbes' discussion of eponyms. In the case of Dr. Ledsmar's conversation with Theron Ware, all the German and French historians he refers to are among those listed in Mme. Ragozin's book. The books Dr. Ledsmar loans to Reverend Ware, with the exception of the one written by Ernest Renan, are also on the list. According to Woodward, Celia Madden's classification of people as Greeks or Jews comes from Renan's *Recollections of My Youth* (1883). Frederic relied upon his readings in the Northern Christian Advocate, a Methodist journal, for "all the details of a Methodist minister's work, obligation, and daily routine, and all the machinery of his church" (46). Sister Soulsby's woodchuck story is quoted almost verbatim from an 1893 issue of that journal. Woodward concludes that Frederic's characters "had to reveal themselves—their intellectual selves as well as their personalities—through their conversation," and that Frederic, "to make his characters speak convincingly, had to know what they would know" (50-51).

Ziff, Larzer. "Overcivilization: Harold Frederic, the Roosevelt-Adams Outlook, Owen Wister." *The American 1890s: Life and Times of a Lost Generation*. New York: Viking P, 1966. 206-28.

Ziff's Chapter 10 situates Frederic's writing, particularly *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, within the cultural milieu of the late nineteenth century. He characterizes Frederic as "a walking treasury of local history and manners," which served to shape the imaginary towns of Tyre, Thessaly, and Tecumseh (207). "Possessed of an imaginative knowledge of his home county, in which character was inseparable from ethnic, religious, historical, political, and social conditions, [. . . Frederic] was able to follow Howells' lead in producing a fiction of the commonplace, yet to

surpass the dean in rendering a sense of communal density,” argues Ziff (209). *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, Frederic’s last novel set in New York State, represents a culmination of plot and material not achieved in any of his earlier novels; yet the novel reverberates “as a symbolic tale of America’s progress to disunity in the latter half of the nineteenth century” (212). In the character of Theron Ware, Frederic has created a “pitiful creature” who has thrown away the ideals of Christianity in favor of “a grab bag of third-hand tastes, ill-digested ideas, and smirkingly cynical opinions about those who nourished and shaped him” (214). One bright spot in this dark landscape is the Soulsbys, whose manipulations, according to Ziff, are “finally for the good of those manipulated.” The Soulsbys represent Frederic’s answer to Social Darwinism: “men can control the future of their society if they but yield power to the able” (216).

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# Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware:*

A Study Guide with Annotated Bibliography

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Carrington, Jr., George C. "Harold Frederic's Clear Farcical Vision: *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 19.3 (1987): 3-26.

Coale, Samuel. "Frederic and Hawthorne: The Romantic Roots of Naturalism." *American Literature* 48.1 (March 1976): 29-45.

Coale, Samuel Chase. "Harold Frederic: Naturalism as Romantic Snarl." *In Hawthorne's Shadow: American Romance from Melville to Mailer*. Lexington, KY: UP of Kentucky, 1985. 46-62.

Davies, Horton. "Harold Frederic." *A Mirror of the Ministry in Modern Novels*. New York: Oxford UP, 1959. 71-78.

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Prioleau, Elizabeth S. "The Minister and the Seductress in American Fiction: The Adamic Myth Redux." *Journal of American Culture* 16.4 (1993): 1-6.

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Suderman, Elmer F. "The Damnation of Theron Ware as a Criticism of American Religious Thought." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 33 (1969): 61-75.

Zlotnick, Joan. "The Damnation of Theron Ware, with a Backward Glance at Hawthorne." *Markham Review* 2 (Feb 1971): 90-92.

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Carrington, Jr., George C. "Harold Frederic's Clear Farcical Vision: *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 19.3 (1987): 3-26.

Carrington's genre analysis of Frederic's novel opens with the claim that "Frederic's America is farcical; it is a world in which behavior and events are basically determined by the need [. . .] for personal stability and security" (3). Thus, Carrington argues in this article, in Frederic's interpretation of Howellsian realism, nearly all the characters in this farcical novel are knaves: "selfish aggressors" who manipulate "obtuse victims," the fools (9). Theron Ware is unique in that his character is both knave and fool: the "fool-as-knave" tries to be a manipulator, but is hopelessly foolish, and the "knave-as-fool" blunders about seemingly helpless, provokes others to help him, and emerges relatively unharmed, ready to repeat the cycle (3). Although Carrington examines a number of devices standard to farce, he identifies hoaxing and acting as central to the development of the novel. Most of the hoaxing occurs in Ware's mind: he deceives himself more effectively than he deceives any of the other characters. The external hoaxing takes on the form of acting—characters playing a role for the purpose of "self-maintenance" or personal stability (7). Seeing the arrival of Theron Ware in Octavius as a potential threat to their stability, most of the other characters in the novel take immediate and aggressive action toward Ware in order to maintain their positions. Of these, Sister Soulsby is deemed "the most perfect knave in the book": she is deceptive, manipulative, and ruthless (18). Carrington concludes that the question of Theron Ware's illumination or damnation is irrelevant because, in the farcical

world of the novel, nothing significant has changed; and, in the end, it is the reader—not the characters—who is illumined through Frederic’s “clear human vision’ of comedy” (24).

Coale, Samuel. “Frederic and Hawthorne: The Romantic Roots of Naturalism.” *American Literature* 48.1 (March 1976): 29-45.

Coale’s article is a genre study of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* that examines Frederic’s literary roots—from melodrama to realism, romanticism to naturalism—with particular emphasis on Nathaniel Hawthorne as one of Frederic’s “literary parent[s]” (29). Coale notes that many critics have viewed Frederic’s best-seller as simply “another example of emerging American naturalism” (29), a genre that shared much in common with William Dean Howells’ realism, “although the overriding tone is determinedly pessimistic, not obdurately optimistic.” He asserts, however, that “[i]n turning from the abundant details of character in society to concentrate upon one soul or two and in bending their visions inward, [. . . Frederic] approached the psychological and allegorical territory that had appeared in Hawthorne’s fiction” (30). Coale offers several examples to support his claim: Theron Ware’s resemblance to Young Goodman Brown, another “American innocent”; the similarities between *Damnation’s* opening paragraphs and the forest scenes of Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter*; and the use of light and dark imagery. Even the character of Sister Soulsby seems to fit the “Hawthornian mold” in her correspondence to Westervelt in *The Blithedale Romance*—clearly “a representative of the modern manipulative world, not to be trusted, however practical and useful her tools of the trade” (41). In fact, Coale claims, Sister Soulsby may be “the Devil of the piece.” He concludes that Frederic does not succeed in fusing romantic and naturalistic elements in this novel: the “romantic or Hawthornesque touches can only be self-justifications on Theron’s part for his

actions, as his comments on determinism must be, and we cannot take them seriously” (43).

Coale, Samuel Chase. “Harold Frederic: Naturalism as Romantic Snarl.” *In Hawthorne’s Shadow: American Romance from Melville to Mailer*. Lexington, KY: UP of Kentucky, 1985. 46-62.

Coale’s chapter on Harold Frederic is a reworking of his earlier article entitled “Frederic and Hawthorne: The Romantic Roots of Naturalism,” published in *American Literature* 48.1 (March 1976): 29-45.

Davies, Horton. “Harold Frederic.” *A Mirror of the Ministry in Modern Novels*. New York: Oxford UP, 1959. 71-78.

Davies’ chapter entitled “Harold Frederic,” although largely a summary of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, is also a character study and a cultural critique of religion and science, examining particularly the “conflict between the old faith and the new knowledge.” Comparing Frederic’s novel to Mrs. Humphrey Ward’s *Robert Elsmere*, Davies states that Theron Ware’s “lapse,” unlike Robert Elsmere’s, “was moral not theological” (71). Further, “Frederic’s novel gives a much more sympathetic account of the older generation in religion” than is found in the novels of his contemporaries Mrs. Humphrey Ward and William Hale White; it also presents a “sophisticated treatment of the role of the Catholic enclave in a predominantly Protestant America” (72). Davies’ reading of the “genuine Soulsbys” (78) is quite favorable: “The Soulsbys prove in the end [. . .] to be the best friends of Ware and his wife” (76). Davies concludes, “This novel, then, is not so much a study of the agonizing problem of correlating traditional faith with the new scientific and historical knowledge; it is chiefly a study of the



disintegration of a minister through succumbing to vanity, in the form of intellectual ambition” (78).

Genthe, Charles V. “*The Damnation of Theron Ware and Elmer Gantry.*” *Research Studies* 32 (1964): 334-43.

Genthe’s article is a structural analysis of Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896) and Sinclair Lewis’ *Elmer Gantry* (1927) that considers “striking similarities” in “certain characters, materials, and techniques” (334), suggesting that Lewis must have known Frederic’s novel. Celia Madden and Sharon Falconer, although “vastly different in background and occupation,” “epitomize beauty and savoir faire to Ware and Gantry, and the bower seduction scenes are markedly similar” (335). Ministers Theron Ware and Frank Shallard, a minor character in *Elmer Gantry*, share similar “background[s],” “environments,” and “influences,” specifically “Darwinism, the Higher Criticism, and the social gospel” (337). Genthe notes that the publication of Darwin’s *Origin of Species* (1859) and *Descent of Man* (1871) “constituted a separation point between an old order of thought and a new” (338). Higher Criticism, in the minds of some clergymen, threatened to do away with God; and the social gospel, “a movement within the churches to help the common person in his struggle for a material existence,” “helped to level the old barriers between the secular and sacred” (339). For Theron Ware, these influences are embodied in the characters of Dr. Ledsmar, Father Forbes, and Celia Madden. For Frank Shallard, they are all combined in the single character of Dr. Bruno Zechlin, Professor of Hebrew at Mizpah Baptist Seminary. “[I]t is a tribute to American realism that Lewis and Frederic created these two characters and their plot situations with such verisimilitude,” writes Genthe. The similarity could be attributed to “the fact that both authors saw the same basic forces in American religious patterns,” or Lewis may have used



Frederic's novel for source material (343). Genthe opts for the second possibility, that Lewis borrowed from Frederic.

Heddendorf, David. "Pragmatists and Plots: *Pierre* and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Studies in the Novel* 22.3 (1990): 271-81.

Heddendorf's article is a psychological study of Pierre Glendinning, in Herman Melville's *Pierre*, and Theron Ware, in Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, that focuses on the downfall of the two protagonists. According to Heddendorf, Glendinning and Ware seem incapable of comprehending the "prescription for practical results" recommended by their advisors, Plinlimmon and Sister Soulsby. The "rightness or wrongness" of the pragmatic figures of Plinlimmon and Sister Soulsby is not at issue, argues Heddendorf; rather "the relationship between philosophy and narrative is the point of these encounters [. . .] and the simple fact that neither Pierre nor Theron understands what his would-be counselor is talking about" (272). For Pierre Glendinning, it is a pamphlet by Plinlimmon that describes the "irrelevance of an absolute time standard to the requirement of everyday life" that he cannot understand because he is "repressing an understanding of his present extreme circumstances" (273). As readers, Heddendorf asserts, we can see that the pamphlet holds the pragmatic solution to Glendinning's problems. For Theron Ware, Sister Soulsby's declaration that she and her husband are "good frauds" is misleading; Ware assumes that he too is to be a "good fraud." Unfortunately for Ware, he is not a very good fraud and manages to alienate family, friends, and community because he fails to understand Sister Soulsby's advice. Heddendorf concludes, "In *Pierre* and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, the narratives of belief, abandonment and new belief lead less happily to a view of human beings as not licensed but condemned to believe" (280).

Jefferson, Margo. "Seven Unsung Novels Crying to be Filmed." *New York Times* 18 Jan. 1998, late ed., sec. 2: 1+.

Jefferson's feature article focuses on "seven unsung novels crying to be filmed" (1). While noting Hollywood's recent fascination with making movies from the novels of Henry James, Jane Austin, all three Brontës, and Edith Wharton, Jefferson laments Hollywood's oversight in not filming such novels as William Dean Howells' *A Modern Instance* (1882), Charles W. Chesnutt's *The House Behind the Cedars* (1900) and *The Marrow of Tradition* (1901), David Graham Phillips' *Susan Lenox: Her Fall and Rise* (1917), Abraham Cahan's *The Rise of David Levinsky* (1917), Anzia Yeziarska's *Salome of the Tenements* (1923), and Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896).

Johnson, George W. "Harold Frederic's Young Goodman Ware: The Ambiguities of a Realistic Romance." *Modern Fiction Studies* 8 (1963): 361-74.

Johnson's article combines structural and genre criticism to explore the "sinning minister" in Nathaniel Hawthorne's works as an influence on Frederic's minister, "brought up to date and given topicality in the 'turbulent' milieu of the 1890's" (362). Although sensitive to Sister Soulsby's duplicity, Johnson regards her influence as comparable to that of Celia Madden. Johnson writes, Sister Soulsby "patches together Theron's splintered ego by giving him a role to play. Henceforth, she counsels, he is to be a conscious fraud, an actor superior to his audience." Her seduction of Theron Ware takes a different tack from Celia Madden's, "[b]ut Sister Soulsby has in a way seduced him" by appealing to his pride and

fueling his ego. Ware emerges from the forest scene with Madden, “like another Dimmesdale,” unable to reconcile the “radical contradictions” that plague his mind (365). Johnson observes that Frederic’s novel is, on the one hand, “a realistic rendering of societal relationships” and, on the other, “a romancer’s poetic rendering, complete with archetypal trees, gardens, and snakes, of a representative figure” (367). In the character of Theron Ware, Frederic has created a “seeker who combines the temperament of both a romancer and a realist”; however, Johnson concludes that the novel “remains a literary near-miss” because “Theron Ware is an average man who remains throughout the book merely a boy” (372). A novel “[a]t the last more complicated than complex,” Johnson asserts that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is “a flawed monument to an endeavor audacious, artful, and American” (374).

Kane, Patricia. “Lest Darkness Come Upon You: An Interpretation of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *Iowa English Bulletin* 10 (1965): 55-59.

Kane’s article is a Biblical study of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* that focuses on Frederic’s use of symbols and images to trace Theron Ware’s fall from the light of innocence into the “darkness of damnation” (55). Theron and Alice Ware’s garden initially evokes not only “the lost agrarian America,” but also “the sterility of life in a small town, which is relieved only by faith in God.” Later, the garden becomes a spiritual symbol associated with Alice Ware, and Theron Ware’s attitudes toward his wife and her garden chart his descent. The image of a garden is also used to describe Theron Ware’s supposed illumination: at one point he vows to “bend all his energies to cultivating his mind till it should blossom like a garden” (56). Yet in the Maddens’ hothouse garden, Michael Madden tells Ware that his face now resembles that of a bar-keeper, not a saint, and asks him to leave. This scene recalls the Archangel Michael’s expulsion of

Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. Jesus warns in John 12:35, "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth" (57). Kane also notes Reverend Ware's ironic use of "Christian language and symbolism of salvation to describe his damnation": after his evening at Celia Madden's house, Ware is "a new being" (John 3: 3) and a "child of light" (John 12: 36) (56-57). Ware believes himself to be reborn in lightness; but as Kane observes, he is confused and mistaken in his illumination—he is "becoming a child of darkness" (57). The light imagery turns evil when Ware is rebuffed by Celia Madden: "The horrible notion of killing her spread over the chaos of his mind with the effect of unearthly light,—red and abnormally evil" (59). Although Kane concedes that "the Biblical allusions here are not insistent," she maintains that "they hover with enough tenacity to become part of a pattern in a story about a fall from innocence" (56).

Kantor, J. R. K. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware and John Ward, Preacher.*" *The Serif* 3.1 (1996): 16-21.

Kantor's article is an analysis of the character development and structure of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896) and Margaret Deland's *John Ward, Preacher* (1888). The similarities in the treatment of religious doctrine in the two stories, according to Kantor, support the thesis that Frederic was familiar with Deland's novel. First, Kantor notes that critics have argued Frederic was familiar with Mrs. Humphrey Ward's *Robert Elsmere*, a novel published the same year as *John Ward, Preacher*, and often reviewed with it because of their similarities. Second, attitudes toward religion are central to character development in both Frederic's and Deland's novels. The pragmatic attitudes of Sister Soulsby and of Gifford Woodhouse complement one another, and in the end, both characters are a

source of consolation and hope. Kantor also notes similarities between the meetings of the ministers and the trustees in both novels. The trustees are in control, and both groups have one dissenter among them: Levi Gorringer opposes the high interest rate charged by the other trustees, and Elder Johnson defends Helen Ward against the judgment of the others. In both novels, church officials are opposed to all things Catholic. Finally, the names of the two ministers—Ware and Ward—cannot be ignored.

Klopfenstein, Glenn D. "The Flying Dutchman of American Literature': Harold Frederic and the American Canon, a Centenary Overview." *American Literary Realism* 30.1 (1997): 34-46.

Klopfenstein's bibliographical article opens with a brief review of the state of Frederic scholarship since the 1950s. His reference to "the Flying Dutchman" is borrowed from Austin Briggs: "Harold Frederic, unless the interest of the 1960's abides, seems doomed to play the Flying Dutchman of American literature. Over the decades he has been enthusiastically sighted again and again, only to disappear into the fogs of obscurity" (35). According to Klopfenstein, the exclusion of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* from the American canon can be attributed to "changing critical (aesthetic) standards and political (institutional) forces" (36); it has been exacerbated by Vernon Louis Parrington's negative criticism of the novel in *Main Currents in American Thought* (1927). Klopfenstein further speculates that the novel and its author may have been marginalized prior to the work's brief revival in the 1960s because Frederic, an expatriate living in England, was not American enough and his effeminate antihero was not masculine enough to appeal to critics. While lamenting that Frederic has been pigeonholed as a regionalist, a realist, and a naturalist, and that his novel has become "fodder for the reductions of literary theorists and specialists," Klopfenstein praises Stanton Garner's theory that Frederic's

“true descent” was from Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville and holds out hope that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* may yet be resurrected in the coming years by a new generation of Frederic enthusiasts (43).

Oates, Joyce Carol. “Fall From Grace.” Rev. of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, by Harold Frederic. *The New York Times Book Review* 17 Dec. 1995: 24+.

Oates’ book review focuses upon genre and influence as she recalls her discovery of Frederic’s novel in the 1960s. In her opinion, the novel is an “odd, unexpected link between the crude naturalism of the young Stephen Crane [. . .] and the elegant dissections of wealthy New York society of Edith Wharton”; it has less in common with Nathaniel Hawthorne’s fiction than it does with Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, a novel in which the “young, ingenuous hero is ‘poisoned’ by a book of amoral hedonism and by his friendship with a mentor whose disregard for convention completely unhinges him.” The title character in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is also seduced by worldly desires, and he has not one mentor, but four. Oates argues Frederic’s novel inspired two 1920s novels by Sinclair Lewis, *Main Street* and *Elmer Gantry*, but believes that Frederic manages his narrative with more finesse than does Lewis. She asserts, *The Damnation of Theron Ware* “is American literary realism at its most accomplished” and is also a comedy (24). Her prediction of Ware’s future is optimistic: “he will live from now on without illusion” and he “will not only survive but succeed” (25).

Oates, Joyce Carol. “Rediscovering Harold Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *Where I’ve Been, and Where I’m Going*. New York: Penguin, 1999. 304-10.



Oates' chapter is a close version of her review entitled "Fall From Grace," which first appeared in *The New York Times Book Review* in December 1995.

O'Donnell, Thomas F. "Theron Ware, the Irish Picnic, and *Comus*." *American Literature: A Journal of Literary History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 46 (1975): 528-37.

O'Donnell combines textual and structural criticism in an examination of possible literary sources for the scene of the Irish picnic in Frederic's novel. In his article, he acknowledges Nathaniel Hawthorne's influence on Frederic, but argues that John Milton's masque *Comus* may have inspired the picnic in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. Elements of *Comus* are echoed throughout the novel. According to O'Donnell, *Comus* is Theron Ware; the Lady is Celia Madden; and the Attendant Spirit is Father Forbes. However, Frederic's version inverts certain elements: "Comus-Theron rather than the Lady moved along through a thick wood," and he eagerly accepts the potion (lager beer) Milton's Lady refuses (531). The Lady's brothers do not rescue Celia Madden; rather she and Comus-Theron are left alone in the forest. And though it appears that Celia Madden may allow herself to be seduced by Comus-Theron, he receives only a perfunctory good-bye kiss from his Lady. While Milton's *Comus* is a rewriting of the Circe legend, O'Donnell observes, "Abundant precedent for the naturalizing—and nationalizing—of European and classical myth was available in American literature" (535). He concludes that *Comus* clearly provided the elements necessary to Frederic's "final climactic temptation" of Theron Ware (537).

Prioleau, Elizabeth S. "The Minister and the Seductress in American Fiction: The Adamic Myth

Redux." *Journal of American Culture* 16.4 (1993): 1-6.

Prioleau's structural approach identifies the "odd couple" of American literature that reveals "surprising shifts and reversals in the minister-temptress drama" (1) in six novels: Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896), Winston Churchill's *The Inside of the Cup* (1913), Sinclair Lewis' *Elmer Gantry* (1927), Peter De Vries' *The Mackerel Plaza* (1958), and John Updike's *A Month of Sundays* (1974). In her article, Prioleau observes that Hawthorne's Dimmesdale is the model clergyman, a "saint on earth," for whom Hester Prynne's freedom and lawlessness prove to be powerfully seductive. When Dimmesdale falls, "the reverberations are momentous." The title character in Frederic's novel is a "diminished version" of Dimmesdale, and Celia Madden is a "spoiled, vain, fin de siecle voluptuary" (2). Prioleau observes, "Due to the minister's lowered status at the century's end," Ware's "fall resembles more of a pratfall, for which the reader feels mixed pathos and contempt." Churchill's innocent and idealistic minister, John, "denounces everything he had believed"; and his seducer, wealthy and freethinking "pagan" Alison Parr, "metamorphoses into a Victorian hausfrau—domestic and dependent" (3). Prioleau concludes that Churchill's attempt to create "a happy resolution of the clergy-temptress drama" misses the mark. Literature in the 1920s reveals a decline in the clergyman's reputation. Lewis' *Elmer Gantry* is already corrupt when he meets Sharon Faulkner, an even more corrupt tent revivalist. By novel's end, Faulkner is dead and Gantry has become the new "seducer, exploiter, megalomaniac, and muddled nonbeliever." De Vries' Andrew Mackerel is a degenerate minister who believes in nothing. The women in the novel are a parody of earlier seductresses such as Hester Prynne, prompting Prioleau to observe, "The temptations of America for clergymen in the fifties have been indulged to a

point of satiation, ennui, and meaninglessness.” Lastly, Updike’s Tom Marshfield is both minister and seducer, and the temptresses—Ms. Prynne and Alicia—have “evolved into the seduced” (4).

Strout, Cushing. “In Hawthorne’s Shadow: The Minister and the Woman in Howells, Adams, Frederic, and Updike.” *Making American Tradition: Visions and Revisions from Ben Franklin to Alice Walker*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1990. 22-39.

Strout’s Chapter 2 examines the influence of Nathaniel Hawthorne’s “marital triangle”—and more specifically, his “symbolic use of Hester Prynne”—in *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) on novels by William Dean Howells, Henry Adams, Harold Frederic, and John Updike. According to Strout, Hawthorne’s unlikely heroine is presented as a “female apostle [. . .] walking in the footsteps of the Puritan Anne Hutchinson” (22); symbolically, she poses a threat to established views about love, marriage, and Christian authority. Howells’ *A Modern Instance* (1882) treats the issue of divorce in its impartial portrayal of “a marriage without love and a love without marriage” (29). Adams’ title character in *Esther* (1884) is torn between her love for a minister and her scientific agnosticism; the romantic triangle “is defined by her relationship to a scientist and a minister” (30). In *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896), argues Strout, “Frederic turned [. . . Hawthorne’s marital] triangle to the purposes of serious comedy” (33). The forest scene in which Celia Madden bestows upon Theron Ware a kiss is most reminiscent of the relationship between Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale; however, Frederic’s version is “comically ironical” because Ware’s dream of a future with Celia Madden is “inspired by a kiss that is ‘a swift, almost perfunctory caress’” and his dream is corrupted by his lust for Madden’s wealth (33). Ware’s fall is less significant than Dimmesdale’s because Ware was “deeply flawed” to begin with. Ware, as a

representative of his generation of Methodist preachers, is a poor specimen of religious piety as compared to the older generation present at the Nedahma conference. Thus, suggests Strout, “[t]he fall that Frederic measures is not a moral one within the minister but an historical one in America. [. . .] Frederic has an accurate sense of the way in which modernist forms of Protestantism were, in fact, allying themselves with science, evolution, and historical criticism of the Bible, jettisoning traditional Christian doctrine in the process and presupposing a sentimental confidence that change is inevitably progress” (33-34). The last section of this chapter addresses Updike’s *Roger’s Version* (1986), a comic tale of adultery, in which Hawthorne’s triangle is expanded to a marital quadrangle, related from the cuckolded husband’s perspective.

Suderman, Elmer F. “*The Damnation of Theron Ware* as a Criticism of American Religious Thought.” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 33 (1969): 61-75.

Suderman’s article combines psychological and genre criticism in an examination of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and the conventions of the sentimental religious novel of the late nineteenth century. According to Suderman, Frederic’s decidedly non-sentimental novel “modifies the stereotype” and “brings it to life” (66). The young (Protestant) woman in the sentimental novel is recast as the sensual, red-headed, Irish-Catholic beauty Celia Madden. The young skeptic in the sentimental novel who is saved by his love for the young woman and her God is the Methodist minister Theron Ware. In *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, Celia Madden is the skeptic and Reverend Ware represents the already-converted young man. Rather than a conversion to Christianity, Ware experiences a counter-conversion to Madden’s religion of beauty and

“absolute freedom from moral bugbears” (68-69). In one situation after another, Frederic subverts sentimental conventions: Ware converts in the space of a page as opposed to a few chapters; instead of giving up smoking, Ware accepts a cigarette from Madden; at the point in the novel where the young woman would typically pray for her skeptical young man, Madden offers Ware a drink of Benedictine; the convert’s faith in an afterlife is substituted for Ware’s faith in a life of luxury aboard a yacht. Suderman observes that Frederic “has transformed a sterile conventional plot into a convincing, realistic story” (71). Whereas the sentimental religious novel generally ended on an uplifting note, at the end of Chapter 31, Ware, feeling rejected and alone, questions the very existence of God. In true Theron Ware-fashion, however, he “does not live with his more realistic and somber knowledge very long. [. . .] Theron, after two conversions—three if you count the drunken orgy—returns to his routine life unchanged” (74).

Zlotnick, Joan. “*The Damnation of Theron Ware*, with a Backward Glance at Hawthorne.” *Markham Review* 2 (Feb 1971): 90-92.

Zlotnick’s genre study examines possible literary sources for *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. She notes in her article that Frederic considered Nathaniel Hawthorne one of his “literary parents” and compares Frederic’s novel to *The Scarlet Letter*, “Young Goodman Brown,” “My Kinsman, Major Molineux,” and “Rappaccini’s Daughter” (90). Reverend Ware is likened to the “sinning minister” Dimmesdale and Young Goodman Brown, Celia Madden to Hester Prynne, and Dr. Ledsmar to Rappaccini and Chillingworth. Zlotnick argues that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and “Young Goodman Brown” have the same theme, the loss of innocence. In addition, Frederic employs light and dark imagery to develop “the Hawthornian theme of reality versus appearance

and even offers his own version of Hawthorne's ocular deception." Other imagery common to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and "Young Goodman Brown" includes the forest scene and ribbons (in Celia Madden's hair and on the maypole). Like many of Hawthorne's characters, argues Zlotnick, Ware is not guilty of the sin of passion; instead, he is guilty of the sin of pride, "a sin which results in the separation of so many Hawthornian characters from the 'magic circle of humanity'" (91).

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# Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*:

A Study Guide with Annotated Bibliography

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Bramen, Carrie Tirado. "The Americanization of Theron Ware." *Novel* 31.3 (1997): 63-86.

Campbell, Donna M. "Frederic, Norris, and the Fear of Effeminacy." *Resisting Regionalism: Gender and Naturalism in American Fiction, 1885-1915*. Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 1997. 75-108.

Carter, Everett. "Naturalism and Introspection." *Howells and the Age of Realism*. Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1966. 239-45.

Coale, Samuel. "Frederic and Hawthorne: The Romantic Roots of Naturalism." *American Literature* 48.1 (March 1976): 29-45.

Coale, Samuel Chase. "Harold Frederic: Naturalism as Romantic Snarl." *In Hawthorne's Shadow: American Romance from Melville to Mailer*. Lexington, KY: UP of Kentucky, 1985. 46-62.

Donaldson, Scott. Introduction. *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. By Harold Frederic. 1896. New York: Penguin, 1986. vii-xxx.

Garner, Stanton. "The Other Harold Frederic." *Upstate Literature: Essays in Memory of Thomas F. O'Donnell*. Ed. Frank Bergmann. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse UP, 1985. 129-41.

Klopfenstein, Glenn D. "'The Flying Dutchman of American Literature': Harold Frederic and the American Canon, a Centenary Overview." *American Literary Realism* 30.1 (1997): 34-46.

Oates, Joyce Carol. "Fall From Grace." Rev. of *The*

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*Damnation of Theron Ware*, by Harold Frederic. *The New York Times Book Review* 17 Dec. 1995: 24+.

Oates, Joyce Carol. "Rediscovering Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Where I've Been, and Where I'm Going*. New York: Penguin, 1999. 304-10.

Strout, Cushing. "In Hawthorne's Shadow: The Minister and the Woman in Howells, Adams, Frederic, and Updike." *Making American Tradition: Visions and Revisions from Ben Franklin to Alice Walker*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1990. 22-39.

Vanderbeets, Richard. "The Ending of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literature: A Journal of Literary History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 36 (1964): 358-59.

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Bramen, Carrie Tirado. "The Americanization of Theron Ware." *Novel* 31.3 (1997): 63-86.

Bramen's analysis of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* situates Frederic's novel within a cultural and literary context. She notes in her article that for nearly twenty years after its publication, many critics and writers lauded *The Damnation of Theron Ware* as the "great American novel," while others claimed that it was, in fact, Americanism that Frederic was criticizing. *The Damnation of Theron Ware* "can be read as Frederic's attempt to prove that he was not just a local colorist [. . .], but a 'national writer.'" Her essay is an exploration of how Frederic came "to signify a nationalist spirit of inviolate Americanism" with the publication of a novel that is clearly ambivalent in its representation of Theron Ware, an American who is assimilated by Irish Catholics. Bramen focuses on the "contrast between Americanism and

alienism [read Protestantism and Catholicism], between the familiar and the unfamiliar” to demonstrate the subversive nature of Frederic’s novel. She offers an extended structural analysis of how Ware crosses cultural boundaries by simply walking in spaces such as roads, sidewalks, and the countryside as support for his reverse assimilation by the Catholics. According to Bramen, relocation to the “West”—a place where one need not worry about “foreignizing influences”—is the author’s remedy for countering Theron Ware’s reverse assimilation. (Note: The above is from WilsonSelect, an electronic database that does not include *Novels* page numbers.)

Campbell, Donna M. “Frederic, Norris, and the Fear of Effeminacy.” *Resisting Regionalism: Gender and Naturalism in American Fiction, 1885-1915*. Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 1997. 75-108.

Campbell combines feminist theory and genre criticism to analyze Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. The opening paragraphs of the chapter address the ever-widening split between what James Lane Allen describes as the “Masculine” and “Feminine” principles in literature. Campbell argues that, alarmed at the growing “feminine ethic in literature,” naturalists embraced brutish masculinity as an “antidote” to feminine civilization (75). Campbell identifies “three different courses of thematic development [that] emerged in naturalistic fiction: the triumph of the brute, leading to the degeneration of the individual; the balance of the two opposing forces, leading to the perfect amalgamation of sensibility and ‘red-blooded’ vigor; and an excess of civilization, leading, ironically enough, to a degeneration similar to—and in some cases identical with—that which the emergence of the brute signals” (77). Campbell believes the title character in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* succumbs to this third possibility, becoming “a brute in taste and outlook” (79). Tracing “Frederic’s

exploration of realism through his character's progress from the conventions of sentimental and local color fiction to the harsh realities of naturalism" (80), Campbell notes that, as a minister, Theron Ware is a "hybrid female" (81). Subverting the "opposition between male authority and female community common in local color" fiction, Frederic instead focuses on the similarities between the roles of ministers and women (80-81). Powerless, Ware's only options, according to the conventions of sentimental fiction, are to capitulate, threaten, or dissemble, and his only defenses are fainting, illness, and weeping—all feminine responses. Ware's attempt at illumination results in degeneration when he begins "to see himself as a victim of impersonal forces [. . . which lead him] into a self-delusional justification of the naturalistic brute within" (91).

Carter, Everett. "Naturalism and Introspection." *Howells and the Age of Realism*. Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1966. 239-45.

Carter combines biographical and genre criticism in his chapter that examines Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. According to Carter, Frederic "thought of himself as a realist," a disciple of William Dean Howells. Howells preached "a fidelity to the life one knew, an immersion in one's own experience, an unswerving loyalty to the truth and a hatred of the false and sentimental." Like Howells, Frederic looked to his own life and region for inspiration. Unlike Howells, however, Frederic "found his interest going from the social to the individual, from the inequities in relations between men to the tormenting self-divisions within man, from an analysis of the normal and commonplace to a concern with those hidden recesses of the individual soul where cower lust and fear and primitive ignorance" (240). Frederic observed "a society in turmoil" due to social, economic, and scientific advances, which prompted a "struggle within the individual [. . .] attended by possibilities

of evil as well as possibilities of good” (241). Theron Ware’s illumination results in his fall rather than his salvation. Because the characters of Ware, Father Forbes, and Celia Madden, as well as the scenes of New York State life, are “drawn from life,” Carter identifies *The Damnation of Theron Ware* as a work of “realism” (244-45). However, because Frederic also sought to explore a “psychological rather than a social truth” in his portrayal of Father Forbes, Celia Madden, Dr. Ledsmar, and the Soulsbys, he transforms the characters into archetypes (245).

Coale, Samuel. “Frederic and Hawthorne: The Romantic Roots of Naturalism.” *American Literature* 48.1 (March 1976): 29-45.

Coale’s article is a genre study of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* that examines Frederic’s literary roots—from melodrama to realism, romanticism to naturalism—with particular emphasis on Nathaniel Hawthorne as one of Frederic’s “literary parent[s]” (29). Coale notes that many critics have viewed Frederic’s best-seller as simply “another example of emerging American naturalism” (29), a genre that shared much in common with William Dean Howells’ realism, “although the overriding tone is determinedly pessimistic, not obdurately optimistic.” He asserts, however, that “[i]n turning from the abundant details of character in society to concentrate upon one soul or two and in bending their visions inward, [. . . Frederic] approached the psychological and allegorical territory that had appeared in Hawthorne’s fiction” (30). Coale offers several examples to support his claim: Theron Ware’s resemblance to Young Goodman Brown, another “American innocent”; the similarities between *Damnation’s* opening paragraphs and the forest scenes of Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter*; and the use of light and dark imagery. Even the character of Sister Soulsby seems to fit the “Hawthornian mold” in her correspondence to Westervelt in *The Blithedale Romance*—clearly “a



representative of the modern manipulative world, not to be trusted, however practical and useful her tools of the trade” (41). In fact, Coale claims, Sister Soulsby may be “the Devil of the piece.” He concludes that Frederic does not succeed in fusing romantic and naturalistic elements in this novel: the “romantic or Hawthornesque touches can only be self-justifications on Theron’s part for his actions, as his comments on determinism must be, and we cannot take them seriously” (43).

Coale, Samuel Chase. “Harold Frederic: Naturalism as Romantic Snarl.” *In Hawthorne’s Shadow: American Romance from Melville to Mailer*. Lexington, KY: UP of Kentucky, 1985. 46-62.

Coale’s chapter on Harold Frederic is a reworking of his earlier article entitled “Frederic and Hawthorne: The Romantic Roots of Naturalism,” published in *American Literature* 48.1 (March 1976): 29-45.

Donaldson, Scott. Introduction. *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. By Harold Frederic. 1896. New York: Penguin, 1986. vii-xxx.

Donaldson’s introduction to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* combines biographical and genre criticism with a brief character study. Part I is a biography of Harold Frederic: journalist, novelist, bon vivant, and polygamist. Part II opens with Donaldson’s acknowledgment that Frederic’s literary reputation generally rests upon a single novel, *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, a situation he regrets as unfortunate because *Seth’s Brother’s Wife* (1890), *In the Valley* (1890), and *The Market-Place* (1899) “represent major achievements” as well (xii). Donaldson states that Frederic’s novels “resist pigeonholing as works of realism, naturalism, or romance” and further asserts that *Damnation* “reveals traces of all three approaches”



(xvi). Parts III, IV, and V explore the character development of Theron Ware, as well as of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, Celia Madden, and Sister Soulsby. The novel is described as a “subtle study of moral disintegration” (xviii), in which Ware “abandons his faith and seems at the end to have learned almost nothing from his ordeal” (xix).

Garner, Stanton. “The Other Harold Frederic.” *Upstate Literature: Essays in Memory of Thomas F. O'Donnell*. Ed. Frank Bergmann. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse UP, 1985. 129-41.

Garner's chapter is a biographical sketch of Frederic that acknowledges his achievements as an editor and a journalist, but concentrates upon Frederic's literary contributions as a writer of fiction. Joseph Conrad characterized Frederic as “a notable journalist (who had written some novels).” Garner contends that Conrad's comment is an example of how Frederic's fiction has been, and continues to be, misunderstood and underappreciated (130). In Garner's opinion, Frederic is a “fine stylist” who, “in the ease and fluency of his language [. . .], belongs in the camp of Mark Twain” (133). Garner examines genre in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, *Gloria Mundi*, and *The Market-Place* to show Frederic's growth as an author. Frederic's early works set in upstate New York establish him as a regionalist; however, most of Frederic's later works are set abroad and are a “fusion of types,” borrowing elements of regionalism, realism, and romance (135). For example, elements of realism and romance flavor *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, one of Frederic's later novels (although set in New York), with provocative social and moral issues. The setting of *Gloria Mundi* and *The Market-Place*, Frederic's last two novels, moves beyond the Mohawk Valley to “the ancient European cradle out of which [. . . Frederic's regional American] culture had risen” and on to “the future of the West and of mankind” in the character of Joel Thorpe. Garner concludes

“that in addition to the regionalist we know there was another Harold Frederic whose vision grew much broader” (140).

Klopfenstein, Glenn D. “‘The Flying Dutchman of American Literature’: Harold Frederic and the American Canon, a Centenary Overview.” *American Literary Realism* 30.1 (1997): 34-46.

Klopfenstein’s bibliographical article opens with a brief review of the state of Frederic scholarship since the 1950s. His reference to “the Flying Dutchman” is borrowed from Austin Briggs: “Harold Frederic, unless the interest of the 1960’s abides, seems doomed to play the Flying Dutchman of American literature. Over the decades he has been enthusiastically sighted again and again, only to disappear into the fogs of obscurity” (35). According to Klopfenstein, the exclusion of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* from the American canon can be attributed to “changing critical (aesthetic) standards and political (institutional) forces” (36); it has been exacerbated by Vernon Louis Parrington’s negative criticism of the novel in *Main Currents in American Thought* (1927). Klopfenstein further speculates that the novel and its author may have been marginalized prior to the work’s brief revival in the 1960s because Frederic, an expatriate living in England, was not American enough and his effeminate antihero was not masculine enough to appeal to critics. While lamenting that Frederic has been pigeonholed as a regionalist, a realist, and a naturalist, and that his novel has become “fodder for the reductions of literary theorists and specialists,” Klopfenstein praises Stanton Garner’s theory that Frederic’s “true descent” was from Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville and holds out hope that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* may yet be resurrected in the coming years by a new generation of Frederic enthusiasts (43).

Oates, Joyce Carol. "Fall From Grace." Rev. of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, by Harold Frederic. *The New York Times Book Review* 17 Dec. 1995: 24+.

Oates' book review focuses upon genre and influence as she recalls her discovery of Frederic's novel in the 1960s. In her opinion, the novel is an "odd, unexpected link between the crude naturalism of the young Stephen Crane [. . .] and the elegant dissections of wealthy New York society of Edith Wharton"; it has less in common with Nathaniel Hawthorne's fiction than it does with Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, a novel in which the "young, ingenuous hero is 'poisoned' by a book of amoral hedonism and by his friendship with a mentor whose disregard for convention completely unhinges him." The title character in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is also seduced by worldly desires, and he has not one mentor, but four. Oates argues Frederic's novel inspired two 1920s novels by Sinclair Lewis, *Main Street* and *Elmer Gantry*, but believes that Frederic manages his narrative with more finesse than does Lewis. She asserts, *The Damnation of Theron Ware* "is American literary realism at its most accomplished" and is also a comedy (24). Her prediction of Ware's future is optimistic: "he will live from now on without illusion" and he "will not only survive but succeed" (25).

Oates, Joyce Carol. "Rediscovering Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Where I've Been, and Where I'm Going*. New York: Penguin, 1999. 304-10.

Oates' chapter is a close version of her review entitled "Fall From Grace," which first appeared in *The New York Times Book Review* in December 1995.

Strout, Cushing. "In Hawthorne's Shadow: The Minister and the Woman in Howells, Adams, Frederic, and Updike." *Making American Tradition: Visions and Revisions from Ben Franklin to Alice Walker*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1990. 22-39.

Strout's Chapter 2 examines the influence of Nathaniel Hawthorne's "marital triangle"—and more specifically, his "symbolic use of Hester Prynne"—in *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) on novels by William Dean Howells, Henry Adams, Harold Frederic, and John Updike. According to Strout, Hawthorne's unlikely heroine is presented as a "female apostle [. . .] walking in the footsteps of the Puritan Anne Hutchinson" (22); symbolically, she poses a threat to established views about love, marriage, and Christian authority. Howells' *A Modern Instance* (1882) treats the issue of divorce in its impartial portrayal of "a marriage without love and a love without marriage" (29). Adams' title character in *Esther* (1884) is torn between her love for a minister and her scientific agnosticism; the romantic triangle "is defined by her relationship to a scientist and a minister" (30). In *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896), argues Strout, "Frederic turned [. . . Hawthorne's marital] triangle to the purposes of serious comedy" (33). The forest scene in which Celia Madden bestows upon Theron Ware a kiss is most reminiscent of the relationship between Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale; however, Frederic's version is "comically ironical" because Ware's dream of a future with Celia Madden is "inspired by a kiss that is 'a swift, almost perfunctory caress'" and his dream is corrupted by his lust for Madden's wealth (33). Ware's fall is less significant than Dimmesdale's because Ware was "deeply flawed" to begin with. Ware, as a representative of his generation of Methodist preachers, is a poor specimen of religious piety as compared to the older generation present at the Nedahma conference. Thus, suggests Strout, "[t]he fall that Frederic measures is not a moral one within the minister but an historical one in

America. [. . .] Frederic has an accurate sense of the way in which modernist forms of Protestantism were, in fact, allying themselves with science, evolution, and historical criticism of the Bible, jettisoning traditional Christian doctrine in the process and presupposing a sentimental confidence that change is inevitably progress” (33-34). The last section of this chapter addresses Updike’s *Roger’s Version* (1986), a comic tale of adultery, in which Hawthorne’s triangle is expanded to a marital quadrangle, related from the cuckolded husband’s perspective.

Vanderbeets, Richard. “The Ending of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literature: A Journal of Literary History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 36 (1964): 358-59.

Vanderbeets’ textual analysis of Frederic’s novel and working notes challenges earlier criticism labeling Frederic a “comic realist” (358). The ending of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, Vanderbeets argues in his article, is not tragic: Theron Ware relocates to Seattle for a career in real estate and dreams of becoming a Senator. However, Frederic’s working notes read, “Soulsby & wife at deathbed—their words finish book.” Vanderbeets contends that since this note immediately follows references to Ware, it must refer to his deathbed. Furthermore, if Frederic intended to kill off his main character in some earlier version of the novel, then the ending “reveals an inconsistency incompatible with the picture of ‘comic realist’” (359).

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# Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*:

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Garner, Stanton. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware, or Illumination: The Title of Harold Frederic's Novel.*" *Proof: The Yearbook of American Bibliographical and Textual Studies*. Vol. 5 Ed. Joseph Katz. New York: J. Faust, 1979. 57-66.

Jolliff, William. "Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware.*" *The Explicator* 47.2 (1989): 37-38.

Garner, Stanton. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware, or Illumination: The Title of Harold Frederic's Novel.*" *Proof: The Yearbook of American Bibliographical and Textual Studies*. Ed. Joseph Katz. Vol. 5. New York: J. Faust, 1979. 57-66.

Garner's chapter is a textual analysis that focuses upon the title of Harold Frederic's "finest novel" (57), published simultaneously as *The Damnation of Theron Ware* in the United States and as *Illumination* in England. Garner examines "the possibility that one title should have priority over the other" and produces evidence for both arguments: either the different titles were intentional, meant "to attract the two distinct bodies of readers to whom the novel was offered for sale," or the *Damnation* title was unintended, printed in error (58). Evidence supporting the former argument includes the fact that (1) Frederic, in correspondence, referred to the novel as "*The Damnation of Theron Ware*" nearly two years before its publication in the U.S., (2) he did not change the *Damnation* title on the publisher's proofs, and (3) the two different titles appear on the title pages of the U.S. and English original



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editions. However, evidence supporting the argument that the *Damnation* title was appended in error includes (1) literary gossip appearing in the *London Daily Chronicle*, *The New York Times*, *The Critic*, and *The Review of Reviews* as little as two months after the novel's publication, (2) the addition of the English title as a subtitle to later American editions, (3) Frederic's habit of making changes to his compositions up to the last possible moment, and (4) his documented difficulty in selecting titles for his works. Garner judges the evidence to be in favor of *Illumination* as Frederic's preferred choice of title: "A return to *Illumination* would in all probability rectify an error which has for nearly eight decades misrepresented Frederic's final intention" (65).

Jolliff, William. "Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *The Explicator* 47.2 (1989): 37-38.

Jolliff's textual approach to Frederic's novel reveals that one of the working titles for *The Damnation of Theron Ware* was "Snarl," a term popularly interpreted as suggesting the tangled relationships of the novel's characters. Jolliff offers another explanation. In his note, he suggests the title "would direct the reader to consider the beast within Theron Ware" and points to the "abundance of animal imagery" in the novel. Dr. Ledsmar renames one of his lizard specimens "the Rev. Theron Ware," and "Theron's name derives from a Greek word meaning 'wild beast.'" At his lowest point, Theron Ware bemoans to Sister Soulsby, "[I]sn't there any God at all—but only men who live and die like animals?" (37). Ware likens himself to a "mongrel cur," one that Sister Soulsby threatens with a "good cuffing" if he does not shape up (38). Jolliff concludes that such an interpretation of the working title "Snarl" must certainly have been deliberate on the part of the author.

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Genthe, Charles V. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware* and *Elmer Gantry*." *Research Studies* 32 (1964): 334-43.

Hirsh, John C. "The Frederic Papers, The McGlynn Affair, and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 17.1 (1984): 12-23.

Miller, Linda Patterson. "Casting Graven Images: *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Renascence: Essays on Values in Literature* 30 (1978): 179-84.

Myers, Robert M. "Antimodern Protest in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 26.3 (1994): 52-64.

Suderman, Elmer F. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware* as a Criticism of American Religious Thought." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 33 (1969): 61-75.

Zimmermann, David H. "Clay Feet, Modernism, and Fundamental Option in Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *The American Benedictine Review* 45.1 (1994): 33-44.

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Genthe, Charles V. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware* and *Elmer Gantry*." *Research Studies* 32 (1964): 334-43.

Genthe's article is a structural analysis of Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896) and Sinclair Lewis' *Elmer Gantry* (1927) that considers "striking similarities" in "certain characters,

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materials, and techniques” (334), suggesting that Lewis must have known Frederic’s novel. Celia Madden and Sharon Falconer, although “vastly different in background and occupation,” “epitomize beauty and savoir faire to Ware and Gantry, and the bower seduction scenes are markedly similar” (335). Ministers Theron Ware and Frank Shallard, a minor character in *Elmer Gantry*, share similar “background[s],” “environments,” and “influences,” specifically “Darwinism, the Higher Criticism, and the social gospel” (337). Genthe notes that the publication of Darwin’s *Origin of Species* (1859) and *Descent of Man* (1871) “constituted a separation point between an old order of thought and a new” (338). Higher Criticism, in the minds of some clergymen, threatened to do away with God; and the social gospel, “a movement within the churches to help the common person in his struggle for a material existence,” “helped to level the old barriers between the secular and sacred” (339). For Theron Ware, these influences are embodied in the characters of Dr. Ledsmar, Father Forbes, and Celia Madden. For Frank Shallard, they are all combined in the single character of Dr. Bruno Zechlin, Professor of Hebrew at Mizpah Baptist Seminary. “[I]t is a tribute to American realism that Lewis and Frederic created these two characters and their plot situations with such verisimilitude,” writes Genthe. The similarity could be attributed to “the fact that both authors saw the same basic forces in American religious patterns,” or Lewis may have used Frederic’s novel for source material (343). Genthe opts for the second possibility, that Lewis borrowed from Frederic.

Hirsh, John C. “The Frederic Papers, The McGlynn Affair, and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literary Realism* 17.1 (1984): 12-23.

Hirsh combines textual and biographical approaches in his examination of the Frederic Papers, preserved in the Library of Congress, “to

help illuminate some of the more important structural and thematic concerns of the novel, particularly those affecting Fr. Forbes and the Catholics” (12). In his article, Hirsh produces excerpts from the author’s early notes that indicate some of the relationships that Frederic intended to develop, among them Theron Ware, Father Forbes and Dr. Ledsmar; Celia Madden and Father Forbes; Father Forbes and his Bishop. Hirsh cites Paul Haines’ 1945 unpublished dissertation that identifies Father Edward Terry, a priest whom Frederic knew in Utica, as a possible source for the development of Father Forbes. However, Hirsh suggests that a more influential source may have been Father Edward McGlynn, an Irish-Catholic priest in New York who made newspaper headlines in the 1880s for his political activism and American ideal of Catholicism (he was excommunicated in 1887 and reconciled with the church in 1893). The character of Father Forbes, as it emerged in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, is forceful, powerful, and sophisticated. Elements of the role that were in Frederic’s working notes but eliminated from the novel include public condemnation of the priest for a scandalous relationship with Celia Madden and serious political activism.

Miller, Linda Patterson. “Casting Graven Images: *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *Renascence: Essays on Values in Literature* 30 (1978): 179-84.

Miller's article combines moral and structural criticism in her analysis of the “moral wasteland” that confronts Alice Ware, Celia Madden, Sister Soulsby, and Theron Ware in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. Their “search for personal salvation” transforms the concept of the church into something familiar and comforting: for Alice Ware, it is her “garden”; for Celia Madden, it is her “‘sacred chamber’ of art”; for Sister Soulsby, it is a “theatrical stage”; and for Theron Ware, it is the “‘maternal idea’ as embodied in Alice, Celia, and Sister Soulsby” (179). Alice Ware’s religion is her

garden. Images of flowers blossoming and, later, withering are associated with her vivaciousness and despair. Miller observes that, rather than freeing her, both Methodism and her garden serve to isolate Alice Ware until she despairs, “[I]f there is a God, he has forgotten me” (180). Celia Madden seeks to transcend the wasteland in the “sacred chamber” of her rooms where she is worshipped as both seductress and madonna. When Celia Madden “cannot realize moments of transcendence,” she regards herself as “the most helpless and forlorn and lonesome of atoms” (181). Sister Soulsby’s approach is to disguise the wasteland with the machinery of the theatrical stage, all the while knowing that the performance is only an illusion. Theron Ware’s quest for salvation turns first to Alice Ware, then to Celia Madden, and finally to Sister Soulsby, but his misplaced faith in Sister Soulsby seals his damnation. Miller agrees with Stanton Garner’s assessment of Sister Soulsby’s failed religion: “to look for stage machinery instead of truth is to invite degeneration, to confuse darkness with illumination, to strike a bargain with Satan, to lose what weed-grown Paradise is left in a diminished world.” Miller concludes that none of the characters finds “real personal salvation”; none finds God (184).

Myers, Robert M. “Antimodern Protest in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literary Realism* 26.3 (1994): 52-64.

Myers combines biographical and cultural criticism in his article to examine Frederic’s portrayal of nineteenth-century America, particularly the country’s attitude toward religion. According to Myers, many earlier critics of Frederic’s works “tended to see Frederic as an objective critic standing outside of his culture”; he, however, detects in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* the author’s concern for the effect of “overcivilization and fragmentation of modernism” on American cultural institutions (52). Frederic undertook



extensive research on Methodism, Catholicism, and higher Biblical criticism in order to be as accurate as possible in his portrayal of a minister and a priest. Myers notes that Frederic's sources on comparative religion "map a decline in traditional faith" resulting in "a profound ambivalence about the psychological and social effects of faithlessness." Frederic's own views on religion "altered between contempt for religious superstition and a recognition of the social value of religion" (54). In the 1890s, tensions between liberal Methodists, who "adopted the modern optimistic belief in the inevitability of progress," and conservative Methodists, who protested the "modernizing trends of the liberals," were dividing the church. Reverend Ware's attempt to bring "modern ideas" to the Methodists of Octavius is thwarted by "a strong conservative faction" (56). Partly in reaction to his frustration with primitive Methodism, Ware embraces Celia Madden's aesthetic paganism. He is also exposed to Father Forbes' Catholicism, described by Myers as "a useful social institution" (59), and Sister Soulsby's pragmatism, "based on social utility rather than theology." Myers observes, "Father Forbes, Doctor Ledsmar, Celia, and Sister Soulsby all contribute to Theron's destruction by consistently overestimating his ability to assimilate a modern view of religion." Catholicism can tolerate a Father Forbes in its midst because the "corporate ethic of the Catholic Church de-emphasizes the significance of the individual priest" (60). Reverend Ware does not have that luxury in Methodism: "if the minister be corrupt his ministry will be corrupt also." Myers concludes, "Forbes' vision of a national church, focused on the needs of the consumers rather than doctrinal disputes with other religions, parallels simultaneous developments in American business. [. . .] The pragmatic approach to religion that emerges from Theron Ware points to a church strikingly similar to the modern corporation, an institution that took shape in the late nineteenth century" (61).

Suderman, Elmer F. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware* as a Criticism of American Religious Thought." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 33 (1969): 61-75.

Suderman's article combines psychological and genre criticism in an examination of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and the conventions of the sentimental religious novel of the late nineteenth century. According to Suderman, Frederic's decidedly non-sentimental novel "modifies the stereotype" and "brings it to life" (66). The young (Protestant) woman in the sentimental novel is recast as the sensual, red-headed, Irish-Catholic beauty Celia Madden. The young skeptic in the sentimental novel who is saved by his love for the young woman and her God is the Methodist minister Theron Ware. In *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, Celia Madden is the skeptic and Reverend Ware represents the already-converted young man. Rather than a conversion to Christianity, Ware experiences a counter-conversion to Madden's religion of beauty and "absolute freedom from moral bugbears" (68-69). In one situation after another, Frederic subverts sentimental conventions: Ware converts in the space of a page as opposed to a few chapters; instead of giving up smoking, Ware accepts a cigarette from Madden; at the point in the novel where the young woman would typically pray for her skeptical young man, Madden offers Ware a drink of Benedictine; the convert's faith in an afterlife is substituted for Ware's faith in a life of luxury aboard a yacht. Suderman observes that Frederic "has transformed a sterile conventional plot into a convincing, realistic story" (71). Whereas the sentimental religious novel generally ended on an uplifting note, at the end of Chapter 31, Ware, feeling rejected and alone, questions the very existence of God. In true Theron Ware-fashion, however, he "does not live with his more realistic and somber knowledge very long. [. . .] Theron,

after two conversions—three if you count the drunken orgy—returns to his routine life unchanged” (74).

Zimmermann, David H. “Clay Feet, Modernism, and Fundamental Option in Harold Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *The American Benedictine Review* 45.1 (1994): 33-44.

Zimmermann’s thematic and psychological approach to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* focuses upon Frederic’s “careful study of Methodism and Catholicism.” Zimmermann argues in his article that the novel “records an important shift in religious thought within modern Christianity” (34). “[T]he theologies of Forbes and Soulsby,” notes Zimmermann, “include many tenets adopted by twentieth-century Christian theologians” (35). Father Forbes tells Reverend Ware, “The Church is always compromising” (37). This perspective reflects Forbes’ “positivist view of history that forms the basis of his theologies and biblical interpretations” (38); however, “[o]nce Forbes has altered Theron’s understanding of history, he has altered Theron’s understanding of religion [. . . without providing] him with any basis on which to begin reconstructing his understanding of the world” (39). Zimmermann suggests that, within the context of modern theology, Sister Soulsby has undergone a conversion because she and Soulsby have “both soured on living by fakes” (42). Sister Soulsby’s theology embraces a belief in “humanity’s essential goodness,” and she “provides Theron with the forgiveness and direction necessary to begin the redemptive process” (42-43). Zimmermann asserts that, unlike many critics who blame Father Forbes and Sister Soulsby for Ware’s damnation, he does not find fault with either of them. In fact, he does not consider Ware damned. According to Zimmermann, “damnation occurs only after death,” when the option of free choice can no longer be exercised. Thus, “Sister

Soulsby is correct when she points out that the sheep and the goats will not be separated until judgment day” (44). Theron Ware’s future, in light of Zimmermann’s interpretation of Sister Soulsby’s and Father Forbes’ theologies, remains ambiguous.

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### Glossary

Donaldson, Scott. "The Seduction of Theron Ware." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 29 (1975): 441-52.

Dooley, Patrick K. "Fakes and Good Frauds: Pragmatic Religion in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 15.1 (1982): 74-85.

Heddendorf, David. "Pragmatists and Plots: *Pierre* and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Studies in the Novel* 22.3 (1990): 271-81.

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Donaldson, Scott. "The Seduction of Theron Ware." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 29 (1975): 441-52.

Donaldson's article is a psychological analysis of the causes of Theron Ware's downfall. While Donaldson acknowledges that most critics point to the trio of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden as the force behind Ware's destruction, he asserts "the true villain of the piece" is Sister Soulsby, "who plays Mephistopheles" to Ware's "Faust" (441-42). Donaldson points to characteristics of Sister Soulsby—her "deceptive appearance, commanding manner, and duplicitous methods of operation"—to support his judgment (442). Sister Soulsby is a master confidence artist who employs performance, flattery, and scripture quoted out-of-context to further her scheming manipulation of both Theron Ware and his congregation. After Sister Soulsby absolves Ware of any guilt for his participation in her scheme to cheat Levi Gorringer at the trustees' meeting, he embraces her philosophy of pragmatism and vows



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to emulate her example; however, Donaldson concludes, “Theron Ware simply is not cut out for the role of deceiver” (451).

Dooley, Patrick K. “Fakes and Good Frauds: Pragmatic Religion in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literary Realism* 15.1 (1982): 74-85.

Dooley approaches his analysis of Frederic’s novel from a cultural and philosophical perspective. In this article, he defines pragmatism as “a technical and sophisticated epistemological position designed to settle the perennial questions of the nature and meaning of Truth” (74). For William James, the “truth of religion and religious belief is its beneficial consequences and valuable effects” (75). Dooley contends that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* “is a remarkable cultural document and an illuminating philosophical critique,” in which the author illustrates the nature of the difficulties of James’ “tender-minded” pragmatism and “the effects, beneficial and otherwise, of believing a lie” (74-76). According to Dooley, “Frederic stresses two facts: religious experiences are manufactured, and second, one does not have to be pious to produce religious experiences” (79). In fact, none of the central religious characters in this novel—Theron Ware, Father Forbes, and the Soulsbys—really believes in God, and all are, or aspire to be, “good frauds” (81). The essay traces the events leading to and following Ware’s counter-conversion. Dooley examines Father Forbes’ and Sister Soulsby’s pragmatic claims that truth is always relative. This perspective is illustrated in Father Forbes’ attitude toward the Catholic church and its secular function and in Sister Soulsby’s revelation about performance. Dooley concludes that Frederic does not resolve the question of whether or not a pragmatic account of religion—believing a lie if its effects are beneficial—is a satisfactory philosophy. Frederic leaves that for the reader to decide.



Heddendorf, David. "Pragmatists and Plots: *Pierre* and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Studies in the Novel* 22.3 (1990): 271-81.

Heddendorf's article is a psychological study of Pierre Glendinning, in Herman Melville's *Pierre*, and Theron Ware, in Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, that focuses on the downfall of the two protagonists. According to Heddendorf, Glendinning and Ware seem incapable of comprehending the "prescription for practical results" recommended by their advisors, Plinlimmon and Sister Soulsby. The "rightness or wrongness" of the pragmatic figures of Plinlimmon and Sister Soulsby is not at issue, argues Heddendorf; rather "the relationship between philosophy and narrative is the point of these encounters [. . .] and the simple fact that neither Pierre nor Theron understands what his would-be counselor is talking about" (272). For Pierre Glendinning, it is a pamphlet by Plinlimmon that describes the "irrelevance of an absolute time standard to the requirement of everyday life" that he cannot understand because he is "repressing an understanding of his present extreme circumstances" (273). As readers, Heddendorf asserts, we can see that the pamphlet holds the pragmatic solution to Glendinning's problems. For Theron Ware, Sister Soulsby's declaration that she and her husband are "good frauds" is misleading; Ware assumes that he too is to be a "good fraud." Unfortunately for Ware, he is not a very good fraud and manages to alienate family, friends, and community because he fails to understand Sister Soulsby's advice. Heddendorf concludes, "In *Pierre* and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, the narratives of belief, abandonment and new belief lead less happily to a view of human beings as not licensed but condemned to believe" (280).

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# Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*:

A Study Guide with Annotated Bibliography

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Briggs, Austin, Jr. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *The Novels of Harold Frederic*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1969. 97-139.

Carrington, Jr., George C. "Harold Frederic's Clear Farcical Vision: *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 19.3 (1987): 3-26.

Dalton, Dale C. "MacEvoy's Room." *The Frederic Herald* 3.2 (1969): 5.

Donaldson, Scott. "The Seduction of Theron Ware." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 29 (1975): 441-52.

Jolliff, William. "The Damnation of Bryan Dalrymple—and Theron Ware: F. Scott Fitzgerald's Debt to Harold Frederic." *Studies in Short Fiction* 35.1 (1998): 85-90.

Jolliff, William. "Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *The Explicator* 47.2 (1989): 37-38.

Kane, Patricia. "Lest Darkness Come Upon You: An Interpretation of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Iowa English Bulletin* 10 (1965): 55-59.

Luedtke, Luther S. "Harold Frederic's Satanic Sister Soulsby: Interpretation and Sources." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 30.1 (1975): 82-104.

Michelson, Bruce. "Theron Ware in the Wilderness of Ideas." *American Literary Realism* 25.1 (1992): 54-73.

Spangler, George. "Theron Ware and the Perils of Relativism." *Canadian Review of American*

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*Studies* 5 (1974): 36-46.

Steele, Mildred R. "Ware's Post-Seattle Career Dept." *Frederic Herald* 3.2 (1969): 6.

Stein, Allen F. "Evasions of an American Adam: Structure and Theme in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 5 (1972): 23-36.

Suderman, Elmer F. "Modernization as Damnation in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Ball State University Forum* 27.1 (1986): 12-19.

Zimmermann, David H. "Clay Feet, Modernism, and Fundamental Option in Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *The American Benedictine Review* 45.1 (1994): 33-44.

Zlotnick, Joan. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware*, with a Backward Glance at Hawthorne." *Markham Review* 2 (Feb 1971): 90-92.

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Briggs, Austin, Jr. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *The Novels of Harold Frederic*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1969. 97-139.

Briggs' Chapter 5, *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, examines the themes of damnation and illumination with respect to the title character. Briggs notes that both Everett Carter and John Henry Raleigh argue that Ware is "reformed" at novel's end: Carter writes of a fall "from innocence into knowledge," and Raleigh perceives a "wiser, if sadder" Ware, who relocates to Seattle (108). According to Briggs, however, Ware is neither damned nor reformed in the course of his tenure in Octavius; in fact, he remains "pretty much the same old person" (113). Ware's attitude, as reflected in his reminiscences about his former congregation in Tyre, reveals him to be an ambitious social climber

and snob who dreams of “ultimate success and distinction” (120). In light of Ware’s attitude, and other revelations regarding his character in the early pages of the novel, “one wonders,” writes Briggs, “how *The Damnation* can ever have been taken to be a novel about the transformation of a good man into a bad man” (117). The influence of Dr. Ledsmar, Father Forbes, and Celia Madden often has been judged as the cause of Ware’s fall; however, Briggs questions such judgments. Instead, he suggests that Ware’s fall is not a single event but rather a series of falls in which each new fall is followed by “a new illumination” (121). The fact that Ware fails to learn anything from his “illuminations,” Briggs concludes, suggests that Frederic viewed Ware as a “comic, rather than tragic” figure who is essentially unchanged at novel’s end (139).

Carrington, Jr., George C. “Harold Frederic’s Clear Farcical Vision: *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literary Realism* 19.3 (1987): 3-26.

Carrington’s genre analysis of Frederic’s novel opens with the claim that “Frederic’s America is farcical; it is a world in which behavior and events are basically determined by the need [. . .] for personal stability and security” (3). Thus, Carrington argues in this article, in Frederic’s interpretation of Howellsian realism, nearly all the characters in this farcical novel are knaves: “selfish aggressors” who manipulate “obtuse victims,” the fools (9). Theron Ware is unique in that his character is both knave and fool: the “fool-as-knave” tries to be a manipulator, but is hopelessly foolish, and the “knave-as-fool” blunders about seemingly helpless, provokes others to help him, and emerges relatively unharmed, ready to repeat the cycle (3). Although Carrington examines a number of devices standard to farce, he identifies hoaxing and acting as central to the development of the novel. Most of the hoaxing occurs in Ware’s mind: he deceives himself more effectively than he

deceives any of the other characters. The external hoaxing takes on the form of acting—characters playing a role for the purpose of “self-maintenance” or personal stability (7). Seeing the arrival of Theron Ware in Octavius as a potential threat to their stability, most of the other characters in the novel take immediate and aggressive action toward Ware in order to maintain their positions. Of these, Sister Soulsby is deemed “the most perfect knave in the book”: she is deceptive, manipulative, and ruthless (18). Carrington concludes that the question of Theron Ware’s illumination or damnation is irrelevant because, in the farcical world of the novel, nothing significant has changed; and, in the end, it is the reader—not the characters—who is illumined through Frederic’s “‘clear human vision’ of comedy” (24).

Dalton, Dale C. “MacEvoy’s Room.” *The Frederic Herald* 3.2 (1969): 5.

Dalton’s note examines MacEvoy’s room as a recurring structural device significant to Theron Ware’s fall in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. When the Irish-Catholic wheelwright MacEvoy is fatally wounded falling from an elm tree he was ordered to trim on the Madden’s property, he is carried to his house in the outskirts of town. Theron Ware follows the bearers to MacEvoy’s house, the first house Ware visits upon moving to Octavius. MacEvoy’s room, described as “‘dark and ill-smelling,’” might also be called “Theron’s chamber of death,” observes Dalton, “for it holds other agents of Theron’s approaching ‘damnation,’” specifically Celia Madden and Father Forbes. In Chapter 10, when Ware has just returned from a visit to Forbes’ house, he finds his own house “‘bare and squalid’” and the fumes from the kerosene lamp “‘offensive to his nostrils.’” Lying in his room later that night, Ware can hear Madden playing her piano and recalls his first image her in MacEvoy’s room. In Chapter 15, MacEvoy’s room is again recalled: Ware rejects the Methodist Love-Feast as



a “low” ceremony, held in the basement of the church; yet only three months earlier, he was mesmerized by the religious rites performed by Forbes in MacEvoy’s room. “MacEvoy’s fall is prophetic of Theron’s moral decline and spiritual death,” argues Dalton, and “MacEvoy’s room is [. . .] the structural device with which Frederic portrays Theron’s first acceptance of the new and rejection of the old” (5).

Donaldson, Scott. “The Seduction of Theron Ware.” *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 29 (1975): 441-52.

Donaldson’s article is a psychological analysis of the causes of Theron Ware’s downfall. While Donaldson acknowledges that most critics point to the trio of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden as the force behind Ware’s destruction, he asserts “the true villain of the piece” is Sister Soulsby, “who plays Mephistopheles” to Ware’s “Faust” (441-42). Donaldson points to characteristics of Sister Soulsby—her “deceptive appearance, commanding manner, and duplicitous methods of operation”—to support his judgment (442). Sister Soulsby is a master confidence artist who employs performance, flattery, and scripture quoted out-of-context to further her scheming manipulation of both Theron Ware and his congregation. After Sister Soulsby absolves Ware of any guilt for his participation in her scheme to cheat Levi Gorringer at the trustees’ meeting, he embraces her philosophy of pragmatism and vows to emulate her example; however, Donaldson concludes, “Theron Ware simply is not cut out for the role of deceiver” (451).

Jolliff, William. “The Damnation of Bryan Dalrymple—and Theron Ware: F. Scott Fitzgerald’s Debt to Harold Frederic.” *Studies in Short Fiction* 35.1 (1998): 85-90.

Jolliff combines thematic criticism and character analysis in his note arguing that F. Scott Fitzgerald was influenced by Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware* when he wrote "Dalyrimple Goes Wrong." Jolliff establishes that Fitzgerald knew and admired Frederic's novel. He states that "Bryan Dalyrimple's story shares many similarities with Theron Ware's both in theme and detail" and suggests that Dalyrimple was the prototype of Jay Gatsby (87). "[T]ypically adamic," both Ware and Dalyrimple initially believe that hard work will lead to success, discover that "common sense" is a code word that sometimes stands for the sacrifice of moral conviction," and eventually surrender their "traditional ideas of good and evil" in favor of the common sense that will help them to obtain their worldly desires (87-88). As Ware and Dalyrimple abandon their moral codes, each finds that he has become better at his "legitimate work" (88). In addition, both rely upon their rhetorical skills as the key to their future success in politics. Noting that Dalyrimple's "amoral mentor" and boss is named "*Theron G. Macy*" (89), Jolliff concludes, Ware and Dalyrimple "present us with examples of what sometimes happens when the American Adam comes of age: a thorough disillusionment resulting not in self-knowledge but in moral degeneracy. [. . .] For if Fitzgerald was the voice of a generation, surely Harold Frederic had prophesied its coming" (89-90).

Jolliff, William. "Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *The Explicator* 47.2 (1989): 37-38.

Jolliff's textual approach to Frederic's novel reveals that one of the working titles for *The Damnation of Theron Ware* was "Snarl," a term popularly interpreted as suggesting the tangled relationships of the novel's characters. Jolliff offers another explanation. In his note, he suggests the title "would direct the reader to consider the beast within Theron Ware" and points to the "abundance

of animal imagery” in the novel. Dr. Ledsmar renames one of his lizard specimens “the Rev. Theron Ware,” and “Theron’s name derives from a Greek word meaning ‘wild beast.’” At his lowest point, Theron Ware bemoans to Sister Soulsby, “[I]sn’t there any God at all—but only men who live and die like animals?” (37). Ware likens himself to a “mongrel cur,” one that Sister Soulsby threatens with a “good cuffing” if he does not shape up (38). Jolliff concludes that such an interpretation of the working title “Snarl” must certainly have been deliberate on the part of the author.

Kane, Patricia. “Lest Darkness Come Upon You: An Interpretation of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *Iowa English Bulletin* 10 (1965): 55-59.

Kane’s article is a Biblical study of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* that focuses on Frederic’s use of symbols and images to trace Theron Ware’s fall from the light of innocence into the “darkness of damnation” (55). Theron and Alice Ware’s garden initially evokes not only “the lost agrarian America,” but also “the sterility of life in a small town, which is relieved only by faith in God.” Later, the garden becomes a spiritual symbol associated with Alice Ware, and Theron Ware’s attitudes toward his wife and her garden chart his descent. The image of a garden is also used to describe Theron Ware’s supposed illumination: at one point he vows to “bend all his energies to cultivating his mind till it should blossom like a garden” (56). Yet in the Maddens’ hothouse garden, Michael Madden tells Ware that his face now resembles that of a bar-keeper, not a saint, and asks him to leave. This scene recalls the Archangel Michael’s expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. Jesus warns in John 12:35, “Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth” (57). Kane also notes Reverend Ware’s ironic use of “Christian language and symbolism of salvation to describe his damnation”: after his evening at Celia Madden’s

house, Ware is “a new being” (John 3: 3) and a “child of light” (John 12: 36) (56-57). Ware believes himself to be reborn in lightness; but as Kane observes, he is confused and mistaken in his illumination—he is “becoming a child of darkness” (57). The light imagery turns evil when Ware is rebuffed by Celia Madden: “The horrible notion of killing her spread over the chaos of his mind with the effect of unearthly light,—red and abnormally evil” (59). Although Kane concedes that “the Biblical allusions here are not insistent,” she maintains that “they hover with enough tenacity to become part of a pattern in a story about a fall from innocence” (56).

Luedtke, Luther S. “Harold Frederic’s Satanic Sister Soulsby: Interpretation and Sources.” *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 30.1 (1975): 82-104.

Luedtke’s thematic, especially moral, approach to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* identifies Sister Soulsby as “the agent of a *damnation* that has moral as well as social reality” (82; emphasis Luedtke’s). Luedtke writes in his article, “Frederic intends Sister Soulsby, the materialist, to function as a Mephistophelean tempter of Theron’s soul and a minion of spiritual darkness” (84). Tracing the four parts of the novel, Luedtke states that it is not Theron Ware’s introduction to his new church or town, Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, or Celia Madden in Part I that sets him on the path to damnation, but rather it is his interaction with the Soulsbys in Part II that plants the seeds of his destruction. Sister Soulsby’s remarks about Alice Ware cause Theron Ware first to re-evaluate his marriage and, later, to suspect his wife of infidelity. Her lecture to Ware on the art and uses of performance prompt him to brag about his new perspective to Dr. Ledsmar and Celia Madden, alienating them in the process. Luedtke recites the Soulsbys’ long history of questionable employment and concludes that they are confidence artists for whom religion is “only the latest con game” (92). Ware believes

Sister Soulsby when she tells him that she and Soulsby had “both soured on living by fakes” and were now “good frauds” (93). Luedtke notes Frederic’s debt to Nathaniel Hawthorne in the character of Westervelt (*The Blithedale Romance*), who, like Sister Soulsby, has false teeth and is “stamped with [. . . the] totems of the serpent and the evil eye” (94). Although Luedtke contends that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* offers ample evidence of Frederic’s “judgments on Sister Soulsby” (98), he concludes his essay by offering two British models for the character of Sister Soulsby: Lucy Helen Muriel Soulsby (1856-1927) and Charles Dickens’ fictional Mrs. Jellyby (*Bleak House*).

Michelson, Bruce. “Theron Ware in the Wilderness of Ideas.” *American Literary Realism* 25.1 (1992): 54-73.

Michelson’s article combines thematic and structural criticism in his examination of Theron Ware’s “modern intellectual experience” in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (55). First, Michelson focuses on establishing the date for the novel’s action—late 1880s—in an effort to understand Ware’s “culture-crisis at the hands of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden.” The trio, argues Michelson, are “intellectual-pretenders” for whom ideas are merely “social weapons, rationalizations, playthings for idle hours” (57). Initially regarding Ware as an acquisition, the poseurs compete in a game of one-upmanship, exhibiting for Ware their intellectual sophistication. When Ware tries to join their game, however, he fails to understand that “sayings and doings require no reconciliation” (60) and “self-interest and the protection of a public mask” are survival skills he has not mastered (61). Sister Soulsby tries to teach Ware this lesson, but he “never hears the right words at the right time” (67), and he “misses obvious signs of duplicity” in the

actions of the trio (68). Ultimately, Forbes, Ledsmar, and Madden do not reject Ware for his duplicity, but for his “clumsiness in trying to do what they manage deftly” (70). “Disaster has taught [. . . Theron] little,” insists Michelson, “the consequences of stupidity have not crushed him.” Rather, “[a]s a modernized, incoherent man he may now be on his way to public triumphs, readier for them than ever before” (71). Thus Ware’s story, concludes Michelson, “is ultimately ‘about’ a change in American intellectual and cultural life, [. . .] of a degradation of the intellect” (72).

Spangler, George. “Theron Ware and the Perils of Relativism.” *Canadian Review of American Studies* 5 (1974): 36-46.

Spangler’s thematic study critiques the moral values of nineteenth-century America by focusing upon the “economic motives in Theron’s behavior” and the “decisive role of the Soulsbys” in Theron Ware’s moral decline (36). According to Spangler’s article, Theron Ware’s interest in money attracted him first to his wife and then to the very wealthy Celia Madden; it also inspired his idea to write a book on Abraham. In fact, Ware anticipates F. Scott Fitzgerald’s James Gatz and Theodore Dreiser’s *Sister Carrie*. Ware’s relationship to the Soulsbys further reveals the morality of the period. His wholesale acceptance of Sister Soulsby’s ethics—wherein the “appearance of virtue is as important as the reality” and the ends justify the means—destroys his moral integrity; and Sister Soulsby’s seemingly casual comment about Alice Ware causes him to conclude that she is no longer worthy to be his wife (43).

Steele, Mildred R. “Ware’s Post-Seattle Career Dept.” *Frederic Herald* 3.2 (1969): 6.

Steele’s sketch describes Theron Ware’s political career in Seattle and, later, in Washington. This



“sequel,” inspired by Steele’s reading of Ralph Rogers’ 1961 dissertation entitled “Harold Frederic: His Development as a Comic Realist,” outlines the major events of Ware’s new career with striking thematic and structural similarities to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (6).

Stein, Allen F. “Evasions of an American Adam: Structure and Theme in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literary Realism* 5 (1972): 23-36.

Stein’s structural analysis of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* reveals “a whole series of spurious ‘fresh starts’ for Theron, recurring at virtually equidistant intervals in the plot-line” (23). Stein notes in this article that Theron Ware’s character, unlike that in most portrayals of an American Adam, “is ultimately unchanged by his process of initiation,” and the ending of the novel, “looking westward in Springtime, bespeaks [. . .] not affirmation, but damnation [. . .] rendered in mocking, anti-romantic terms criticizing misplaced faith in the powers of spiritual renewal in shallow souls” (24). The novel is divided into four parts, corresponding to the four seasons. Excluding the first three chapters and the last chapter, which are expository in nature, the story is structured in four groups of seven chapters each. The last chapter of each seven-chapter group ends in a supposed “resolution” to Ware’s most recent conflict (25). At the end of Part One, Reverend Ware has met the trio of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden and has assumed an attitude of superiority over his wife and congregation. Throughout Part Two, Ware’s contempt for the unilluminated grows, along with his suspicions about an illicit affair between his wife and Levi Gorringer. A temporary resolution to Ware’s conflicts is presented in the counsel of Sister Soulsby to be a “good fraud” (31). Part Three traces Ware’s rapid degeneration and alienation from his new, intellectual friends. In

Part Four, encouraged by Celia Madden's kiss, Ware turns his back on the Methodist world in favor of the civilized world represented by the trio. Stein observes, Ware's "flouting of the conventions of both worlds will literally drive him from both into the western forests for a new start and new dreams" (33). In Chapter 31, rejected and forlorn, Ware turns to Sister Soulsby for consolation, but "Theron's despair, unfortunately, is not symptomatic of any attempt to face the consequences of his actions in a mature manner" (35). In the final chapter, spring has returned with a new cycle of fresh starts for Theron Ware. Stein concludes, "Presumably Theron will rush blithely onward, an American Adam of the Gilded Age, so unsubstantial that nothing can touch him." The damnation Ware suffers, according to Stein, is "the most insidious kind not only for him but [also] for his society" because he and others like him are unaware of their damnation (36).

Suderman, Elmer F. "Modernization as Damnation in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Ball State University Forum* 27.1 (1986): 12-19.

Suderman's thematic consideration of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* focuses upon the way in which modernism causes "man" to think "differently about the nature of man, of the universe, of God," and of "the different way in which he relates to himself and others, to the community and its institutions, and to God" (12). According to Suderman's article, modern attitudes have already damned Celia Madden, Sister Soulsby, Dr. Ledsmar, and Father Forbes when they are introduced to the reader. Furthermore, technological advancement and urbanization lead to the "damnation of community, a church, and a minister who discovers that his substitution of modern personality traits for traditional ones does not help him cope with an intractable world" (18). Suderman concludes that Theron Ware has no place in either modern or traditional society.

Zimmermann, David H. "Clay Feet, Modernism, and Fundamental Option in Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *The American Benedictine Review* 45.1 (1994): 33-44.

Zimmermann's thematic and psychological approach to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* focuses upon Frederic's "careful study of Methodism and Catholicism." Zimmermann argues in his article that the novel "records an important shift in religious thought within modern Christianity" (34). "[T]he theologies of Forbes and Soulsby," notes Zimmermann, "include many tenets adopted by twentieth-century Christian theologians" (35). Father Forbes tells Reverend Ware, "The Church is always compromising" (37). This perspective reflects Forbes' "positivist view of history that forms the basis of his theologies and biblical interpretations" (38); however, "[o]nce Forbes has altered Theron's understanding of history, he has altered Theron's understanding of religion [. . . without providing] him with any basis on which to begin reconstructing his understanding of the world" (39). Zimmermann suggests that, within the context of modern theology, Sister Soulsby has undergone a conversion because she and Soulsby have "both soured on living by fakes" (42). Sister Soulsby's theology embraces a belief in "humanity's essential goodness," and she "provides Theron with the forgiveness and direction necessary to begin the redemptive process" (42-43). Zimmermann asserts that, unlike many critics who blame Father Forbes and Sister Soulsby for Ware's damnation, he does not find fault with either of them. In fact, he does not consider Ware damned. According to Zimmermann, "damnation occurs only after death," when the option of free choice can no longer be exercised. Thus, "Sister Soulsby is correct when she points out that the sheep and the goats will not be separated until judgment day" (44). Theron Ware's future, in light of Zimmermann's interpretation of Sister Soulsby's

and Father Forbes' theologies, remains ambiguous.

Zlotnick, Joan. "The Damnation of Theron Ware, with a Backward Glance at Hawthorne." *Markham Review* 2 (Feb 1971): 90-92.

Zlotnick's genre study examines possible literary sources for *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. She notes in her article that Frederic considered Nathaniel Hawthorne one of his "literary parents" and compares Frederic's novel to *The Scarlet Letter*, "Young Goodman Brown," "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," and "Rappaccini's Daughter" (90). Reverend Ware is likened to the "sinning minister" Dimmesdale and Young Goodman Brown, Celia Madden to Hester Prynne, and Dr. Ledsmar to Rappaccini and Chillingworth. Zlotnick argues that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and "Young Goodman Brown" have the same theme, the loss of innocence. In addition, Frederic employs light and dark imagery to develop "the Hawthornian theme of reality versus appearance and even offers his own version of Hawthorne's ocular deception." Other imagery common to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and "Young Goodman Brown" includes the forest scene and ribbons (in Celia Madden's hair and on the maypole). Like many of Hawthorne's characters, argues Zlotnick, Ware is not guilty of the sin of passion; instead, he is guilty of the sin of pride, "a sin which results in the separation of so many Hawthornian characters from the 'magic circle of humanity'" (91).

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# Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*:

A Study Guide with Annotated Bibliography

## Areas of Criticism - Structure

### Harold Frederic

- Biography
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### Bibliographical Studies

### *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896)

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Dalton, Dale C. "MacEvoy's Room." *The Frederic Herald* 3.2 (1969): 5.

Eggers, Paul. "By Whose Authority? Point of View in the First Chapter of Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Style* 31.1 (1997): 81-95.

Hirsh, John C. "The Frederic Papers, The McGlynn Affair, and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 17.1 (1984): 12-23.

Howells, William Dean. "My Favorite Novelist and His Best Book." *Munsey's Magazine* 17 (Apr. 1897): 24. Rpt. in *W. D. Howells as Critic*. Ed. Edwin H. Cady. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973. 268-80.

Johnson, George W. "Harold Frederic's Young Goodman Ware: The Ambiguities of a Realistic Romance." *Modern Fiction Studies* 8 (1963): 361-74.

Kantor, J. R. K. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware* and *John Ward, Preacher*." *The Serif* 3.1 (1996): 16-21.

Luedtke, Luther S. "Harold Frederic's Satanic Sister Soulsby: Interpretation and Sources." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 30.1 (1975): 82-104.

Michelson, Bruce. "Theron Ware in the Wilderness of Ideas." *American Literary Realism* 25.1 (1992): 54-73.

Miller, Linda Patterson. "Casting Graven Images:



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*The Damnation of Theron Ware.*” *Renascence: Essays on Values in Literature* 30 (1978): 179-84.

O'Donnell, Thomas F. “Theron Ware, the Irish Picnic, and *Comus*.” *American Literature: A Journal of Literary History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 46 (1975): 528-37.

Prioleau, Elizabeth S. “The Minister and the Seductress in American Fiction: The Adamic Myth Redux.” *Journal of American Culture* 16.4 (1993): 1-6.

Steele, Mildred R. “Ware’s Post-Seattle Career Dept.” *Frederic Herald* 3.2 (1969): 6.

Stein, Allen F. “Evasions of an American Adam: Structure and Theme in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literary Realism* 5 (1972): 23-36.

Strother, Garland. “The Control of Distance in Theron Ware.” *Frederic Herald* 3.2 (1969): 4.

Strother, Garland. “Shifts in Point of View in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *Frederic Herald* 3.1 (1969): 2.

Vanderbeets, Richard. “The Ending of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literature: A Journal of Literary History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 36 (1964): 358-59.

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Dalton, Dale C. “MacEvoy’s Room.” *The Frederic Herald* 3.2 (1969): 5.

Dalton’s note examines MacEvoy’s room as a recurring structural device significant to Theron Ware’s fall in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. When the Irish-Catholic wheelwright MacEvoy is



fatally wounded falling from an elm tree he was ordered to trim on the Madden's property, he is carried to his house in the outskirts of town. Theron Ware follows the bearers to MacEvoy's house, the first house Ware visits upon moving to Octavius. MacEvoy's room, described as "dark and ill-smelling," might also be called "Theron's chamber of death," observes Dalton, "for it holds other agents of Theron's approaching 'damnation,'" specifically Celia Madden and Father Forbes. In Chapter 10, when Ware has just returned from a visit to Forbes' house, he finds his own house "bare and squalid" and the fumes from the kerosene lamp "offensive to his nostrils." Lying in his room later that night, Ware can hear Madden playing her piano and recalls his first image her in MacEvoy's room. In Chapter 15, MacEvoy's room is again recalled: Ware rejects the Methodist Love-Feast as a "low" ceremony, held in the basement of the church; yet only three months earlier, he was mesmerized by the religious rites performed by Forbes in MacEvoy's room. "MacEvoy's fall is prophetic of Theron's moral decline and spiritual death," argues Dalton, and "MacEvoy's room is [. . .] the structural device with which Frederic portrays Theron's first acceptance of the new and rejection of the old" (5).

Eggers, Paul. "By Whose Authority? Point of View in the First Chapter of Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Style* 31.1 (1997): 81-95.

Eggers' article combines reader-response and structural criticism in an examination of Chapter 1 of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. Eggers argues that other critics who have examined authority in this novel (Oehlschlaeger and Becknell) have begun in Chapter 2, where the narrative focus and main characters are established. He contends, however, "that the first chapter both initiates and encapsulates the novel's exploration of authority through a perplexing usage of shifting points of

view.” Identification of these shifting points of view alternates between clarity and ambiguity, not only implicating readers in “unauthoritative’ readings” of the text but also focusing on the “book’s concern with authority.” The opening three paragraphs are traditional omniscient narration, but one word in the third paragraph, “nay,” suggests an “internal debate” that should give careful readers pause. The narrator changes for paragraphs four through six to an unnamed “observer.” The point of view appears to shift again in paragraphs ten and eleven to the “venerable Fathers” of the Methodist clergy. Their “sincerity” is called into question if the judgments rendered are not the implied author’s (as reported by the omniscient narrator). Point of view clearly shifts back to the omniscient narrator in paragraphs twelve through fifteen, influencing the reader’s perceptions of Theron and Alice Ware in later paragraphs in contrast to the proud Tecumseh congregation. Eggers’ analysis continues along this line, scrutinizing each paragraph in turn. When Ware is finally introduced to the reader, it is through the “objective” tone of a limited-omniscient narrator who has just replaced the “vitriolic tone of the parishioner-controlled narrative.” Since the reader is predisposed to be sympathetic toward the seemingly stoic and pious Reverend Ware, this impression influences the reader well into the book. As Eggers demonstrates, “both text and reader are rendered ‘unauthoritative’ through the agency of point of view.” (Note: The above is from WilsonSelect, an electronic database that does not include *Style’s* page numbers.)

Hirsh, John C. “The Frederic Papers, The McGlynn Affair, and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literary Realism* 17.1 (1984): 12-23.

Hirsh combines textual and biographical approaches in his examination of the Frederic Papers, preserved in the Library of Congress, “to help illuminate some of the more important

structural and thematic concerns of the novel, particularly those affecting Fr. Forbes and the Catholics” (12). In his article, Hirsh produces excerpts from the author’s early notes that indicate some of the relationships that Frederic intended to develop, among them Theron Ware, Father Forbes and Dr. Ledsmar; Celia Madden and Father Forbes; Father Forbes and his Bishop. Hirsh cites Paul Haines’ 1945 unpublished dissertation that identifies Father Edward Terry, a priest whom Frederic knew in Utica, as a possible source for the development of Father Forbes. However, Hirsh suggests that a more influential source may have been Father Edward McGlynn, an Irish-Catholic priest in New York who made newspaper headlines in the 1880s for his political activism and American ideal of Catholicism (he was excommunicated in 1887 and reconciled with the church in 1893). The character of Father Forbes, as it emerged in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, is forceful, powerful, and sophisticated. Elements of the role that were in Frederic’s working notes but eliminated from the novel include public condemnation of the priest for a scandalous relationship with Celia Madden and serious political activism.

Howells, William Dean. “My Favorite Novelist and His Best Book.” *W. D. Howells as Critic*. Ed. Edwin H. Cady. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973. 268-80.

Howells’ review of Frederic’s novel was published in *Munsey’s* in April 1897. Howells names *The Damnation of Theron Ware* one of his favorite books. His comment on Frederic’s novel is often quoted by critics: “I was particularly interested in the book, for when you get to the end, although you have carried a hazy notion in your mind of the sort of man Ware was, you fully realize, for the first time, that the author has never for a moment represented him anywhere to you as a good or honest man, or as anything but a very selfish man” (278).

Johnson, George W. "Harold Frederic's Young Goodman Ware: The Ambiguities of a Realistic Romance." *Modern Fiction Studies* 8 (1963): 361-74.

Johnson's article combines structural and genre criticism to explore the "sinning minister" in Nathaniel Hawthorne's works as an influence on Frederic's minister, "brought up to date and given topicality in the 'turbulent' milieu of the 1890's" (362). Although sensitive to Sister Soulsby's duplicity, Johnson regards her influence as comparable to that of Celia Madden. Johnson writes, Sister Soulsby "patches together Theron's splintered ego by giving him a role to play. Henceforth, she counsels, he is to be a conscious fraud, an actor superior to his audience." Her seduction of Theron Ware takes a different tack from Celia Madden's, "[b]ut Sister Soulsby has in a way seduced him" by appealing to his pride and fueling his ego. Ware emerges from the forest scene with Madden, "like another Dimmesdale," unable to reconcile the "radical contradictions" that plague his mind (365). Johnson observes that Frederic's novel is, on the one hand, "a realistic rendering of societal relationships" and, on the other, "a romancer's poetic rendering, complete with archetypal trees, gardens, and snakes, of a representative figure" (367). In the character of Theron Ware, Frederic has created a "seeker who combines the temperament of both a romancer and a realist"; however, Johnson concludes that the novel "remains a literary near-miss" because "Theron Ware is an average man who remains throughout the book merely a boy" (372). A novel "[a]t the last more complicated than complex," Johnson asserts that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is "a flawed monument to an endeavor audacious, artful, and American" (374).

Kantor, J. R. K. “*The Damnation of Theron Ware and John Ward, Preacher.*” *The Serif* 3.1 (1996): 16-21.

Kantor’s article is an analysis of the character development and structure of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896) and Margaret Deland’s *John Ward, Preacher* (1888). The similarities in the treatment of religious doctrine in the two stories, according to Kantor, support the thesis that Frederic was familiar with Deland’s novel. First, Kantor notes that critics have argued Frederic was familiar with Mrs. Humphrey Ward’s *Robert Elsmere*, a novel published the same year as *John Ward, Preacher*, and often reviewed with it because of their similarities. Second, attitudes toward religion are central to character development in both Frederic’s and Deland’s novels. The pragmatic attitudes of Sister Soulsby and of Gifford Woodhouse complement one another, and in the end, both characters are a source of consolation and hope. Kantor also notes similarities between the meetings of the ministers and the trustees in both novels. The trustees are in control, and both groups have one dissenter among them: Levi Gorringer opposes the high interest rate charged by the other trustees, and Elder Johnson defends Helen Ward against the judgment of the others. In both novels, church officials are opposed to all things Catholic. Finally, the names of the two ministers—Ware and Ward—cannot be ignored.

Luedtke, Luther S. “Harold Frederic’s Satanic Sister Soulsby: Interpretation and Sources.” *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 30.1 (1975): 82-104.

Luedtke’s thematic, especially moral, approach to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* identifies Sister Soulsby as “the agent of a *damnation* that has moral as well as social reality” (82; emphasis Luedtke’s). Luedtke writes in his article, “Frederic intends Sister Soulsby, the materialist, to function

as a Mephistophelean tempter of Theron's soul and a minion of spiritual darkness" (84). Tracing the four parts of the novel, Luedtke states that it is not Theron Ware's introduction to his new church or town, Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, or Celia Madden in Part I that sets him on the path to damnation, but rather it is his interaction with the Soulsbys in Part II that plants the seeds of his destruction. Sister Soulsby's remarks about Alice Ware cause Theron Ware first to re-evaluate his marriage and, later, to suspect his wife of infidelity. Her lecture to Ware on the art and uses of performance prompt him to brag about his new perspective to Dr. Ledsmar and Celia Madden, alienating them in the process. Luedtke recites the Soulsbys' long history of questionable employment and concludes that they are confidence artists for whom religion is "only the latest con game" (92). Ware believes Sister Soulsby when she tells him that she and Soulsby had "both soured on living by fakes" and were now "good frauds" (93). Luedtke notes Frederic's debt to Nathaniel Hawthorne in the character of Westervelt (*The Blithedale Romance*), who, like Sister Soulsby, has false teeth and is "stamped with [. . . the] totems of the serpent and the evil eye" (94). Although Luedtke contends that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* offers ample evidence of Frederic's "judgments on Sister Soulsby" (98), he concludes his essay by offering two British models for the character of Sister Soulsby: Lucy Helen Muriel Soulsby (1856-1927) and Charles Dickens' fictional Mrs. Jellyby (*Bleak House*).

Michelson, Bruce. "Theron Ware in the Wilderness of Ideas." *American Literary Realism* 25.1 (1992): 54-73.

Michelson's article combines thematic and structural criticism in his examination of Theron Ware's "modern intellectual experience" in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (55). First, Michelson focuses on establishing the date for the novel's



action—late 1880s—in an effort to understand Ware’s “culture-crisis at the hands of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden.” The trio, argues Michelson, are “intellectual-pretenders” for whom ideas are merely “social weapons, rationalizations, playthings for idle hours” (57). Initially regarding Ware as an acquisition, the poseurs compete in a game of one-upmanship, exhibiting for Ware their intellectual sophistication. When Ware tries to join their game, however, he fails to understand that “sayings and doings require no reconciliation” (60) and “self-interest and the protection of a public mask” are survival skills he has not mastered (61). Sister Soulsby tries to teach Ware this lesson, but he “never hears the right words at the right time” (67), and he “misses obvious signs of duplicity” in the actions of the trio (68). Ultimately, Forbes, Ledsmar, and Madden do not reject Ware for his duplicity, but for his “clumsiness in trying to do what they manage deftly” (70). “Disaster has taught [. . . Theron] little,” insists Michelson, “the consequences of stupidity have not crushed him.” Rather, “[a]s a modernized, incoherent man he may now be on his way to public triumphs, readier for them than ever before” (71). Thus Ware’s story, concludes Michelson, “is ultimately ‘about’ a change in American intellectual and cultural life, [. . .] of a degradation of the intellect” (72).

Miller, Linda Patterson. “Casting Graven Images: *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *Renascence: Essays on Values in Literature* 30 (1978): 179-84.

Miller's article combines moral and structural criticism in her analysis of the “moral wasteland” that confronts Alice Ware, Celia Madden, Sister Soulsby, and Theron Ware in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. Their “search for personal salvation” transforms the concept of the church into something familiar and comforting: for Alice Ware, it is her “garden”; for Celia Madden, it is her “‘sacred chamber’ of art”; for Sister Soulsby, it is a

“theatrical stage”; and for Theron Ware, it is the “maternal idea’ as embodied in Alice, Celia, and Sister Soulsby” (179). Alice Ware’s religion is her garden. Images of flowers blossoming and, later, withering are associated with her vivaciousness and despair. Miller observes that, rather than freeing her, both Methodism and her garden serve to isolate Alice Ware until she despairs, “[I]f there is a God, he has forgotten me” (180). Celia Madden seeks to transcend the wasteland in the “sacred chamber” of her rooms where she is worshipped as both seductress and madonna. When Celia Madden “cannot realize moments of transcendence,” she regards herself as “the most helpless and forlorn and lonesome of atoms” (181). Sister Soulsby’s approach is to disguise the wasteland with the machinery of the theatrical stage, all the while knowing that the performance is only an illusion. Theron Ware’s quest for salvation turns first to Alice Ware, then to Celia Madden, and finally to Sister Soulsby, but his misplaced faith in Sister Soulsby seals his damnation. Miller agrees with Stanton Garner’s assessment of Sister Soulsby’s failed religion: “to look for stage machinery instead of truth is to invite degeneration, to confuse darkness with illumination, to strike a bargain with Satan, to lose what weed-grown Paradise is left in a diminished world.” Miller concludes that none of the characters finds “real personal salvation”; none finds God (184).

O’Donnell, Thomas F. “Theron Ware, the Irish Picnic, and *Comus*.” *American Literature: A Journal of Literary History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 46 (1975): 528-37.

O’Donnell combines textual and structural criticism in an examination of possible literary sources for the scene of the Irish picnic in Frederic’s novel. In his article, he acknowledges Nathaniel Hawthorne’s influence on Frederic, but argues that John Milton’s masque *Comus* may have inspired the picnic in *The Damnation of Theron*

**Ware.** Elements of *Comus* are echoed throughout the novel. According to O'Donnell, Comus is Theron Ware; the Lady is Celia Madden; and the Attendant Spirit is Father Forbes. However, Frederic's version inverts certain elements: "Comus-Theron rather than the Lady moved along through a thick wood," and he eagerly accepts the potion (lager beer) Milton's Lady refuses (531). The Lady's brothers do not rescue Celia Madden; rather she and Comus-Theron are left alone in the forest. And though it appears that Celia Madden may allow herself to be seduced by Comus-Theron, he receives only a perfunctory good-bye kiss from his Lady. While Milton's *Comus* is a rewriting of the Circe legend, O'Donnell observes, "Abundant precedent for the naturalizing—and nationalizing—of European and classical myth was available in American literature" (535). He concludes that *Comus* clearly provided the elements necessary to Frederic's "final climactic temptation" of Theron Ware (537).

Prioleau, Elizabeth S. "The Minister and the Seductress in American Fiction: The Adamic Myth Redux." *Journal of American Culture* 16.4 (1993): 1-6.

Prioleau's structural approach identifies the "odd couple" of American literature that reveals "surprising shifts and reversals in the minister-temptress drama" (1) in six novels: Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896), Winston Churchill's *The Inside of the Cup* (1913), Sinclair Lewis' *Elmer Gantry* (1927), Peter De Vries' *The Mackerel Plaza* (1958), and John Updike's *A Month of Sundays* (1974). In her article, Prioleau observes that Hawthorne's Dimmesdale is the model clergyman, a "saint on earth," for whom Hester Prynne's freedom and lawlessness prove to be powerfully seductive. When Dimmesdale falls, "the reverberations are momentous." The title

character in Frederic's novel is a "diminished version" of Dimmesdale, and Celia Madden is a "spoiled, vain, fin de siècle voluptuary" (2). Prioleau observes, "Due to the minister's lowered status at the century's end," Ware's "fall resembles more of a pratfall, for which the reader feels mixed pathos and contempt." Churchill's innocent and idealistic minister, John, "denounces everything he had believed"; and his seducer, wealthy and freethinking "pagan" Alison Parr, "metamorphoses into a Victorian hausfrau—domestic and dependent" (3). Prioleau concludes that Churchill's attempt to create "a happy resolution of the clergy-temptress drama" misses the mark. Literature in the 1920s reveals a decline in the clergyman's reputation. Lewis' Elmer Gantry is already corrupt when he meets Sharon Faulkner, an even more corrupt tent revivalist. By novel's end, Faulkner is dead and Gantry has become the new "seducer, exploiter, megalomaniac, and muddled nonbeliever." De Vries' Andrew Mackerel is a degenerate minister who believes in nothing. The women in the novel are a parody of earlier seductresses such as Hester Prynne, prompting Prioleau to observe, "The temptations of America for clergymen in the fifties have been indulged to a point of satiation, ennui, and meaninglessness." Lastly, Updike's Tom Marshfield is both minister and seducer, and the temptresses—Ms. Prynne and Alicia—have "evolved into the seduced" (4).

Steele, Mildred R. "Ware's Post-Seattle Career Dept." *Frederic Herald* 3.2 (1969): 6.

Steele's sketch describes Theron Ware's political career in Seattle and, later, in Washington. This "sequel," inspired by Steele's reading of Ralph Rogers' 1961 dissertation entitled "Harold Frederic: His Development as a Comic Realist," outlines the major events of Ware's new career with striking thematic and structural similarities to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (6).

Stein, Allen F. "Evasions of an American Adam: Structure and Theme in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 5 (1972): 23-36.

Stein's structural analysis of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* reveals "a whole series of spurious 'fresh starts' for Theron, recurring at virtually equidistant intervals in the plot-line" (23). Stein notes in this article that Theron Ware's character, unlike that in most portrayals of an American Adam, "is ultimately unchanged by his process of initiation," and the ending of the novel, "looking westward in Springtime, bespeaks [. . .] not affirmation, but damnation [. . .] rendered in mocking, anti-romantic terms criticizing misplaced faith in the powers of spiritual renewal in shallow souls" (24). The novel is divided into four parts, corresponding to the four seasons. Excluding the first three chapters and the last chapter, which are expository in nature, the story is structured in four groups of seven chapters each. The last chapter of each seven-chapter group ends in a supposed "resolution" to Ware's most recent conflict (25). At the end of Part One, Reverend Ware has met the trio of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden and has assumed an attitude of superiority over his wife and congregation. Throughout Part Two, Ware's contempt for the unilluminated grows, along with his suspicions about an illicit affair between his wife and Levi Gorringer. A temporary resolution to Ware's conflicts is presented in the counsel of Sister Soulsby to be a "good fraud" (31). Part Three traces Ware's rapid degeneration and alienation from his new, intellectual friends. In Part Four, encouraged by Celia Madden's kiss, Ware turns his back on the Methodist world in favor of the civilized world represented by the trio. Stein observes, Ware's "flouting of the conventions of both worlds will literally drive him from both into the western forests for a new start and new dreams" (33). In Chapter 31, rejected and forlorn, Ware turns to Sister Soulsby for consolation, but

“Theron’s despair, unfortunately, is not symptomatic of any attempt to face the consequences of his actions in a mature manner” (35). In the final chapter, spring has returned with a new cycle of fresh starts for Theron Ware. Stein concludes, “Presumably Theron will rush blithely onward, an American Adam of the Gilded Age, so unsubstantial that nothing can touch him.” The damnation Ware suffers, according to Stein, is “the most insidious kind not only for him but [also] for his society” because he and others like him are unaware of their damnation (36).

Strother, Garland. “The Control of Distance in Theron Ware.” *Frederic Herald* 3.2 (1969): 4.

Strother’s note is a structural analysis of Harold Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware* “involving the manipulation of Theron’s name” as a “distancing factor [. . .] between the narrator and Theron and, hence, between the reader and Theron.” When reporting from within the mind of Ware, Frederic’s narrator usually uses the character’s first name. Other times, when the narrator relates events from outside Ware’s mind, the references to the title character tend to be more formal—Theron Ware, “the Rev. Theron Ware,” and “the Rev. Mr. Ware”—and should alert readers to distance themselves from Ware (4).

Strother, Garland. “Shifts in Point of View in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *Frederic Herald* 3.1 (1969): 2.

Strother opens his note by refuting Everett Carter’s assertion that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is “told strictly from the minister’s point of view.” In his own structural analysis of the novel, Strother states that “[o]n at least three occasions, Frederic significantly shifts the point of view away from Theron to another character.” The first shift occurs



in Chapter 21 when Dr. Ledsmar renames his lizard “the Rev. Mr. Ware.” The second shift occurs in Chapter 25 when Levi Gorringer says that Ware is “so much meaner than any other man,” and the third shift occurs in Chapter 26 when Father Forbes tells his housekeeper that he is not home should Ware call again. “The function of the shifts in point of view is in each case to indicate Theron’s loss of esteem in the eyes of another character. By shifting the point of view from Theron to the other character,” Strother argues, “Frederic dramatizes clearly this loss of esteem and foreshadows Theron’s eventual damnation” (2).

Vanderbeets, Richard. “The Ending of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literature: A Journal of Literary History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 36 (1964): 358-59.

Vanderbeets’ textual analysis of Frederic’s novel and working notes challenges earlier criticism labeling Frederic a “comic realist” (358). The ending of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, Vanderbeets argues in his article, is not tragic: Theron Ware relocates to Seattle for a career in real estate and dreams of becoming a Senator. However, Frederic’s working notes read, “Soulsby & wife at deathbed—their words finish book.” Vanderbeets contends that since this note immediately follows references to Ware, it must refer to his deathbed. Furthermore, if Frederic intended to kill off his main character in some earlier version of the novel, then the ending “reveals an inconsistency incompatible with the picture of ‘comic realist’” (359).

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# Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware:*

A Study Guide with Annotated Bibliography

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Campbell, Donna M. "Frederic, Norris, and the Fear of Effeminacy." *Resisting Regionalism: Gender and Naturalism in American Fiction, 1885-1915*. Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 1997. 75-108.

MacFarlane, Lisa. "Resurrecting Man: Desire and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *A Mighty Baptism: Race, Gender, and the Creation of American Protestantism*. Ed. Susan Juster and Lisa MacFarlane. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1996. 65-80.

MacFarlane, Lisa Watt. "Resurrecting Man: Desire and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Studies in American Fiction* 20.2 (1992): 127-43.

Oehlschlaeger, Fritz. "Passion, Authority, and Faith in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literature* 58.2 (1986): 238-55.

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Campbell, Donna M. "Frederic, Norris, and the Fear of Effeminacy." *Resisting Regionalism: Gender and Naturalism in American Fiction, 1885-1915*. Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 1997. 75-108.

Campbell combines feminist theory and genre criticism to analyze Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. The opening paragraphs of the chapter address the ever-widening split between what James Lane Allen describes as the "Masculine" and "Feminine" principles in literature. Campbell argues that, alarmed at the growing "feminine ethic in literature," naturalists embraced brutish masculinity as an "antidote" to

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feminine civilization (75). Campbell identifies “three different courses of thematic development [that] emerged in naturalistic fiction: the triumph of the brute, leading to the degeneration of the individual; the balance of the two opposing forces, leading to the perfect amalgamation of sensibility and ‘red-blooded’ vigor; and an excess of civilization, leading, ironically enough, to a degeneration similar to—and in some cases identical with—that which the emergence of the brute signals” (77). Campbell believes the title character in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* succumbs to this third possibility, becoming “a brute in taste and outlook” (79). Tracing “Frederic’s exploration of realism through his character’s progress from the conventions of sentimental and local color fiction to the harsh realities of naturalism” (80), Campbell notes that, as a minister, Theron Ware is a “hybrid female” (81). Subverting the “opposition between male authority and female community common in local color” fiction, Frederic instead focuses on the similarities between the roles of ministers and women (80-81). Powerless, Ware’s only options, according to the conventions of sentimental fiction, are to capitulate, threaten, or dissemble, and his only defenses are fainting, illness, and weeping—all feminine responses. Ware’s attempt at illumination results in degeneration when he begins “to see himself as a victim of impersonal forces [. . . which lead him] into a self-delusional justification of the naturalistic brute within” (91).

MacFarlane, Lisa. “Resurrecting Man: Desire and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *A Mighty Baptism: Race, Gender, and the Creation of American Protestantism*. Ed. Susan Juster and Lisa MacFarlane. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1996. 65-80.

MacFarlane’s chapter is reprinted, with minor changes, from an article published in *Studies in American Fiction* 20.2 (1992): 127-43.

MacFarlane, Lisa Watt. "Resurrecting Man: Desire and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Studies in American Fiction* 20.2 (1992): 127-43.

MacFarlane's article is a feminist study of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* that examines the social and cultural roles of ministers, who are viewed as possessing both masculine and feminine characteristics. Ministers are often referred to as "feminized," "neutral," or "hybrid" because they represent "the patriarchal authority of God the Father" while their cultural work "aligns them socially with women" (128-29). The ambiguity of the minister's "social constructions of gender," according to MacFarlane, gives him power over both men and women (129). In *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, "a series of gender-confusing triangles"—particularly the Theron Ware-Alice Ware-Levi Gorringer and Theron Ware-Celia Madden-Father Forbes triangles—demonstrate Theron Ware's unstable gender identity. In certain company, Ware takes on the role of female, while in other circumstances, he plays the role of the male. Even the novel's ending is ambiguous in terms of gender identity: Ware dreams of succeeding in politics, a traditionally male-dominated sphere; however, when he "shivers with pleasure" at the fantasy of enthraling the masses with his rhetoric, he assumes a feminine identity (132). MacFarlane suggests that Frederic's novel may be read as "an allegory about the social constructions of gender." She concludes that "[t]he feminized minister is not an androgynous creature, selecting judiciously from an orderly list of binarily gendered characteristics. Rather, he is an instable, fractured being whose multiply gendered identity shifts as he negotiates his professional and personal positions" (141).

Oehlschlaeger, Fritz. "Passion, Authority, and Faith in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American*

*Literature* 58.2 (1986): 238-55.

Oehlschlaeger's article combines reader response, feminist, and psychological criticism in an analysis of authority in Frederic's novel. According to Oehlschlaeger, Frederic "systematically discredits every authority figure in the novel while simultaneously revealing Theron's own search for authority." He argues that what Frederic's novel presents "is not an innocent's fall into corrupt sexuality but a critique of the way corrupt authority poisons sexuality," a claim demonstrated in Theron Ware's relationships with his wife Alice Ware and Celia Madden (239). Theron Ware becomes "progressively effeminized" by the novel's "proscription of female sexuality by male authority" (244). All of the novel's authority figures—the Methodist trustees; Father Forbes; Dr. Ledsmar; Sister Soulsby, perhaps the most complex authority figure; the Catholic Church; and even Jeremiah Madden, "the book's most dignified figure"—are discredited by their words or actions (254). Oehlschlaeger acknowledges that critics have seen Sister Soulsby "either as a Satanic figure or as a voice for Frederic's own supposed pragmatism" (246); however, he disagrees with both views. First, Sister Soulsby is neither all good nor all bad, and her pragmatism is "inadequate to deal with the highly irrational world that Frederic depicts," which undercuts her validity as an authority figure (247). Second, Oehlschlaeger does not agree with critics who have pointed to Sister Soulsby's pragmatism as an indication of Frederic's personal views. In Oehlschlaeger's opinion, Frederic's views are evident in his respect for "certain religious values" represented by the venerable church elders and the Christian idea of repentance (253).



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# Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*:

A Study Guide with Annotated Bibliography

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Briggs, Austin, Jr. "The Damnation of Theron Ware." *The Novels of Harold Frederic*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1969. 97-139.

Campbell, Donna M. "Frederic, Norris, and the Fear of Effeminacy." *Resisting Regionalism: Gender and Naturalism in American Fiction, 1885-1915*. Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 1997. 75-108.

Carrington, Jr., George C. "Harold Frederic's Clear Farcical Vision: *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 19.3 (1987): 3-26.

Carter, Everett. Introduction. *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. By Harold Frederic. 1896. Cambridge: Belknap P of Harvard UP, 1960. vii-xxiv.

Davies, Horton. "Harold Frederic." *A Mirror of the Ministry in Modern Novels*. New York: Oxford UP, 1959. 71-78.

Donaldson, Scott. "The Seduction of Theron Ware." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 29 (1975): 441-52.

Graham, Don. "'A Degenerate Methodist': A New Review of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 9 (1976): 280-84.

Heddendorf, David. "Pragmatists and Plots: *Pierre* and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Studies in the Novel* 22.3 (1990): 271-81.

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Howells, William Dean. "My Favorite Novelist and His Best Book." *Munsey's Magazine* 17 (Apr. 1897): 24. Rpt. in *W. D. Howells as Critic*. Ed. Edwin H. Cady. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973. 268-80.

Johnson, George W. "Harold Frederic's Young Goodman Ware: The Ambiguities of a Realistic Romance." *Modern Fiction Studies* 8 (1963): 361-74.

Jolliff, William. "The Damnation of Bryan Dalrymple—and Theron Ware: F. Scott Fitzgerald's Debt to Harold Frederic." *Studies in Short Fiction* 35.1 (1998): 85-90.

Kantor, J. R. K. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware* and *John Ward, Preacher*." *The Serif* 3.1 (1996): 16-21.

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LeClair, Thomas. "The Ascendant Eye: A Reading of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Studies in American Fiction* 3 (1975): 95-102.

Oehlschlaeger, Fritz. "Passion, Authority, and Faith in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literature* 58.2 (1986): 238-55.

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Auchincloss, Louis. "Harold Frederic." *The Man Behind the Book: Literary Profiles*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996. 114-23.

Auchincloss' chapter entitled "Harold Frederic" is a psychological analysis that reflects Frederic's multifarious thinking and the cultural milieu in which he was writing *Seth's Brother's Wife* and *The*

*Damnation of Theron Ware*. For example, the portrayal of Father Forbes and the Catholic Church reflects Frederic's views of priests and Catholicism. The "crux" of the novel lies in Theron Ware's recognition of a "turning point in his career," "the sensation of having been invited to become a citizen of [. . . the] world" of intellect, culture, and grace to which Father Forbes, Celia Madden, and Dr. Ledsmar belong (119-20). Sister Soulsby is "a tough, realistic but kindly woman who has been through the toughest mills of life and emerged as a noisy but effective church fund raiser" (120). Celia Madden is little more than a separate banking account, while Levi Gorringer is the voice of the reader in his speech condemning Theron Ware as "a man who's so much meaner than any other man" (121). Auchincloss describes *The Damnation of Theron Ware* as a book, unlike Frederic's other novels, in which the author "addresses himself to the bewilderment and ultimate absurdity of a semi-educated American would-be idealist struggling in the arid culture of a northern New York State small town towards the end of the nineteenth century" (116-17). He concludes that Theron Ware has learned nothing and continues to delude himself with fantasies about using "his gift as a preacher" to become a Senator by the time he is forty (121).

Briggs, Austin, Jr. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *The Novels of Harold Frederic*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1969. 97-139.

Briggs' Chapter 5, *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, examines the themes of damnation and illumination with respect to the title character. Briggs notes that both Everett Carter and John Henry Raleigh argue that Ware is "reformed" at novel's end: Carter writes of a fall "from innocence into knowledge," and Raleigh perceives a "wiser, if sadder" Ware, who relocates to Seattle (108). According to Briggs, however, Ware is neither damned nor reformed in the course of his tenure in Octavius; in fact, he remains "pretty much the same

old person" (113). Ware's attitude, as reflected in his reminiscences about his former congregation in Tyre, reveals him to be an ambitious social climber and snob who dreams of "ultimate success and distinction" (120). In light of Ware's attitude, and other revelations regarding his character in the early pages of the novel, "one wonders," writes Briggs, "how *The Damnation* can ever have been taken to be a novel about the transformation of a good man into a bad man" (117). The influence of Dr. Ledsmar, Father Forbes, and Celia Madden often has been judged as the cause of Ware's fall; however, Briggs questions such judgments. Instead, he suggests that Ware's fall is not a single event but rather a series of falls in which each new fall is followed by "a new illumination" (121). The fact that Ware fails to learn anything from his "illuminations," Briggs concludes, suggests that Frederic viewed Ware as a "comic, rather than tragic" figure who is essentially unchanged at novel's end (139).

Campbell, Donna M. "Frederic, Norris, and the Fear of Effeminacy." *Resisting Regionalism: Gender and Naturalism in American Fiction, 1885-1915*. Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 1997. 75-108.

Campbell combines feminist theory and genre criticism to analyze Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. The opening paragraphs of the chapter address the ever-widening split between what James Lane Allen describes as the "Masculine" and "Feminine" principles in literature. Campbell argues that, alarmed at the growing "feminine ethic in literature," naturalists embraced brutish masculinity as an "antidote" to feminine civilization (75). Campbell identifies "three different courses of thematic development [that] emerged in naturalistic fiction: the triumph of the brute, leading to the degeneration of the individual; the balance of the two opposing forces, leading to the perfect amalgamation of sensibility



and 'red-blooded' vigor; and an excess of civilization, leading, ironically enough, to a degeneration similar to—and in some cases identical with—that which the emergence of the brute signals” (77). Campbell believes the title character in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* succumbs to this third possibility, becoming “a brute in taste and outlook” (79). Tracing “Frederic’s exploration of realism through his character’s progress from the conventions of sentimental and local color fiction to the harsh realities of naturalism” (80), Campbell notes that, as a minister, Theron Ware is a “hybrid female” (81). Subverting the “opposition between male authority and female community common in local color” fiction, Frederic instead focuses on the similarities between the roles of ministers and women (80-81). Powerless, Ware’s only options, according to the conventions of sentimental fiction, are to capitulate, threaten, or dissemble, and his only defenses are fainting, illness, and weeping—all feminine responses. Ware’s attempt at illumination results in degeneration when he begins “to see himself as a victim of impersonal forces [. . . which lead him] into a self-delusional justification of the naturalistic brute within” (91).

Carrington, Jr., George C. “Harold Frederic’s Clear Farcical Vision: *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literary Realism* 19.3 (1987): 3-26.

Carrington’s genre analysis of Frederic’s novel opens with the claim that “Frederic’s America is farcical; it is a world in which behavior and events are basically determined by the need [. . .] for personal stability and security” (3). Thus, Carrington argues in this article, in Frederic’s interpretation of Howellsian realism, nearly all the characters in this farcical novel are knaves: “selfish aggressors” who manipulate “obtuse victims,” the fools (9). Theron Ware is unique in that his character is both knave and fool: the “fool-as-knave” tries to be a manipulator, but is hopelessly

foolish, and the “knave-as-fool” blunders about seemingly helpless, provokes others to help him, and emerges relatively unharmed, ready to repeat the cycle (3). Although Carrington examines a number of devices standard to farce, he identifies hoaxing and acting as central to the development of the novel. Most of the hoaxing occurs in Ware’s mind: he deceives himself more effectively than he deceives any of the other characters. The external hoaxing takes on the form of acting—characters playing a role for the purpose of “self-maintenance” or personal stability (7). Seeing the arrival of Theron Ware in Octavius as a potential threat to their stability, most of the other characters in the novel take immediate and aggressive action toward Ware in order to maintain their positions. Of these, Sister Soulsby is deemed “the most perfect knave in the book”: she is deceptive, manipulative, and ruthless (18). Carrington concludes that the question of Theron Ware’s illumination or damnation is irrelevant because, in the farcical world of the novel, nothing significant has changed; and, in the end, it is the reader—not the characters—who is illumined through Frederic’s “‘clear human vision’ of comedy” (24).

Carter, Everett. Introduction. *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. By Harold Frederic. 1896. Cambridge: Belknap P of Harvard UP, 1960. vii-xxiv.

Carter’s oft-cited introduction opens with a biographical survey of Frederic’s life before it moves on to a cultural and a moral examination of the trio of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden as “seducers of innocence” (xxi). Carter claims that Theron Ware falls from innocence into knowledge, “a fall into the religious and scientific knowledge” and “the dark knowledge of the flesh” (xxi). Father Forbes is responsible for Ware’s religious crisis, while Dr. Ledsmar—a Darwinian atheist—introduces Ware to the writings of Renan. According to Carter, Celia Madden’s role in Theron

Ware's damnation is "evil" (x). The critic's bibliography is a good source for contemporaneous reception of the novel: most of the citations are reviews or articles from the 1890s.

Davies, Horton. "Harold Frederic." *A Mirror of the Ministry in Modern Novels*. New York: Oxford UP, 1959. 71-78.

Davies' chapter entitled "Harold Frederic," although largely a summary of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, is also a character study and a cultural critique of religion and science, examining particularly the "conflict between the old faith and the new knowledge." Comparing Frederic's novel to Mrs. Humphrey Ward's *Robert Elsmere*, Davies states that Theron Ware's "lapse," unlike Robert Elsmere's, "was moral not theological" (71). Further, "Frederic's novel gives a much more sympathetic account of the older generation in religion" than is found in the novels of his contemporaries Mrs. Humphrey Ward and William Hale White; it also presents a "sophisticated treatment of the role of the Catholic enclave in a predominantly Protestant America" (72). Davies' reading of the "genuine Soulsbys" (78) is quite favorable: "The Soulsbys prove in the end [. . .] to be the best friends of Ware and his wife" (76). Davies concludes, "This novel, then, is not so much a study of the agonizing problem of correlating traditional faith with the new scientific and historical knowledge; it is chiefly a study of the disintegration of a minister through succumbing to vanity, in the form of intellectual ambition" (78).

Donaldson, Scott. "The Seduction of Theron Ware." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 29 (1975): 441-52.

Donaldson's article is a psychological analysis of the causes of Theron Ware's downfall. While Donaldson acknowledges that most critics point to

the trio of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden as the force behind Ware's destruction, he asserts "the true villain of the piece" is Sister Soulsby, "who plays Mephistopheles" to Ware's "Faust" (441-42). Donaldson points to characteristics of Sister Soulsby—her "deceptive appearance, commanding manner, and duplicitous methods of operation"—to support his judgment (442). Sister Soulsby is a master confidence artist who employs performance, flattery, and scripture quoted out-of-context to further her scheming manipulation of both Theron Ware and his congregation. After Sister Soulsby absolves Ware of any guilt for his participation in her scheme to cheat Levi Gorringer at the trustees' meeting, he embraces her philosophy of pragmatism and vows to emulate her example; however, Donaldson concludes, "Theron Ware simply is not cut out for the role of deceiver" (451).

Graham, Don. "A Degenerate Methodist': A New Review of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 9 (1976): 280-84.

Graham's bibliographical article identifies and reprints an 1896 review of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* previously unlisted in Frederic bibliographies. The unidentified reviewer labels the book "an important novel" (281) and proceeds to summarize the plot, concluding that "we suspect the probabilities of such unconscious degeneration; it seems impossible that the conditions postulated should precipitate so involuntary a downfall. It seems so useless the game these various characters play against the unfortunate minister; his disillusion is so gratuitous, so merciless" (284).

Heddendorf, David. "Pragmatists and Plots: *Pierre* and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Studies in the Novel* 22.3 (1990): 271-81.

Heddendorf's article is a psychological study of

Pierre Glendinning, in Herman Melville's *Pierre*, and Theron Ware, in Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, that focuses on the downfall of the two protagonists. According to Heddendorf, Glendinning and Ware seem incapable of comprehending the "prescription for practical results" recommended by their advisors, Plinlimmon and Sister Soulsby. The "rightness or wrongness" of the pragmatic figures of Plinlimmon and Sister Soulsby is not at issue, argues Heddendorf; rather "the relationship between philosophy and narrative is the point of these encounters [. . .] and the simple fact that neither Pierre nor Theron understands what his would-be counselor is talking about" (272). For Pierre Glendinning, it is a pamphlet by Plinlimmon that describes the "irrelevance of an absolute time standard to the requirement of everyday life" that he cannot understand because he is "repressing an understanding of his present extreme circumstances" (273). As readers, Heddendorf asserts, we can see that the pamphlet holds the pragmatic solution to Glendinning's problems. For Theron Ware, Sister Soulsby's declaration that she and her husband are "good frauds" is misleading; Ware assumes that he too is to be a "good fraud." Unfortunately for Ware, he is not a very good fraud and manages to alienate family, friends, and community because he fails to understand Sister Soulsby's advice. Heddendorf concludes, "In *Pierre* and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, the narratives of belief, abandonment and new belief lead less happily to a view of human beings as not licensed but condemned to believe" (280).

Howells, William Dean. "My Favorite Novelist and His Best Book." *W. D. Howells as Critic*. Ed. Edwin H. Cady. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973. 268-80.

Howells' review of Frederic's novel was published in *Munsey's* in April 1897. Howells names *The*

***Damnation of Theron Ware*** one of his favorite books. His comment on Frederic's novel is often quoted by critics: "I was particularly interested in the book, for when you get to the end, although you have carried a hazy notion in your mind of the sort of man Ware was, you fully realize, for the first time, that the author has never for a moment represented him anywhere to you as a good or honest man, or as anything but a very selfish man" (278).

Johnson, George W. "Harold Frederic's Young Goodman Ware: The Ambiguities of a Realistic Romance." *Modern Fiction Studies* 8 (1963): 361-74.

Johnson's article combines structural and genre criticism to explore the "sinning minister" in Nathaniel Hawthorne's works as an influence on Frederic's minister, "brought up to date and given topicality in the 'turbulent' milieu of the 1890's" (362). Although sensitive to Sister Soulsby's duplicity, Johnson regards her influence as comparable to that of Celia Madden. Johnson writes, Sister Soulsby "patches together Theron's splintered ego by giving him a role to play. Henceforth, she counsels, he is to be a conscious fraud, an actor superior to his audience." Her seduction of Theron Ware takes a different tack from Celia Madden's, "[b]ut Sister Soulsby has in a way seduced him" by appealing to his pride and fueling his ego. Ware emerges from the forest scene with Madden, "like another Dimmesdale," unable to reconcile the "radical contradictions" that plague his mind (365). Johnson observes that Frederic's novel is, on the one hand, "a realistic rendering of societal relationships" and, on the other, "a romancer's poetic rendering, complete with archetypal trees, gardens, and snakes, of a representative figure" (367). In the character of Theron Ware, Frederic has created a "seeker who combines the temperament of both a romancer and a realist"; however, Johnson concludes that the



novel “remains a literary near-miss” because “Theron Ware is an average man who remains throughout the book merely a boy” (372). A novel “[a]t the last more complicated than complex,” Johnson asserts that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is “a flawed monument to an endeavor audacious, artful, and American” (374).

Jolliff, William. “The Damnation of Bryan Dalrymple—and Theron Ware: F. Scott Fitzgerald’s Debt to Harold Frederic.” *Studies in Short Fiction* 35.1 (1998): 85-90.

Jolliff combines thematic criticism and character analysis in his note arguing that F. Scott Fitzgerald was influenced by Harold Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware* when he wrote “Dalrymple Goes Wrong.” Jolliff establishes that Fitzgerald knew and admired Frederic’s novel. He states that “Bryan Dalrymple’s story shares many similarities with Theron Ware’s both in theme and detail” and suggests that Dalrymple was the prototype of Jay Gatsby (87). “[T]ypically adamic,” both Ware and Dalrymple initially believe that hard work will lead to success, discover that “‘common sense’ is a code word that sometimes stands for the sacrifice of moral conviction,” and eventually surrender their “traditional ideas of good and evil” in favor of the common sense that will help them to obtain their worldly desires (87-88). As Ware and Dalrymple abandon their moral codes, each finds that he has become better at his “legitimate work” (88). In addition, both rely upon their rhetorical skills as the key to their future success in politics. Noting that Dalrymple’s “amoral mentor” and boss is named “*Theron G. Macy*” (89), Jolliff concludes, Ware and Dalrymple “present us with examples of what sometimes happens when the American Adam comes of age: a thorough disillusionment resulting not in self-knowledge but in moral degeneracy. [. . .] For if Fitzgerald was the voice of a generation, surely Harold Frederic had prophesied its coming” (89-

90).

Kantor, J. R. K. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware and John Ward, Preacher.*" *The Serif* 3.1 (1996): 16-21.

Kantor's article is an analysis of the character development and structure of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896) and Margaret Deland's *John Ward, Preacher* (1888). The similarities in the treatment of religious doctrine in the two stories, according to Kantor, support the thesis that Frederic was familiar with Deland's novel. First, Kantor notes that critics have argued Frederic was familiar with Mrs. Humphrey Ward's *Robert Elsmere*, a novel published the same year as *John Ward, Preacher*, and often reviewed with it because of their similarities. Second, attitudes toward religion are central to character development in both Frederic's and Deland's novels. The pragmatic attitudes of Sister Soulsby and of Gifford Woodhouse complement one another, and in the end, both characters are a source of consolation and hope. Kantor also notes similarities between the meetings of the ministers and the trustees in both novels. The trustees are in control, and both groups have one dissenter among them: Levi Gorringer opposes the high interest rate charged by the other trustees, and Elder Johnson defends Helen Ward against the judgment of the others. In both novels, church officials are opposed to all things Catholic. Finally, the names of the two ministers—Ware and Ward—cannot be ignored.

Krause, Sydney J. "Harold Frederic and the Failure Motif." *Studies in American Fiction* 15.1 (1987): 55-69.

Krause's cultural and psychological approach to Frederic's novel juxtaposes the American myth of success with American novelists' fascination with

failure. Published during the period when “Horatio Alger stories were still at the ‘zenith of their fame’” (57), Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware* “represents that counter-phenomenon in the American tradition wherein knowledge not only fails to set someone free, it actually enslaves him to a false notion of the freed Self” (56). A key element in Theron Ware’s failure, according to Krause’s article, is “his inability to accept a negative image of himself for wrongs done” (59). Sympathetic to Ware’s motives for wanting “to cultivat[e] his mind till it should blossom like a garden,” Krause acknowledges “Frederic’s strategy of ambiguity,” wherein Ware’s desire for “personal enrichment” is hindered by his complete lack of self knowledge (61). Krause argues that Celia Madden’s musical seduction of Ware “becomes such a blatantly erotic performance as to constitute a rape of his senses” (62). For those “characters who fall socially and thereafter rehabilitate themselves, [ . . . Frederic] provides moral redemption” or, if necessary, a graceful death. However, those characters “who fall morally and fail to acknowledge it,” such as Ware, must live with their ignominy (63). Krause concludes that Theron Ware’s “failure is fundamental and national; it is his persisting in the American illusion that there is no final failure, that success only awaits a new beginning elsewhere” (64).

Lackey, Lionel. “Redemption and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *South Atlantic Review* 55 (1990): 81-91.

Lackey’s biographical and psychological study examines Frederic’s portrayal, and possible redemption, of Theron Ware. Lackey’s article is a sympathetic reading of Ware is influenced by his opinion that Frederic never achieved total honesty in his own life; thus “the author neither expected nor achieved total honesty in his characters” (81). Frederic’s practices regarding money, friendships, and extra-marital relationships, for example, are

reflected in Ware's desire for financial freedom, cultured friends, and a liaison with Celia Madden. Because Ware lacks "the financial access to culturally enlightened circles that would have afforded him the expertise and discretion to enter into moral ambiguities gracefully and knowingly—on Forbes' and Celia's own level," they judge him a bore (85). Sister Soulsby consoles Theron Ware after his rejection by Celia Madden and Father Forbes. Some critics see this consolation as "a prelude to renewed vanity, delusion, and failure" (86), but Lackey prefers to believe "there is ground for hope that Theron may after all have learned something valuable from his mistakes [. . .]. Having lost his life, Theron may yet save it" (87). Lackey speculates that Frederic may have intended the ending to be ambiguous in order to pave the way for another book, perhaps "The Redemption of Theron Ware." In any case, Lackey chooses "to place the best construction on the various ambivalences Frederic positions in the concluding chapters" (88).

LeClair, Thomas. "The Ascendant Eye: A Reading of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Studies in American Fiction* 3 (1975): 95-102.

LeClair's psychological analysis of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* explores "the complex relationship between being seen and seeing, between the person as object of perception and the person as perceiver of self and others" (95). In his article, LeClair asserts that Theron Ware's visibility as a small-town minister invites other characters to form superficial perceptions about his character, perceptions that ultimately contribute to Ware's "loss of self" (96). Levi Gorringe, Celia Madden, and Sister Soulsby are each wrong in their initial impressions of "Theron's superiority and potential for transformation" (97), but Theron Ware willingly embraces their characterizations, preferring the illusion of being seen to the reality of seeing. LeClair extends his argument to include the

“recurring imagery of eyes and sight” and of “light, darkness, and elevation” (96). He concludes that “Theron abandons whatever was genuine in him, accepts the identity others provide, and eventually becomes a synthetic person, the makeshift creation of Sister Soulsby, [. . .who] advocates picking an illusion, knowing that it is an illusion, and then using it to survive in a time of confusion” (101-02).

Oehlschlaeger, Fritz. “Passion, Authority, and Faith in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literature* 58.2 (1986): 238-55.

Oehlschlaeger’s article combines reader response, feminist, and psychological criticism in an analysis of authority in Frederic’s novel. According to Oehlschlaeger, Frederic “systematically discredits every authority figure in the novel while simultaneously revealing Theron’s own search for authority.” He argues that what Frederic’s novel presents “is not an innocent’s fall into corrupt sexuality but a critique of the way corrupt authority poisons sexuality,” a claim demonstrated in Theron Ware’s relationships with his wife Alice Ware and Celia Madden (239). Theron Ware becomes “progressively effeminized” by the novel’s “proscription of female sexuality by male authority” (244). All of the novel’s authority figures—the Methodist trustees; Father Forbes; Dr. Ledsmar; Sister Soulsby, perhaps the most complex authority figure; the Catholic Church; and even Jeremiah Madden, “the book’s most dignified figure”—are discredited by their words or actions (254). Oehlschlaeger acknowledges that critics have seen Sister Soulsby “either as a Satanic figure or as a voice for Frederic’s own supposed pragmatism” (246); however, he disagrees with both views. First, Sister Soulsby is neither all good nor all bad, and her pragmatism is “inadequate to deal with the highly irrational world that Frederic depicts,” which undercuts her validity as an authority figure (247). Second, Oehlschlaeger does not agree with critics who have pointed to Sister Soulsby’s

pragmatism as an indication of Frederic's personal views. In Oehlschlaeger's opinion, Frederic's views are evident in his respect for "certain religious values" represented by the venerable church elders and the Christian idea of repentance (253).

Prioleau, Elizabeth S. "The Minister and the Seductress in American Fiction: The Adamic Myth Redux." *Journal of American Culture* 16.4 (1993): 1-6.

Prioleau's structural approach identifies the "odd couple" of American literature that reveals "surprising shifts and reversals in the minister-temptress drama" (1) in six novels: Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896), Winston Churchill's *The Inside of the Cup* (1913), Sinclair Lewis' *Elmer Gantry* (1927), Peter De Vries' *The Mackerel Plaza* (1958), and John Updike's *A Month of Sundays* (1974). In her article, Prioleau observes that Hawthorne's Dimmesdale is the model clergyman, a "saint on earth," for whom Hester Prynne's freedom and lawlessness prove to be powerfully seductive. When Dimmesdale falls, "the reverberations are momentous." The title character in Frederic's novel is a "diminished version" of Dimmesdale, and Celia Madden is a "spoiled, vain, fin de siecle voluptuary" (2). Prioleau observes, "Due to the minister's lowered status at the century's end," Ware's "fall resembles more of a pratfall, for which the reader feels mixed pathos and contempt." Churchill's innocent and idealistic minister, John, "denounces everything he had believed"; and his seducer, wealthy and freethinking "pagan" Alison Parr, "metamorphoses into a Victorian hausfrau—domestic and dependent" (3). Prioleau concludes that Churchill's attempt to create "a happy resolution of the clergy-temptress drama" misses the mark. Literature in the 1920s reveals a decline in the clergyman's reputation. Lewis' *Elmer Gantry* is already corrupt



when he meets Sharon Faulkner, an even more corrupt tent revivalist. By novel's end, Faulkner is dead and Gantry has become the new "seducer, exploiter, megalomaniac, and muddled nonbeliever." De Vries' Andrew Mackerel is a degenerate minister who believes in nothing. The women in the novel are a parody of earlier seductresses such as Hester Prynne, prompting Prioleau to observe, "The temptations of America for clergymen in the fifties have been indulged to a point of satiation, ennui, and meaninglessness." Lastly, Updike's Tom Marshfield is both minister and seducer, and the temptresses—Ms. Prynne and Alicia—have "evolved into the seduced" (4).

Raleigh, John Henry. "The Damnation of Theron Ware." *American Literature* 30 (1958): 210-27.

Raleigh's analysis of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* situates Frederic's writing within a cultural context. In his article, Raleigh argues that the novel reflects American history and culture on three levels: (1) its representation of nineteenth-century America, (2) its representation of the nineteenth-century American and "his relationship to Europe," and (3) its "metaphorical statement about the essential polarities of all human existence" (213). On the first level, Raleigh describes Theron Ware as an anachronism: "an Emersonian, a Romantic, a lover of nature" (215). Ware's "lingering intuitionism" and "reliance upon feelings" are challenged by Celia Madden's aestheticism and Dr. Ledsmar's Darwinism (214). On the second level, Frederic's novel "shows Irish Catholicism conquering American Protestantism," an unusual perspective in the nineteenth century. In theme, the novel resembles Henry James' *Roderick Hudson*; in the character of Sister Soulsby, Frederic has captured the essence of Mark Twain's Huck Finn. On the third level, Raleigh asserts that the "highest and strongest" (223) attitudes in the novel belong to Father Forbes, "the voice of history, of tragedy, of loneliness, [. . .] of the mysteries that

surround and encompass us,” and to Sister Soulsby, “the spokesman for the here-and-now, for life as a comedy, for the efficacy of common sense” (226). “As psychological surrogates,” Raleigh proposes, “Father Forbes is the ‘father,’ while Sister Soulsby is the ‘mother.’” He concludes that “the two forces represented by Father Forbes and Sister Soulsby are not antithetical but complementary.” Both are “right,” and neither subscribes to “Absolute Truths” (227).

Raleigh, John Henry. “*The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *Time, Place, and Idea: Essays on the Novel*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1968. 75-95.

Raleigh’s chapter is a reprint of his article entitled “*The Damnation of Theron Ware*” that appeared in *American Literature* 30 (1958): 210-27.

Raleigh, John Henry. Introduction. *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960. vii-xxvi.

Raleigh’s introduction is a reprint of his article entitled “*The Damnation of Theron Ware*” that appeared in *American Literature* 30 (1958): 210-27.

Rees, John. “‘Dead Men’s Bones, Dead Men’s Beliefs’: Ideas of Antiquity in Upstate New York and *Theron Ware*.” *American Studies* 16.2 (1975): 77-87.

Rees’ biographical and psychological approach to the last of Frederic’s New York State novels leads him to speculate in this article that a “special regional consciousness” in areas like “religion, history, [. . . and] legend” contributes to the “psychological interest” of *The Damnation of*

*Theron Ware* (78). Father Forbes claims that the “idea that humanity progresses” is “utterly baseless and empty.” Theron Ware confesses to Sister Soulsby, “It oppresses me, and yet it fascinates me—this idea that the dead men have known more than we know, done more than we do; that there is nothing new anywhere” (79). Rees contends that Frederic believed the past is constantly imposing itself on the present and that “beneath the rising American republic lay an empire of the dead” (83). Beliefs, for example, about pre-Columbian America—including the theory that “the Indians were descended from the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel” and the Mound-builders were a “physically and mentally superior race”—promoted a sense of “religious antiquarianism” in residents of upstate New York, the regional consciousness that permeates Frederic’s novel (82-85).

Suderman, Elmer F. “*The Damnation of Theron Ware* as a Criticism of American Religious Thought.” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 33 (1969): 61-75.

Suderman’s article combines psychological and genre criticism in an examination of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and the conventions of the sentimental religious novel of the late nineteenth century. According to Suderman, Frederic’s decidedly non-sentimental novel “modifies the stereotype” and “brings it to life” (66). The young (Protestant) woman in the sentimental novel is recast as the sensual, red-headed, Irish-Catholic beauty Celia Madden. The young skeptic in the sentimental novel who is saved by his love for the young woman and her God is the Methodist minister Theron Ware. In *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, Celia Madden is the skeptic and Reverend Ware represents the already-converted young man. Rather than a conversion to Christianity, Ware experiences a counter-conversion to Madden’s religion of beauty and “absolute freedom from moral bugbears” (68-69).

In one situation after another, Frederic subverts sentimental conventions: Ware converts in the space of a page as opposed to a few chapters; instead of giving up smoking, Ware accepts a cigarette from Madden; at the point in the novel where the young woman would typically pray for her skeptical young man, Madden offers Ware a drink of Benedictine; the convert's faith in an afterlife is substituted for Ware's faith in a life of luxury aboard a yacht. Suderman observes that Frederic "has transformed a sterile conventional plot into a convincing, realistic story" (71). Whereas the sentimental religious novel generally ended on an uplifting note, at the end of Chapter 31, Ware, feeling rejected and alone, questions the very existence of God. In true Theron Ware-fashion, however, he "does not live with his more realistic and somber knowledge very long. [. . .] Theron, after two conversions—three if you count the drunken orgy—returns to his routine life unchanged" (74).

Wilkie, Brian. "Morality and Its Alternatives: *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Value and Vision in American Literature: Literary Essays in Honor of Ray Lewis White*. Ed. Joseph Candido. Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 1999. 64-82.

Wilkie approaches his chapter on Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware* from a moral and psychological perspective. His main purpose is to explore "the competing claims of morality and of a radically antinomian personal freedom" (66) that result in contradictions or a "confounding of affects" in the novel (69). For example, Wilkie describes Sister Soulsby as unscrupulous; however, he does not consider her self-absorbed or devious in her personal relationships. In fact, she seems to exhibit genuine concern for the Wares. Likewise, Celia Madden is both captivating and comic, and Father Forbes is both devoted to and dismissive of Catholicism. Dr. Ledsmar and Celia Madden seem to be the antithesis of one another, but they are

united in their rejection of Theron Ware. Sister Soulsby, a pragmatist, and Celia Madden, an idealist, “both register an affinity to Chopin’s music.” According to Wilkie, “This method, of creating polarities (as they seem at first) that later dissolve into unities or (more often) fragment kaleidoscopically, is the heart of Frederic’s novelistic strategy in *Theron Ware*” (71). The death of MacEvoy “epitomizes the double vision of values—aesthetic and moral—that, perhaps more than any other of the novel’s confounding of affects, gives *Theron Ware* its disturbing resonance as philosophical speculation” (74): Jeremiah Madden, “the most sympathetically portrayed character in the entire novel,” is ultimately responsible for MacEvoy’s death, and the beauty of the last rites and of Celia Madden’s attire overshadows the somber images of MacEvoy’s deathbed (73). Wilkie suggests “that the recurrent strategy by which the novel’s affects cancel one another out are variants, presented indirectly, of its exploration of the antinomian theme” (77). Theron Ware’s attraction toward Celia Madden and Father Forbes may be commendable, but his actions toward them seem contemptible. Wilkie argues that “Frederic has rendered, with almost unique success, and primarily through his double-takes on matters involving values, the perennial problem that emerges when antinomian spiritual energizing clashes head-on with morality, when two perfectly valid senses of *good* collide” (77-78). Furthermore, Frederic avoids “definitive judgment[s]” with respect to the morality of his characters (78), while at the same time his novel demonstrates the “utter incompatibility” of the pursuit of both morality and beauty and freedom (80).

Zimmermann, David H. “Clay Feet, Modernism, and Fundamental Option in Harold Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *The American Benedictine Review* 45.1 (1994): 33-44.

Zimmermann’s thematic and psychological

approach to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* focuses upon Frederic's "careful study of Methodism and Catholicism." Zimmermann argues in his article that the novel "records an important shift in religious thought within modern Christianity" (34). "[T]he theologies of Forbes and Soulsby," notes Zimmermann, "include many tenets adopted by twentieth-century Christian theologians" (35). Father Forbes tells Reverend Ware, "The Church is always compromising" (37). This perspective reflects Forbes' "positivist view of history that forms the basis of his theologies and biblical interpretations" (38); however, "[o]nce Forbes has altered Theron's understanding of history, he has altered Theron's understanding of religion [. . . without providing] him with any basis on which to begin reconstructing his understanding of the world" (39). Zimmermann suggests that, within the context of modern theology, Sister Soulsby has undergone a conversion because she and Soulsby have "both soured on living by fakes" (42). Sister Soulsby's theology embraces a belief in "humanity's essential goodness," and she "provides Theron with the forgiveness and direction necessary to begin the redemptive process" (42-43). Zimmermann asserts that, unlike many critics who blame Father Forbes and Sister Soulsby for Ware's damnation, he does not find fault with either of them. In fact, he does not consider Ware damned. According to Zimmermann, "damnation occurs only after death," when the option of free choice can no longer be exercised. Thus, "Sister Soulsby is correct when she points out that the sheep and the goats will not be separated until judgment day" (44). Theron Ware's future, in light of Zimmermann's interpretation of Sister Soulsby's and Father Forbes' theologies, remains ambiguous.



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# Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*:

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Auchincloss, Louis. "Harold Frederic." *The Man Behind the Book: Literary Profiles*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996. 114-23.

Becknell, Thomas. "Implication Through Reading *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 24.1 (1991): 63-71.

Carter, Everett. Introduction. *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. By Harold Frederic. 1896. Cambridge: Belknap P of Harvard UP, 1960. vii-xxiv.

Genthe, Charles V. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware* and *Elmer Gantry*." *Research Studies* 32 (1964): 334-43.

Myers, Robert M. "Antimodern Protest in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 26.3 (1994): 52-64.

O'Donnell, Thomas F, and Hoyt C. Franchere. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Harold Frederic*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1961. 108-17.

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Auchincloss, Louis. "Harold Frederic." *The Man Behind the Book: Literary Profiles*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996.114-23.

Auchincloss' chapter entitled "Harold Frederic" is a psychological analysis that reflects Frederic's multifarious thinking and the cultural milieu in which he was writing *Seth's Brother's Wife* and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. For example, the

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portrayal of Father Forbes and the Catholic Church reflects Frederic's views of priests and Catholicism. The "crux" of the novel lies in Theron Ware's recognition of a "turning point in his career," "the sensation of having been invited to become a citizen of [. . . the] world" of intellect, culture, and grace to which Father Forbes, Celia Madden, and Dr. Ledsmar belong (119-20). Sister Soulsby is "a tough, realistic but kindly woman who has been through the toughest mills of life and emerged as a noisy but effective church fund raiser" (120). Celia Madden is little more than a separate banking account, while Levi Gorringer is the voice of the reader in his speech condemning Theron Ware as "a man who's so much meaner than any other man" (121). Auchincloss describes *The Damnation of Theron Ware* as a book, unlike Frederic's other novels, in which the author "addresses himself to the bewilderment and ultimate absurdity of a semi-educated American would-be idealist struggling in the arid culture of a northern New York State small town towards the end of the nineteenth century" (116-17). He concludes that Theron Ware has learned nothing and continues to delude himself with fantasies about using "his gift as a preacher" to become a Senator by the time he is forty (121).

Becknell, Thomas. "Implication Through Reading *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 24.1 (1991): 63-71.

Becknell's article is a reader-response essay based on an extension of Randall Craig's theory of a "hermeneutical gap" between "intended and model readers" (63). Becknell contends that thematic and hermeneutic gaps exist "between the available authorities (which are discredited), and a valid authority which Theron lacks" and between the authority of the reader and the authority of the author (64). Borrowing a term from Wolfgang Iser's *The Act of Reading*, Becknell argues that the "'horizon' against which we view Theron's awakening" is a "vast no-man's-land between

authority and personal judgment”; as readers, we want Theron Ware to be more than he is (65-66). This desire is a result of the way we read and our inability to “embrace all perspectives at once”; thus a problem of “authority” confronts our judgment (68). The competing authorities of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden cloud Theron Ware’s judgment. When Madden tells Ware, “We find that you are a bore,” the “we” she refers to includes the author (again referring to “author-ity”) (70). Becknell asserts that we, as readers, forget the authority of the author because we want to see *The Damnation of Theron Ware* as a drama of lost faith and Theron Ware as a victim of temptation. He claims that readers can be misguided because they want to read the novel as a romance when they should be keying in on the signals of realism. Like truth, concludes Becknell, assumptions about authority begin with absolutes and end in relativity.

Carter, Everett. Introduction. *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. By Harold Frederic. 1896. Cambridge: Belknap P of Harvard UP, 1960. vii-xxiv.

Carter’s oft-cited introduction opens with a biographical survey of Frederic’s life before it moves on to a cultural and a moral examination of the trio of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden as “seducers of innocence” (xxi). Carter claims that Theron Ware falls from innocence into knowledge, “a fall into the religious and scientific knowledge” and “the dark knowledge of the flesh” (xxi). Father Forbes is responsible for Ware’s religious crisis, while Dr. Ledsmar—a Darwinian atheist—introduces Ware to the writings of Renan. According to Carter, Celia Madden’s role in Theron Ware’s damnation is “evil” (x). The critic’s bibliography is a good source for contemporaneous reception of the novel: most of the citations are reviews or articles from the 1890s.

Genthe, Charles V. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware and Elmer Gantry.*" *Research Studies* 32 (1964): 334-43.

Genthe's article is a structural analysis of Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896) and Sinclair Lewis' *Elmer Gantry* (1927) that considers "striking similarities" in "certain characters, materials, and techniques" (334), suggesting that Lewis must have known Frederic's novel. Celia Madden and Sharon Falconer, although "vastly different in background and occupation," "epitomize beauty and savoir faire to Ware and Gantry, and the bower seduction scenes are markedly similar" (335). Ministers Theron Ware and Frank Shallard, a minor character in *Elmer Gantry*, share similar "background[s]," "environments," and "influences," specifically "Darwinism, the Higher Criticism, and the social gospel" (337). Genthe notes that the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859) and *Descent of Man* (1871) "constituted a separation point between an old order of thought and a new" (338). Higher Criticism, in the minds of some clergymen, threatened to do away with God; and the social gospel, "a movement within the churches to help the common person in his struggle for a material existence," "helped to level the old barriers between the secular and sacred" (339). For Theron Ware, these influences are embodied in the characters of Dr. Ledsmar, Father Forbes, and Celia Madden. For Frank Shallard, they are all combined in the single character of Dr. Bruno Zechlin, Professor of Hebrew at Mizpah Baptist Seminary. "[I]t is a tribute to American realism that Lewis and Frederic created these two characters and their plot situations with such verisimilitude," writes Genthe. The similarity could be attributed to "the fact that both authors saw the same basic forces in American religious patterns," or Lewis may have used Frederic's novel for source material (343). Genthe opts for the second possibility, that Lewis borrowed from Frederic

Myers, Robert M. "Antimodern Protest in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 26.3 (1994): 52-64.

Myers combines biographical and cultural criticism in his article to examine Frederic's portrayal of nineteenth-century America, particularly the country's attitude toward religion. According to Myers, many earlier critics of Frederic's works "tended to see Frederic as an objective critic standing outside of his culture"; he, however, detects in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* the author's concern for the effect of "overcivilization and fragmentation of modernism" on American cultural institutions (52). Frederic undertook extensive research on Methodism, Catholicism, and higher Biblical criticism in order to be as accurate as possible in his portrayal of a minister and a priest. Myers notes that Frederic's sources on comparative religion "map a decline in traditional faith" resulting in "a profound ambivalence about the psychological and social effects of faithlessness." Frederic's own views on religion "altered between contempt for religious superstition and a recognition of the social value of religion" (54). In the 1890s, tensions between liberal Methodists, who "adopted the modern optimistic belief in the inevitability of progress," and conservative Methodists, who protested the "modernizing trends of the liberals," were dividing the church. Reverend Ware's attempt to bring "modern ideas" to the Methodists of Octavius is thwarted by "a strong conservative faction" (56). Partly in reaction to his frustration with primitive Methodism, Ware embraces Celia Madden's aesthetic paganism. He is also exposed to Father Forbes' Catholicism, described by Myers as "a useful social institution" (59), and Sister Soulsby's pragmatism, "based on social utility rather than theology." Myers observes, "Father Forbes, Doctor Ledsmar, Celia, and Sister Soulsby all contribute to Theron's destruction by consistently



overestimating his ability to assimilate a modern view of religion.” Catholicism can tolerate a Father Forbes in its midst because the “corporate ethic of the Catholic Church de-emphasizes the significance of the individual priest” (60). Reverend Ware does not have that luxury in Methodism: “if the minister be corrupt his ministry will be corrupt also.” Myers concludes, “Forbes’ vision of a national church, focused on the needs of the consumers rather than doctrinal disputes with other religions, parallels simultaneous developments in American business. [. . .] The pragmatic approach to religion that emerges from Theron Ware points to a church strikingly similar to the modern corporation, an institution that took shape in the late nineteenth century” (61).

O’Donnell, Thomas F, and Hoyt C. Franchere. “*The Damnation of Theron Ware.*” *Harold Frederic*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1961. 108-17.

O’Donnell and Franchere’s chapter on *The Damnation of Theron Ware* combines biographical and cultural criticism in an examination of the writing and reception of the novel. The essay opens with a survey of the novel’s contemporaneous reviews in both England and the United States, then moves on to speculate upon the genesis of the work, which took Frederic “five years of conscious, careful, and silent planning” to write. O’Donnell and Franchere believe the idea for the novel may have occurred to Frederic “as far back as his Utica days when his long conversations with Father Terry, the brilliant and candid priest, had so stimulated him” (110). They point out that Frederic observed the growth of religious skepticism in the 1870s and 1880s—fueled by Darwin’s theories, higher Biblical criticism, aestheticism, and intellectual epicureanism—and incorporated these influences in the characters of Dr. Ledsmar, Father Forbes, and Celia Madden, with disastrous results for his title character. Unable to reconcile “currents of thought that are disturbing the very universe of

his time [, . . .] Theron brings about his own damnation,” conclude O’Donnell and Franchere (116).

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Carrington, Jr., George C. "Harold Frederic's Clear Farcical Vision: *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 19.3 (1987): 3-26.

Donaldson, Scott. "The Seduction of Theron Ware." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 29 (1975): 441-52.

Johnson, George W. "Harold Frederic's Young Goodman Ware: The Ambiguities of a Realistic Romance." *Modern Fiction Studies* 8 (1963): 361-74.

Luedtke, Luther S. "Harold Frederic's Satanic Sister Soulsby: Interpretation and Sources." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 30.1 (1975): 82-104.

Miller, Linda Patterson. "Casting Graven Images: *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Renascence: Essays on Values in Literature* 30 (1978): 179-84.

Myers, Robert M. "Antimodern Protest in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 26.3 (1994): 52-64.

Oehlschlaeger, Fritz. "Passion, Authority, and Faith in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literature* 58.2 (1986): 238-55.

Raleigh, John Henry. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literature* 30 (1958): 210-27.

Raleigh, John Henry. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Time, Place, and Idea: Essays on the Novel*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1968. 75-95.

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Zimmermann, David H. "Clay Feet, Modernism, and Fundamental Option in Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *The American Benedictine Review* 45.1 (1994): 33-44.

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Carrington, Jr., George C. "Harold Frederic's Clear Farcical Vision: *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 19.3 (1987): 3-26.

Carrington's genre analysis of Frederic's novel opens with the claim that "Frederic's America is farcical; it is a world in which behavior and events are basically determined by the need [. . .] for personal stability and security" (3). Thus, Carrington argues in this article, in Frederic's interpretation of Howellsian realism, nearly all the characters in this farcical novel are knaves: "selfish aggressors" who manipulate "obtuse victims," the fools (9). Theron Ware is unique in that his character is both knave and fool: the "fool-as-knave" tries to be a manipulator, but is hopelessly foolish, and the "knave-as-fool" blunders about seemingly helpless, provokes others to help him, and emerges relatively unharmed, ready to repeat the cycle (3). Although Carrington examines a number of devices standard to farce, he identifies hoaxing and acting as central to the development of the novel. Most of the hoaxing occurs in Ware's mind: he deceives himself more effectively than he deceives any of the other characters. The external hoaxing takes on the form of acting—characters playing a role for the purpose of "self-maintenance" or personal stability (7). Seeing the arrival of Theron Ware in Octavius as a potential threat to their stability, most of the other characters in the novel take immediate and aggressive action toward Ware in order to maintain their positions. Of these,

Sister Soulsby is deemed “the most perfect knave in the book”: she is deceptive, manipulative, and ruthless (18). Carrington concludes that the question of Theron Ware’s illumination or damnation is irrelevant because, in the farcical world of the novel, nothing significant has changed; and, in the end, it is the reader—not the characters—who is illumined through Frederic’s “clear human vision’ of comedy” (24).

Donaldson, Scott. “The Seduction of Theron Ware.” *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 29 (1975): 441-52.

Donaldson’s article is a psychological analysis of the causes of Theron Ware’s downfall. While Donaldson acknowledges that most critics point to the trio of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden as the force behind Ware’s destruction, he asserts “the true villain of the piece” is Sister Soulsby, “who plays Mephistopheles” to Ware’s “Faust” (441-42). Donaldson points to characteristics of Sister Soulsby—her “deceptive appearance, commanding manner, and duplicitous methods of operation”—to support his judgment (442). Sister Soulsby is a master confidence artist who employs performance, flattery, and scripture quoted out-of-context to further her scheming manipulation of both Theron Ware and his congregation. After Sister Soulsby absolves Ware of any guilt for his participation in her scheme to cheat Levi Gorringer at the trustees’ meeting, he embraces her philosophy of pragmatism and vows to emulate her example; however, Donaldson concludes, “Theron Ware simply is not cut out for the role of deceiver” (451).

Johnson, George W. “Harold Frederic’s Young Goodman Ware: The Ambiguities of a Realistic Romance.” *Modern Fiction Studies* 8 (1963): 361-74.

Johnson's article combines structural and genre

criticism to explore the “sinning minister” in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s works as an influence on Frederic’s minister, “brought up to date and given topicality in the ‘turbulent’ milieu of the 1890’s” (362). Although sensitive to Sister Soulsby’s duplicity, Johnson regards her influence as comparable to that of Celia Madden. Johnson writes, Sister Soulsby “patches together Theron’s splintered ego by giving him a role to play. Henceforth, she counsels, he is to be a conscious fraud, an actor superior to his audience.” Her seduction of Theron Ware takes a different tack from Celia Madden’s, “[b]ut Sister Soulsby has in a way seduced him” by appealing to his pride and fueling his ego. Ware emerges from the forest scene with Madden, “like another Dimmesdale,” unable to reconcile the “radical contradictions” that plague his mind (365). Johnson observes that Frederic’s novel is, on the one hand, “a realistic rendering of societal relationships” and, on the other, “a romancer’s poetic rendering, complete with archetypal trees, gardens, and snakes, of a representative figure” (367). In the character of Theron Ware, Frederic has created a “seeker who combines the temperament of both a romancer and a realist”; however, Johnson concludes that the novel “remains a literary near-miss” because “Theron Ware is an average man who remains throughout the book merely a boy” (372). A novel “[a]t the last more complicated than complex,” Johnson asserts that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is “a flawed monument to an endeavor audacious, artful, and American” (374).

Luedtke, Luther S. “Harold Frederic’s Satanic Sister Soulsby: Interpretation and Sources.” *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 30.1 (1975): 82-104.

Luedtke’s thematic, especially moral, approach to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* identifies Sister Soulsby as “the agent of a damnation that has moral as well as social reality” (82; emphasis



Luedtke's). Luedtke writes in his article, "Frederic intends Sister Soulsby, the materialist, to function as a Mephistophelean tempter of Theron's soul and a minion of spiritual darkness" (84). Tracing the four parts of the novel, Luedtke states that it is not Theron Ware's introduction to his new church or town, Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, or Celia Madden in Part I that sets him on the path to damnation, but rather it is his interaction with the Soulsbys in Part II that plants the seeds of his destruction. Sister Soulsby's remarks about Alice Ware cause Theron Ware first to re-evaluate his marriage and, later, to suspect his wife of infidelity. Her lecture to Ware on the art and uses of performance prompt him to brag about his new perspective to Dr. Ledsmar and Celia Madden, alienating them in the process. Luedtke recites the Soulsbys' long history of questionable employment and concludes that they are confidence artists for whom religion is "only the latest con game" (92). Ware believes Sister Soulsby when she tells him that she and Soulsby had "both soured on living by fakes" and were now "good frauds" (93). Luedtke notes Frederic's debt to Nathaniel Hawthorne in the character of Westervelt (*The Blithedale Romance*), who, like Sister Soulsby, has false teeth and is "stamped with [. . . the] totems of the serpent and the evil eye" (94). Although Luedtke contends that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* offers ample evidence of Frederic's "judgments on Sister Soulsby" (98), he concludes his essay by offering two British models for the character of Sister Soulsby: Lucy Helen Muriel Soulsby (1856-1927) and Charles Dickens' fictional Mrs. Jellyby (*Bleak House*).

Miller, Linda Patterson. "Casting Graven Images: *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Renascence: Essays on Values in Literature* 30 (1978): 179-84.

Miller's article combines moral and structural criticism in her analysis of the "moral wasteland" that confronts Alice Ware, Celia Madden, Sister

Soulsby, and Theron Ware in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. Their “search for personal salvation” transforms the concept of the church into something familiar and comforting: for Alice Ware, it is her “garden”; for Celia Madden, it is her “‘sacred chamber’ of art”; for Sister Soulsby, it is a “theatrical stage”; and for Theron Ware, it is the “‘maternal idea’ as embodied in Alice, Celia, and Sister Soulsby” (179). Alice Ware’s religion is her garden. Images of flowers blossoming and, later, withering are associated with her vivaciousness and despair. Miller observes that, rather than freeing her, both Methodism and her garden serve to isolate Alice Ware until she despairs, “[I]f there is a God, he has forgotten me” (180). Celia Madden seeks to transcend the wasteland in the “sacred chamber” of her rooms where she is worshipped as both seductress and madonna. When Celia Madden “cannot realize moments of transcendence,” she regards herself as “the most helpless and forlorn and lonesome of atoms” (181). Sister Soulsby’s approach is to disguise the wasteland with the machinery of the theatrical stage, all the while knowing that the performance is only an illusion. Theron Ware’s quest for salvation turns first to Alice Ware, then to Celia Madden, and finally to Sister Soulsby, but his misplaced faith in Sister Soulsby seals his damnation. Miller agrees with Stanton Garner’s assessment of Sister Soulsby’s failed religion: “to look for stage machinery instead of truth is to invite degeneration, to confuse darkness with illumination, to strike a bargain with Satan, to lose what weed-grown Paradise is left in a diminished world.” Miller concludes that none of the characters finds “real personal salvation”; none finds God (184).

Myers, Robert M. “Antimodern Protest in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literary Realism* 26.3 (1994): 52-64.

Myers combines biographical and cultural criticism in his article to examine Frederic’s portrayal of

nineteenth-century America, particularly the country's attitude toward religion. According to Myers, many earlier critics of Frederic's works "tended to see Frederic as an objective critic standing outside of his culture"; he, however, detects in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* the author's concern for the effect of "overcivilization and fragmentation of modernism" on American cultural institutions (52). Frederic undertook extensive research on Methodism, Catholicism, and higher Biblical criticism in order to be as accurate as possible in his portrayal of a minister and a priest. Myers notes that Frederic's sources on comparative religion "map a decline in traditional faith" resulting in "a profound ambivalence about the psychological and social effects of faithlessness." Frederic's own views on religion "altered between contempt for religious superstition and a recognition of the social value of religion" (54). In the 1890s, tensions between liberal Methodists, who "adopted the modern optimistic belief in the inevitability of progress," and conservative Methodists, who protested the "modernizing trends of the liberals," were dividing the church. Reverend Ware's attempt to bring "modern ideas" to the Methodists of Octavius is thwarted by "a strong conservative faction" (56). Partly in reaction to his frustration with primitive Methodism, Ware embraces Celia Madden's aesthetic paganism. He is also exposed to Father Forbes' Catholicism, described by Myers as "a useful social institution" (59), and Sister Soulsby's pragmatism, "based on social utility rather than theology." Myers observes, "Father Forbes, Doctor Ledsmar, Celia, and Sister Soulsby all contribute to Theron's destruction by consistently overestimating his ability to assimilate a modern view of religion." Catholicism can tolerate a Father Forbes in its midst because the "corporate ethic of the Catholic Church de-emphasizes the significance of the individual priest" (60). Reverend Ware does not have that luxury in Methodism: "if the minister be corrupt his ministry will be corrupt also." Myers concludes, "Forbes' vision of a national church,

focused on the needs of the consumers rather than doctrinal disputes with other religions, parallels simultaneous developments in American business. [. . .] The pragmatic approach to religion that emerges from Theron Ware points to a church strikingly similar to the modern corporation, an institution that took shape in the late nineteenth century” (61).

Oehlschlaeger, Fritz. “Passion, Authority, and Faith in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literature* 58.2 (1986): 238-55.

Oehlschlaeger’s article combines reader response, feminist, and psychological criticism in an analysis of authority in Frederic’s novel. According to Oehlschlaeger, Frederic “systematically discredits every authority figure in the novel while simultaneously revealing Theron’s own search for authority.” He argues that what Frederic’s novel presents “is not an innocent’s fall into corrupt sexuality but a critique of the way corrupt authority poisons sexuality,” a claim demonstrated in Theron Ware’s relationships with his wife Alice Ware and Celia Madden (239). Theron Ware becomes “progressively effeminized” by the novel’s “proscription of female sexuality by male authority” (244). All of the novel’s authority figures—the Methodist trustees; Father Forbes; Dr. Ledsmar; Sister Soulsby, perhaps the most complex authority figure; the Catholic Church; and even Jeremiah Madden, “the book’s most dignified figure”—are discredited by their words or actions (254). Oehlschlaeger acknowledges that critics have seen Sister Soulsby “either as a Satanic figure or as a voice for Frederic’s own supposed pragmatism” (246); however, he disagrees with both views. First, Sister Soulsby is neither all good nor all bad, and her pragmatism is “inadequate to deal with the highly irrational world that Frederic depicts,” which undercuts her validity as an authority figure (247). Second, Oehlschlaeger does not agree with critics who have pointed to Sister Soulsby’s

pragmatism as an indication of Frederic's personal views. In Oehlschlaeger's opinion, Frederic's views are evident in his respect for "certain religious values" represented by the venerable church elders and the Christian idea of repentance (253).

Raleigh, John Henry. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware.*" *American Literature* 30 (1958): 210-27.

Raleigh's analysis of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* situates Frederic's writing within a cultural context. In his article, Raleigh argues that the novel reflects American history and culture on three levels: (1) its representation of nineteenth-century America, (2) its representation of the nineteenth-century American and "his relationship to Europe," and (3) its "metaphorical statement about the essential polarities of all human existence" (213). On the first level, Raleigh describes Theron Ware as an anachronism: "an Emersonian, a Romantic, a lover of nature" (215). Ware's "lingering intuitionism" and "reliance upon feelings" are challenged by Celia Madden's aestheticism and Dr. Ledsmar's Darwinism (214). On the second level, Frederic's novel "shows Irish Catholicism conquering American Protestantism," an unusual perspective in the nineteenth century. In theme, the novel resembles Henry James' *Roderick Hudson*; in the character of Sister Soulsby, Frederic has captured the essence of Mark Twain's Huck Finn. On the third level, Raleigh asserts that the "highest and strongest" (223) attitudes in the novel belong to Father Forbes, "the voice of history, of tragedy, of loneliness, [. . .] of the mysteries that surround and encompass us," and to Sister Soulsby, "the spokesman for the here-and-now, for life as a comedy, for the efficacy of common sense" (226). "As psychological surrogates," Raleigh proposes, "Father Forbes is the 'father,' while Sister Soulsby is the 'mother.'" He concludes that "the two forces represented by Father Forbes and Sister Soulsby are not antithetical but complementary."

Both are “right,” and neither subscribes to “Absolute Truths” (227).

Raleigh, John Henry. “*The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *Time, Place, and Idea: Essays on the Novel*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1968. 75-95.

Raleigh’s chapter is a reprint of his article entitled “*The Damnation of Theron Ware*” that appeared in *American Literature* 30 (1958): 210-27.

Raleigh, John Henry. Introduction. *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960. vii-xxvi.

Raleigh’s introduction is a reprint of his article entitled “*The Damnation of Theron Ware*” that appeared in *American Literature* 30 (1958): 210-27.

Zimmermann, David H. “Clay Feet, Modernism, and Fundamental Option in Harold Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *The American Benedictine Review* 45.1 (1994): 33-44.

Zimmermann’s thematic and psychological approach to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* focuses upon Frederic’s “careful study of Methodism and Catholicism.” Zimmermann argues in his article that the novel “records an important shift in religious thought within modern Christianity” (34). “[T]he theologies of Forbes and Soulsby,” notes Zimmermann, “include many tenets adopted by twentieth-century Christian theologians” (35). Father Forbes tells Reverend Ware, “The Church is always compromising” (37). This perspective reflects Forbes’ “positivist view of history that forms the basis of his theologies and biblical interpretations” (38); however, “[o]nce



Forbes has altered Theron's understanding of history, he has altered Theron's understanding of religion [. . . without providing] him with any basis on which to begin reconstructing his understanding of the world" (39). Zimmermann suggests that, within the context of modern theology, Sister Soulsby has undergone a conversion because she and Soulsby have "both soured on living by fakes" (42). Sister Soulsby's theology embraces a belief in "humanity's essential goodness," and she "provides Theron with the forgiveness and direction necessary to begin the redemptive process" (42-43). Zimmermann asserts that, unlike many critics who blame Father Forbes and Sister Soulsby for Ware's damnation, he does not find fault with either of them. In fact, he does not consider Ware damned. According to Zimmermann, "damnation occurs only after death," when the option of free choice can no longer be exercised. Thus, "Sister Soulsby is correct when she points out that the sheep and the goats will not be separated until judgment day" (44). Theron Ware's future, in light of Zimmermann's interpretation of Sister Soulsby's and Father Forbes' theologies, remains ambiguous.

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Becknell, Thomas. "Implication Through Reading *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 24.1 (1991): 63-71.

Eggers, Paul. "By Whose Authority? Point of View in the First Chapter of Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Style* 31.1 (1997): 81-95.

Oehlschlaeger, Fritz. "Passion, Authority, and Faith in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literature* 58.2 (1986): 238-55.

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Becknell, Thomas. "Implication Through Reading *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 24.1 (1991): 63-71.

Becknell's article is a reader-response essay based on an extension of Randall Craig's theory of a "hermeneutical gap" between "intended and model readers" (63). Becknell contends that thematic and hermeneutic gaps exist "between the available authorities (which are discredited), and a valid authority which Theron lacks" and between the authority of the reader and the authority of the author (64). Borrowing a term from Wolfgang Iser's *The Act of Reading*, Becknell argues that the "horizon' against which we view Theron's awakening" is a "vast no-man's-land between authority and personal judgment"; as readers, we want Theron Ware to be more than he is (65-66). This desire is a result of the way we read and our

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inability to “embrace all perspectives at once”; thus a problem of “authority” confronts our judgment (68). The competing authorities of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden cloud Theron Ware’s judgment. When Madden tells Ware, “We find that you are a bore,” the “we” she refers to includes the author (again referring to “author-ity”) (70). Becknell asserts that we, as readers, forget the authority of the author because we want to see *The Damnation of Theron Ware* as a drama of lost faith and Theron Ware as a victim of temptation. He claims that readers can be misguided because they want to read the novel as a romance when they should be keying in on the signals of realism. Like truth, concludes Becknell, assumptions about authority begin with absolutes and end in relativity.

Eggers, Paul. “By Whose Authority? Point of View in the First Chapter of Harold Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *Style* 31.1 (1997): 81-95.

Eggers’ article combines reader-response and structural criticism in an examination of Chapter 1 of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. Eggers argues that other critics who have examined authority in this novel (Oehlschlaeger and Becknell) have begun in Chapter 2, where the narrative focus and main characters are established. He contends, however, “that the first chapter both initiates and encapsulates the novel’s exploration of authority through a perplexing usage of shifting points of view.” Identification of these shifting points of view alternates between clarity and ambiguity, not only implicating readers in “unauthoritative’ readings” of the text but also focusing on the “book’s concern with authority.” The opening three paragraphs are traditional omniscient narration, but one word in the third paragraph, “nay,” suggests an “internal debate” that should give careful readers pause. The narrator changes for paragraphs four through six to an unnamed “observer.” The point of view appears to shift again in paragraphs ten and eleven to the

“venerable Fathers” of the Methodist clergy. Their “sincerity” is called into question if the judgments rendered are not the implied author’s (as reported by the omniscient narrator). Point of view clearly shifts back to the omniscient narrator in paragraphs twelve through fifteen, influencing the reader’s perceptions of Theron and Alice Ware in later paragraphs in contrast to the proud Tecumseh congregation. Eggers’ analysis continues along this line, scrutinizing each paragraph in turn. When Ware is finally introduced to the reader, it is through the “objective” tone of a limited-omniscient narrator who has just replaced the “vitriolic tone of the parishioner-controlled narrative.” Since the reader is predisposed to be sympathetic toward the seemingly stoic and pious Reverend Ware, this impression influences the reader well into the book. As Eggers demonstrates, “both text and reader are rendered ‘unauthoritative’ through the agency of point of view.” (Note: The above is from WilsonSelect, an electronic database that does not include *Style’s* page numbers.)

Oehlschlaeger, Fritz. “Passion, Authority, and Faith in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literature* 58.2 (1986): 238-55.

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# Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*:

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The following questions are intended to promote discussion on some of the issues raised by Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. Questions are geared toward the material of the web site as well as the links to other sites, such as Methodism, Catholicism, and Literary Movements.

1. Critics are not in agreement on how best to categorize Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. It is the fourth and last of Frederic's novels set in upstate New York and possesses characteristics of regionalism and local color in both its setting and use of dialect. Elements of realism are evident in the issues the novel addresses and in characterization. Some critics argue that the ending is optimistic while others find a more deterministic strain suggestive of naturalism. Finally, *The Damnation of Theron Ware* has been compared to several of Nathaniel Hawthorne's romances, especially *The Scarlet Letter*. Based on your understanding of the romance (as genre), regionalism, local color, realism, and naturalism, how would you categorize the novel?
2. Much has been made of the two titles of this book: *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, the title first used in the United States publication, and *Illumination*, the title used in the English publication. These titles suggest very different themes. Which title do you consider most apt? How might knowing that one of the working titles for the novel was "Snarl" (See Jolliff; Garner, 1979.) change your interpretation?
3. Religion, science, and art are key elements to understanding several characters in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*: Father Forbes represents both Catholicism and intellectualism, while Theron Ware represents fundamentalist Methodism and intellectual naivete; Dr. Ledsmar represents post-Darwinian science and atheism; and Celia Madden represents art and beauty. Critics argue that Frederic's treatment of these elements reflects not only the spirit of the times, described as the "turbulent" nineties, but also his own perspectives on Catholicism, Methodism, Darwinism, and Decadence. How do the elements of religion, science, and art work together in this novel? How do they work against each other? Where does Theron Ware fit in the religion-science-art triangle?
4. The latter half of the nineteenth century experienced a significant increase of Irish-Catholic immigration into the United States. During the same period, societies such as the American Protective Association (APA) and the Know-Nothing Party were formed to promote anti-Catholicism. How does Frederic portray the Catholics and the Methodists in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*? Which group is presented in a more sympathetic manner?
5. William Dean Howells, prominent nineteenth-century critic and author, wrote the following comments in an 1897 essay entitled "My

**Favorite Novelist and His Best Book”:**

"I was particularly interested in the book, for when you get to the end, although you have carried a hazy notion in your mind of the sort of man Ware was, you fully realize, for the first time, that the author has never for a moment represented him anywhere to you as a good or honest man, or as anything but a very selfish man."

How is Theron Ware portrayed in each of the four parts of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*? Is he a different man at the beginning than he is at the end? If he has changed, how has he changed? If he remains the same, why do you think so?

6. Many critics have blamed Sister Soulsby and/or the trio of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden for Theron Ware's fall. To what extent are any of these characters responsible for either his "damnation" or "illumination"? To what extent is Ware himself responsible?
7. *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is set during a period when Protestants were in the majority in the United States. Theron Ware is a Methodist minister in a small town in which Protestant and Catholic groups are generally segregated. Carrie Tirado Bramen, in her essay "The Americanization of Theron Ware," observes that the novel is "a modern version of the captivity narrative, where a member of the dominant culture is transformed through contact with the alien Other." How is Theron Ware transformed? Is he a captive of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, or Celia Madden? Do you agree with Bramen's assessment? Why or why not?

For background on captivity narratives, see the following:

Early American Captivity Narratives

<http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/campbell/enl310/captive.htm>

Forms of Puritan Rhetoric: The Jeremiad and the Conversion Narrative

<http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/campbell/enl310/jeremiad.htm>

Indian Captivity Narratives

<http://www.nagasaki-gaigo.ac.jp/ishikawa/amlit/general/movements.htm>

8. Alice Ware is generally viewed as a maligned character in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. Early in the novel, Theron Ware feels fortunate to have someone so vivacious and intelligent as his wife. Later, however, he views her as dull and slightly dim-witted. Since most of the descriptions of Alice Ware come from Theron Ware's point of view, how reliable are the descriptions? Who else comments on Alice Ware? Theron Ware wants to suspect his wife of having an affair with Levi Gorringer. Is an affair likely? Why or why not? At the end of the novel, why does Alice Ware not imagine herself returning to Washington as the wife of a Senator? How would you characterize Alice Ware? Does she evolve in the novel?

9. Sister Soulsby's pragmatic "religion" dictates that the end justifies the means. She tells Theron Ware, "I've got a religion of my own, and it's

got just one plank in it, and that is that the time to separate the sheep from the goats in on Judgment Day, and that it can't be done a minute before. [. . .] Now I say that Soulsby and I do good, and that we're good fellows. [. . .] It's a fraud—yes; but it's a good fraud" (176-79). Do these statements accord with Sister Soulsby's actions? Is she non-judgmental? Can she be a "good fraud" without judging others? Are her confessions to Theron Ware part of her con game?

10. *The Damnation of Theron Ware* has been described as both "the great American novel" and an "anti-American" novel. How might one or both of these labels apply to Frederic's masterpiece?

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**Aestheticism:** A nineteenth-century movement in art and literature that advocated the credo of “Art for Art’s Sake.” Beauty became the basic principle of life, the source of all other principles, including moral ones. Art was superior to nature; death and beauty were significantly intertwined; and intensity of experience was emphasized.

**American Adam:** The image “of the authentic American as a figure of heroic innocence and vast potentialities at the start of a new history. [. . . T]his image had about it always an air of adventurousness, a sense of promise and possibility” (Lewis 1).

**Decadence:** A late nineteenth-century movement in art and literature that emphasized Aestheticism, sought to escape the human condition by artifice and “evil,” and, alternately, pursued sensation and cultivated a mood of ennui.

**Edenic Myth:** The belief that the “discovery” of a “New World”—a new Eden—“was a providential blessing” that offered “new starts and new hopes for the human race.” In the pristine environs of America, it was argued, the new settlers “might experience a rebirth into innocence, simplicity, [. . . and] primal sweetness” (Cunliff 2).

**Fin de Siècle:** French phrase meaning “end of century,” sometimes used to refer to the Aesthetes or the Decadents of the late nineteenth century.

**Gilded Age:** This phrase comes from Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner’s 1873 novel *The Gilded Age*, depicting “an American society that, despite its appearance of promise and prosperity, is riddled with corruption and scandal” (<http://us.history.wisc.edu/hist102/lectures/lecture04.html>).

**New Woman:** The “New Woman” of the nineteenth century replaced the earlier nineteenth-century concept of the “True Woman,” a product of the “Cult of Domesticity.” “Less constrained by Victorian norms and domesticity than previous generations, the new woman had greater freedom to pursue public roles and even flaunt her ‘sex appeal,’ a term coined in



the 1920s and linked with the emergence of the new woman. She challenged conventional gender roles and met with hostility from men and women who objected to women's public presence and supposed decline in morality. Expressing autonomy and individuality, the new woman represented the tendency of young women at the turn of the century to reject their mothers' ways in favor of new, modern choices" ([click here](#)).

**West:** For many nineteenth- and twentieth-century Americans, and for historians and critics until recently, the "American West symbolized movement. There were several successive Wests." The "true symbolic meaning of the West" was "not its absorption of civilization but its atmosphere of adventurous openness." In other words, the West "had an abstract function for nineteenth-century literature," and the Western mood was "robust" (Cunliffe 16-20) in a land of opportunity, with ever-expanding borders. Recent "New West" historians and literary critics, however, see the West very differently, decrying idealized frontiers, focusing upon the encounters of diverse peoples, including the marginalized and the oppressed, and examining environmental concerns. See Frederic Jackson Turner, especially, for the earlier frontier thesis; Patricia Nelson Limerick, Clyde A. Milner II, and Charles E. Rankin, eds., *Trails: Toward a New Western History* (Lawrence: U of Kansas, 1991) for an excellent collection on recent Western historiography; and Laurie Kovacovic, "An Annotated Bibliography of the American Frontier Heritage," <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/tbacig/urop/bibtrner.html> for many other resources.

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Ohio State U Dept. of History. 11 August 2002 ([Click Here](#)).

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### Harold Frederic

- Harold Frederic 1856-1898  
<http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/campbell/howells/frederic.htm>
- Classical Authors Directory: Harold Frederic  
<http://authorsdirectory.com>
- Harold Frederic Books Online  
<http://www.selfknowledge.com/155au.htm>
- Project Gutenberg Presents: *The Damnation of Theron Ware* by Harold Frederic  
<http://digital.library.upenn.edu/webbin/gutbook/lookup?num=133>
- Harold Frederic's Review of Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*  
<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/CRANE/reviews/frederic.html>

### Methodism

- Methodism—MSN Encarta Online Encyclopedia 2002  
<http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/refpages/RefArticle.aspx?refid=761573984>
- Kansas Methodism: Some Historical Background  
<http://history.cc.ukans.edu/heritage/um/histbkgrd.htm>
- Kansas Methodism: Methodist History Research Aids  
<http://history.cc.ukans.edu/heritage/um/magnify.htm>
- 200 Years of United Methodism: An Illustrated History  
<http://www.drew.edu/books/200Years/200UM/homepage.htm>
- About the UMC: Our History  
<http://www.umc.org/abouttheumc/history/>
- George Whitefield  
<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/3505/whitefield.html>
- About John Wesley and Methodism  
[http://www.wesley.edu/about\\_wesley/john\\_wesley.html](http://www.wesley.edu/about_wesley/john_wesley.html)
- Methodism—Catholic Encyclopedia  
<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10237b.htm>
- Methodism  
<http://65.107.211.206/victorian/religion/methodist.html>

## **Catholicism**

- **The Jesuits**  
<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14081a.htm>
- **Roman Catholic History**  
<http://users.aol.com/rcchurch/rcchurch.html>
- **Two-Thousand Years of Catholic Writings**  
<http://www-2.cs.cmu.edu/People/spok/catholic/writings.html>
- **Historical Documents, Texts, Archives & Directories**  
[http://home.att.net/~Local\\_Catholic/CatholicHistory-archives.htm](http://home.att.net/~Local_Catholic/CatholicHistory-archives.htm)
- **St. Aurelius Augustine—*On Christian Doctrine***  
[http://www.knuten.liu.se~bjoch509/works/augustine/christian\\_doctrine/ddc0.html](http://www.knuten.liu.se~bjoch509/works/augustine/christian_doctrine/ddc0.html)
- **Pope Leo XIII**  
<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09169a.htm>
- **Pope Pius IX**  
<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12134b.htm>
- **Ernest Renan**  
<http://www.bartleby.com/32/1003.html>
- **Catholicism in Nineteenth-Century America**  
<http://www.wfu.edu/~matthetl/perspectives/seventeen.html>

## **Anti-Catholicism**

- **The American Protective Association**  
<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01426a.htm>
- **Know-Nothing Party**  
<http://gi.grolier.com/presidents/aae/side/knownot.html>
- **I Know Nothing! Anti-Catholicism and the Know-Nothings**  
<http://www.aquinas-multimedia.com/stjoseph/knownothings.html>

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- **\*American Transcendentalism**  
<http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/campbell/enl311/amtrans.htm>
- **\*Romance and Novel**  
<http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/campbell/enl413/novel.htm>
- **\*Realism: 1860-1890**  
<http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/campbell/enl311/realism.htm>

- **\*Naturalism**  
<http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/campbell/enl413/natural.htm>

#### **\*American Literature Sites**

- <http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/campbell/enl311/sites.htm>

#### **\*Brief Timeline of American Literature and Events: Pre-1620 to 1920**

- <http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/campbell/enl311/timefram.html>

#### **\*American Authors**

- <http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/campbell/enl311/aufram.html>

\*Each of these links is part of Professor Donna Campbell's extensive network of web pages, a testament to her valuable contribution to American literary scholarship.

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Robin Taylor Rogers is a graduate student in English at the University of South Florida (USF) in Tampa. She has taught Honors English II, Composition I and II (Computer-Assisted Instruction), and Professional Writing at USF and Hillsborough Community College.

Her areas of interest are early American literature, nineteenth-century American literature, women's literature, Southern literature, and captivity narratives.

Presentations include "The Confidence Woman and Other 'Good Frauds,'" at Northeast Modern Language Association (Hartford, CT, March 30, 2001), and "Have Passport, Will Travel: Exploitation and Commercialization in Travel Narratives," at The Art History Association and the USF Art Department and Graphicstudio's Eighth Annual Interdisciplinary Graduate Symposium (Tampa, FL, March 24, 2000).

She has served as Associate Editor of *Victorian Periodicals Review* since 1999 and was President of the English Graduate Student Association, a member of the Composition I and II Essay Awards Committee, and a member of the English Graduate Committee, from 1999-2000.

Honors and awards include a University Graduate Fellowship (1999-2000) and Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society Graduate Scholarship (1999).

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Auchincloss, Louis. "Harold Frederic." *The Man Behind the Book: Literary Profiles*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996.114-23.

Auchincloss' chapter entitled "Harold Frederic" is a psychological analysis that reflects Frederic's multifarious thinking and the cultural milieu in which he was writing *Seth's Brother's Wife* and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. For example, the portrayal of Father Forbes and the Catholic Church reflects Frederic's views of priests and Catholicism. The "crux" of the novel lies in Theron Ware's recognition of a "turning point in his career," "the sensation of having been invited to become a citizen of [. . . the] world" of intellect, culture, and grace to which Father Forbes, Celia Madden, and Dr. Ledsmar belong (119-20). Sister Soulsby is "a tough, realistic but kindly woman who has been through the toughest mills of life and emerged as a noisy but effective church fund raiser" (120). Celia Madden is little more than a separate banking account, while Levi Gorringer is the voice of the reader in his speech condemning Theron Ware as "a man who's so much meaner than any other man" (121). Auchincloss describes *The Damnation of Theron Ware* as a book, unlike Frederic's other novels, in which the author "addresses himself to the bewilderment and ultimate absurdity of a semi-educated American would-be idealist struggling in the arid culture of a northern New York State small town towards the end of the nineteenth century" (116-17). He concludes that Theron Ware has learned nothing and continues to delude himself with fantasies about using "his gift as a preacher" to become a Senator by the time he is forty (121).

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Becknell, Thomas. "Implication Through Reading *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 24.1 (1991): 63-71.

Becknell's article is a reader-response essay based on an extension of Randall Craig's theory of a "hermeneutical gap" between "intended and model readers" (63). Becknell contends that thematic and hermeneutic gaps exist "between the available authorities (which are discredited), and a valid authority which Theron lacks" and between the authority of the reader and the authority of the author (64). Borrowing a term from Wolfgang Iser's *The Act of Reading*, Becknell argues that the "horizon' against which we view Theron's awakening" is a "vast no-man's-land between authority and personal judgment"; as readers, we want Theron Ware to be more than he is (65-66). This desire is a result of the way we read and our inability to "embrace all perspectives at once"; thus a problem of "authority" confronts our judgment (68). The competing authorities of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden cloud Theron Ware's judgment. When Madden tells Ware, "We find that you are a bore," the "we" she refers to includes the author (again referring to "author-ity") (70). Becknell asserts that we, as readers, forget the authority of the author because we want to see *The Damnation of Theron Ware* as a drama of lost faith and Theron Ware as a victim of temptation. He claims that readers can be misguided because they want to read the novel as a romance when they should be keying in on the signals of realism. Like truth, concludes Becknell, assumptions about authority begin with absolutes and end in relativity.

Bennett, Bridget. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware or Illumination* (1896)." *The Damnation of Harold Frederic: His Lives and Works*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse UP, 1997. 174-97.

Bennett approaches her analysis of Frederic's novel from a biographical and cultural perspective. In Chapter 5, she claims the novel "is an embodiment of its own message—the difference between appearance and reality"—because both Theron Ware and the reader are misled with respect to his "illumination" (174). Bennett hypothesizes that Frederic expresses empathy for his main character, the "badly treated" Reverend Ware, probably because he too felt victimized by life's circumstance (175). According to the *Harold Frederic Papers* in the Library of Congress, the author originally intended to kill off the title character by having him jump off the Brooklyn Bridge (built in 1883); however, Bennett contends that suicide might have made Ware appear to be a decadent hero. Death by alcohol would have been conventional and melodramatic. Thus the unexpected ending Frederic chose for Ware reflects the author's pessimism regarding the Gilded Age and ironically perpetuates the themes of illumination and damnation. Bennett observes, "Theron is less illumined, as he believes, than literally blinded by the people and ideas that he encounters. It is in this debilitated state of hysterical blindness that he seems most like a moth helplessly circling a source of light that he believes to be the catalyst of his illumination, singeing himself every time he gets too close to it, and inevitably foundering into it" (178). This analysis reflects Frederic's disillusionment with the Edenic myth of America and the corruption and falseness of its political and religious leaders—beliefs that are revealed through the characters in the novel. According to Bennett, "Theron's anxiety about how others perceived him, his eagerness to please and naive belief in his own intellectual and social advances captured a painfully familiar aspect of American national character" (186). Bennett notes that similar themes may be found in the writing of Nathaniel Hawthorne and Henry James.

Bramen, Carrie Tirado. "The Americanization of

Theron Ware.” *Novel* 31.3 (1997): 63-86.

Bramen’s analysis of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* situates Frederic’s novel within a cultural and literary context. She notes in her article that for nearly twenty years after its publication, many critics and writers lauded *The Damnation of Theron Ware* as the “great American novel,” while others claimed that it was, in fact, Americanism that Frederic was criticizing. *The Damnation of Theron Ware* “can be read as Frederic’s attempt to prove that he was not just a local colorist [. . .], but a ‘national writer.’” Her essay is an exploration of how Frederic came “to signify a nationalist spirit of inviolate Americanism” with the publication of a novel that is clearly ambivalent in its representation of Theron Ware, an American who is assimilated by Irish Catholics. Bramen focuses on the “contrast between Americanism and alienism [read Protestantism and Catholicism], between the familiar and the unfamiliar” to demonstrate the subversive nature of Frederic’s novel. She offers an extended structural analysis of how Ware crosses cultural boundaries by simply walking in spaces such as roads, sidewalks, and the countryside as support for his reverse assimilation by the Catholics. According to Bramen, relocation to the “West”—a place where one need not worry about “foreignizing influences”—is the author’s remedy for countering Theron Ware’s reverse assimilation. (Note: The above is from WilsonSelect, an electronic database that does not include *Novel’s* page numbers.)

Briggs, Austin, Jr. “*The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *The Novels of Harold Frederic*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1969. 97-139.

Briggs’ Chapter 5, *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, examines the themes of damnation and illumination with respect to the title character. Briggs notes that both Everett Carter and John

Henry Raleigh argue that Ware is “reformed” at novel’s end: Carter writes of a fall “from innocence into knowledge,” and Raleigh perceives a “wiser, if sadder” Ware, who relocates to Seattle (108). According to Briggs, however, Ware is neither damned nor reformed in the course of his tenure in Octavius; in fact, he remains “pretty much the same old person” (113). Ware’s attitude, as reflected in his reminiscences about his former congregation in Tyre, reveals him to be an ambitious social climber and snob who dreams of “ultimate success and distinction” (120). In light of Ware’s attitude, and other revelations regarding his character in the early pages of the novel, “one wonders,” writes Briggs, “how *The Damnation* can ever have been taken to be a novel about the transformation of a good man into a bad man” (117). The influence of Dr. Ledsmar, Father Forbes, and Celia Madden often has been judged as the cause of Ware’s fall; however, Briggs questions such judgments. Instead, he suggests that Ware’s fall is not a single event but rather a series of falls in which each new fall is followed by “a new illumination” (121). The fact that Ware fails to learn anything from his “illuminations,” Briggs concludes, suggests that Frederic viewed Ware as a “comic, rather than tragic” figure who is essentially unchanged at novel’s end (139).

Campbell, Donna M. “Frederic, Norris, and the Fear of Effeminacy.” *Resisting Regionalism: Gender and Naturalism in American Fiction, 1885-1915*. Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 1997. 75-108.

Campbell combines feminist theory and genre criticism to analyze Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. The opening paragraphs of the chapter address the ever widening split between what James Lane Allen describes as the “Masculine” and “Feminine” principles in literature. Campbell argues that, alarmed at the growing “feminine ethic in literature,” naturalists embraced brutish masculinity as an “antidote” to



feminine civilization (75). Campbell identifies “three different courses of thematic development [that] emerged in naturalistic fiction: the triumph of the brute, leading to the degeneration of the individual; the balance of the two opposing forces, leading to the perfect amalgamation of sensibility and ‘red-blooded’ vigor; and an excess of civilization, leading, ironically enough, to a degeneration similar to—and in some cases identical with—that which the emergence of the brute signals” (77). Campbell believes the title character in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* succumbs to this third possibility, becoming “a brute in taste and outlook” (79). Tracing “Frederic’s exploration of realism through his character’s progress from the conventions of sentimental and local color fiction to the harsh realities of naturalism” (80), Campbell notes that, as a minister, Theron Ware is a “hybrid female” (81). Subverting the “opposition between male authority and female community common in local color” fiction, Frederic instead focuses on the similarities between the roles of ministers and women (80-81). Powerless, Ware’s only options, according to the conventions of sentimental fiction, are to capitulate, threaten, or dissemble, and his only defenses are fainting, illness, and weeping—all feminine responses. Ware’s attempt at illumination results in degeneration when he begins “to see himself as a victim of impersonal forces [. . . which lead him] into a self-delusional justification of the naturalistic brute within” (91).

Carrington, Jr., George C. “Harold Frederic’s Clear Farcical Vision: *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literary Realism* 19.3 (1987): 3-26.

Carrington’s genre analysis of Frederic’s novel opens with the claim that “Frederic’s America is farcical; it is a world in which behavior and events are basically determined by the need [. . .] for personal stability and security” (3). Thus, Carrington argues in this article, in Frederic’s



interpretation of Howellsian realism, nearly all the characters in this farcical novel are knaves: “selfish aggressors” who manipulate “obtuse victims,” the fools (9). Theron Ware is unique in that his character is both knave and fool: the “fool-as-knave” tries to be a manipulator, but is hopelessly foolish, and the “knave-as-fool” blunders about seemingly helpless, provokes others to help him, and emerges relatively unharmed, ready to repeat the cycle (3). Although Carrington examines a number of devices standard to farce, he identifies hoaxing and acting as central to the development of the novel. Most of the hoaxing occurs in Ware’s mind: he deceives himself more effectively than he deceives any of the other characters. The external hoaxing takes on the form of acting—characters playing a role for the purpose of “self-maintenance” or personal stability (7). Seeing the arrival of Theron Ware in Octavius as a potential threat to their stability, most of the other characters in the novel take immediate and aggressive action toward Ware in order to maintain their positions. Of these, Sister Soulsby is deemed “the most perfect knave in the book”: she is deceptive, manipulative, and ruthless (18). Carrington concludes that the question of Theron Ware’s illumination or damnation is irrelevant because, in the farcical world of the novel, nothing significant has changed; and, in the end, it is the reader—not the characters—who is illumined through Frederic’s “‘clear human vision’ of comedy” (24).

Carter, Everett. Introduction. *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. By Harold Frederic. 1896. Cambridge: Belknap P of Harvard UP, 1960. vii-xxiv.

Carter’s oft-cited introduction opens with a biographical survey of Frederic’s life before it moves on to a cultural and a moral examination of the trio of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden as “seducers of innocence” (xxi). Carter claims that Theron Ware falls from innocence into

knowledge, “a fall into the religious and scientific knowledge” and “the dark knowledge of the flesh” (xxi). Father Forbes is responsible for Ware’s religious crisis, while Dr. Ledsmar—a Darwinian atheist—introduces Ware to the writings of Renan. According to Carter, Celia Madden’s role in Theron Ware’s damnation is “evil” (x). The critic’s bibliography is a good source for contemporaneous reception of the novel: most of the citations are reviews or articles from the 1890s.

Carter, Everett. “Naturalism and Introspection.” *Howells and the Age of Realism*. Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1966. 239-45.

Carter combines biographical and genre criticism in his chapter that examines Harold Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. According to Carter, Frederic “thought of himself as a realist,” a disciple of William Dean Howells. Howells preached “a fidelity to the life one knew, an immersion in one’s own experience, an unswerving loyalty to the truth and a hatred of the false and sentimental.” Like Howells, Frederic looked to his own life and region for inspiration. Unlike Howells, however, Frederic “found his interest going from the social to the individual, from the inequities in relations between men to the tormenting self-divisions within man, from an analysis of the normal and commonplace to a concern with those hidden recesses of the individual soul where cower lust and fear and primitive ignorance” (240). Frederic observed “a society in turmoil” due to social, economic, and scientific advances, which prompted a “struggle within the individual [. . .] attended by possibilities of evil as well as possibilities of good” (241). Theron Ware’s illumination results in his fall rather than his salvation. Because the characters of Ware, Father Forbes, and Celia Madden, as well as the scenes of New York State life, are “drawn from life,” Carter identifies *The Damnation of Theron Ware* as a work of “realism” (244-45). However, because

Frederic also sought to explore a “psychological rather than a social truth” in his portrayal of Father Forbes, Celia Madden, Dr. Ledsmar, and the Soulsbys, he transforms the characters into archetypes (245).

Coale, Samuel. “Frederic and Hawthorne: The Romantic Roots of Naturalism.” *American Literature* 48.1 (March 1976): 29-45.

Coale’s article is a genre study of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* that examines Frederic’s literary roots—from melodrama to realism, romanticism to naturalism—with particular emphasis on Nathaniel Hawthorne as one of Frederic’s “literary parent[s]” (29). Coale notes that many critics have viewed Frederic’s best-seller as simply “another example of emerging American naturalism” (29), a genre that shared much in common with William Dean Howells’ realism, “although the overriding tone is determinedly pessimistic, not obdurately optimistic.” He asserts, however, that “[i]n turning from the abundant details of character in society to concentrate upon one soul or two and in bending their visions inward, [. . . Frederic] approached the psychological and allegorical territory that had appeared in Hawthorne’s fiction” (30). Coale offers several examples to support his claim: Theron Ware’s resemblance to Young Goodman Brown, another “American innocent”; the similarities between *Damnation’s* opening paragraphs and the forest scenes of Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter*; and the use of light and dark imagery. Even the character of Sister Soulsby seems to fit the “Hawthornian mold” in her correspondence to Westervelt in *The Blithedale Romance*—clearly “a representative of the modern manipulative world, not to be trusted, however practical and useful her tools of the trade” (41). In fact, Coale claims, Sister Soulsby may be “the Devil of the piece.” He concludes that Frederic does not succeed in fusing romantic and naturalistic elements in this novel: the “romantic or Hawthornesque touches can only

be self-justifications on Theron's part for his actions, as his comments on determinism must be, and we cannot take them seriously" (43).

Coale, Samuel Chase. "Harold Frederic: Naturalism as Romantic Snarl." *In Hawthorne's Shadow: American Romance from Melville to Mailer*. Lexington, KY: UP of Kentucky, 1985. 46-62.

Coale's chapter on Harold Frederic is a reworking of his earlier article entitled "Frederic and Hawthorne: The Romantic Roots of Naturalism," published in *American Literature* 48.1 (March 1976): 29-45.

Crisler, Jesse S. "Harold Frederic." *American Literary Realism* 8 (1975): 250-55.

Crisler's article is a bibliographical review of twelve dissertations on Harold Frederic and his writing. Charles C. Walcutt's "Naturalism in the American Novel" (U of Michigan, 1938), the first dissertation to address Frederic's novels, "views Frederic in connection with other 'naturalistic' writers" and, according to Crisler, is "valuable only as a prologue to later dissertations." Paul Haines' "Harold Frederic" (New York U, 1945) is the first dissertation to treat Frederic solely, "sets a worthy precedent in terms of research, content, technique, and presentation," and is the only record for some of Frederic's manuscripts that are apparently no longer extant (250). Marvin O. Mitchell's "A Study of Romantic Elements in the Fiction of Edgar Watson Howe, Joseph Kirkland, Hamlin Garland, Harold Frederic, and Frank Norris" (U of North Carolina, 1953) argues that Frederic's novels "mix romantic elements with realistic ones" (251). Robert H. Woodward's "Harold Frederic: A Study of His Novels, Short Stories, and Plays" (U of Indiana, 1957) employs extensive use of the Harold Frederic Papers, housed in the Library of Congress,

in a critical analysis of Frederic's works. Thomas F. O'Donnell's "The Regional Fiction of Upstate New York" (Syracuse U, 1957) addresses in one chapter Frederic's works set in the U.S.. Charles B. Hands' "Harold Frederic: A Critical Study of the American Works" (U of Notre Dame, 1959) draws upon earlier studies of Frederic in the "first completely critical treatment of the novelist" (252). Crisler dismisses Ralph R. Rogers' "Harold Frederic: His Development as a Comic Realist" (Columbia U, 1961) because Rogers concludes that Frederic was a comic realist and appears to overlook Frederic's use of irony that "more often than not transforms apparent comedy into gripping tragedy." William J. Holmes' "A Study of the Novels of Harold Frederic" (U of Iowa, 1962) supports the argument that Frederic was a realist; Crisler ranks Holmes' study with Haines' as "one of the best in its field." Austin E. Briggs' "The Novels of Harold Frederic" (Columbia U, 1963) approaches Frederic's novels "from a 'comic' standpoint in which realism and romance are always combined." According to Crisler, Stanton B. Garner's "Harold Frederic: The Major Works" (Brown U, 1963) is "of extreme importance to Frederic criticism" (253) and "indispensable to evaluations of Frederic and his work" (254). Fred G. See's "Metaphoric and Metonymic Imagery in Nineteenth Century American Fiction: Harriet Beecher Stowe, Rebecca Harding Davis, and Harold Frederic" (U of California, Berkeley, 1967) examines Frederic's novels within the framework of a late-nineteenth-century movement from romantic to realistic imagery. Crisler finds little value in Nancy Siferd's "Textual Range in the Novels of Harold Frederic" (Bowling Green, 1970), with the exception of the chapters in which she investigates character motivation.

Dalton, Dale C. "MacEvoy's Room." *The Frederic Herald* 3.2 (1969): 5.

Dalton's note examines MacEvoy's room as a

recurring structural device significant to Theron Ware's fall in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. When the Irish-Catholic wheelwright MacEvoy is fatally wounded falling from an elm tree he was ordered to trim on the Madden's property, he is carried to his house in the outskirts of town. Theron Ware follows the bearers to MacEvoy's house, the first house Ware visits upon moving to Octavius. MacEvoy's room, described as "dark and ill-smelling," might also be called "Theron's chamber of death," observes Dalton, "for it holds other agents of Theron's approaching 'damnation,'" specifically Celia Madden and Father Forbes. In Chapter 10, when Ware has just returned from a visit to Forbes' house, he finds his own house "bare and squalid" and the fumes from the kerosene lamp "offensive to his nostrils." Lying in his room later that night, Ware can hear Madden playing her piano and recalls his first image her in MacEvoy's room. In Chapter 15, MacEvoy's room is again recalled: Ware rejects the Methodist Love-Feast as a "low" ceremony, held in the basement of the church; yet only three months earlier, he was mesmerized by the religious rites performed by Forbes in MacEvoy's room. "MacEvoy's fall is prophetic of Theron's moral decline and spiritual death," argues Dalton, and "MacEvoy's room is [. . .] the structural device with which Frederic portrays Theron's first acceptance of the new and rejection of the old" (5).

Davies, Horton. "Harold Frederic." *A Mirror of the Ministry in Modern Novels*. New York: Oxford UP, 1959. 71-78.

Davies' chapter entitled "Harold Frederic," although largely a summary of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, is also a character study and a cultural critique of religion and science, examining particularly the "conflict between the old faith and the new knowledge." Comparing Frederic's novel to Mrs. Humphrey Ward's *Robert Elsmere*, Davies states that Theron Ware's "lapse," unlike Robert



Elsmere's, "was moral not theological" (71). Further, "Frederic's novel gives a much more sympathetic account of the older generation in religion" than is found in the novels of his contemporaries Mrs. Humphrey Ward and William Hale White; it also presents a "sophisticated treatment of the role of the Catholic enclave in a predominantly Protestant America" (72). Davies' reading of the "genuine Soulsbys" (78) is quite favorable: "The Soulsbys prove in the end [. . .] to be the best friends of Ware and his wife" (76). Davies concludes, "This novel, then, is not so much a study of the agonizing problem of correlating traditional faith with the new scientific and historical knowledge; it is chiefly a study of the disintegration of a minister through succumbing to vanity, in the form of intellectual ambition" (78).

Donaldson, Scott. Introduction. *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. By Harold Frederic. 1896. New York: Penguin, 1986. vii-xxx.

Donaldson's introduction to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* combines biographical and genre criticism with a brief character study. Part I is a biography of Harold Frederic: journalist, novelist, bon vivant, and polygamist. Part II opens with Donaldson's acknowledgment that Frederic's literary reputation generally rests upon a single novel, *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, a situation he regrets as unfortunate because *Seth's Brother's Wife* (1890), *In the Valley* (1890), and *The Market-Place* (1899) "represent major achievements" as well (xii). Donaldson states that Frederic's novels "resist pigeonholing as works of realism, naturalism, or romance" and further asserts that *Damnation* "reveals traces of all three approaches" (xvi). Parts III, IV, and V explore the character development of Theron Ware, as well as of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, Celia Madden, and Sister Soulsby. The novel is described as a "subtle study of moral disintegration" (xviii), in which Ware "abandons his faith and seems at the end to have

learned almost nothing from his ordeal” (xix).

Donaldson, Scott. “The Seduction of Theron Ware.” *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 29 (1975): 441-52.

Donaldson’s article is a psychological analysis of the causes of Theron Ware’s downfall. While Donaldson acknowledges that most critics point to the trio of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden as the force behind Ware’s destruction, he asserts “the true villain of the piece” is Sister Soulsby, “who plays Mephistopheles” to Ware’s “Faust” (441-42). Donaldson points to characteristics of Sister Soulsby—her “deceptive appearance, commanding manner, and duplicitous methods of operation”—to support his judgment (442). Sister Soulsby is a master confidence artist who employs performance, flattery, and scripture quoted out-of-context to further her scheming manipulation of both Theron Ware and his congregation. After Sister Soulsby absolves Ware of any guilt for his participation in her scheme to cheat Levi Gorringer at the trustees’ meeting, he embraces her philosophy of pragmatism and vows to emulate her example; however, Donaldson concludes, “Theron Ware simply is not cut out for the role of deceiver” (451).

Dooley, Patrick K. “Fakes and Good Frauds: Pragmatic Religion in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literary Realism* 15.1 (1982): 74-85.

Dooley approaches his analysis of Frederic’s novel from a cultural and philosophical perspective. In this article, he defines pragmatism as “a technical and sophisticated epistemological position designed to settle the perennial questions of the nature and meaning of Truth” (74). For William James, the “truth of religion and religious belief is its beneficial consequences and valuable effects”

(75). Dooley contends that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* “is a remarkable cultural document and an illuminating philosophical critique,” in which the author illustrates the nature of the difficulties of James’ “tender-minded” pragmatism and “the effects, beneficial and otherwise, of believing a lie” (74-76). According to Dooley, “Frederic stresses two facts: religious experiences are manufactured, and second, one does not have to be pious to produce religious experiences” (79). In fact, none of the central religious characters in this novel—Theron Ware, Father Forbes, and the Soulsbys—really believes in God, and all are, or aspire to be, “good frauds” (81). The essay traces the events leading to and following Ware’s counter-conversion. Dooley examines Father Forbes’ and Sister Soulsby’s pragmatic claims that truth is always relative. This perspective is illustrated in Father Forbes’ attitude toward the Catholic church and its secular function and in Sister Soulsby’s revelation about performance. Dooley concludes that Frederic does not resolve the question of whether or not a pragmatic account of religion—believing a lie if its effects are beneficial—is a satisfactory philosophy. Frederic leaves that for the reader to decide.

Eggers, Paul. “By Whose Authority? Point of View in the First Chapter of Harold Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *Style* 31.1 (1997): 81-95.

Eggers’ article combines reader-response and structural criticism in an examination of Chapter 1 of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. Eggers argues that other critics who have examined authority in this novel (Oehlschlaeger and Becknell) have begun in Chapter 2, where the narrative focus and main characters are established. He contends, however, “that the first chapter both initiates and encapsulates the novel’s exploration of authority through a perplexing usage of shifting points of view.” Identification of these shifting points of view

alternates between clarity and ambiguity, not only implicating readers in “unauthoritative’ readings” of the text but also focusing on the “book’s concern with authority.” The opening three paragraphs are traditional omniscient narration, but one word in the third paragraph, “nay,” suggests an “internal debate” that should give careful readers pause. The narrator changes for paragraphs four through six to an unnamed “observer.” The point of view appears to shift again in paragraphs ten and eleven to the “venerable Fathers” of the Methodist clergy. Their “sincerity” is called into question if the judgments rendered are not the implied author’s (as reported by the omniscient narrator). Point of view clearly shifts back to the omniscient narrator in paragraphs twelve through fifteen, influencing the reader’s perceptions of Theron and Alice Ware in later paragraphs in contrast to the proud Tecumseh congregation. Eggers’ analysis continues along this line, scrutinizing each paragraph in turn. When Ware is finally introduced to the reader, it is through the “objective” tone of a limited-omniscient narrator who has just replaced the “vitriolic tone of the parishioner-controlled narrative.” Since the reader is predisposed to be sympathetic toward the seemingly stoic and pious Reverend Ware, this impression influences the reader well into the book. As Eggers demonstrates, “both text and reader are rendered ‘unauthoritative’ through the agency of point of view.” (Note: The above is from WilsonSelect, an electronic database that does not include *Style’s* page numbers.)

Fortenberry, George, Charlyne Dodge, Stanton Garner, and Robert H. Woodward, eds. *The Correspondence of Harold Frederic*. Fort Worth, TX: Texas Christian UP, 1977.

Fortenberry, Dodge, Garner, and Woodward’s bibliography contains a complete file of letters to and from Harold Frederic, organized by date. In addition to the texts of the letters, the editors

provide biographies of some of the correspondents, samples of letterhead used by Frederic, a list of “Known and Inferred Private Correspondence, Not Located,” and an index. The editors discovered five letters after this book had been published; the letters are listed in Noel Polk, *The Literary Manuscripts of Harold Frederic: A Catalogue* (New York: Garland, 1979) 104-07.

Garner, Stanton. “*The Damnation of Theron Ware, or Illumination: The Title of Harold Frederic’s Novel.*” *Proof: The Yearbook of American Bibliographical and Textual Studies*. Ed. Joseph Katz. Vol. 5. New York: J. Faust, 1979. 57-66.

Garner’s chapter is a textual analysis that focuses upon the title of Harold Frederic’s “finest novel” (57), published simultaneously as *The Damnation of Theron Ware* in the United States and as *Illumination* in England. Garner examines “the possibility that one title should have priority over the other” and produces evidence for both arguments: either the different titles were intentional, meant “to attract the two distinct bodies of readers to whom the novel was offered for sale,” or the *Damnation* title was unintended, printed in error (58). Evidence supporting the former argument includes the fact that (1) Frederic, in correspondence, referred to the novel as “*The Damnation of Theron Ware*” nearly two years before its publication in the U.S., (2) he did not change the *Damnation* title on the publisher’s proofs, and (3) the two different titles appear on the title pages of the U.S. and English original editions. However, evidence supporting the argument that the *Damnation* title was appended in error includes (1) literary gossip appearing in the London *Daily Chronicle*, *The New York Times*, *The Critic*, and *The Review of Reviews* as little as two months after the novel’s publication, (2) the addition of the English title as a subtitle to later American editions, (3) Frederic’s habit of making

changes to his compositions up to the last possible moment, and (4) his documented difficulty in selecting titles for his works. Garner judges the evidence to be in favor of *Illumination* as Frederic's preferred choice of title: "A return to *Illumination* would in all probability rectify an error which has for nearly eight decades misrepresented Frederic's final intention" (65).

Garner, Stanton. "The Other Harold Frederic." *Upstate Literature: Essays in Memory of Thomas F. O'Donnell*. Ed. Frank Bergmann. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse UP, 1985. 129-41.

Garner's chapter is a biographical sketch of Frederic that acknowledges his achievements as an editor and a journalist, but concentrates upon Frederic's literary contributions as a writer of fiction. Joseph Conrad characterized Frederic as "a notable journalist (who had written some novels)." Garner contends that Conrad's comment is an example of how Frederic's fiction has been, and continues to be, misunderstood and underappreciated (130). In Garner's opinion, Frederic is a "fine stylist" who, "in the ease and fluency of his language [. . .], belongs in the camp of Mark Twain" (133). Garner examines genre in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, *Gloria Mundi*, and *The Market-Place* to show Frederic's growth as an author. Frederic's early works set in upstate New York establish him as a regionalist; however, most of Frederic's later works are set abroad and are a "fusion of types," borrowing elements of regionalism, realism, and romance (135). For example, elements of realism and romance flavor *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, one of Frederic's later novels (although set in New York), with provocative social and moral issues. The setting of *Gloria Mundi* and *The Market-Place*, Frederic's last two novels, moves beyond the Mohawk Valley to "the ancient European cradle out of which [. . . Frederic's regional American] culture had risen" and on to "the future of the West and of mankind"



in the character of Joel Thorpe. Garner concludes “that in addition to the regionalist we know there was another Harold Frederic whose vision grew much broader” (140).

Genthe, Charles V. “*The Damnation of Theron Ware and Elmer Gantry.*” *Research Studies* 32 (1964): 334-43.

Genthe’s article is a structural analysis of Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896) and Sinclair Lewis’ *Elmer Gantry* (1927) that considers “striking similarities” in “certain characters, materials, and techniques” (334), suggesting that Lewis must have known Frederic’s novel. Celia Madden and Sharon Falconer, although “vastly different in background and occupation,” “epitomize beauty and savoir faire to Ware and Gantry, and the bower seduction scenes are markedly similar” (335). Ministers Theron Ware and Frank Shallard, a minor character in *Elmer Gantry*, share similar “background[s],” “environments,” and “influences,” specifically “Darwinism, the Higher Criticism, and the social gospel” (337). Genthe notes that the publication of Darwin’s *Origin of Species* (1859) and *Descent of Man* (1871) “constituted a separation point between an old order of thought and a new” (338). Higher Criticism, in the minds of some clergymen, threatened to do away with God; and the social gospel, “a movement within the churches to help the common person in his struggle for a material existence,” “helped to level the old barriers between the secular and sacred” (339). For Theron Ware, these influences are embodied in the characters of Dr. Ledsmar, Father Forbes, and Celia Madden. For Frank Shallard, they are all combined in the single character of Dr. Bruno Zechlin, Professor of Hebrew at Mizpah Baptist Seminary. “[I]t is a tribute to American realism that Lewis and Frederic created these two characters and their plot situations with such verisimilitude,” writes Genthe. The similarity could be attributed to “the fact that

both authors saw the same basic forces in American religious patterns,” or Lewis may have used Frederic’s novel for source material (343). Genthe opts for the second possibility, that Lewis borrowed from Frederic.

Graham, Don. “‘A Degenerate Methodist’: A New Review of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literary Realism* 9 (1976): 280-84.

Graham’s bibliographical article identifies and reprints an 1896 book review of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* previously unlisted in Frederic bibliographies. The unidentified reviewer labels the book “an important novel” (281) and proceeds to summarize the plot, concluding that “we suspect the probabilities of such unconscious degeneration; it seems impossible that the conditions postulated should precipitate so involuntary a downfall. It seems so useless the game these various characters play against the unfortunate minister; his disillusion is so gratuitous, so merciless” (284).

“Harold Frederic (1856-1898): A Critical Bibliography of Secondary Comment.” *American Literary Realism* 2 (1968): 1-70.

The editors of *American Literary Realism*, under the leadership of Clayton L. Eichelberger, along with twenty-four other contributors, compiled the first annotated bibliography of secondary criticism on Harold Frederic and his work. Sources for the bibliography include books, dissertations, and periodical articles; newspaper articles are specifically omitted. This bibliography provided the foundation upon which later bibliographies were compiled (see Thomas F. O’Donnell, Stanton Garner, and Robert H. Woodward’s *A Bibliography of Writings By and About Harold Frederic*, 1975).

Heddendorf, David. "Pragmatists and Plots: *Pierre* and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Studies in the Novel* 22.3 (1990): 271-81.

Heddendorf's article is a psychological study of Pierre Glendinning, in Herman Melville's *Pierre*, and Theron Ware, in Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, that focuses on the downfall of the two protagonists. According to Heddendorf, Glendinning and Ware seem incapable of comprehending the "prescription for practical results" recommended by their advisors, Plinlimmon and Sister Soulsby. The "rightness or wrongness" of the pragmatic figures of Plinlimmon and Sister Soulsby is not at issue, argues Heddendorf; rather "the relationship between philosophy and narrative is the point of these encounters [. . .] and the simple fact that neither Pierre nor Theron understands what his would-be counselor is talking about" (272). For Pierre Glendinning, it is a pamphlet by Plinlimmon that describes the "irrelevance of an absolute time standard to the requirement of everyday life" that he cannot understand because he is "repressing an understanding of his present extreme circumstances" (273). As readers, Heddendorf asserts, we can see that the pamphlet holds the pragmatic solution to Glendinning's problems. For Theron Ware, Sister Soulsby's declaration that she and her husband are "good frauds" is misleading; Ware assumes that he too is to be a "good fraud." Unfortunately for Ware, he is not a very good fraud and manages to alienate family, friends, and community because he fails to understand Sister Soulsby's advice. Heddendorf concludes, "In *Pierre* and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, the narratives of belief, abandonment and new belief lead less happily to a view of human beings as not licensed but condemned to believe" (280).

Hirsh, John C. "The Frederic Papers, The McGlynn Affair, and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 17.1 (1984): 12-23.

Hirsh combines textual and biographical approaches in his examination of the Frederic Papers, preserved in the Library of Congress, “to help illuminate some of the more important structural and thematic concerns of the novel, particularly those affecting Fr. Forbes and the Catholics” (12). In his article, Hirsh produces excerpts from the author’s early notes that indicate some of the relationships that Frederic intended to develop, among them Theron Ware, Father Forbes, and Dr. Ledsmar; Celia Madden and Father Forbes; Father Forbes and his Bishop. Hirsh cites Paul Haines’ 1945 unpublished dissertation that identifies Father Edward Terry, a priest whom Frederic knew in Utica, as a possible source for the development of Father Forbes. However, Hirsh suggests that a more influential source may have been Father Edward McGlynn, an Irish-Catholic priest in New York who made newspaper headlines in the 1880s for his political activism and American ideal of Catholicism (he was excommunicated in 1887 and reconciled with the church in 1893). The character of Father Forbes, as it emerged in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, is forceful, powerful, and sophisticated. Elements of the role that were in Frederic’s working notes but eliminated from the novel include public condemnation of the priest for a scandalous relationship with Celia Madden and serious political activism.

Howells, William Dean. “My Favorite Novelist and His Best Book.” *W. D. Howells as Critic*. Ed. Edwin H. Cady. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973. 268-80.

Howells’ review of Frederic’s novel was published in *Munsey’s* in April 1897. Howells names *The Damnation of Theron Ware* one of his favorite books. His comment on Frederic’s novel is often quoted by critics: “I was particularly interested in the book, for when you get to the end, although you

have carried a hazy notion in your mind of the sort of man Ware was, you fully realize, for the first time, that the author has never for a moment represented him anywhere to you as a good or honest man, or as anything but a very selfish man” (278).

Jefferson, Margo. “Seven Unsung Novels Crying to be Filmed.” *New York Times* 18 Jan. 1998, late ed., sec. 2: 1+.

Jefferson’s feature article focuses on “seven unsung novels crying to be filmed” (1). While noting Hollywood’s recent fascination with making movies from the novels of Henry James, Jane Austin, all three Brontës, and Edith Wharton, Jefferson laments Hollywood’s oversight in not filming such novels as William Dean Howells’ *A Modern Instance* (1882), Charles W. Chesnutt’s *The House Behind the Cedars* (1900) and *The Marrow of Tradition* (1901), David Graham Phillips’ *Susan Lenox: Her Fall and Rise* (1917), Abraham Cahan’s *The Rise of David Levinsky* (1917), Anzia Yezierska’s *Salome of the Tenements* (1923), and Harold Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896).

Johnson, George W. “Harold Frederic’s Young Goodman Ware: The Ambiguities of a Realistic Romance.” *Modern Fiction Studies* 8 (1963): 361-74.

Johnson’s article combines structural and genre criticism to explore the “sinning minister” in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s works as an influence on Frederic’s minister, “brought up to date and given topicality in the ‘turbulent’ milieu of the 1890’s” (362). Although sensitive to Sister Soulsby’s duplicity, Johnson regards her influence as comparable to that of Celia Madden. Johnson writes, Sister Soulsby “patches together Theron’s splintered ego by giving him a role to play.

Henceforth, she counsels, he is to be a conscious fraud, an actor superior to his audience.” Her seduction of Theron Ware takes a different tack from Celia Madden’s, “[b]ut Sister Soulsby has in a way seduced him” by appealing to his pride and fueling his ego. Ware emerges from the forest scene with Madden, “like another Dimmesdale,” unable to reconcile the “radical contradictions” that plague his mind (365). Johnson observes that Frederic’s novel is, on the one hand, “a realistic rendering of societal relationships” and, on the other, “a romancer’s poetic rendering, complete with archetypal trees, gardens, and snakes, of a representative figure” (367). In the character of Theron Ware, Frederic has created a “seeker who combines the temperament of both a romancer and a realist”; however, Johnson concludes that the novel “remains a literary near-miss” because “Theron Ware is an average man who remains throughout the book merely a boy” (372). A novel “[a]t the last more complicated than complex,” Johnson asserts that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is “a flawed monument to an endeavor audacious, artful, and American” (374).

Jolliff, William. “The Damnation of Bryan Dalrymple—and Theron Ware: F. Scott Fitzgerald’s Debt to Harold Frederic.” *Studies in Short Fiction* 35.1 (1998): 85-90.

Jolliff combines thematic criticism and character analysis in his note arguing that F. Scott Fitzgerald was influenced by Harold Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware* when he wrote “Dalrymple Goes Wrong.” Jolliff establishes that Fitzgerald knew and admired Frederic’s novel. He states that “Bryan Dalrymple’s story shares many similarities with Theron Ware’s both in theme and detail” and suggests that Dalrymple was the prototype of Jay Gatsby (87). “[T]ypically adamic,” both Ware and Dalrymple initially believe that hard work will lead to success, discover that



“‘common sense’ is a code word that sometimes stands for the sacrifice of moral conviction,” and eventually surrender their “traditional ideas of good and evil” in favor of the common sense that will help them to obtain their worldly desires (87-88). As Ware and Dalrymple abandon their moral codes, each finds that he has become better at his “legitimate work” (88). In addition, both rely upon their rhetorical skills as the key to their future success in politics. Noting that Dalrymple’s “amoral mentor” and boss is named “*Theron G. Macy*” (89), Jolliff concludes, Ware and Dalrymple “present us with examples of what sometimes happens when the American Adam comes of age: a thorough disillusionment resulting not in self-knowledge but in moral degeneracy. [. . .] For if Fitzgerald was the voice of a generation, surely Harold Frederic had prophesied its coming” (89-90).

Jolliff, William. “Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *The Explicator* 47.2 (1989): 37-38.

Jolliff’s textual approach to Frederic’s novel reveals that one of the working titles for *The Damnation of Theron Ware* was “Snarl,” a term popularly interpreted as suggesting the tangled relationships of the novel’s characters. Jolliff offers another explanation. In his note, he suggests the title “would direct the reader to consider the beast within Theron Ware” and points to the “abundance of animal imagery” in the novel. Dr. Ledsmar renames one of his lizard specimens “the Rev. Theron Ware,” and “Theron’s name derives from a Greek word meaning ‘wild beast.’” At his lowest point, Theron Ware bemoans to Sister Soulsby, “[I]sn’t there any God at all—but only men who live and die like animals?” (37). Ware likens himself to a “mongrel cur,” one that Sister Soulsby threatens with a “good cuffing” if he does not shape up (38). Jolliff concludes that such an interpretation of the working title “Snarl” must certainly have been deliberate on the part of the author.

Kane, Patricia. "Lest Darkness Come Upon You: An Interpretation of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Iowa English Bulletin* 10 (1965): 55-59.

Kane's article is a Biblical study of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* that focuses on Frederic's use of symbols and images to trace Theron Ware's fall from the light of innocence into the "darkness of damnation" (55). Theron and Alice Ware's garden initially evokes not only "the lost agrarian America," but also "the sterility of life in a small town, which is relieved only by faith in God." Later, the garden becomes a spiritual symbol associated with Alice Ware, and Theron Ware's attitudes toward his wife and her garden chart his descent. The image of a garden is also used to describe Theron Ware's supposed illumination: at one point he vows to "bend all his energies to cultivating his mind till it should blossom like a garden" (56). Yet in the Maddens' hothouse garden, Michael Madden tells Ware that his face now resembles that of a bar-keeper, not a saint, and asks him to leave. This scene recalls the Archangel Michael's expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. Jesus warns in John 12:35, "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth" (57). Kane also notes Reverend Ware's ironic use of "Christian language and symbolism of salvation to describe his damnation": after his evening at Celia Madden's house, Ware is "a new being" (John 3: 3) and a "child of light" (John 12: 36) (56-57). Ware believes himself to be reborn in lightness; but as Kane observes, he is confused and mistaken in his illumination—he is "becoming a child of darkness" (57). The light imagery turns evil when Ware is rebuffed by Celia Madden: "The horrible notion of killing her spread over the chaos of his mind with the effect of unearthly light,—red and abnormally evil" (59). Although Kane concedes that "the Biblical allusions here are not insistent," she maintains that "they hover with enough tenacity to

become part of a pattern in a story about a fall from innocence” (56).

Kantor, J. R. K. “*The Damnation of Theron Ware and John Ward, Preacher.*” *The Serif* 3.1 (1996): 16-21.

Kantor’s article is an analysis of the character development and structure of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896) and Margaret Deland’s *John Ward, Preacher* (1888). The similarities in the treatment of religious doctrine in the two stories, according to Kantor, support the thesis that Frederic was familiar with Deland’s novel. First, Kantor notes that critics have argued Frederic was familiar with Mrs. Humphrey Ward’s *Robert Elsmere*, a novel published the same year as *John Ward, Preacher*, and often reviewed with it because of their similarities. Second, attitudes toward religion are central to character development in both Frederic’s and Deland’s novels. The pragmatic attitudes of Sister Soulsby and of Gifford Woodhouse complement one another, and in the end, both characters are a source of consolation and hope. Kantor also notes similarities between the meetings of the ministers and the trustees in both novels. The trustees are in control, and both groups have one dissenter among them: Levi Gorringer opposes the high interest rate charged by the other trustees, and Elder Johnson defends Helen Ward against the judgment of the others. In both novels, church officials are opposed to all things Catholic. Finally, the names of the two ministers—Ware and Ward—cannot be ignored.

Klopfenstein, Glenn D. “‘The Flying Dutchman of American Literature’: Harold Frederic and the American Canon, a Centenary Overview.” *American Literary Realism* 30.1 (1997): 34-46.

Klopfenstein’s bibliographical article opens with a

brief review of the state of Frederic scholarship since the 1950s. His reference to “the Flying Dutchman” is borrowed from Austin Briggs: “Harold Frederic, unless the interest of the 1960’s abides, seems doomed to play the Flying Dutchman of American literature. Over the decades he has been enthusiastically sighted again and again, only to disappear into the fogs of obscurity” (35). According to Klopfenstein, the exclusion of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* from the American canon can be attributed to “changing critical (aesthetic) standards and political (institutional) forces” (36); it has been exacerbated by Vernon Louis Parrington’s negative criticism of the novel in *Main Currents in American Thought* (1927). Klopfenstein further speculates that the novel and its author may have been marginalized prior to the work’s brief revival in the 1960s because Frederic, an expatriate living in England, was not American enough and his effeminate antihero was not masculine enough to appeal to critics. While lamenting that Frederic has been pigeonholed as a regionalist, a realist, and a naturalist, and that his novel has become “fodder for the reductions of literary theorists and specialists,” Klopfenstein praises Stanton Garner’s theory that Frederic’s “true descent” was from Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville and holds out hope that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* may yet be resurrected in the coming years by a new generation of Frederic enthusiasts (43).

Krause, Sydney J. “Harold Frederic and the Failure Motif.” *Studies in American Fiction* 15.1 (1987): 55-69.

Krause’s cultural and psychological approach to Frederic’s novel juxtaposes the American myth of success with American novelists’ fascination with failure. Published during the period when “Horatio Alger stories were still at the ‘zenith of their fame’” (57), Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware* “represents that counter-phenomenon in the

American tradition wherein knowledge not only fails to set someone free, it actually enslaves him to a false notion of the freed Self” (56). A key element in Theron Ware’s failure, according to Krause’s article, is “his inability to accept a negative image of himself for wrongs done” (59). Sympathetic to Ware’s motives for wanting “to cultivat[e] his mind till it should blossom like a garden,” Krause acknowledges “Frederic’s strategy of ambiguity,” wherein Ware’s desire for “personal enrichment” is hindered by his complete lack of self knowledge (61). Krause argues that Celia Madden’s musical seduction of Ware “becomes such a blatantly erotic performance as to constitute a rape of his senses” (62). For those “characters who fall socially and thereafter rehabilitate themselves, [. . . Frederic] provides moral redemption” or, if necessary, a graceful death. However, those characters “who fall morally and fail to acknowledge it,” such as Ware, must live with their ignominy (63). Krause concludes that Theron Ware’s “failure is fundamental and national; it is his persisting in the American illusion that there is no final failure, that success only awaits a new beginning elsewhere” (64).

Lackey, Lionel. “Redemption and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *South Atlantic Review* 55 (1990): 81-91.

Lackey’s biographical and psychological study examines Frederic’s portrayal, and possible redemption, of Theron Ware. Lackey’s article is a sympathetic reading of Ware influenced by his opinion that Frederic never achieved total honesty in his own life; thus “the author neither expected nor achieved total honesty in his characters” (81). Frederic’s practices regarding money, friendships, and extra-marital relationships, for example, are reflected in Ware’s desire for financial freedom, cultured friends, and a liaison with Celia Madden. Because Ware lacks “the financial access to culturally enlightened circles that would have

afforded him the expertise and discretion to enter into moral ambiguities gracefully and knowingly—on Forbes' and Celia's own level," they judge him a bore (85). Sister Soulsby consoles Theron Ware after his rejection by Celia Madden and Father Forbes. Some critics see this consolation as "a prelude to renewed vanity, delusion, and failure" (86), but Lackey prefers to believe "there is ground for hope that Theron may after all have learned something valuable from his mistakes [. . .]. Having lost his life, Theron may yet save it" (87). Lackey speculates that Frederic may have intended the ending to be ambiguous in order to pave the way for another book, perhaps "The Redemption of Theron Ware." In any case, Lackey chooses "to place the best construction on the various ambivalences Frederic positions in the concluding chapters" (88).

LeClair, Thomas. "The Ascendant Eye: A Reading of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Studies in American Fiction* 3 (1975): 95-102.

LeClair's psychological analysis of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* explores "the complex relationship between being seen and seeing, between the person as object of perception and the person as perceiver of self and others" (95). In his article, LeClair asserts that Theron Ware's visibility as a small-town minister invites other characters to form superficial perceptions about his character, perceptions that ultimately contribute to Ware's "loss of self" (96). Levi Gorringer, Celia Madden, and Sister Soulsby are each wrong in their initial impressions of "Theron's superiority and potential for transformation" (97), but Theron Ware willingly embraces their characterizations, preferring the illusion of being seen to the reality of seeing. LeClair extends his argument to include the "recurring imagery of eyes and sight" and of "light, darkness, and elevation" (96). He concludes that "Theron abandons whatever was genuine in him, accepts the identity others provide, and eventually



becomes a synthetic person, the makeshift creation of Sister Soulsby, [. . .who] advocates picking an illusion, knowing that it is an illusion, and then using it to survive in a time of confusion” (101-02).

Luedtke, Luther S. “Harold Frederic’s Satanic Sister Soulsby: Interpretation and Sources.” *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 30.1 (1975): 82-104.

Luedtke’s thematic, especially moral, approach to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* identifies Sister Soulsby as “the agent of a *damnation* that has moral as well as social reality” (82; emphasis Luedtke’s). Luedtke writes in his article, “Frederic intends Sister Soulsby, the materialist, to function as a Mephistophelean tempter of Theron’s soul and a minion of spiritual darkness” (84). Tracing the four parts of the novel, Luedtke states that it is not Theron Ware’s introduction to his new church or town, Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, or Celia Madden in Part I that sets him on the path to damnation, but rather it is his interaction with the Soulsbys in Part II that plants the seeds of his destruction. Sister Soulsby’s remarks about Alice Ware cause Theron Ware first to re-evaluate his marriage and, later, to suspect his wife of infidelity. Her lecture to Ware on the art and uses of performance prompt him to brag about his new perspective to Dr. Ledsmar and Celia Madden, alienating them in the process. Luedtke recites the Soulsbys’ long history of questionable employment and concludes that they are confidence artists for whom religion is “only the latest con game” (92). Ware believes Sister Soulsby when she tells him that she and Soulsby had “both soured on living by fakes” and are now “good frauds” (93). Luedtke notes Frederic’s debt to Nathaniel Hawthorne in the character of Westervelt (*The Blithedale Romance*), who, like Sister Soulsby, has false teeth and is “stamped with [. . . the] totems of the serpent and the evil eye” (94). Although Luedtke contends that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* offers ample

evidence of Frederic's "judgments on Sister Soulsby" (98), he concludes his essay by offering two British models for the character of Sister Soulsby: Lucy Helen Muriel Soulsby (1856-1927) and Charles Dickens' fictional Mrs. Jellyby (*Bleak House*).

MacFarlane, Lisa. "Resurrecting Man: Desire and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *A Mighty Baptism: Race, Gender, and the Creation of American Protestantism*. Ed. Susan Juster and Lisa MacFarlane. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1996. 65-80.

MacFarlane's chapter is reprinted, with minor changes, from an article published in *Studies in American Fiction* 20.2 (1992): 127-43.

MacFarlane, Lisa Watt. "Resurrecting Man: Desire and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Studies in American Fiction* 20.2 (1992): 127-43.

MacFarlane's article is a feminist study of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* that examines the social and cultural roles of ministers, who are viewed as possessing both masculine and feminine characteristics. Ministers are often referred to as "feminized," "neutral," or "hybrid" because they represent "the patriarchal authority of God the Father" while their cultural work "aligns them socially with women" (128-29). The ambiguity of the minister's "social constructions of gender," according to MacFarlane, gives him power over both men and women (129). In *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, "a series of gender-confusing triangles"—particularly the Theron Ware-Alice Ware-Levi Gorringer and Theron Ware-Celia Madden-Father Forbes triangles—demonstrate Theron Ware's unstable gender identity. In certain company, Ware takes on the role of female, while in other circumstances, he plays the role of the male. Even the novel's ending is ambiguous in terms of

gender identity: Ware dreams of succeeding in politics, a traditionally male-dominated sphere; however, when he “shivers with pleasure” at the fantasy of enthraling the masses with his rhetoric, he assumes a feminine identity (132). MacFarlane suggests that Frederic’s novel may be read as “an allegory about the social constructions of gender.” She concludes that “[t]he feminized minister is not an androgynous creature, selecting judiciously from an orderly list of binarily gendered characteristics. Rather, he is an instable, fractured being whose multiply gendered identity shifts as he negotiates his professional and personal positions” (141).

Michelson, Bruce. “Theron Ware in the Wilderness of Ideas.” *American Literary Realism* 25.1 (1992): 54-73.

Michelson’s article combines thematic and structural criticism in his examination of Theron Ware’s “modern intellectual experience” in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (55). First, Michelson focuses on establishing the date for the novel’s action—late 1880s—in an effort to understand Ware’s “culture-crisis at the hands of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden.” The trio, argues Michelson, are “intellectual-pretenders” for whom ideas are merely “social weapons, rationalizations, playthings for idle hours” (57). Initially regarding Ware as an acquisition, the poseurs compete in a game of one-upmanship, exhibiting for Ware their intellectual sophistication. When Ware tries to join their game, however, he fails to understand that “sayings and doings require no reconciliation” (60) and “self-interest and the protection of a public mask” are survival skills he has not mastered (61). Sister Soulsby tries to teach Ware this lesson, but he “never hears the right words at the right time” (67), and he “misses obvious signs of duplicity” in the actions of the trio (68). Ultimately, Forbes,

Ledsmar, and Madden do not reject Ware for his duplicity, but for his “clumsiness in trying to do what they manage deftly” (70). “Disaster has taught [. . . Theron] little,” insists Michelson, “the consequences of stupidity have not crushed him.” Rather, “[a]s a modernized, incoherent man he may now be on his way to public triumphs, readier for them than ever before” (71). Thus Ware’s story, concludes Michelson, “is ultimately ‘about’ a change in American intellectual and cultural life, [. . .] of a degradation of the intellect” (72).

Miller, Linda Patterson. “Casting Graven Images: *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *Renascence: Essays on Values in Literature* 30 (1978): 179-84.

Miller's article combines moral and structural criticism in an analysis of the “moral wasteland” that confronts Alice Ware, Celia Madden, Sister Soulsby, and Theron Ware in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. Their “search for personal salvation” transforms the concept of the church into something familiar and comforting: for Alice Ware, it is her “garden”; for Celia Madden, it is her “‘sacred chamber’ of art”; for Sister Soulsby, it is a “theatrical stage”; and for Theron Ware, it is the “‘maternal idea’ as embodied in Alice, Celia, and Sister Soulsby” (179). Alice Ware’s religion is her garden. Images of flowers blossoming and, later, withering are associated with her vivaciousness and despair. Miller observes that, rather than freeing her, both Methodism and her garden serve to isolate Alice Ware until she despairs, “[I]f there is a God, he has forgotten me” (180). Celia Madden seeks to transcend the wasteland in the “sacred chamber” of her rooms where she is worshipped as both seductress and madonna. When Celia Madden “cannot realize moments of transcendence,” she regards herself as “the most helpless and forlorn and lonesome of atoms” (181). Sister Soulsby’s approach is to disguise the wasteland with the machinery of the theatrical stage, all the while knowing that the performance is only an illusion.

Theron Ware's quest for salvation turns first to Alice Ware, then to Celia Madden, and finally to Sister Soulsby, but his misplaced faith in Sister Soulsby seals his damnation. Miller agrees with Stanton Garner's assessment of Sister Soulsby's failed religion: "to look for stage machinery instead of truth is to invite degeneration, to confuse darkness with illumination, to strike a bargain with Satan, to lose what weed-grown Paradise is left in a diminished world." Miller concludes that none of the characters finds "real personal salvation"; none finds God (184).

Morace, Robert A. "Arthur Warren's and Robert Sherard's Interviews with Harold Frederic." *American Literary Realism* 11.1 (1978): 52-70.

Morace's article is a reprint of two "important interviews" with Harold Frederic that have been relatively inaccessible to Frederic scholars in the past. Morace's intention was to "increase their accessibility and thereby to further the interests of Frederic scholarship" (52). Arthur Warren's interview, entitled "An American Journalist in London. A Chat with Mr. Harold Frederic," originally appeared in *The Sketch* on March 13, 1895. Robert H. Sherard's interview, simply entitled "Harold Frederic," originally appeared in *The Idler* in November 1897. (See the section "[Frederic and Contemporaries: On Writing](#)" for summaries of the interviews by Warren and Sherard.)

Morace, Robert A. "Harold Frederic's 'Degenerate Methodist.'" *Markham Review* 5 (1976): 58.

Morace's bibliographical note reprints a portion of a long review of Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware* that appeared in the San Francisco *Wave* on April 25, 1895. The anonymous reviewer writes, "Indeed, considering the book, there can be

no question of its great ability, or of the vivid interest its narrative inspires. There is serious doubt, however, of the truth of the situations; we suspect the probabilities of such unconscious degeneration; it seems impossible that the conditions postulated should precipitate so involuntary a downfall" (58).

Myers, Robert M. "Antimodern Protest in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literary Realism* 26.3 (1994): 52-64.

Myers combines biographical and cultural criticism in his article to examine Frederic's portrayal of nineteenth-century America, particularly the country's attitude toward religion. According to Myers, many earlier critics of Frederic's works "tended to see Frederic as an objective critic standing outside of his culture"; he, however, detects in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* the author's concern for the effect of "overcivilization and fragmentation of modernism" on American cultural institutions (52). Frederic undertook extensive research on Methodism, Catholicism, and higher Biblical criticism in order to be as accurate as possible in his portrayal of a minister and a priest. Myers notes that Frederic's sources on comparative religion "map a decline in traditional faith" resulting in "a profound ambivalence about the psychological and social effects of faithlessness." Frederic's own views on religion "altered between contempt for religious superstition and a recognition of the social value of religion" (54). In the 1890s, tensions between liberal Methodists, who "adopted the modern optimistic belief in the inevitability of progress," and conservative Methodists, who protested the "modernizing trends of the liberals," were dividing the church. Reverend Ware's attempt to bring "modern ideas" to the Methodists of Octavius is thwarted by "a strong conservative faction" (56). Partly in reaction to his frustration with primitive Methodism, Ware embraces Celia Madden's



aesthetic paganism. He is also exposed to Father Forbes' Catholicism, described by Myers as "a useful social institution" (59), and Sister Soulsby's pragmatism, "based on social utility rather than theology." Myers observes, "Father Forbes, Doctor Ledsmar, Celia, and Sister Soulsby all contribute to Theron's destruction by consistently overestimating his ability to assimilate a modern view of religion." Catholicism can tolerate a Father Forbes in its midst because the "corporate ethic of the Catholic Church de-emphasizes the significance of the individual priest" (60). Reverend Ware does not have that luxury in Methodism: "if the minister be corrupt his ministry will be corrupt also." Myers concludes, "Forbes' vision of a national church, focused on the needs of the consumers rather than doctrinal disputes with other religions, parallels simultaneous developments in American business. [. . .] The pragmatic approach to religion that emerges from Theron Ware points to a church strikingly similar to the modern corporation, an institution that took shape in the late nineteenth century" (61).

Myers, Robert M. "Author of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Reluctant Expatriate: The Life of Harold Frederic*. Westport, CT: Greenwood P, 1995. 115-34.

Myers' biographical essay examines the influence of events in Harold Frederic's life on the writing of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. In this chapter, Myers notes that Frederic's attempts to keep the circumstances of his unconventional life private—specifically, the maintenance of two households—may have "contributed to his conception of the difficulties Theron Ware faced as he began to separate his public from his private self" (116). A decade of expatriation may also have afforded Frederic an outsider's perspective with regard to American culture; he was particularly concerned that "America had become overcivilized and that the homogenous American spirit was

being torn apart by such factors as the growing class unrest and the increasing conflict between the sexes” (119). According to Myers, these concerns are reflected in Frederic’s novel. Having perused Frederic’s notes on “extensive readings in science, comparative religion, and the history of Methodism,” collected in *The Frederic Papers* in the Library of Congress, Myers also theorizes that Frederic may have used the characters of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden to express his own views on religion, philosophy, and American culture (120).

Oates, Joyce Carol. “Fall From Grace.” Rev. of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, by Harold Frederic. *The New York Times Book Review* 17 Dec. 1995: 24+.

Oates’ book review focuses upon genre and influence as she recalls her discovery of Frederic’s novel in the 1960s. In her opinion, the novel is an “odd, unexpected link between the crude naturalism of the young Stephen Crane [. . .] and the elegant dissections of wealthy New York society of Edith Wharton”; it has less in common with Nathaniel Hawthorne’s fiction than it does with Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, a novel in which the “young, ingenuous hero is ‘poisoned’ by a book of amoral hedonism and by his friendship with a mentor whose disregard for convention completely unhinges him.” The title character in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is also seduced by worldly desires, and he has not one mentor, but four. Oates argues Frederic’s novel inspired two 1920s novels by Sinclair Lewis, *Main Street* and *Elmer Gantry*, but believes that Frederic manages his narrative with more finesse than does Lewis. She asserts, *The Damnation of Theron Ware* “is American literary realism at its most accomplished” and is also a comedy (24). Her prediction of Ware’s future is optimistic: “he will live from now on without illusion” and he “will not only survive but succeed” (25).

Oates, Joyce Carol. "Rediscovering Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Where I've Been, and Where I'm Going*. New York: Penguin, 1999. 304-10.

Oates' chapter is a close version of her review entitled "Fall From Grace," which first appeared in *The New York Times Book Review* in December 1995.

O'Donnell, Thomas F. "The Baxter Marginalia: Theron Ware a Clef." *Frederic Herald* 1.3 (1967): 5.

O'Donnell's note relates some of the brief marginalia contained in a copy of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (Herbert S. Stone, 1899) acquired by O'Donnell and believed to have belonged to one of Harold Frederic's close friends and first cousin, John Baxter. The marginalia are generally biographical in nature, referring to events, people, buildings, streets, or places that appear in Frederic's novel and are also familiar to Baxter. For example, next to the text that reads, "[. . .] my very particular friend, Dr. Ledsmar," the margin note reads, "My mother's name and of course his mother's as well spelled backwards" (underlined in original). Frederic's and Baxter's mothers' maiden names were Ramsdell. Opposite the name "Father Forbes" on one page, Baxter wrote "Father Terry," and next to "Octavius," he wrote "Utica." In two places, Baxter seems to identify elements in the book directly with Frederic: opposite the text that reads, "[. . .] and a copy of 'Josephus' which had belonged to his grandmother," Baxter penned the words, "My grandmother's book. Here he makes himself Theron"; opposite the text that reads, "[. . .] it did have a curious effect upon Theron Ware," Baxter wrote, "Harry," the name by which friends and family members knew Harold Frederic. O'Donnell states that the marginalia "demonstrate

the extent to which F[rederic] relied on his memories of Utica as he wrote the novel” (5).

O'Donnell, Thomas F. “Harold Frederic (1856-1898).” *American Literary Realism* 1 (1967): 39-44.

O'Donnell's article is a brief overview of the state of Frederic studies up to the 1960s. His bibliographical essay credits Paul Haines with the “rediscovery of Frederic” in 1945, when he wrote his “pioneer dissertation at New York University” (39). In the 1950s, about a half-dozen dissertations and articles continued the Frederic revival. Then from 1960 to 1965, the annual *PMLA* bibliographies listed thirty items of Frederic scholarship; O'Donnell briefly mentions most of them.

O'Donnell, Thomas F. “Theron Ware, the Irish Picnic, and *Comus*.” *American Literature: A Journal of Literary History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 46 (1975): 528-37.

O'Donnell combines textual and structural criticism in an examination of possible literary sources for the scene of the Irish picnic in Frederic's novel. In his article, he acknowledges Nathaniel Hawthorne's influence on Frederic, but argues that John Milton's masque *Comus* may have inspired the picnic in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. Elements of *Comus* are echoed throughout the novel. According to O'Donnell, *Comus* is Theron Ware; the Lady is Celia Madden; and the Attendant Spirit is Father Forbes. However, Frederic's version inverts certain elements: “*Comus-Theron* rather than the Lady moved along through a thick wood,” and he eagerly accepts the potion (lager beer) Milton's Lady refuses (531). The Lady's brothers do not rescue Celia Madden; rather she and *Comus-Theron* are left alone in the forest. And though it appears that Celia Madden may allow

herself to be seduced by Comus-Theron, he receives only a perfunctory good-bye kiss from his Lady. While Milton's *Comus* is a rewriting of the Circe legend, O'Donnell observes, "Abundant precedent for the naturalizing—and nationalizing—of European and classical myth was available in American literature" (535). He concludes that *Comus* clearly provided the elements necessary to Frederic's "final climactic temptation" of Theron Ware (537).

O'Donnell, Thomas F., ed. *The Merrill Checklist of Harold Frederic*. Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill, 1969.

O'Donnell's bibliography, a brief 34-page checklist, is a select compilation of writings by or about Harold Frederic "intended to provide students with the tools that will give them access to the most meaningful published resources for the study of an author" (iii). Divided into eight sections, the checklist begins with "Books and Major Separate Publications" (1-2), which includes both fiction and non-fiction, followed by "Uncollected Writings" (2-6), which includes fiction, poetry, reviews, and articles. Section III (6-7) lists "Editions" of Frederic's works. Section IV, "Letters" (7), directs readers to Robert H. Woodward's "Harold Frederic: A Bibliography." (In 1969, *The Correspondence of Harold Frederic* had not been published.) Section V, "Special Journal" (7), lists a single journal, *The Frederic Herald*, devoted to short biographical, critical, and bibliographical notes on Frederic; nine issues were published between April 1967 and January 1970. Section VI (7-8) is "Bibliographies and Checklists"; Section VII (8) lists "Biographies." The last and largest section, "Scholarship and Criticism" (9-34), lists books and articles about Frederic's major works, arranged in sub-sections by title.

O'Donnell, Thomas F, and Hoyt C. Franchere. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Harold Frederic*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1961. 108-17.

O'Donnell and Franchere's chapter on *The Damnation of Theron Ware* combines biographical and cultural criticism in an examination of the writing and reception of the novel. The essay opens with a survey of the novel's contemporaneous reviews in both England and the United States, then moves on to speculate upon the genesis of the work, which took Frederic "five years of conscious, careful, and silent planning" to write. O'Donnell and Franchere believe the idea for the novel may have occurred to Frederic "as far back as his Utica days when his long conversations with Father Terry, the brilliant and candid priest, had so stimulated him" (110). They point out that Frederic observed the growth of religious skepticism in the 1870s and 1880s—fueled by Darwin's theories, higher Biblical criticism, aestheticism, and intellectual epicureanism—and incorporated these influences in the characters of Dr. Ledsmar, Father Forbes, and Celia Madden, with disastrous results for his title character. Unable to reconcile "currents of thought that are disturbing the very universe of his time [. . .] Theron brings about his own damnation," conclude O'Donnell and Franchere (116).

O'Donnell, Thomas F., Stanton Garner, and Robert H. Woodward, eds. *A Bibliography of Writings By and About Harold Frederic*. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1975.

O'Donnell, Garner, and Woodward's compilation is the most recent and comprehensive Harold Frederic bibliography published. It includes writings by and about Frederic and is "[i]ntended to be of use to the scholar, student, or interested general reader of Harold Frederic by providing various kinds of bibliographical information not



previously available, or available only in periodicals and pamphlets.” “Writings by Frederic” (1-105) identifies Frederic’s books (fiction and non-fiction), shorter works (short fiction, essays, letters, and features), journalism (articles, editorials, and reviews in *The Observer*, *New York Times*, and *The Manchester Guardian*), and editions. “Writings about Frederic” (109-308) lists bibliographies; reviews and notices; writings to 1900 (books, newspapers, and periodicals); books, parts of books, monographs, and pamphlets (1900-1973); dissertations and theses; manuscripts, letters, library holdings, and likenesses; and *The Frederic Herald*. The compilers claim the book “lists every piece of published writing attributable to Frederic at this time (1974). [. . .] It identifies and locates all of Frederic’s manuscripts, letters, and related documents that could be uncovered by a lengthy and wide-ranging search. It lists—with brief objective annotations—most of the biographical, critical, and bibliographical comment about Frederic that appeared in print between 1879 and 1 January 1974. It also lists all those doctoral dissertations the compilers were able to identify as containing significant discussion of Frederic’s work, as well as a number of master’s theses” (v).

Oehlschlaeger, Fritz. “Passion, Authority, and Faith in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literature* 58.2 (1986): 238-55.

Oehlschlaeger’s article combines reader response, feminist, and psychological criticism in an analysis of authority in Frederic’s novel. According to Oehlschlaeger, Frederic “systematically discredits every authority figure in the novel while simultaneously revealing Theron’s own search for authority.” He argues that what Frederic’s novel presents “is not an innocent’s fall into corrupt sexuality but a critique of the way corrupt authority poisons sexuality,” a claim demonstrated in Theron Ware’s relationships with his wife Alice Ware and Celia Madden (239). Theron Ware becomes

“progressively effeminized” by the novel’s “proscription of female sexuality by male authority” (244). All of the novel’s authority figures—the Methodist trustees; Father Forbes; Dr. Ledsmar; Sister Soulsby, perhaps the most complex authority figure; the Catholic Church; and even Jeremiah Madden, “the book’s most dignified figure”—are discredited by their words or actions (254). Oehlschlaeger acknowledges that critics have seen Sister Soulsby “either as a Satanic figure or as a voice for Frederic’s own supposed pragmatism” (246); however, he disagrees with both views. First, Sister Soulsby is neither all good nor all bad, and her pragmatism is “inadequate to deal with the highly irrational world that Frederic depicts,” which undercuts her validity as an authority figure (247). Second, Oehlschlaeger does not agree with critics who have pointed to Sister Soulsby’s pragmatism as an indication of Frederic’s personal views. In Oehlschlaeger’s opinion, Frederic’s views are evident in his respect for “certain religious values” represented by the venerable church elders and the Christian idea of repentance (253).

Polk, Noel. *The Literary Manuscripts of Harold Frederic: A Catalogue*. New York: Garland, 1979.

Polk’s bibliography identifies and locates Harold Frederic’s extant novel manuscripts. An examination of Frederic’s working papers shows him “to have been a disciplined, methodical worker and an unusually meticulous craftsman” (xi). Most of Frederic’s extant manuscripts are now located in the Library of Congress; however, Polk identifies the exceptions (thirteen locations in the U.S. and the U.K.). The manuscripts of *Seth’s Brother’s Wife* and *The Lawton Girl* are either lost or no longer extant. Paul Haines’ 1945 New York University dissertation, “Harold Frederic,” is the only source for descriptions and quotations from these manuscripts. Section A lists Frederic’s novels; Section B, stories; Section C, non-fiction prose; Section D, poetry; Section E, unpublished fiction;

Section F, unpublished plays; Section G, unpublished poetry; and Section H, unpublished non-fiction prose. Section I lists miscellaneous items in the Library of Congress, such as three of Frederic's diaries for the years 1891, 1892, and 1893; the Frederic-Heinemann (his London publisher) Papers; Frederic-Brown, Shipley & Co. Papers; miscellaneous, unclassifiable papers; Frederic's will (not in Frederic's hand); and a "photograph of Frederic and an unidentified woman, possibly Kate Lyon" (102). Section J is a guide to correspondences written by Harold Frederic. Polk directs readers to *The Correspondence of Harold Frederic* (1977) for a complete file of Frederic's correspondence.

Prioleau, Elizabeth S. "The Minister and the Seductress in American Fiction: The Adamic Myth Redux." *Journal of American Culture* 16.4 (1993): 1-6.

Prioleau's structural approach identifies the "odd couple" of American literature that reveals "surprising shifts and reversals in the minister-temptress drama" (1) in six novels: Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896), Winston Churchill's *The Inside of the Cup* (1913), Sinclair Lewis' *Elmer Gantry* (1927), Peter De Vries' *The Mackerel Plaza* (1958), and John Updike's *A Month of Sundays* (1974). In her article, Prioleau observes that Hawthorne's Dimmesdale is the model clergyman, a "saint on earth," for whom Hester Prynne's freedom and lawlessness prove to be powerfully seductive. When Dimmesdale falls, "the reverberations are momentous." The title character in Frederic's novel is a "diminished version" of Dimmesdale, and Celia Madden is a "spoiled, vain, fin de siecle voluptuary" (2). Prioleau observes, "Due to the minister's lowered status at the century's end," Ware's "fall resembles more of a pratfall, for which the reader feels mixed pathos and contempt." Churchill's innocent and

idealistic minister, John, “denounces everything he had believed”; and his seducer, wealthy and freethinking “pagan” Alison Parr, “metamorphoses into a Victorian hausfrau—domestic and dependent” (3). Prioleau concludes that Churchill’s attempt to create “a happy resolution of the clergy-temptress drama” misses the mark. Literature in the 1920s reveals a decline in the clergyman’s reputation. Lewis’ Elmer Gantry is already corrupt when he meets Sharon Faulkner, an even more corrupt tent revivalist. By novel’s end, Faulkner is dead and Gantry has become the new “seducer, exploiter, megalomaniac, and muddled nonbeliever.” De Vries’ Andrew Mackerel is a degenerate minister who believes in nothing. The women in the novel are a parody of earlier seductresses such as Hester Prynne, prompting Prioleau to observe, “The temptations of America for clergymen in the fifties have been indulged to a point of satiation, ennui, and meaninglessness.” Lastly, Updike’s Tom Marshfield is both minister and seducer, and the temptresses—Ms. Prynne and Alicia—have “evolved into the seduced” (4).

Raleigh, John Henry. “*The Damnation of Theron Ware.*” *American Literature* 30 (1958): 210-27.

Raleigh’s analysis of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* situates Frederic’s writing within a cultural context. In his article, Raleigh argues that the novel reflects American history and culture on three levels: (1) its representation of nineteenth-century America, (2) its representation of the nineteenth-century American and “his relationship to Europe,” and (3) its “metaphorical statement about the essential polarities of all human existence” (213). On the first level, Raleigh describes Theron Ware as an anachronism: “an Emersonian, a Romantic, a lover of nature” (215). Ware’s “lingering intuitionism” and “reliance upon feelings” are challenged by Celia Madden’s aestheticism and Dr. Ledsmar’s Darwinism (214). On the second level,

Frederic's novel "shows Irish Catholicism conquering American Protestantism," an unusual perspective in the nineteenth century. In theme, the novel resembles Henry James' *Roderick Hudson*; in the character of Sister Soulsby, Frederic has captured the essence of Mark Twain's Huck Finn. On the third level, Raleigh asserts that the "highest and strongest" (223) attitudes in the novel belong to Father Forbes, "the voice of history, of tragedy, of loneliness, [. . .] of the mysteries that surround and encompass us," and to Sister Soulsby, "the spokesman for the here-and-now, for life as a comedy, for the efficacy of common sense" (226). "As psychological surrogates," Raleigh proposes, "Father Forbes is the 'father,' while Sister Soulsby is the 'mother.'" He concludes that "the two forces represented by Father Forbes and Sister Soulsby are not antithetical but complementary." Both are "right," and neither subscribes to "Absolute Truths" (227).

Raleigh, John Henry. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *Time, Place, and Idea: Essays on the Novel*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1968. 75-95.

Raleigh's chapter is a reprint of his article entitled "*The Damnation of Theron Ware*" that appeared in *American Literature* 30 (1958): 210-27.

Raleigh, John Henry. Introduction. *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960. vii-xxvi.

Raleigh's introduction is a reprint of his article entitled "*The Damnation of Theron Ware*" that appeared in *American Literature* 30 (1958): 210-27.

Rees, John. "Dead Men's Bones, Dead Men's Beliefs': Ideas of Antiquity in Upstate New York

and *Theron Ware*.” *American Studies* 16.2 (1975): 77-87.

Rees’ biographical and psychological approach to the last of Frederic’s New York State novels leads him to speculate in this article that a “special regional consciousness” in areas like “religion, history, [. . . and] legend” contributes to the “psychological interest” of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (78). Father Forbes claims that the “idea that humanity progresses” is “utterly baseless and empty.” Theron Ware confesses to Sister Soulsby, “It oppresses me, and yet it fascinates me—this idea that the dead men have known more than we know, done more than we do; that there is nothing new anywhere” (79). Rees contends that Frederic believed the past is constantly imposing itself on the present and that “beneath the rising American republic lay an empire of the dead” (83). Beliefs, for example, about pre-Columbian America—including the theory that “the Indians were descended from the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel” and the Mound-builders were a “physically and mentally superior race”—promoted a sense of “religious antiquarianism” in residents of upstate New York, the regional consciousness that permeates Frederic’s novel (82-85).

Spangler, George. “Theron Ware and the Perils of Relativism.” *Canadian Review of American Studies* 5 (1974): 36-46.

Spangler’s thematic study critiques the moral values of nineteenth-century America by focusing upon the “economic motives in Theron’s behavior” and the “decisive role of the Soulsbys” in Theron Ware’s moral decline (36). According to Spangler’s article, Theron Ware’s interest in money attracted him first to his wife and then to the very wealthy Celia Madden; it also inspired his idea to write a book on Abraham. In fact, Ware anticipates F. Scott Fitzgerald’s James Gatz and Theodore



Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*. Ware's relationship to the Soulsbys further reveals the morality of the period. His wholesale acceptance of Sister Soulsby's ethics—wherein the “appearance of virtue is as important as the reality” and the ends justify the means—destroys his moral integrity; and Sister Soulsby's seemingly casual comment about Alice Ware causes him to conclude that she is no longer worthy to be his wife (43).

Steele, Mildred R. “Ware's Post-Seattle Career Dept.” *Frederic Herald* 3.2 (1969): 6.

Steele's sketch describes Theron Ware's political career in Seattle and, later, in Washington. This “sequel,” inspired by Steele's reading of Ralph Rogers' 1961 dissertation entitled “Harold Frederic: His Development as a Comic Realist,” outlines the major events of Ware's new career with striking thematic and structural similarities to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (6).

Stein, Allen F. “Evasions of an American Adam: Structure and Theme in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literary Realism* 5 (1972): 23-36.

Stein's structural analysis of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* reveals “a whole series of spurious ‘fresh starts’ for Theron, recurring at virtually equidistant intervals in the plot-line” (23). Stein notes in this article that Theron Ware's character, unlike that in most portrayals of an American Adam, “is ultimately unchanged by his process of initiation,” and the ending of the novel, “looking westward in Springtime, bespeaks [. . .] not affirmation, but damnation [. . .] rendered in mocking, anti-romantic terms criticizing misplaced faith in the powers of spiritual renewal in shallow souls” (24). The novel is divided into four parts, corresponding to the four seasons. Excluding the first three chapters and the last chapter, which are

expository in nature, the story is structured in four groups of seven chapters each. The last chapter of each seven-chapter group ends in a supposed “resolution” to Ware’s most recent conflict (25). At the end of Part One, Reverend Ware has met the trio of Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden and has assumed an attitude of superiority over his wife and congregation. Throughout Part Two, Ware’s contempt for the unilluminated grows, along with his suspicions about an illicit affair between his wife and Levi Gorringer. A temporary resolution to Ware’s conflicts is presented in the counsel of Sister Soulsby to be a “good fraud” (31). Part Three traces Ware’s rapid degeneration and alienation from his new, intellectual friends. In Part Four, encouraged by Celia Madden’s kiss, Ware turns his back on the Methodist world in favor of the civilized world represented by the trio. Stein observes, Ware’s “flouting of the conventions of both worlds will literally drive him from both into the western forests for a new start and new dreams” (33). In Chapter 31, rejected and forlorn, Ware turns to Sister Soulsby for consolation, but “Theron’s despair, unfortunately, is not symptomatic of any attempt to face the consequences of his actions in a mature manner” (35). In the final chapter, spring has returned with a new cycle of fresh starts for Theron Ware. Stein concludes, “Presumably Theron will rush blithely onward, an American Adam of the Gilded Age, so unsubstantial that nothing can touch him.” The damnation Ware suffers, according to Stein, is “the most insidious kind not only for him but [also] for his society” because he and others like him are unaware of their damnation (36).

Stronks, James. “Supplements to the Standard Bibliographies of Ade, Bierce, Crane, Frederic, Fuller, Garland, Norris, and Twain.” *American Literary Realism* 16.2 (1983): 272-77.

Stronks’ bibliographical note cites five additions to

*A Bibliography of Writings By and About Harold Frederic* by Thomas F. O'Donnell, Stanton Garner, and Robert H. Woodward (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1975).

Stronks, James. "Supplements to the Standard Bibliographies of Crane, Dreiser, Frederic, Fuller, Garland, London, and Norris." *American Literary Realism* 11.1 (1978): 124-33.

Stronks' bibliographical note cites three additions to *A Bibliography of Writings By and About Harold Frederic* by Thomas F. O'Donnell, Stanton Garner, and Robert H. Woodward (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1975).

Stronks, James B. "Addenda to the Bibliographies of Stephen Crane, Dreiser, Frederic, Fuller, Garland, Herne, Howells, London, and Norris." *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 71.3 (1977): 362-68.

Stronks' bibliographical note cites one addition to *A Bibliography of Writings By and About Harold Frederic* by Thomas F. O'Donnell, Stanton Garner, and Robert H. Woodward (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1975).

Strother, Garland. "The Control of Distance in Theron Ware." *Frederic Herald* 3.2 (1969): 4.

Strother's note is a structural analysis of Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware* "involving the manipulation of Theron's name" as a "distancing factor [. . .] between the narrator and Theron and, hence, between the reader and Theron." When reporting from within the mind of Ware, Frederic's narrator usually uses the character's first name. Other times, when the narrator relates events from outside Ware's mind,

the references to the title character tend to be more formal—Theron Ware, “the Rev. Theron Ware,” and “the Rev. Mr. Ware”—and should alert readers to distance themselves from Ware (4).

Strother, Garland. “Shifts in Point of View in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *Frederic Herald* 3.1 (1969): 2.

Strother opens his note by refuting Everett Carter’s assertion that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is “told strictly from the minister’s point of view.” In his own structural analysis of the novel, Strother states that “[o]n at least three occasions, Frederic significantly shifts the point of view away from Theron to another character.” The first shift occurs in Chapter 21 when Dr. Ledsmar renames his lizard “the Rev. Mr. Ware.” The second shift occurs in Chapter 25 when Levi Gorringer says that Ware is “so much meaner than any other man,” and the third shift occurs in Chapter 26 when Father Forbes tells his housekeeper that he is not home should Ware call again. “The function of the shifts in point of view is in each case to indicate Theron’s loss of esteem in the eyes of another character. By shifting the point of view from Theron to the other character,” Strother argues, “Frederic dramatizes clearly this loss of esteem and foreshadows Theron’s eventual damnation” (2).

Strout, Cushing. “In Hawthorne’s Shadow: The Minister and the Woman in Howells, Adams, Frederic, and Updike.” *Making American Tradition: Visions and Revisions from Ben Franklin to Alice Walker*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1990. 22-39.

Strout’s Chapter 2 examines the influence of Nathaniel Hawthorne’s “marital triangle”—and more specifically, his “symbolic use of Hester Prynne”—in *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) on novels by William Dean Howells, Henry Adams, Harold

Frederic, and John Updike. According to Strout, Hawthorne's unlikely heroine is presented as a "female apostle [. . .] walking in the footsteps of the Puritan Anne Hutchinson" (22); symbolically, she poses a threat to established views about love, marriage, and Christian authority. Howells' *A Modern Instance* (1882) treats the issue of divorce in its impartial portrayal of "a marriage without love and a love without marriage" (29). Adams' title character in *Esther* (1884) is torn between her love for a minister and her scientific agnosticism; the romantic triangle "is defined by her relationship to a scientist and a minister" (30). In *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896), argues Strout, "Frederic turned [. . . Hawthorne's marital] triangle to the purposes of serious comedy" (33). The forest scene in which Celia Madden bestows upon Theron Ware a kiss is most reminiscent of the relationship between Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale; however, Frederic's version is "comically ironical" because Ware's dream of a future with Celia Madden is "inspired by a kiss that is 'a swift, almost perfunctory caress'" and his dream is corrupted by his lust for Madden's wealth (33). Ware's fall is less significant than Dimmesdale's because Ware was "deeply flawed" to begin with. Ware, as a representative of his generation of Methodist preachers, is a poor specimen of religious piety as compared to the older generation present at the Nedahma conference. Thus, suggests Strout, "[t]he fall that Frederic measures is not a moral one within the minister but an historical one in America. [. . .] Frederic has an accurate sense of the way in which modernist forms of Protestantism were, in fact, allying themselves with science, evolution, and historical criticism of the Bible, jettisoning traditional Christian doctrine in the process and presupposing a sentimental confidence that change is inevitably progress" (33-34). The last section of this chapter addresses Updike's *Roger's Version* (1986), a comic tale of adultery, in which Hawthorne's triangle is expanded to a marital quadrangle, related from the cuckolded husband's perspective.

Suderman, Elmer F. "*The Damnation of Theron Ware* as a Criticism of American Religious Thought." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 33 (1969): 61-75.

Suderman's article combines psychological and genre criticism in an examination of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and the conventions of the sentimental religious novel of the late nineteenth century. According to Suderman, Frederic's decidedly non-sentimental novel "modifies the stereotype" and "brings it to life" (66). The young (Protestant) woman in the sentimental novel is recast as the sensual, red-headed, Irish-Catholic beauty Celia Madden. The young skeptic in the sentimental novel who is saved by his love for the young woman and her God is the Methodist minister Theron Ware. In *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, Celia Madden is the skeptic and Reverend Ware represents the already-converted young man. Rather than a conversion to Christianity, Ware experiences a counter-conversion to Madden's religion of beauty and "absolute freedom from moral bugbears" (68-69). In one situation after another, Frederic subverts sentimental conventions: Ware converts in the space of a page as opposed to a few chapters; instead of giving up smoking, Ware accepts a cigarette from Madden; at the point in the novel where the young woman would typically pray for her skeptical young man, Madden offers Ware a drink of Benedictine; the convert's faith in an afterlife is substituted for Ware's faith in a life of luxury aboard a yacht. Suderman observes that Frederic "has transformed a sterile conventional plot into a convincing, realistic story" (71). Whereas the sentimental religious novel generally ended on an uplifting note, at the end of Chapter 31, Ware, feeling rejected and alone, questions the very existence of God. In true Theron Ware-fashion, however, he "does not live with his more realistic



and somber knowledge very long. [. . .] Theron, after two conversions—three if you count the drunken orgy—returns to his routine life unchanged” (74).

Suderman, Elmer F. “Modernization as Damnation in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *Ball State University Forum* 27.1 (1986): 12-19.

Suderman’s thematic consideration of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* focuses upon the way in which modernism causes “man” to think “differently about the nature of man, of the universe, of God,” and of “the different way in which he relates to himself and others, to the community and its institutions, and to God” (12). According to Suderman’s article, modern attitudes have already damned Celia Madden, Sister Soulsby, Dr. Ledsmar, and Father Forbes when they are introduced to the reader. Furthermore, technological advancement and urbanization lead to the “damnation of community, a church, and a minister who discovers that his substitution of modern personality traits for traditional ones does not help him cope with an intractable world” (18). Suderman concludes that Theron Ware has no place in either modern or traditional society.

Vanderbeets, Richard. “The Ending of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *American Literature: A Journal of Literary History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 36 (1964): 358-59.

Vanderbeets’ textual analysis of Frederic’s novel and working notes challenges earlier criticism labeling Frederic a “comic realist” (358). The ending of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, Vanderbeets argues in his article, is not tragic: Theron Ware relocates to Seattle for a career in real estate and dreams of becoming a Senator. However, Frederic’s working notes read, “Soulsby & wife at deathbed—their words finish book.”

Vanderbeets contends that since this note immediately follows references to Ware, it must refer to his deathbed. Furthermore, if Frederic intended to kill off his main character in some earlier version of the novel, then the ending “reveals an inconsistency incompatible with the picture of ‘comic realist’” (359).

Watson, Douglas. “Folk Speech, Custom, and Belief in Harold Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and *Stories of York State*.” *New York Folklore* 3 (1977): 83-99.

Watson’s linguistic and biographical study of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and *Stories of York State* examines the materials and processes of folklore—specifically speech, customs, and beliefs. Watson reasons in his article, “Frederic’s life provided him with both a natural and a practiced awareness of the ‘folk,’ and his fiction became a medium for recording the particulars of that awareness.” Folk speech is “used for the purposes of characterization and establishment of setting.” It portrays Brother Pierce’s upstate New York fundamentalism: “We are a plain sort o’ folk up in these parts. [. . .] We ain’t gone traipsin’ after strange gods [. . .]. No new-fangled notions can go down here” (84). Sister Soulsby’s figurative expressions and use of proverbial sayings—“You’ve got to take folks as you find them” and “you’ve got to find them the best way you can”—“express her understanding of human nature and her attitude toward overcoming its limitations” (86). Watson notes three distinct dialect patterns in *Stories of York State*: the upstate New York dialect (similar to Pierce’s in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*), the Irish immigrant dialect, and the German immigrant dialect. In addition to using folk speech patterns to create realistic characters, Frederic also used folk beliefs and customs, such as the rustics’ opposition to intellectualism and the Methodists’ suspicions of the Irish and the Italians. Folk

customs in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* include the camp meeting, the lovefeast, donation parties, and the rental of pews. According to Watson, Frederic attended a Methodist camp meeting in 1875 and wrote an essay attacking “the hypocrisies of the barely religious event” (96). “Frederic’s use of the folklore of his native Mohawk Valley,” asserts Watson, “appears to be not only extensive, but basically accurate as well” (97).

Wilkie, Brian. “Morality and Its Alternatives: *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *Value and Vision in American Literature: Literary Essays in Honor of Ray Lewis White*. Ed. Joseph Candido. Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 1999. 64-82.

Wilkie approaches his analysis of Harold Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware* from a moral and psychological perspective. His main purpose is to explore “the competing claims of morality and of a radically antinomian personal freedom” (66) that result in contradictions or a “confounding of affects” in the novel (69). For example, Wilkie describes Sister Soulsby as unscrupulous; however, he does not consider her self-absorbed or devious in her personal relationships. In fact, she seems to exhibit genuine concern for the Wares. Likewise, Celia Madden is both captivating and comic, and Father Forbes is both devoted to and dismissive of Catholicism. Dr. Ledsmar and Celia Madden seem to be the antithesis of one another, but they are united in their rejection of Theron Ware. Sister Soulsby, a pragmatist, and Celia Madden, an idealist, “both register an affinity to Chopin’s music.” According to Wilkie, “This method, of creating polarities (as they seem at first) that later dissolve into unities or (more often) fragment kaleidoscopically, is the heart of Frederic’s novelistic strategy in *Theron Ware*” (71). The death of MacEvoy “epitomizes the double vision of values—esthetic and moral—that, perhaps more than any other of the novel’s confounding of affects, gives *Theron Ware* its disturbing resonance

as philosophical speculation” (74): Jeremiah Madden, “the most sympathetically portrayed character in the entire novel,” is ultimately responsible for MacEvoy’s death, and the beauty of the last rites and of Celia Madden’s attire overshadows the somber images of MacEvoy’s deathbed (73). Wilkie suggests “that the recurrent strategy by which the novel’s affects cancel one another out are variants, presented indirectly, of its exploration of the antinomian theme” (77). Theron Ware’s attraction toward Celia Madden and Father Forbes may be commendable, but his actions toward them seem contemptible. Wilkie argues that “Frederic has rendered, with almost unique success, and primarily through his double-takes on matters involving values, the perennial problem that emerges when antinomian spiritual energizing clashes head-on with morality, when two perfectly valid senses of *good* collide” (77-78). Furthermore, Frederic avoids “definitive judgment[s]” with respect to the morality of his characters (78), while at the same time his novel demonstrates the “utter incompatibility” of the pursuit of both morality and beauty and freedom (80).

Wilson, Edmund. “Two Neglected American Novelists: II—Harold Frederic, the Expanding Upstarter.” *The New Yorker* (6 June 1970): 112-34.

Wilson’s biographical criticism of *The Damnation of Theron Ware* likens the title character to his creator, Harold Frederic. Wilson dedicates a large portion of his article to Frederic’s biography and a chronological review of Frederic’s literary works. Drawing parallels between events in Frederic’s life and events in his novels, Wilson states that Frederic “violates the genteel conventions by allowing sex often to figure in its rawest, least romantic form” (114). To support his point, Wilson cites Frederic’s public defense of prostitution in London and his maintenance of two households—one with his legally-married wife and children, the other with his common-law wife and

children. *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is described as “amusing, absorbing, rather shocking” (124). Wilson identifies the “three tempters” (Father Forbes, Dr. Ledsmar, and Celia Madden) as the agents of Ware’s damnation and Sister Soulsby as the only “redeeming element among Theron’s mischief-making friends” (125-26). Ware’s “illumination” is a feeble version of the “intellectual and imaginative expansion” Frederic himself experienced. Furthermore, Frederic and Ware shared a “kind of disregard of consequences”; Wilson cites the serious debt both faced as an example (126). Wilson concludes that “Theron Ware was an unself-flattering version of Harold Frederic as a young provincial eager to widen his social, aesthetic, and intellectual scope and to make for himself a career” (133).

Wilson, Edmund. “Two Neglected American Novelists: Harold Frederic, the Expanding Upstater.” *The Devils and Canon Barham: Ten Essays on Poets, Novelists and Monsters*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1973. 48-76.

Wilson’s chapter was first published as an article in *The New Yorker* (6 June 1970): 112-34.

Woodward, Robert H. “The Frederic Bibliographies: Errata.” *The Frederic Herald* 3.1 (1969): 3-4.

Woodward’s note identifies bibliographic errors in three published bibliographies of secondary comment on Frederic: “Harold Frederic: A Bibliography” by Robert H. Woodward (*Studies in Bibliography* 13 [1960]: 247-57); “Harold Frederic (1856-1898): A Critical Bibliography of Secondary Comment,” compiled by the editors of *ALR* and numerous contributors (*American Literary Realism* 2 [1968]: 1-70); and “Frederic’s Collection of Reviews: Supplement to the Checklist of

Contemporary Reviews of Frederic's Writings" by Robert H. Woodward (*American Literary Realism* 2 [1968]: 84-89).

Woodward, Robert H. "Harold Frederic: Supplemental Critical Bibliography of Secondary Comment." *American Literary Realism* 3.2 (1970): 95-147.

Woodward's critical bibliography is the first supplement to the bibliography compiled by the editors of *American Literary Realism* in 1968 ("Harold Frederic [1856-1898]: A Critical Bibliography of Secondary Comment"). This bibliography expands on the earlier compilation in that it includes newspaper articles and theses on Frederic. It is divided into three categories: books (including dissertations and theses), periodicals (including magazines and newspapers), and errata (corrections of known errors in the first Frederic bibliography).

Woodward, Robert H. "Some Sources for Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*." *American Literature* 33.1 (1961): 46-51.

Woodward combines textual, biographical, and cultural criticism in his examination of Frederic's writing methods and sources. The article opens with a statement Frederic made in an interview published in *Literary Digest* in which he describes his research: "I seek to know my people through and through. [. . .] I set myself the task of knowing everything they knew. [. . .] I have got up masses of stuff." Among the background works Frederic studied, Woodward cites Samuel Laing's *Human Origins* (1892) as the source for Father Forbes' Abraham speech and Zénaïde A. Ragozin's *The Story of Chaldea from the Earliest Times to the Rise of Assyria* (1886) for Forbes' discussion of eponyms. In the case of Dr. Ledsmar's conversation with Theron Ware, all the German and French



historians he refers to are among those listed in Mme. Ragozin's book. The books Dr. Ledsmar loans to Reverend Ware, with the exception of the one written by Ernest Renan, are also on the list. According to Woodward, Celia Madden's classification of people as Greeks or Jews comes from Renan's *Recollections of My Youth* (1883). Frederic relied upon his readings in the *Northern Christian Advocate*, a Methodist journal, for "all the details of a Methodist minister's work, obligation, and daily routine, and all the machinery of his church" (46). Sister Soulsby's woodchuck story is quoted almost verbatim from an 1893 issue of that journal. Woodward concludes that Frederic's characters "had to reveal themselves—their intellectual selves as well as their personalities—through their conversation," and that Frederic, "to make his characters speak convincingly, had to know what they would know" (50-51).

Ziff, Larzer. "Overcivilization: Harold Frederic, the Roosevelt-Adams Outlook, Owen Wister." *The American 1890s: Life and Times of a Lost Generation*. New York: Viking P, 1966. 206-28.

Ziff's Chapter 10 situates Frederic's writing, particularly *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, within the cultural milieu of the late nineteenth century. He characterizes Frederic as "a walking treasury of local history and manners," which served to shape the imaginary towns of Tyre, Thessaly, and Tecumseh (207). "Possessed of an imaginative knowledge of his home county, in which character was inseparable from ethnic, religious, historical, political, and social conditions, [. . . Frederic] was able to follow Howells' lead in producing a fiction of the commonplace, yet to surpass the dean in rendering a sense of communal density," argues Ziff (209). *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, Frederic's last novel set in New York State, represents a culmination of plot and material

not achieved in any of his earlier novels; yet the novel reverberates “as a symbolic tale of America’s progress to disunity in the latter half of the nineteenth century” (212). In the character of Theron Ware, Frederic has created a “pitiful creature” who has thrown away the ideals of Christianity in favor of “a grab bag of third-hand tastes, ill-digested ideas, and smirkingly cynical opinions about those who nourished and shaped him” (214). One bright spot in this dark landscape is the Soulsbys, whose manipulations, according to Ziff, are “finally for the good of those manipulated.” The Soulsbys represent Frederic’s answer to Social Darwinism: “men can control the future of their society if they but yield power to the able” (216).

Zimmermann, David H. “Clay Feet, Modernism, and Fundamental Option in Harold Frederic’s *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.” *The American Benedictine Review* 45.1 (1994): 33-44.

Zimmermann’s thematic and psychological approach to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* focuses upon Frederic’s “careful study of Methodism and Catholicism.” Zimmermann argues in his article that the novel “records an important shift in religious thought within modern Christianity” (34). “[T]he theologies of Forbes and Soulsby,” notes Zimmermann, “include many tenets adopted by twentieth-century Christian theologians” (35). Father Forbes tells Reverend Ware, “The Church is always compromising” (37). This perspective reflects Forbes’ “positivist view of history that forms the basis of his theologies and biblical interpretations” (38); however, “[o]nce Forbes has altered Theron’s understanding of history, he has altered Theron’s understanding of religion [. . . without providing] him with any basis on which to begin reconstructing his understanding of the world” (39). Zimmermann suggests that, within the context of modern theology, Sister Soulsby has undergone a conversion because she and Soulsby have “both soured on living by fakes”

(42). Sister Soulsby's theology embraces a belief in "humanity's essential goodness," and she "provides Theron with the forgiveness and direction necessary to begin the redemptive process" (42-43). Zimmermann asserts that, unlike many critics who blame Father Forbes and Sister Soulsby for Ware's damnation, he does not find fault with either of them. In fact, he does not consider Ware damned. According to Zimmermann, "damnation occurs only after death," when the option of free choice can no longer be exercised. Thus, "Sister Soulsby is correct when she points out that the sheep and the goats will not be separated until judgment day" (44). Theron Ware's future, in light of Zimmermann's interpretation of Sister Soulsby's and Father Forbes' theologies, remains ambiguous.

Zlotnick, Joan. "The Damnation of Theron Ware, with a Backward Glance at Hawthorne." *Markham Review* 2 (Feb 1971): 90-92.

Zlotnick's genre study examines possible literary sources for *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. She notes in her article that Frederic considered Nathaniel Hawthorne one of his "literary parents" and compares Frederic's novel to *The Scarlet Letter*, "Young Goodman Brown," "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," and "Rappaccini's Daughter" (90). Reverend Ware is likened to the "sinning minister" Dimmesdale and Young Goodman Brown, Celia Madden to Hester Prynne, and Dr. Ledsmar to Rappaccini and Chillingworth. Zlotnick argues that *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and "Young Goodman Brown" have the same theme, the loss of innocence. In addition, Frederic employs light and dark imagery to develop "the Hawthornian theme of reality versus appearance and even offers his own version of Hawthorne's ocular deception." Other imagery common to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* and "Young Goodman Brown" includes the forest scene and ribbons (in Celia Madden's hair and on the maypole). Like many of Hawthorne's characters, argues Zlotnick,

Ware is not guilty of the sin of passion; instead, he is guilty of the sin of pride, “a sin which results in the separation of so many Hawthornian characters from the ‘magic circle of humanity’” (91).

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HAROLD FREDERIC'S *THE DAMNATION OF THERON WARE*:

A STUDY GUIDE WITH ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

by

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Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware*:  
A Study Guide with Annotated Bibliography

Robin Taylor Rogers

ABSTRACT

Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896) is an important work of American fiction that deserves greater critical attention. My intention in creating a website devoted to Frederic's masterpiece is not only to promote awareness of the novel but also to provide high school and undergraduate students, as well as their teachers, with a resource that will situate *The Damnation of Theron Ware* within an historical as well as a literary and cultural context. Significant events and discoveries in the fields of science, technology, religion, philosophy, art, and literature shaped Frederic's thinking and writing, particularly the events and characters of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. An understanding of this milieu is critical to understanding the issues of the richly complicated novel.

*The Damnation of Theron Ware*, or *Illumination* as it is known in England, is the story of a Methodist minister who loses his faith when he makes the acquaintance of a Catholic priest, a post-Darwinian scientist, a New Woman, and a pragmatic con artist. In the end, critics are in disagreement as to the extent of Theron's damnation or illumination. A best seller in the 1890s, *The Damnation of Theron Ware* was heralded as both "the great American novel" and as "anti-American" in its sentiments.

Conceived as an ongoing project and research tool, my thesis is an online study guide with annotated bibliography of criticism devoted specifically to *The Damnation of Theron Ware*. The website is divided into six main sections: (1) the home page, which briefly introduces users to the site, identifies the scope of the project and provides links to other pages; (2) "Harold Frederic," which includes a biography of the author, a timeline of significant events during his lifetime, a select bibliography of his writing, and a sampling of interviews with and articles on Frederic as author and critic; (3) "Bibliographical Studies," which lists bibliographies, checklists, catalogues, critical overviews, and online resources; (4) "*The Damnation of Theron Ware*," which includes a discussion of the contemporaneous critical reception of the novel, an annotated bibliography of criticism in list form and broken down by subject, a bibliography of dissertations and theses, and recommended discussion questions or topics for essays; (5) a "Glossary," which includes terms that may be unfamiliar to students; and (6) "Links of



Interest,” which directs users to other websites relevant to a study of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.

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