

Annotated Bibliography Example 2

The area of secularization and the novel is under some recent revitalization because scholars are relooking at the assumption that secularization was a singularly straight trajectory. Stemming from the work of Charles Taylor, many literary scholars including Vincent Pecora and Terry Eagleton are reexamining the literary terrain constructed by Ian Watt, Michael McKeon, and Franco Moretti, in which a secular mindset attributed to a sense that secularization was a process. Currently, secularization can no longer just be seen as a decline in religious beliefs and practices, but rather a spectrum of different patterns of secularization such as the privatization of religion and the rise of morality outside of religion. Scholars are acknowledging that we live in a mostly secular society and that our frame of reference skews our view of the past. We must acknowledge our own perspective and look to a dialectical view of secularism rather than one in which the terms, religion, science, and reason are mutually exclusive.

Since Taylor's concept of the "imminent frame" is used frequently throughout the new secularization scholars, it is rather perplexing that literary scholars have not merged this concept with an analysis of framing devices in narrative. If it is the perspective that becomes the site of secularization, then the perspective to which the narrative is framed would be paramount to determining where the novel positions itself to the reader. The reason why framing devices have not been discussed in relation to secularism is because the current understanding of framing devices is embedded with the discourse of narratology. The issue here is that most narratological terms were created through intersections of science and literary studies and therefore the language of narratology carries with it a certain air of secularization with it. Using narratological terms brings a particular kind of secular reading to the text that excludes a supernatural presence in the narrative. Utilizing the thought process behind the "imminent frame" within the context of narrative framing can enlighten the position as to how narrative plays a role in the tension between secularization and religion

Both studies of narrative frame and secularization are currently under a very similar destabilization process, expressed by the works brought together in this bibliography. By combining these two areas in a reading of narrative can provide a new perspective to both the realms of narratology and secularization studies. Examining the assumptions and perspectives one approaches a literary text with while discussing what perspectives the literary tools include and exclude, one can hope to approach a text in a completely new way. It is through a reexamining of the assumptions of perspective that new knowledge is produced. And by examining the narrative framing devices through the lens of secularization, we can start to see the ways in which scholarship reframed narrative to become something different than it might have originally conceived to be. Rather than seeing science, literature, and religion as separate discourses, revealing the similarities between these disciplines can solidify the need for more interdisciplinary approaches to literary studies.

Malina, Debra. *Breaking the Frame: Metalepsis and the Construction of the Subject*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2002. Print.

Narratology is an important new way in understanding how to approach framing devices in texts, and this work by Debra Malina introduces a new deconstructionist method when looking at these frames. The key term in the work is metalepsis, which can be thought of as a kind of frame breaking, when a character or narrator shifts their narrative level to align with other characters, an example of this is when a character in a novel would address the author. Malina introduces a variety of narratological concepts like extradiegetic (fictional frame), diegesis (main narrative), and hypodiegesis (play within the play), which are used to describe the various frames at play in a narrative, however these become confusing concepts throughout the work because Malina uses all of these terms as abbreviations, like DR for diegetic reader. And while none of these concepts are unique to this work, this use of abbreviations makes these new terms even more confusing. Even the metalepsis term is borrowed from another scholar, Gérard Genette, however, Malina introduces a new framework to this concept in which the concept of metalepsis collapses the lines between fiction and reality in postmodern fiction.

Malina's analysis focuses on three particular authors, Samuel Beckett, Christine Brooke-Rose, and Angela Carter to articulate how metalepsis is employed in the construction of the postmodern narrative subject in the blurring of lines between character and reader. The framework that is introduced could be used in the analysis of other older works, but this type of narrative device is most apparent in these postmodern works. What is most unique in this work is not the blurring of lines of subjectivity, but Malina's method for deconstructing a structuralist concept of frame making. Deconstructing the frame is an act of complicating theoretical divides and it the most interesting aspect of this work. She concludes by showing that narratological frames are not static, but it is more dynamic than previously thought. Looking at the frames as something that can shift throughout the narrative is useful when looking at how the narrative interplays with the framing device.

Schäbler, Daniel. *Framing Strategies in English Fiction from Romanticism to the Present*. Heidelberg, Germany: Universitätsverlag, 2014. Print.

In this publication, Daniel Schäbler traces the use of framing mechanisms in narratives from Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) to Adam Thorpe's *Hodd* (2009) to show how the form and function of these frames evolved over literary history. He first maps out the various strategies employed in narratological framing focusing particularly on paratextual and intertextual framing in order to call for a more complex and contextually informed method of conceptualizing framing mechanisms. Specifically, Schäbler cites the need to imbue the current narratological method of examining frames with a more culturally informed perspective, which no longer detaches the paratextual material from the narrative. Aligning the past formalist methods of looking at each frame individually with the current narratological perspective of separating frames, Schäbler asks the reader to consider how each frame intersects with one another to arrive a holistic way of looking at framing devices. To further draw out implications

of the frame, Schäbler suggests that one must look at how cultural forces played a role in the construction of these sometimes elaborate paratextual elements.

Much of the space of the publication is devoted to an examination of individual texts as a way to show a case study of how looking at the paratextual material can provide great insight into the cultural forces at play within the narrative. While this allows Schäbler to survey the criticism for each individual narrative before he goes into an examination of the framing devices, this structure does not allow the reader to come away with a method of looking at other texts in a new way. All that Schäbler is asking the reader to do is to ensure that the paratextual elements are looked at with the narrative, not to separate them from the narrative, which is merely correcting the separation brought on by the formalists and narratologists but is a useful way of approaching the frame nonetheless.

Stewart, Carol (Carol Ann). *The Eighteenth-Century Novel and the Secularization of Ethics*. Farnham, Surrey, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010. Print.

The reasons behind the rise of the novel in the eighteenth century have always been linked to the increasing secular tastes of the reading public, but not many scholars have looked into why the tastes changed. In this particular work, Carol Stewart attempts to unpack how novels promoted morality without religion. What makes the eighteenth-century novel so popular for Stewart is the move away from narratives that could be seen as risqué into novels that were more realistic. It was through this realism that novels were able to connect to the public during a time where Anglican sermons could not. She is able to provide comprehensive close readings of particularly important works peppered in with criticism draw both from the time of publication and current literary theory, in order to make a convincing argument.

The work begins with the seventeenth-century roots of this movement through the debates on morality from the Calvinists and Latitudinarians and drops the reader into a case study of the novels of Samuel Richardson and Henry Fielding, which shows an attempt to reimagine Anglican morality through fiction. Centering the argument of the shift of morality and ideas to the novel and away from religion is Stewart's discussion on Laurence Sterne's *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (1759) which places the influence of the seventeenth-century debate of morality in a satirical context. This essentially sets the stage for Jane Austen in the later eighteenth century to create novels that were well-respected stories of moral value, which further separates religion from morality. The work succeeds in paying attention to the important works of the eighteenth century without seeming to privilege one work over another, that all of these works and their position in time were essential to making the novel popular. It provides a sense that in order to look at secularism, one must look at a trajectory, not just a single work.

Taylor, Charles. *A Secular Age*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007. Print.

This particular work, while not necessarily literary in nature, has proven to be the most influential work on secularism in the last fifty years and is often cited in other literary critical work in the field of the novel. This work draws heavily upon Charles Taylor's work in the 1999 Gifford Lectures at Edinburgh and it offers a comprehensive trajectory of how secularism gained popularity in the last half-century. In his approach, Taylor combines both a historical and philosophical perspective, drawing upon mostly religious texts to ground it firmly in religion, while other works in the literary field draw upon a variety of different discourses. Even though the rise of secularism is apparent through our contemporary gaze, Taylor argues that we must look at secularism as not merely the absence of religion caused by the rise of science and reason, but rather secularism provides the viable option to not believe in God. Expanding what on this concept, Taylor frames the rise of secularism as a shift in perspective that was not linear and eventual as has been reimagined by current secular theorists and is not simply a battle between unbelievers and believers. Taylor goes onto exploring the social and cultural conditions that gave rise to this unbelief, showing that people used both belief and unbelief at different times and that the rise of modernism did not necessarily offer no religious perspective, but shifted between the two.

The key concept in the work is the "imminent frame", which constitutes a natural perspective to the world rather than a supernatural one (imminent rather than transcendent). Taylor focuses on the word perspective to state that the manifestations of the imminent frame might vary where some frames are completely closed and some remain slightly open to transcendence. However, even in a closed imminent frame where there is no possibility of a transcendent experience, there still is a yearning for something more that causes cultural pressures to begin to try to widen a worldview that includes religious thought. It is this tension that is Taylor's most provocative thought, that there still is a desire for religion in the absence of religion.