Homicide in American Fiction, 1798–1860

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PART ONE

_Homicide and the Nature of Man_

ALL our inquiries in morals, religion, and politics must begin with human nature. The ends for which a being is made, his relations, his true course of conduct, depend upon his nature. To comprehend the former, we must understand the latter. Accordingly, certain views of man are involved in all speculation about the object of life, and the proper sphere of human action. On such views all schemes of society and legislation are built.

—W. E. CHANNING