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# LITERATURES OF COLONIAL AMERICA

EDITED BY SUSAN CASTILLO AND IVY SCHWEITZER

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## “Cross-Cultural Conversations”: The Captivity Narrative

*Lisa M. Logan*

In his essay on the ethics of reading, Derek Attridge asks, “How does the new, the other, come into being when all we have is what we have?” Attridge suggests:

The coming into being of the wholly new requires some relinquishment of intellectual control, and the other is a possible name for that to which control is ceded. Furthermore, if the settled patterns of my mental world have been so freed up that the truly other finds a welcome, my subjectivity will have been altered in some degree, and thus – especially if the cumulative effect of such events is taken into account – the self too can be said to be a creation of the other. In fact . . . when I experience alterity, I experience not the other as such (how could I?) but the remolding of the self that brings the other into being as, necessarily, no longer entirely other.

For Attridge, “feats of creativity” emerge from the “ceding” of “settled patterns in [our] mental world[s].” In his view, the self neither experiences the other as truly other, nor does it merely create the other. Rather, the self’s encounter with the other “alter[s]” and reshapes the self by “destabiliz[ing] the field of the same,” so that both self and other are remade. That is, “novelty is achieved by means both of the refashioning of the old and . . . the advent of the new *is* a particular refashioning of the old” (Attridge 1999: 21).

If we accept this model of the creative process as a dialogue between self and other, known and unknown, then we must also accept that the products of this process are collaborations. That is, creative acts, including acts of authorship, are neither the passive experience of the other nor the process solely of active agency. Attridge writes, “Since there is no recipe, no program, for creation . . . it cannot be purely a willed act, but since creation requires preparation and labor, it cannot be purely an event” (ibid: 22).

The following essay plays out a collaborative model of the creative process in early American captivity narratives, texts that record the histories of writing subjects

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encountering the other in colonial America. My argument assumes what Attridge assumes – that literary texts are not the products of singular originary genius; nor are they transcriptions from the Muse or automatic writing from the dead. Colonial American Indian captivity narratives are an excellent example of collaboration at work in the production of texts.

Indian captivity narratives constitute collaborative texts in at least two ways. First, captivity narratives "constitute an amalgamation of voices and input, each with its own agenda and design" (Derounian-Stodola and Levernier 1993: 11). That is, their production as printed texts is the result of the labor of several agents, including prefators, printers, booksellers, editors, amanuenses, and even readers. Second, captivity narratives are conceived in the context of a colonial European culture's contact with the New World and its inhabitants. In fact, several scholars, including Amy Shrager Lang, Nancy Armstrong, and Leonard Tennenhouse, argue that Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative provides the basis for the first purely American literary genre and even the first American novel. If we accept Attridge's argument that the creative process is about the encounter of self with other, then it follows that Indian captivity narratives offer white readers of European extraction the creative process writ large: protagonist-captives like themselves facing Native American captor-others. In the case of captivity narratives, the significance of the other goes beyond Attridge's sense of that term as that which is not and "has not been yet grasped" by the self (Attridge 1999: 21). Because Western culture and discourses historically have been the purview of white Western males, then the *other* has often been represented as something that is *not* white and male (i.e., a woman or person of color). As Attridge notes, the *new* "cannot be apprehended by the old modes of understanding and could not have been predicted by them" (ibid: 22). This is also true for the *other*. If "old modes of understanding" cannot manage the meaning of this encounter between self and other, then patterns of thought and apprehension must be reshaped in order for textual production to take place. This process can be understood as collaborative. Therefore, we might also add the voice of the other, however marginalized or silenced by the text's dominant colonial discourse, to the list of collaborative agents involved in textual production. If we include the (agency of) the other in the reshaping of thought to produce the creative process (and a printed text), then the narration of the self's encounter with that other constitutes a dialogic exchange comprised of a range of cross-cultural and intracultural conversations. This dialogically produced, collaborative narration transforms the terms of the exchange that is its purpose, reshaping self and other into not merely the sum of its dichotomized parts. The text becomes a third thing, the *new* no longer entirely the creation of solely self or solely other.

This argument has implications for scholars studying authorship, feminist theory and practice, and cross-cultural early American literature. By demonstrating a method of resistance to polarized discussions that often paralyze scholars when recovering lesser known or marginalized authors, I suggest that collaborative models of authorship – and reading – resist our current paradigms about textual production and cultural difference in the early American colonial period. Moreover, in collaboration

with Attridge, I posit a sort of "ethics" of reading the captivity narrative, one that takes responsibility for our roles in (re)creating the other but also in (re)creating readerly and scholarly selves.

### What is Collaborative Authorship?

Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford maintain that the definition of collaborative writing is "far from evident." Collaboration, they write, might include "written and spoken brainstorming, outlining, note-taking, organizational planning, drafting, revising, and editing" (Ede and Lunsford: 14). Charlotte Thralls argues that all texts are inherently collaborative insofar as they contain traces of other texts. Using Bakhtin's theory of the active and dialogic "communication chain," she maintains that all utterances are related to those which precede them and to all subsequent utterances: "language is never the purview of the individual only, but always an interaction of the individual and *others*" (Thralls 1990: 66). In Bakhtin, Thralls finds language about textual production that closely mirrors that of Attridge:

[Texts contain] varying degrees of otherness or varying degrees of "our-ownness," varying degrees of awareness and detachment. These words of others carry with them their own expression, their own evaluative tone, which we (authors) assimilate, reword, and reaccentuate. (Cited in Thralls 1990: 68)

Theories of collaborative authorship acknowledge the imbeddedness of texts in the social order, the role of multiple agents and voices in textual production, and the reliance on the self as well as the other in the refashioning of the new.

### Captivity Narrators as Collaborative Authors

Most scholars will recognize the following fundamental and yet unacknowledged law of all discussion about American *women's* Indian captivity narratives, texts "of," by, and "about" women (Derounian-Stodola 1998: xxvi). All arguments of any kind will inevitably tend toward the question, "But did she really write it?" This familiar question hinges on the extent of the roles played by prefators, printers, booksellers, editors, and amanuenses in the production of the text and the biases in patriarchal cultures against women and their works. Derounian-Stodola and Levernier advise that any consideration of Indian captivity narratives "must, therefore, be text- and culture-based, not author-based, because authorship is so problematical" (Derounian-Stodola and Levernier 1993: 13).

To foreground collaborative authorship in the study of Indian captivity narratives is to emphasize the role of those historical and cultural processes through which these texts were produced. This critical strategy relies on that which Foucault named the

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"author function," or the "modes of circulation, valorization, attribution, and appropriation" of texts within culture, and the "manner in which they are articulated according to social relationships." Instead of asking, "Who wrote it?," we might inquire, "How under what conditions, and in what forms can something like a subject appear in the order of discourse?" (Foucault 1984: 117, 118). This question enables a discussion of the multiple processes of and agents in textual production (writers, printers, booksellers, editors, readers), and acknowledges that these processes are finally collaborative in nature.

One of the difficulties of bringing theories of collaborative authorship to bear on captivity narratives, especially those by women, is our own entrenchments in post-nineteenth-century models of authorship. Maryanne Dever articulates the problems in applying these theories:

[Many critics use] a definition of collaboration as a simple division of labor [which] privileges the use of empirical evidence either to assert the presence of a single authorial consciousness or to reestablish individual authorship over discrete sections of a work, ultimately presenting the collaborative text as the mere sum of separate, individual contributions. The central preoccupation with the authorial signature assumes that the collaborative enterprise will invariably leave some *textual* trace or clue. (Dever 1995: 66-7)

Dever distills the difficulties of resisting traditional models of authorship in our readings of captivity narratives. Working within an academic discipline that values the productions of individuals, the single-authored book, article, and monograph, we easily revert to a treasure hunt for "textual trace[s] and clues" to the narrator's "real" or "individual" voice. Readers will point to stylistic differences within a text as evidence that this sentence or paragraph could not be the "real words" of the "author." As Dever notes, this treasure-hunt model ignores "the wider collaborative context produced through conversation, correspondence, the sympathetic hearing or reading of a manuscript, the vigorously sought opinion" (ibid: 67). That is, by hunting for textual traces of real authors, we ignore the ways that printed texts are created in the first place; texts are not generated in isolation but in communication with a culture and the people who live within it. Therefore, I propose that we shift our critical focus from the origins of texts to the texts themselves, the situations that produced them, and their effects on readers.

A "culture-based study," such as Derounian-Stodola and Levernier recommend, would try to account for the role of cultural context in the production of the text. The narrative of Mary Rowlandson, the most written about captive in early American literature, serves as an excellent example in this regard. A consideration of New England Puritan culture underscores the role that Rowlandson probably played in the production of her captivity narrative, known in New England as *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God* (1682) and published in London as *A True History of the Captivity & Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* (1682). Critics frequently suspect Rowlandson's

authorship of the narrative because the text relies a great deal on scripture and the narrative style exhibits a curious (and refreshing) blend of colloquial speech and formal sermon-like prose. Scholars have questioned the authorial role played by the prefator, whose name is signed "[P]er Amicum," Latin for "by a friend," and usually assumed to be Increase Mather. However, Derounian, in her work on its "publication, promotion, and distribution," maintains that his "impact on the work came after its composition" (Derounian 1998: 240). Some cite Mather's publication of *A Brief History of the War with the Indians of New-England* (1676) as evidence of his investment in Rowlandson's narrative and his micromanaging role as the "major theorist" of King Philip's War (Breitwieser 1990: 83). Other scholars have suggested Gershom Bulkely, also one of the executors of Mary's late husband Joseph Rowlandson's estate, as an influential contributor. The fact is that at least one of these prominent men would certainly have been in conversation with Rowlandson about her text, both as she wrote it and after it was printed, simply because of its content and the importance of the war to the English Puritan community. Rowlandson's presence in a culture that was probably processing the meaning of the war through its communal consciousness demonstrates the intricacies of the collaborative process of authorship.

Another collaborative aspect of Rowlandson's text is its appearance in print in at least one English edition with the final sermon her husband, Joseph Rowlandson, preached before he died, "A Sermon of the Possibility of God's Forsaking a People . . ." The minister's sermon is "annexed" to his wife's narrative and "suggests in general . . . what the captivity title shows in particular, and together, the announcement of these works indicates a family disaster the London audience would want to read more about" (Derounian 1998: 253). In this instance, printers, booksellers, husband, wife, and readers collaborate on the production of the text, its meaning, and circulation. Back in America, Samuel Green, Jr. advertised Rowlandson's forthcoming narrative in the first American edition of *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1681): "Before long, there will be published . . . the particular circumstances of the Captivity, & Redemption of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson; and of her Children. Being pathetically written with her own Hand" (cited in Derounian 1998: 244). As these examples show, the production and interpretation of the Rowlandson text was anything but the sole effort of a single author.

Besides these external circumstances, New England literacy trends, attitudes toward published texts, and theories of the self are also key factors in the collaborative aspects of Rowlandson's narrative. Using Walter Ong's phrase "residually oral," Jane Kamensky argues that Puritan culture was at once literate and speech-centered. In such a culture, Kamensky maintains, the Bible may have been perceived "more as oral performance than as written text. Much, if not most, Bible reading was done aloud . . . [and] godly men and women read *and listened* to it closely" (Kamensky 1997: 14). In light of this argument, the pervasive presence of scripture in Rowlandson's text, often cited as evidence to suspect her authorship, is less of an oddity. Moreover, the mixture of high and low writing styles apparent throughout the text is symptomatic of its New England cultural context. As David Hall explains,

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"literacy and religion were inseparable" in this culture (Hall 1989: 38). If the Bible formed the basis for reading *and* it was heard daily as spoken word, then the dialogic blend of elevated and colloquial style in Rowlandson's text is not only explicable but normative. Rowlandson's captivity narrative was produced in a culture that "conceived of speech and script as interdependent, overlapping, virtually contiguous" (Kamensky 1997: 14).

Puritan acts of *reading* might also be viewed as collaborative. As Jeffrey Hammond argues in *Sinful Self, Saintly Self*, both sermons and poems conveyed "the speaker's response to grace or provoke[d] the reader's desire to share in such a response . . . Natural eloquence was measured not by figures of speech but by the power of a text to stir its readers to piety" (Hammond 1993: 18). In other words, a Puritan text was intrinsically and traditionally collaborative insofar as it relied on *readers* for its completion. When Rowlandson writes of her trepidation of water crossings, she invokes not simply a personal fear of the wintry Connecticut River. Rather, her text points to biblical bodies of water that her readers' consciousnesses supplied. In this conversation between narrator and reader, Hammond contends, authorial identity was not perceived in terms of the modern, private self. Instead, "the selves that [Puritan poets] created were consistent with the psychology of redemption as taught by their theology. Self-expression in a modern sense was minimized because the mere self — one's private identity as a fallen individual — was precisely what Puritans wished to overcome" (Hammond 1993: 23). Similarly, Rowlandson's text positions her as an *example* of God's afflicted for the benefit and instruction of her audience. Readers were expected to "read, therefore, peruse, ponder, and from hence lay up something from the experience of another, against thine own turn comes" (Rowlandson 1990: 31). As many scholars of early American literature and culture have shown, an emphasis on individual identity would be misplaced in a consideration of Puritan texts, as the individual is merely an instance of the whole.

*A True Narrative of the Sufferings of Mary Kinnan* (1795) reinforces the value of theories of collaborative authorship in recovering the cultural context of captivity narratives. This brief text presents a curious melding of providential narrative, sentimental fiction, and political propaganda characteristic of eighteenth-century popular fiction and the captivity genre. Captivity is represented as a threat to the fundamental role of domesticity and white womanhood in the new and expanding nation. This lesser-known narrative recounts how a group of Shawnee attacked the Kinnan home in western Virginia in 1791, taking Mary, a mother of three, captive. Her home was destroyed and everyone in her Virginia family except one son was killed. She lived with the Shawnee and Delaware, apparently as a servant, until August 1794, when, through a letter-writing campaign by her supporters and the persistent efforts of her brother, she escaped and returned despite astounding complications. However, as Sharon M. Harris observes, Kinnan, unlike most captives, was not necessarily "restored," since her home, friends, and family in Virginia were no more. Instead, she returned to her birthplace in New Jersey, where she lived with relatives for 54 more years, writing nothing more that we know of save a



letter applying for her murdered husband's military pension. Upon her return to her family, she told her story to New Jersey printer Shepard Kollock, who, according to Kinnan's grand-niece, added embellishments and published the 15-page account.

An entry on Kinnan appears in Harris' anthology *American Women Writers to 1800* (1996) and *The Dictionary of Literary Biography: American Women Prose Writers to 1820* (1998), edited by Carla Mulford. But what does it mean to call Kinnan a "writer"? According to Oscar M. Vorhees, Kollock (the printer) "used his own gifted talents for much of the language, including, of course, the poetical quotations," but he based the story "wholly on what Mrs. Kinnan herself told him" (Vorhees 1928: 54). This claim that the text is at once factual and reconstructed is echoed in many prefaces to captivity narratives. For example, the preface to Elizabeth Hanson's narrative (1728) claims that Hanson's "Relation, as it was taken from her own Mouth, by a Friend, differs very little from the original copy, but is even almost in her own Words" (cited in Derounian-Stodola 1998: xxvii). In each case, the role of printers, transcribers, booksellers, and "friends" is central to textual production.

In Kinnan's text, approximately half of its 15 pages recount Kinnan's capture, forced march, and physical and emotional hardships during captivity. The remainder of the narrative contextualizes her escape plans in the Western wars between the US Army and the Native American Nations of Ohio and Michigan (1790-4), focusing especially on the ways that the British alliance with the Native Americans at that time exacerbated her captivity and prevented her smooth escape. It seems unlikely that Kinnan, whose only surviving writing is a letter asserting her rights to a pension, was responsible for the highly stylized rhetoric of patriotism, religion, and sentimental fiction. As Derounian-Stodola notes, "Kollock was a journalist, soldier, patriot, judge, and publisher of some importance: the British called him 'the rebel printer'" (Derounian-Stodola 1998: 108). It seems more probable that Kinnan furnished the materials for her tale orally, and that Kollock embellished with sentimental rhetoric: "Here I would mark nature progressing, and the revolutions of the seasons; and from these would turn to contemplate the buds of virtue and of genius, sprouting in the bosoms of my children" (Kollock 1998: 109). This bucolic affirmation of the new American republic matches the following flowery expression of patriotism: "O Britain! how heavy will be the weight of thy crimes at the last great day! Instigated by thee, the Indian murderer plunges his knife into the bosom of innocence, of piety, and of virtue; and drags thousands into a captivity, worse than death" (ibid: 113). Such passages serve as compelling evidence that the text was produced collaboratively through the processes of Kinnan's account and her publisher's familiarity with eighteenth-century readership and print culture.

Although such readings may *appear* to negate the roles of women in the processes of textual production, roles which feminist scholars of early American women's literature are assiduously involved in recovering and documenting, I would argue that such negation only occurs if we use more traditional models of authorship that view textual production as the effect of a single originary genius. However, a model that follows

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theories of collaborative authorship performs Derounian-Stodola and Levernier's recommended "culture-based study" and accurately describes current feminist scholarship on women's Indian captivity narratives, which focus on the narrator/protagonist's agency within particular cultural contexts. The central A-word here is *agency* and not authorship. At once feminist and culture based, this critical strategy enables a consideration of women as subjects in, of, and to culture without reverting to paralyzing arguments about who did or did not perform the actual writing. Moreover, a focus on agency in women's roles in the collaborative production of texts is consistent with the larger feminist project of recovering and preserving previously lost women's writing. The revival of women's texts has opened up necessary and heretofore buried questions about nation, class, race, and authority and revolutionized early American literary history, aesthetics, and canon. Using theories of collaborative authorship preserves the role of agency in our investigations while also privileging a consideration of the cultural processes underpinning textual production. As Nancy K. Miller has so brilliantly stated, "the postmodernist decision that the Author is dead, and subjective agency along with him, does not necessarily work for women and prematurely forecloses the question of identity for them . . . because women have not had the same historical relation of identity to origin, institution, production, that men have had" (Miller 1986: 104). To talk about authorship in a way that complicates genius and origins even as we insist on the recovery of texts by and about women enables a rethinking of the patriarchal and binary paradigms of authorship that have characterized interpretation (and canonization) for too long.

### Cross-Cultural Conversations

Several critics have addressed the captivity narrative in terms of its "newness" and particularity to colonial America. For example, the work of Roy Harvey Pearce, Richard Van der Beets, David Downing, and David L. Minter represents early scholarship on the captivity narrative that considered the genre as a phenomenon that arose from and upheld the New World English Puritans' belief in a providential universe. According to these scholars, the genre used Puritan biblical understandings, including typology, to reproduce the Puritan self and define a discursive space through which members of the elect could reaffirm and represent their cultural authority over the meaning of the New World and its others.

A second wave of scholars, which includes Christopher Castiglia, Teresa Toulouse, and Margaret Davis, considered the figure of the woman in the wilderness as a site of individual and/or national transgression and/or complicity. In this view, the captive's position outside of normative cultural space enabled her to exercise agency and even authority not afforded by dominant cultural practices. In this vein, I argued in 1993 that Mary Rowlandson's narrative negotiated the physical, ideological, social, and discursive spaces of a woman subject in New England Puritanism. In my view, Rowlandson's rendering of captivity and restoration negotiated not only the progress

of a Puritan soul, but also the processes of a Puritan woman desperate to recover her former cultural position that captivity among the "heathens" displaced and compromised.

More recently, scholars such as Michelle Burnham and Tara Fitzpatrick have taken contextual approaches that focus on the broader cultural work the genre performs. Burnham (1997) considers the sentimental aspects of captivity, linking cultural with emotional border crossing. She argues that these "crossings" elicit new paradigms of cultural understanding in readers and captives themselves. Fitzpatrick (1991) considers the ways that tensions between captives and ministers transformed both elite and popular religious frameworks of the New England covenant. Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse argue that Rowlandson's captivity narrative signals the emergence of a specifically British American bourgeois identity; in their reading, Rowlandson's text demonstrates that "one has to go to America . . . to understand where English novels come from" (Armstrong and Tennenhouse 1992: 388).

These strategies of inquiry enable a focus on the relationship of the genre to the broader culture in which it was produced, but do not necessarily accommodate Attridge's notion of the "new" as the outcome of creative processes negotiated by self and other. That is, the Indian captivity narrative, premised on and made possible by the forced encounter between a "self" from a European colonial culture and an "other" from a colonized Native American culture, emerges as a new genre because of the very terms of its processes of production. That is, the process of a self letting go "settled patterns" and "intellectual control" in the face of that which is not known and opening up to that which "destabilizes the field of the same" structures the captivity narrative as "new" in its composition, form, and content (Attridge 1999: 21). What I wish to address here is those narrative moments defined by this process of cultural and textual production: the collaboration between self and other that brings into being the "new" – self and other refashioned in text.

The product of this collaboration might be viewed, in spite of the protests of captivity narrators and prefators themselves, as a cross-cultural entity, the work of two cultures working together in cooperation. This new entity challenges its readers to consider the ways that difference is made possible. Difference emerges not merely through the fact of the other's presence, but by the processes of exchange and encounter between a self in the process of ceding itself, of giving up its cultural authority, of *collaborating* with the unfamiliar, whose cultural positions emerge from the spaces of the narrative. That is, the genre is enabled by spaces within the reading and writing self in creative negotiation with what and whom it does not yet know. The project for us as readers and critics is to recognize that collaboration and what it makes possible.

It might seem strange to view the captivity narrative as a collaborative effort between European and Native American textual agents. Certainly, aspects of the narratives themselves work to prevent such an interpretation and the historical European colonial participants in its production would likely consider any cross-cultural cooperation as collusion with the enemy. Title pages consistently highlight

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the cruelty and inhumanity of savage heathens in contrast to the gentle goodness of white women captives, representations that the narratives themselves, at least on a superficial level, often seem to support. Prefators of texts published in Puritan New England emphasize the instructional use of captivity in exemplifying the operations of divine providence and urge readers to view the captives' trials in the wilderness as metaphors for their own spiritual journeys. Writers of prefaces consistently remonstrate with readers to read according to plan. The preface to Rowlandson's text, probably the work of Puritan minister Increase Mather, cautions: "Reader, if thou gettest no good by such a Declaration as this, the fault must needs be thine own" (Rowlandson 1990: 31). A century and a half later, James Seaver frames *A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison* as a "piece of biography," "especially for children," "that shows . . . what trials may be surmounted; what cruelties perpetrated; and what pain endured, when stern necessity holds the reins, and drives the car of fate" (Seaver 1992: 1992: 50). The idea that these noble European colonial subjects could be in collaboration with their barbaric adversaries would seem to start printers and ministers spinning in their graves.

Over the years many scholars have noted that moments of ambiguity persist despite the captivity text's ostensibly dominant cultural aims, which are registered most strenuously in the efforts of prefaces. These moments have been read variously as signs of acculturation, Stockholm syndrome, transgression, or evidence of the captive's authorial voice. Ralph Bauer (1997) has observed that captivity narrators are "creole" (i.e., neither of the metropolitan center, nor of the "savage" or "exotic" wilderness). He argues that captives' creole identities enable them to assert a form of authority that contests dominant cultural narratives composed by and circulating in the European center. Historian Neal Salisbury concludes that Rowlandson "was neither the entirely unreconstructed English Puritan nor the 'white Indian' who, like some later captives, completely forsook her original identity" (Salisbury 1997: 32). Each of these perspectives is important in deepening our views of the contexts in which captivity narratives were produced. This portion of the essay will further the arguments of previous scholars by examining moments of cross-cultural encounter in which the self and other enter a field where cultural boundaries are ambiguous and fluid. I will consider these moments as examples of captives and captors engaged in collaborations that produce the texts themselves. That is, I shall consider how these moments constitute cross-cultural conversations that construct the other as an agent in the production of the text.

One significant indicator of cross-cultural collaboration is the lessening or absence of recuperation of the native person/peoples or native culture into the dominant cultural narrative of the speaker. We must attend to moments when the narrative self suspends accommodation or explanation of the other and allows difference simply to exist in the text. On the simplest level, the use of native language in Rowlandson's narrative serves as an example of the self ceding intellectual control by reporting the language of her captors without comment. Rowlandson consistently uses the words *Saggamore*, *Wigwam*, and *Nux*, incorporating native language into her own and

seeming to accept that Native American utterances may more aptly describe the details of her experiences in captivity. Furthermore, Rowlandson clearly understands a great deal of her captors' language, as she reports conversations with them about travel, food, the possibility of her release, the whereabouts of her husband and children, etc., and frequently serves as an intermediary for new or more recalcitrant captives. Salisbury explains such familiarity by relating that Joseph Rowlandson once kept a Native American servant and that "Nipmuc people of Nashaway had helped the town [of Lancaster] get started and continued to contribute to its economic well-being" (Salisbury 1997: 11).

This economic interconnectedness along the colonial frontier is mirrored by Rowlandson's own business and service practices while in captivity. She readily apprehends her position as servant, referring to Quannopin and his wife, King Philip's sister Weetamoo (Wettimore in the English version), as her master and mistress. In addition to gathering wood and food and carrying her share of household goods on the trail, Rowlandson engages her knitting and sewing skills to earn food and keep whenever possible. Scholars have interpreted these practices as signs of acculturation and even of rugged American individualism. Important to a consideration of cross-cultural collaboration, however, is that Rowlandson presents her economic responses to captivity as normative and perhaps assumes that her readers would see parallels to general economic practices among the English and Native Americans along the New England frontier. Rowlandson narrates her trade operations as part of daily life; she knits a pair of socks and receives a scrap of food; she sews a shirt and earns a shilling; a cap gets her an invitation to dinner. The point is that these moments are narrated factually and without embellishment via scriptural or larger providential meaning. Rowlandson's business collaborations with her captors present a cross-cultural exchange that may have been no different economically from the colonial reader's.

Perhaps the most curious instance of narration without embellishment occurs in the nineteenth remove, when Rowlandson carefully describes a Wampanoag pre-battle ritual:

There was one that kneeled upon a *Deer-skin*, with the Company round him in a Ring, who kneeled, striking upon the Ground with their hands and with sticks, and muttering or humming with their Mouths. Besides him who kneeled in the Ring, there also stood one with a Gun in his hand: Then he on the Deer-skin made a speech, and all manifested assent to it; and so they did many times together. Then they bade him with the Gun go out of the Ring, which he did, but when he was out they called him in again; but he seemed to make a stand; then they called the more earnestly, till he returned again. Then they all sang. Then they gave him two Guns, in either hand one. And so he on the Deer-skin began again; and at the end of every Sentence in his speaking they all assented, humming or muttering with their Mouths, and striking upon the Ground with their Hands. Then they bade him with the two Guns go out of the Ring again; which he did a little way. Then they called him in again, but he made a stand, so they called him with greater earnestness; but he stood reeling and wavering, as if he knew not whether he should stand or fall, or which way to go. Then they called

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him with exceeding great vehemency, all of them, one and another: after a little while, he turned in, staggering as he went, with his Arms stretched out; in either hand a Gun. As soon as he came in, they all sang and rejoiced exceedingly a while. And then he upon the Deer-skin made another speech, unto which they all assented in a rejoicing manner. (Rowlandson 1990: 55)

This passage is remarkable for its cultural detail and its length, uninterrupted by the observer's judgment or the insertion of correlating scriptural passages. It presents a cultural ritual that seems to make little sense to its observer and, no doubt, colonial readers. In contrast to an earlier passage, when she notes the infernal din and "outrageous [*sic*] roaring and hooping" of her captors (ibid: 37), Rowlandson here permits this ceremony to stand on its own. The passage resonates as an important moment of Native American cultural cohesiveness, and the manner of narration seems to accept and recognize its importance. Salisbury writes that "although [Rowlandson] was ostensibly appalled at the fact that [the ceremony] was organized by a Christian Indian, her detailed description betrays a deeper fascination." He continues, "the ceremony also modified precolonial tradition in its use of guns" (Salisbury 1997: 100). Rowlandson offers no representative English response, concluding rather lamely: "And so they ended their business, and forthwith went to Sudbury Fight." She then turns to the strange response of her captors once they return in apparent victory – they behaved "rather like Dogs (as they say) which have lost their Ears" (Rowlandson 1990: 55).

Perhaps we can account for Rowlandson's fascination with the ceremony by considering the role of the figure in the middle, he that holds the gun and enters and leaves the circle of his comrades. While she is not privy to the Wampanoag interpretation of this ritual, Rowlandson is quite familiar with the use of language and ceremony to elicit audience response in Puritan sermons and the condition of being at once *in the midst of* and *outside the circle of* her captors. Repeatedly, Rowlandson laments "having no Christian Friend near me" (ibid: 35). She remarks that "the *Indians* were as thick as Trees; if one looked before one there was nothing but *Indians*, and behind one nothing but *Indians*, and so on either hand; I myself in the midst; and no Christian Soul near me" (ibid: 41). Mitchell Breitwieser has argued that this rendition of a "world without others" is typical of an English Puritan worldview, "which is an intentionally isolated culture, severed from its social media or neighborhoods, self-enclosed and self-generated, fed out of its own libidinal interior." Breitwieser finds that Rowlandson resists "interchange and creative cultural evolution" (Breitwieser 1990: 172–3).

However, an examination of the eighth remove challenges this view. Here Rowlandson and her captors ford the Connecticut River, a geographical passage that seems to mark the physical, emotional, and cultural gulf between her present condition and her home. She writes: "When I came ashore, they gathered all about me, I sitting alone in the midst." As her reunited captors swap news, Rowlandson emerges from what she characterizes as a state of shock and falls to weeping. To situate her response,

she turns to the Psalm, "By the rivers of Babylon, then we sate down, yea we wept when we remembered Zion." Rowlandson weeps because of her present condition, "gathered about" by strangers and cut off by the river from all that represents home — her Christian friends and family, the geography of the town of Lancaster (versus the confusing geography of the wilderness), and the social, emotional, and discursive frameworks that have been displaced by captivity. Her captors, who treat their captives as members of the tribe, offer the comfort of food and ask her the cause of her distress. Rowlandson "could hardly tell what to say; yet I answered, they would kill me" (Rowlandson 1990: 42).

This exchange presents Rowlandson as both outsider and insider. She weeps because she has traveled far outside her English circle and feels herself in the midst of her enemies. Yet these same enemies offer food and relief, inviting her into their circle. That she is already part of that circle is evident from what we know of Algonquin practices of captivity and also from the response of "King Philip's crew." Moreover, Rowlandson's own response, "they would kill me," reveals her capacity to negotiate her own needs for food and reassurance and her captors' worldview now that she resides in a new place with a new family. She has processed and accommodated their question, "What, will you love *English-men* still?" (ibid: 33). These exchanges demonstrate, contrary to Breitwieser's view of Rowlandson as an isolated self, that her encounters with the other are increasingly comprised of moments of exchange and, I would argue, collaboration.

Finally, we might understand Rowlandson's fascination with the *pouwow* in the context of her return to her English friends. Back inside her circle of friends, she relates that "when all are fast about me . . . my thoughts are upon things past." She remembers "in the night season, how the other day I was in the midst of thousands of enemies" (Rowlandson 1990: 64). Although redeemed, both physically and spiritually, Rowlandson's thoughts remain *outside the circle* of her friends. As in the structure of the *pouwow*, her friends call for her return and rejoice, but she seems to "make a stand." Like the man with the gun, Rowlandson seems on the periphery, "reeling and wavering, as if [s]he knew not whether [s]he should stand or fall, or which way to go." Such is the dilemma of the returned captive, who has seen the patterns of her mental world unsettled and experienced not merely the alterity of the other but the refashioning of the self through that encounter. Just as she has intended to create the other in her text, so the other has in fact created her. The captivity narrative becomes not the narrative of colonial domination but the production of intercultural creative agents.

Nearly one hundred and fifty years later, ethnohistorian James Seaver published a documentary of his interviews with Mary Jemison, an 80-year-old white woman taken captive as an adolescent by Shawnee and adopted by the Seneca. Jemison married two Native American husbands, a Delaware and a Seneca, and raised several children with the Seneca in upstate New York. Karen Kilcup includes Jemison in the anthology, *Native American Women's Writing, 1800–1924* (2000). Distrustful of the written documents and motivations of white people, Jemison offers her narrative in the presence of a

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lawyer. As Susan Walsh reports, Jemison later told a visitor: "I did not tell them who wrote it down half of what it was" (Seaver 1992: 52). Several scholars have played on the meaning of Jemison's Seneca name, Deigwene's or Dehgewanus, translated as "the sound of two voices falling," to suggest the bicultural nature of the narrative, especially its interweaving of Native American elements of oral autobiography with Seaver's written text (Namias 1992: 15; Kilcup 2000: 31; Walsh 1992: 51).

Seaver addresses his work to young readers, the future citizens of the US, "who would learn to walk in the 'paths of peace'" (Seaver 1992: 49). Seaver wishes to "transmi[t] to future generations the poverty, pain, wrong, hunger, wretchedness and torment . . . that has been endured by those who have lived in obscurity, and groped their lonely way through a long series of unpropitious events, with but little help besides the light of nature" (ibid: 50). Seaver offers this biography as a paean to national progress and the peace that will surely ensue, hoping that the "lessons of distress" will "increase our love of liberty: to enlarge our views of the blessings that are derived from our liberal institutions; and to excite in our breasts sentiments of devotion and gratitude to the great Author and finisher of our happiness" (ibid: 52).

But Jemison's life directly contradicts Seaver's stated goals. By 1797, Jemison had rejected all offers to return to her white "friends" and had been granted a tract of land by the Seneca for her resolution. Jemison's decision is based on her certainty that even if she "should be so fortunate as to find my relatives, they would despise [my children], if not myself; and treat us as enemies; or, at least with a degree of cold indifference, which I thought I could not endure" (Seaver 1992: 119-20). Although her children are both Scotch-Irish and Seneca, the text reflects representative readers' views by referring to them as "a large family of Indian children" (ibid: 119). Curiously, Seaver stresses Jemison's whiteness, her fair complexion, her light blue eyes, her Irish accent, and her apparent compliance with many of the ideals of the cult of domesticity, including her "natural goodness of heart" and "love of family" (ibid: 56). While Seaver's narrative strategies attempt to recuperate Jemison for US readers, Jemison's life story disrupts this process. The narrative also reveals Jemison's rights as a Seneca woman to decide where and with whom to live, to participate in tribal political life, and to own and dispense of land even as a married woman. Seaver accommodates these disruptions by citing Jemison's age and expressing doubts about her memory at such an advanced age, along with her lack of education and troubled life (ibid: 51).

*A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison* epitomizes the Indian captivity narrative as a collaborative project. It reverses the terms of the captive white woman in the wilderness and presents readers with a Native American agent of European origins in conversation with an educated white male US citizen determined to construct the meaning of her narrative for "American" readers. Jemison's views of colonial American history are at times omitted, disputed, and overwritten; Seaver turns to white males who survived the conflicts and even Jemison's thieving "cousin" George to achieve his aims. But Mary Jemison's story persists, and Seaver cannot write his book without her.



As these examples demonstrate, the captivity narrative traces the encounter between two distinct cultures. The captive lives "interculturally," in the midst of or within the boundaries of the other culture. In the case of Mary Rowlandson, Hannah Dustan, Hannah Swarton, and Mary Lewis Kinnan, the captive lives within but also without the other culture and perhaps those boundaries begin to blur. Scholars have argued that the processes of narration attempt to stabilize these moments of ambiguity and to construct a clear self and other. But the consideration of these texts as cross-cultural or even bi-cultural productions complicates this view. To consider the captivity narrative through the lens of collaborative authorship is to see traces of our-ownness and otherness melded together. Once narrated, the encounter between self and other has become, through the process of collaboration, a third thing, no longer self, no longer other. It has become new.

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