National Anxiety and Religion: Transitional Captivity Narratives from the Post-Revolutionary United States

by Amanda Roberts

The captivity narrative is a genre that has gripped audiences on both sides of the Atlantic for centuries. It encompasses a variety of experiences ranging from hostage stories, prisoners of war, and convent captivity and may later be termed more broadly as "confinement narratives."[1] This form of literature has served as a great mirror into the societies which have produced and read them, including an array from tales of Barbary cruelty, to the tests undergone by Puritans captured by Native Americans. The genre has been considered the first uniquely American one, despite the fact that Barbary captivity narratives were popular in Europe prior to Mary Rowlandson's 1682 publication *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God*.[2] Although Barbary captivity narratives predate Native American ones, they have coexisted and grown alongside one another for centuries and both play principal roles in American literary culture and understanding the outside world during the period after the Revolutionary War.[3]

Barbary captivity narratives involved tales of "civilized," or European, hostages forced to survive in the 'Barbary states' located in north and northwestern Africa and Moorish Spain.[4] These narratives would often be the only source of information the common European would have regarding the area and the foreign religion of Islam. While it would show civilized societies in these regions, the focus was often on how the Muslim masters would attempt to capture the 'soul' of the captive through conversion.[5] Native American captivity narratives served a different purpose and instead focused on a more physical form of capturing. Colonists often had direct contact with Native Americans and saw them as a more direct threat to their well-being as they encroached further on Native American territory. Both styles of narrative served to support imperialistic ventures by either the British Empire or burgeoning United States and reinforced the belief that one culture was superior over the other although under very

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[1] Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola, "Captivity, Liberty, and Early American Consciousness," *Early American Literature* 43 (2008), 716.

[2] Michelle Burnham, *Captivity and Sentiment: Culture Exchange in American Literature* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1997), 5.

[3] Paul Baepler, ed., *White Slaves, African Masters: An Anthology of American Barbary Captivity Narratives* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 3.

[4] "Barbary," Oxford Dictionaries, accessed May 2, 2016, http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/barbary.

[5] Daniel J. Vitkus, ed., *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 33.

different contexts.[6] Conversion was not a key feature of Native American captivity narratives where instead conquering the wild frontier, which Native Americans represented within the genre, was the main message conveyed. In the early period of Native American captivity narratives, the bridge between the old style and the new show how European concerns in Barbary stories transitioned towards American ones in Native American narratives.

While scholars have argued that following the United States' revolutionary period, the genre deviated from its religious roots and became more secularized, religion still played a prominent theme in the narratives.[7] This paper argues that during a period of national anxiety and maritime defenselessness, captivity narratives utilized women to address national interests and reaffirm religious convictions through the establishment of the cultural "other." The hallmark of this period's literature has often been considered sensational and as turning towards secularization, but these pieces are more transitional than that and reflect a history of religious influence on the genre adapted to new concerns. This can be seen within Native American and Barbary captivity narratives that were present at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century.[8] This was done through what scholar Lorrayne Carroll describes as rhetorical drag, where men appropriate "I" within the literature to feature as a female protagonist in order to further the male author's views and authority.[9] This creates what scholar Kathryn Derounian-Stodola terms a double victim. This means that these women were first victimized by their captors, usually as a by-product of expansionism, and secondly by those who claim their stories for ulterior motives, usually after they have returned home.[10] Early captives often blamed their husbands and male relatives for not providing protection out on the frontier they were colonizing. However by the nineteenth century, the blame lay with lack of institutional protection from the military or government.[11]

The ecclesial ties are more prominent in the Native American captivity narratives featuring Jemima Howe, published in 1792 and compiled into what is known as the Belknap edition with an introductory letter by Reverend Bunker Gay, and Mary Kinnan, published in 1795 by a printer known for religious books and literature against

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[6] Christopher Castiglia, *Bound and Determined: Captivity, Culture-Crossings, and White Womanhood from Mary Rowlandson to Patty Hearst* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 14.
[7] Teresa Toulouse, *The Captive's Position: Female Narrative, Male Identity, and Royal Authority in Colonial New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 5 and Castiglia, *Bound and Determined*, 82.
[8] Many of the narratives used have multiple editions. The year listed is of the edition used for this paper.
[9] Lorrayne Carroll, *Rhetorical Drag: Gender Impersonation, Captivity, and the Writing of History* (Kent: The Kent State University Press, 2007), 2-3.
[10] Kathyrn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola, "The Native American Captivity Narratives of Mary Rowlandson and Olive Oatman: Case Studies in the Continuity, Evolution, and Exploitation of Literary Discourse," *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 27 (1994), 33.
[11] Castiglia, *Bound and Determined*, 66-7.

Britain.[12] In 1806, the first Barbary captivity narrative to be published in America would be that of Mary Velnet which oddly lacks pressure for Velnet to convert to the foreign religion of Islam or predatory advances by her captors.[13] During that same year, the Barbary captivity narrative of Maria Martin had its initial publication in Boston and was picked up by several other American printers. The piece on Martin is filled with plagiarism from the narrative of Velnet and a 1726 book that featured information about Martin's captors.[14] All of these texts demonstrate how the genre thrived within American imaginations and adapted itself for the post-Revolutionary period to suit the interests and needs of its audience.

Barbary captivity narratives had a history of popularity amongst Europeans, especially the British, before Native American captivity narratives gained traction. As scholar Daniel Vitkus states, "captivity accounts reflect the social and religious challenge non-Christians and non-Europeans presented to early modern Britons."[15] This form of literature informed those at home about other parts of the British empire, in this case the Mediterranean and North Africa, and enforced fears about Islam and the Moors. It can also be applied more broadly to other circumstances and parts of the world as the genre continued to expand. The conflicts between the British and Barbary states were carried over with colonists across the Atlantic and along with them came a lens through which to identify Native Americans and captivity among them in terms and concepts already familiar to the colonists.[16] Scholar Paul Baepler states that, "if the fictional was sometimes read as true, then fiction helped to shape history, and we need to view these narratives side by side."[17] While the Native American captivity narrative is uniquely American, they were initially drawn in terms similar to that of Barbary narratives.

The importance of the Barbary captivity genre goes beyond this cultural context in the Revolutionary era. Without British protection, United States citizens were left vulnerable to abduction by the Barbary states without the ability to negotiate for rescue.[18] This shift would cause the focus of the narratives to change from showing God's providence to moral instruction and the representation of captivity as a national fault and humiliation.[19] In addition to this, the period sees the theme of sexual violence

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[12] Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola, ed., *Women's Native American Captivity Narratives* (New York: Penguin Group), 94, 108.
[13] Khalid Bekkaoui, ed., *White Women Captives in North Africa: Narratives of Enslavement: 1735-1830* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 163.
[14] Ibid, 187.
[15] Vitkus, *Piracy, Slavery*, 6.
[16] Paul Baepler, "The Barbary Captivity Narrative in American Culture," *Early American Literature* 39 (2004), 219, 229.
[17] Baepler, ed., *White Slaves*, 12.
[18] Ibid, 7-8.
[19] Ibid., 14-5.

and torture against female captives emerge along with the exotic arrival of the Barbary captivity narrative in American publishing houses.[20] This would be seen in both forms of narratives of this period. Barbary and Native American captivity narratives influenced each other and it is impossible to separate the two when examining the transatlantic implications of the genre.[21]

Native American captivity narratives have a strong basis within Puritan culture, to the point where some scholars have argued for a division of the genre between early, Puritan based works and the more secularized pieces from the early national period.[22] In these early works, captives came to represent the difficulties colonists faced and ministers utilized this imagery in the seventeenth century in their sermons to encourage their flock to repent lest their families fall victim and be captured, too.[23] However, the religious tradition remains strong even in the Howe and Kinnan pieces that reflect religious undertones that enforce the changing role of women at the turn of the century. Mary Kinnan felt "blest with the affections of the best of husbands, and the love and esteem of the most dutiful of children" prior to her captivity.[24] Jemima Howe, who was taken with her children, was heart-wrenchingly split from her infant who was "shrieking and screaming, enough to penetrate a heart of stone" and was delivered "into the hands of those unfeeling wretches whose tender mercies may be termed cruel."[25] The concept of Puritan repression was being replaced with Victorian ideals where a woman's chastity was even more important and her role as a moral agent was crucial to her family and community.[26] The strength of women such as Kinnan to find the purpose in suffering made sense of the turmoil many felt at the time. Her experience is tempered with the claim: "But the soul often acquires vigor from misfortune, and by adversity is led to the exertion of faculties."[27] This would go right to the heart of female piety and her role to emphasize religion in the face of the "other." She drew her ability to act as a public authority and moral example from her piety and maintaining her religiosity despite her suffering in captivity.

This can be seen most clearly through Jemima Howe's narrative where Reverend Bunker Gay wrote the introductory letter. At the end of the narrative, it concludes with the Reverend blurring the line between where Howe's voice ends and where his begins

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[20] Burnham, 73.

[21] For more about how interwoven the two are, read Paul Baepler, "The Barbary Captivity Narrative in American Culture."

[22] Toulouse, *The Captive's Position*, 5; Castiglia, *Bound and Determined*, 108; and Carroll, *Rhetorical Drag*, 178.

[23] Tara Fitzpatrick, "The Figure of Captivity: The Cultural Work of the Puritan Captivity Narrative," *American Literary History* 3 (1991), 4-5.

[24] Derounian-Stodola, *Women's Native American Captivity Narratives*, 109.

[25] Ibid., 99.

[26] Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in the Northern New England: 1650-1750* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 103-4.

[27] Ibid., 110.

again, thus leaving the reader unclear who is speaking.[28] Her narrative is also unique in that thirty years passed between her captivity and the initial publication of the narrative in 1788, after America gained its independence.[29] Unlike Mary Kinnan, who was the only one taken from her family, Jemima Howe was taken with two of her daughters and five of her sons. Since the seventeenth century, motherhood was often used to legitimize female authors, particularly by ministers seeking to use women's stories for moral lessons, and would be an important character point for Howe.[30] Like their mother, her two daughters went from being in captivity with the Native Americans to the French. They were sent to a convent that is described as a "school of superstition and bigotry" and they became the unredeemed captives by choice, only one returned by force. Despite her return, she was "so extremely bigoted was she to the customs and religion of the place, that after all, she left it with great reluctance, and the most bitter lamentations…"[31] The girl's conversion was complete and although she was physically returned, she had become an "other" through her religious education.

This is not the only captivity narrative that painted Native Americans as the other alongside French Catholicism. The narrative of Hannah Swarton in 1697, written by Cotton Mather, through the technique of rhetorical drag, shows the idealized, pious captive woman that suffered at the hands of both the Native American and French.[32] Women such as Jemima Howe and Hannah Swarton allowed and offered ministers a unique pulpit where they could express religious views and ideas about outside faiths through female experience. Through these narratives and the creation of the Catholic "other," male authors politicized women's experiences in order to project a national opponent in a negative light.[33] This practice continued after the American Revolution in a period where a national identity separate from Britain was struggling to be formed and these narratives reaffirmed to their audience of the "other's" brutality and the superiority of white civilization along with the trials that were undergone under British authority.[34]

Howe's experience as a pious, captive mother gave her experience weight in a custom where church membership was one of the few ways women could enter the public realm and where religion favored traditional virtues for women.[35] A good moral standing prior to her captivity was essential to allowing her to act as an informant of

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[28] Carroll, *Rhetorical Drag*, 183.
[29] Derounian-Stodola, ed., *Women's Native American Captivity*,93 and Toulouse, *The Captive's Position*, 136.
[30] Carroll, *Rhetorical Drag*, 21.
[31] Derounian-Stodola, ed., *Women's Native American Captivity*,103.
[32] Carroll, *Rhetorical Drag*, 37, 49 and Carroll Lorrayne, "'My Outward Man': The Curious Case of Hannah Swarton," *Early American Literature* 31 (1996), 66.
[33] Carroll, *Rhetorical Drag*, 152-3.
[34] Derounian-Stodola, "The Native American Captivity Narratives," 43.
[35] Ulrich, 216.

other cultures and survivor.[36] Her captivity narrative is a transitional piece that is vital to linking early narratives that were overt in their religious expectations and with the shift of them being more for entertainment purposes.[37] While the shift in the narratives was there, women were still seen as the primary source of religious morality for their families, thus giving their private experiences significance when used for the right purposes.[38] As scholar Lorrayne Carroll puts it, "ministers who saw the instructional potential in captivity… also [saw] the danger in allowing a woman to assert a public authority."[39] The decades between Howe's captivity and its first publication are telling in that her story went unnoticed until it served a greater purpose yet even then, the final publication with Reverend Gay's introduction is the only one close to the source that lacks major embellishments. The final version's main purpose was to serve as a history for New Hampshire and in a subtle way, shows Howe as a powerless captive whose fate is outside of her hands, whether in God's or her male countryman's, instead of a female wilderness hero like Hannah Duston.[40] The helplessness felt by Howe was under British sovereignty and the interest in the narrative after the American Revolution shows the underlying theme of national fault being involved with captivity. The British were responsible for Howe's captivity becoming politicized and this theme is more prominently displayed in Mary Kinnan's narrative.

Similar to early captivity narratives, Mary Kinnan's begins with an introduction that states, "Her history will not, perhaps, be without its use. It will display the supporting arm of a Divine Providence: it will point to the best and surest support under danger and adversity: and 'it will teach the repiner at little evils to be juster to his God and to himself."[41] Authorship of the narrative is credited to Shepard Kollock, the original printer of the narrative, who was known for publishing literature against the British and religious texts.[42] Throughout the piece, Kollock laced it with emphasis on the soul handling misfortune, the providence of God, and foists the blame of such travesties onto the British through the voice of Mary Kinnan. The protagonist laments after witnessing the British negotiate with the Native Americans for their continued warfare against the United States, "O Britain! How heavy will be the weight of thy crimes at the last great day! Instigated by thee, the Native American murderer plunges his knife into the bosom of innocence, of piety, and of virtue; and drags thousands into

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[36] Carroll, *Rhetorical Drag*, 10.
[37] Castiglia, 108.
[38] Ibid, 116.
[39] Carroll, "'My Outward Man,'" 46.
[40] Hannah Duston was a returned captive that came to represent an "American amazon, a defender of Israel, and an archetypal heroine of the New World frontier." Derounian-Stodola, ed., *Women's Native American Captivity*, 93-4 and Ulrich, *Good Wives*, 166-7, 177.
[41] Derounian-Stodola, ed., *Women's Native American Captivity*, 109.
[42] Ibid., 108.

a captivity."[43] The tradition of the captivity narrative has been transformed to be used within a new cultural context. Kinnan's piety is what gives her narrative the authority to be out in the public realm and Kollock emphasizes her religious virtue in order to promote not only his spiritual views, but anti-British ones that would find a ready audience amongst members of the new republic.

Captivity within the Barbary states was of a different nature than Native American captivity where religious conversion was less of a fear than death. Native Americans were often considered savage and without civilization, whereas in Barbary states, urban, permanent settlements gave pause to captives that were able to observe from the inside.[44] Captives of Native Americans could include whole families from settlements and might be sold to imperial rivals (typically French or Spain), tortured to death, or brought into Native American society.[45] Barbary captives, however, were kept within the confines of the Mediterranean and both black and white slaves had diverse experiences that allowed some to own property or businesses for other Christian slaves.[46] The impact of their experiences was great and scholar Linda Colley states that, "like other captives in other parts of the world, like empire itself, Barbary corsairing and its victims impacted richly and diversely on British culture at home, in this case influencing images and fears of Islam, and supplying men and women with information on North Africa and the Mediterranean region more broadly."[47] It is impossible to separate captive writers and subjects from imperial goals as they often influenced one another.[48] This information would find an eager audience in the churches of England that often collected money for the redemption of captives through charity briefs.[49]

The roots of Barbary captivity held religious traditions and through that, a way of seeing the Muslim world so that "like Native American captivity accounts, Barbary captivity narratives predictably emphasized the victimization of the Christian and the inhumanity of the non-Christian."[50] With Americans at even more risk of captivity in the Barbary states without British protection, the surge in popularity of these captivity narratives in the early nineteenth century reflects a need to understand this outside culture in American publishing houses.[51] The first captivity narrative of this kind to be

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[43] Ibid., 113.
[44] Vitkus, *Piracy, Slavery*, 22-3.
[45] Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire*, 145, 150.
[46] Ibid., 59.
[47] Ibid., 75.
[48] Baepler, ed., *White Slaves*, 43.
[49] Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire*, 76-7. Charity briefs were royal warrants that allowed churches to make collections for charity, typically through door-to-door tactics. This money was often used for ransoms and environmental emergencies.
[50] Baepler, "The Barbary Captivity," 220.
[51] Baepler, *White Slaves*, 2.

published in America was *An Affecting History of the Captivity and Sufferings of Mrs. Mary Velnet* in 1806. [52] This narrative fit in with the traditional Barbary captivity narratives in that unlike future American ones, the heroine was not subjected to sexual advances by her captors or pushed to converting to Islam.[53] Despite this, Velnet's loyal piety and femininity in the face of her sufferings were of the utmost importance to the narrative. Most telling is that at the beginning of her capture she begins with a prayer of repentance similar to lines from *Paradise Lost* by John Milton:

> "In that moment 'with sincere intent,
> To prayer, repentance, and obedience due,
> Mine ear could not be slow, mine eye not shut,
> And I did place within them as a guide
> Mine umpire conscience—whom, if I will hear,
> That long suff'ring hour was my day of grace'."[54]

This follows the similar themes present in Puritan captivity narratives of the seventeenth century. The need for repentance made her suffering at the hands of her captors necessary and was part of her path towards salvation.[55] When she later decided against death the narrative states, "Yet, putting my trust in that Almighty Being, whose power is unbounded, and to whose will I was subservient, I surmounted my afflictions with fortitude becoming a female…"[56] Although Velnet chose against suicide initially, she noted the grace of God when another slave died: "her Maker in mercy to her, had called her home, and put her out of the reach of barbarian cruelty!"[57] This same thread of repentance and need for proper action to be redeemed can be seen as a theme in Mary Kinnan's narrative at the end of her misfortune. It reads, "ye, who are pierced by the darts of misfortune, imitate my example, and like me recline on the bosom of your Father and your God."[58] Much like earlier captivity narratives, strong faith through trials would help to bring the captive home and would earn her story a place in the public sphere, whether told by herself or a male authority.

Later captivity narratives featured a different focus that would not always allow a female captive to return easily into the fold of her native country. The narrative of

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[52] Full title: *An Affecting History of the Captivity and Sufferings of Mrs. Mary Velnet an Italian Lady, Who was Seven Years a Slave in Tripoli, Three of which She Was Confined in a Dungeon, Loaded with Irons; and Four Times Put to the Most Cruel Tortures Ever Invented by Man. Written by Herself.*

[53] Bekkaoui, ed., *White Women Captives*, 163.

[54] Ibid, 164.

[55] Fitzpatrick, *The Figure of Captivity*, 4.

[56] Ibid., 167-8.

[57] Ibid., 169.

[58] Derounian-Stodola, *Women's Native American Captivity*, 116.

Maria Martin was first published in Boston and reflects an Americanized version of the Barbary captivity narrative. The 1807 edition included a new plotline that involved Martin's virtue threatened by her Muslim captors.[59] The early nineteenth century brought a renewed importance to female chastity that added to the genre.[60] It is important to note that while a woman's chastity gained importance, preserving it did not guarantee a woman would be accepted upon her arrival back into her own home society.[61] Along with the sex threat plot, the Martin piece contains a vast amount of plagiarism from the Velnet narrative, even though there is a stronger focus on the Moor "other." Martin's narrative includes more characteristics of religious life in Algiers which included the illegality of having sex with Christian women and the basics about Moorish culture and Muslim prayers.[62] Much of this information was plagiarized from the 1726 *The Voyages and Adventures of Captain Robert Boyle*.[63] More than Velnet's piece, Martin's was meant to inform audiences of the foreign landscape of North Africa including the differences that only an outsider would take particular notice of.

While religion is still a prominent theme in these captivity narratives, government actors become the source of salvation for captives. Martin's narrative states that, "Deliverance seemed possible, especially should the Consul learn my situation."[64] Martin and Velnet would be redeemed through efforts by a British consul, even though Velnet would ultimately turn to God in her darkest hour. After enduring brutal tortures, Velnet justified her desire for suicide before she was finally redeemed by exclaiming: "I cursed not Providence, I feared not annihilation, I dared not Almighty vengeance: God the Creator was the disposer of my fate; and if he heaped afflictions upon me he had not given me strength to support, his justice would not therefore punish me."[65] Jemima Howe was saved because of a colonel delivering money for her and three of her children's ransom.[66] Religions colored the perceptions of these women's experiences and were laced with the new national anxieties that had appeared at a time of uncertainty. Again, the post-Revolutionary shift was to draw focus to the fact that captivity was the fault of the nation and it was up to them to act to redeem themselves and their lost ones.

These narratives are reflective of the national culture and tradition they are rooted in. Earlier narratives have been seen as potential sources for female agency in

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[59] Ibid., 187.
[60] Ulrich, *Good Wives*, 104.
[61] Khalid Bekkaoui, "White Women and Moorish Fancy in Eighteenth-Century Literature" in *The Arabian Nights in Historical Context: Between East and West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 161.
[62] Bekkaoui, ed., *White Women Captives*, 192.
[63] Ibid., 187.
[64] Ibid., 201.
[65] Ibid., 186.
[66] Derounian-Stodola, ed., *Women's Native American Captivity Narratives*, 103.

periods where literature and writing by women is scarce.[67] The pieces from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are often attributed to women despite being written with heavier involvement by outside male authority. This happened with either a minister blurring the line between his voice and the supposed heroine, or plagiarism that grants further authority to a woman acting as a cultural broker.[68] These women, as captives, were able to "negotiate zones of contact" of race, culture, and the frontier.[69] Much like conversion narratives, these stories "record experiences that are profoundly personal, yet grounded in particular cultures in which the writers lived."[70] This ability to act as a liaison between cultures took on a new purpose that was utilized more by male authority during a period where American men were increasingly called into the public sphere to serve in the new government. While these women's experiences are valuable, most of the surviving knowledge of their stories comes from narratives that were heavily written, edited, and published by men and it is difficult to distinguish between the woman's voice and the ulterior motives of the publications.[71]

Captivity narratives published late in the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century demonstrate familiar religious themes found in early colonial pieces in the Americas. While scholars often comment on the secularization of these narratives into sensational pieces, female captives were used as a mouthpiece for male authority to assert their views including a religious agenda. The displays of piety by female captives and what they witnessed while in a foreign community demonstrate the national anxieties that Americans were experiencing after losing vital protection from Great Britain. Women were becoming the "purifier[s] of society" in a time when men had to step up and take on new leadership roles in the government and public sphere.[72] Religious authority was given away to religious communities in the nineteenth century and it would be up to the communities to interpret readings within their own homes.[73] Traditionally, these narratives have been used as examples by authority of the ways communities had departed from their Godly ways to make sense of the challenges colonists faced from the outside.[74] Through native stories of Mary Kinnan and Jemima Howe and the imported Barbary tales, Americans made sense of the international world

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[67] Carroll, *Rhetorical Drag*, 5.
[68] Derounian-Stodola, ed., *Women's Native American Captivity*, 94 and Bekkaoui, ed., *White Women Captives*, 187.
[69] Burnham, *Captivity and Sentiment*, 3.
[70] James Craig Holte, *The Conversion Experience in America: A Sourcebook on Religious Conversion Autobiography* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992), X.
[71] Carroll, *Rhetorical Drag*, 37.
[72] Ulrich, *Good Wives*, 104 and Juster, *Disorderly Women: Sexual Politics & Evangelicalism in Revolutionary New England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 217.
[73] Holte, *The Conversion Experience*, XIII.
[74] Toulouse, *The Captive's Position*, 55-6.

they lived in which religion was one of many defining characteristics of the nation and of discovering the "other" that played a crucial role in their lives.

This literary genre has undergone what is known as "regenreing" over the centuries where it has been transformed and influenced by other genres.[75] The process has not been instantaneous and the shift from almost absolute religious focus and conversion has been tempered by new national anxieties that provided a different context to view the genre. In addition to this, these narratives allowed captives, and their authors, to reaffirm their national identities after returning or, in the case of the newly independent United States, to separate themselves from their old identity.[76] There is no clear split between the conversional Puritan narratives and the more secularized ones later in the nineteenth century. It was a gradual change that was still rooted in the traditional themes of the literary field. These pieces show that while captivity narratives ultimately sought to entertain their audiences, like other publications, they also acted as moral guides that enforced women's roles as the religious glue that held the piety of the family together. The lessons of these stories permeate the past and present. Native American and Barbary captivity narratives have modern incarnations. A better understanding of how they progressed and reflected America in the past will allow for more insight into present portrayals of captivity narratives.[77]

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[75] Derounian-Stodola, "Captivity, Liberty," 717.

[76] Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire*, 87.

[77] Baepler, *White Slaves* 51. For a more present application of the captivity narrative on popular media see David T. Haberly, "Women and Native Americans: The Last of the Mohicans and the Captivity Tradition," *American Quarterly* 28 (1976), Paul Baepler, "The Barbary Captivity Narrative in American Culture," and Patrick B. Sharp, "Starbuck as 'American Amazon': Captivity Narrative and the Colonial Imagination in Battlestar Galatica," *Science Fiction Film and Television* 3 (2010).