

The University of Western Ontario

HISTORY 4351F

American Captivity Narratives

Fall 2022-23

In-person: Mondays 1:30 – 3:30 p.m., Stevenson Hall Room 2166

Instructor: Professor Aldona Sendzikas

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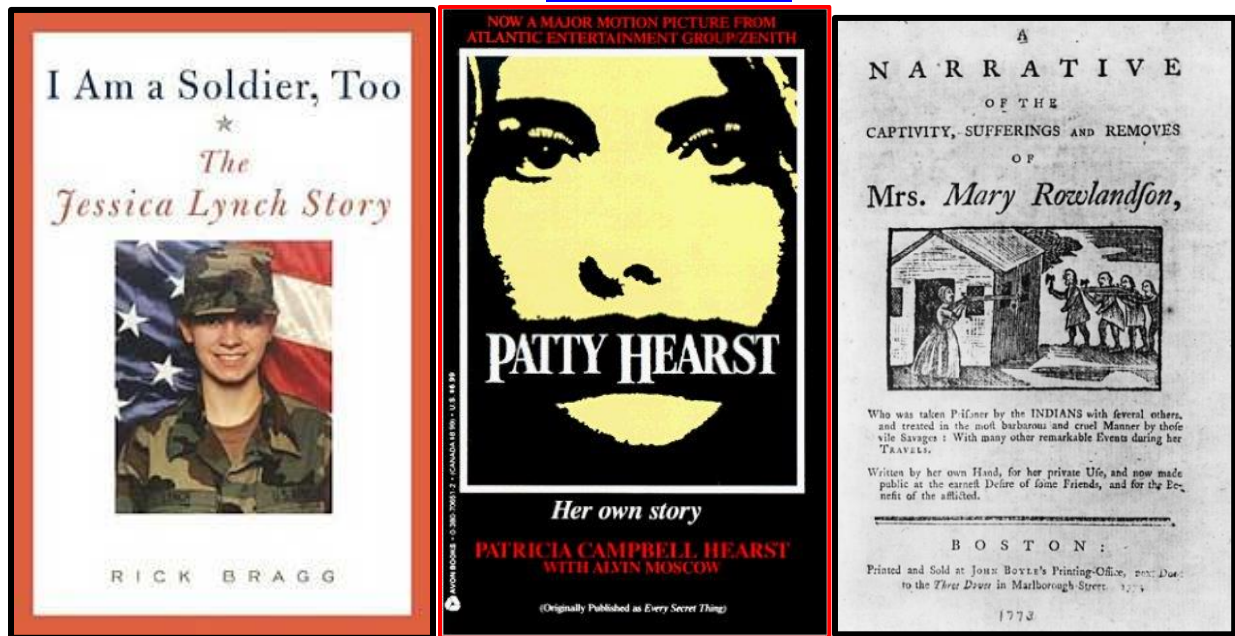


Illustration: The book covers of three famous American captivity narratives.

**This is a draft syllabus. Please see your course OWL site for the final syllabus.**

### Course delivery with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic

The intent is for this course to be delivered in-person, but should the COVID-19 landscape shift, the course will be delivered on-line synchronously (*i.e.*, on Zoom at the times indicated in the timetable). The grading scheme will not change. The course will return to an in-person mode of delivery when the University and local health authorities deem it safe to do so.

### **Course Description:**

An examination of American captivity narratives as an historiographical genre. Examples to be studied include colonial-era captivity accounts involving indigenous peoples and white settlers, African American slave narratives, POW memoirs, prison writings, and modern captivity stories. What do these narratives reveal about ethnic, racial, and gender boundaries in America?

### ***Prerequisite(s):***

2.0 courses in History at the 2200 level or above.

Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

### **Course Syllabus:**

#### **Course Content and Objectives:**

Since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when American colonists who had survived abduction by Native American tribes published accounts of their experiences as captives, the “captivity narrative” has been an immensely popular, and significant, form of literature in American culture. In this course, we will examine the genre of captivity narratives, from Mary Rowlandson’s famous 1682 account of being held captive by the Narragansett tribe, to African American slave narratives, POW accounts from various American wars, and prison writings by American inmates, including Henry David Thoreau, Jack London, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Huey Newton. We will compare early American captivity accounts to more modern versions of captivity narratives, such as the story of the capture of Private Jessica Lynch during the Iraq War in 2003, heiress Patty Hearst’s account of her kidnapping by a domestic terrorist group in California in 1974, and Travis Walton’s book *Fire in the Sky*, one of the most famous accounts of alleged abduction by a UFO. We will seek to answer the following questions: Why are captivity narratives such a popular and recurring form of American literature? How do captivity narratives stand up as historical documentation? What is their value as primary source material, and how have they been interpreted by historians? What did Americans learn from these widely-read depictions of what often amounted to forced cross-cultural encounters? How were the captives’ stories used to meet societal, cultural, and political needs at different times in U.S. history? What do they teach us about ethnic, racial, and gender boundaries in America?

#### **Learning Outcomes:**

##### ***Depth and Breadth of Knowledge:***

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will:

- Be familiar with the origins of the colonial era captivity narrative in American history;
- Be familiar with several such narratives;

- Be able to situate these narratives within the broader context of American history and historiography;
- Be able to identify recurring instances of the captivity narrative format in other periods of American history, and in a variety of forms;
- Be able to explain the significance, durability, and uses of captivity narratives in American culture.

### ***Research and Scholarship:***

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have demonstrated the ability to:

- Locate and use primary and secondary sources to interpret and analyze American captivity narratives;
- Assess differences between primary accounts written in the first person and those written in the third person in terms of their usefulness as historical sources;
- Develop a research question and answer it in a written assignment, integrating both primary and secondary sources;
- Understand and adhere to scholarly conventions in research, writing, documentation, and sharing of research.

### ***Professional Capacity and Communication Skills***

Through the completion of this course, students will:

- Develop improved reading and essay writing skills;
- Practice and improve communication skills through weekly discussions as well as oral presentations.

### **Course Materials:**

- Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola, ed., *Women's Indian Captivity Narratives* (NY: Penguin Books, 1998) (paperback) (available for purchase in the UWO Bookstore)
- William Graebner, *Patty's Got a Gun: Patricia Hearst in 1970s America* (Chicago and London: University Press of Chicago, 2008) (paperback edition 2015) (available for purchase in the UWO Bookstore)
- Additional weekly readings, which will be made available online.

### **Methods of Evaluation:**

#### ***Grading:***

- **2 short papers (3-4 pp. each)** (The first short paper will be due on Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup>. The second will be based on one of the class readings, and the due date will depend on which reading the student chooses). **30%**

- **Leading class discussion** (in conjunction with the reading chosen for the second short paper) **10%**
- **Essay proposal (1-2 pages) (due Oct. 17<sup>th</sup>)** **5%**
- **Research essay (10-12 pages) (Due: Dec. 1st)** **35%**
- **Participation** **20%**

***Written assignments:***

Written assignments must be submitted in Word format to the submission link on the OWL course website. (By using the submission link on the course website, your paper will automatically be submitted to Turnitin.com.)

Further instructions regarding the above listed assignments will be provided in class.

Late assignments: a late penalty of 5% for the first day, and 2% for each day after the first day (including Saturdays and Sundays) will be incurred for all written work submitted after the due date and time. Papers submitted on the due date but after the due time (*i.e.*, 1:30 p.m.) will be considered late and will be penalized 2%. Keep a copy of each of your written assignments until you receive the grade for it.

A late penalty will not be waived unless the student has provided to the instructor documentation from Academic Counseling. In that case, the student must contact the professor as soon as possible (*i.e.*, within 48 hours of the missed deadline) to discuss an alternate assignment and/or due date.

Please note that HIS 4351F is an essay course. According to Western's Academic Handbook, an essay course "...must be so structured that the student is required to demonstrate competence in essay writing to pass the course." In this course, that means that, in addition to receiving an overall passing grade in the course, students must complete and submit both short papers and the essay in order to pass the course, regardless of grades received for other assignments.

***Expectations:***

- Regular attendance.
  - Completion of all assigned readings and active, informed participation in class discussion, based on those readings.
  - Courtesy and respect towards all other members of the class.
  - Be present: turn off cell phones and other electronic devices, and engage with the class. Laptops are allowed if they are used to take notes or to refer to online course readings. Use of laptops for other purposes in class may negatively affect your participation mark.
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## Course Schedule and Readings:

[Please note: This is a preliminary schedule only. The final version of the syllabus will be posted on the OWL course website.]

### **Week 1 (September 12<sup>th</sup>): Introduction**

- Introduction and review of syllabus
- Historical background: captivity and captivity narratives in colonial North America
- Case study: the captivity of Mary Rowlandson

### **Week 2 (September 19<sup>th</sup>): Colonial Captivity Narratives**

- Mary Rowlandson (1682): “A True History of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson” (pp. 3-51 in *Women’s Indian Captivity Narratives*)
- Excerpt from James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (on conversion vs. redemption of captives)
- June Namias, “White Women Held Captive,” in Namias, *Gender and Ethnicity on the American Frontier* (chapter 1, pp. 21-48)
- June Namias, “White Men Held Captive,” in Namias, *Gender and Ethnicity on the American Frontier* (chapter 2, pp. 49-83)
- Linda Colley, “Different Americans, Different Britons” in Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire, and the World, 1650-1850* (pp. 137-167)
- Nancy Armstrong, “Mary Rowlandson and the Alien and Sedition Acts,” in Greil Marcus and Werner Sollors, eds., *A New Literary History of America* (pp. 127-131)

### **Week 3 (September 26<sup>th</sup>): Colonial Captivity Narratives**

- John Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America*, Chapter One (about the 1704 Deerfield Raid) (pp. 11-39)
- “English Narratives” (accounts of John Williams, Stephen Williams, Joseph Petty, and Joseph Kellogg) in Evan Haefeli and Kevin Sweeney, eds., *Captive Histories: English, French, and Native Narratives of the 1704 Deerfield Raid* (pp. 89-187)
- Hannah Dustan (1702): “A Notable Exploit; wherein, *Dux Faemina Facti, from Magnalia Christi Americana*” by Cotton Mather (pp. 55-60 in *Women’s Indian Captivity Narratives*)
- Jemima Howe (1792): “A Genuine and Correct Account of the Captivity, Sufferings and Deliverance of Mrs. Jemima Howe” by Bunker Gay (pp. 93-104 in *Women’s Indian Captivity Narratives*)
- Mary Jemison (1824): “A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison” by James E. Seaver, (pp. 119-210 in *Women’s Indian Captivity Narratives*)
- Sarah F. Wakefield (1864): “Six Weeks in the Sioux Tepees: A Narrative of Indian Captivity” (pp. 241-313)
- Sara Humphreys, “The Mass Marketing of the Colonial Captive Hannah Duston,” in *Canadian Review of American Studies* (Vol. 41, no. 2, 2011), pp. 149-178)

**Week 4 (October 3<sup>rd</sup>): African American Slave Narratives**

- Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861)
- Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave: Written by Himself* (1845)

**October 10<sup>th</sup>: Happy Thanksgiving! No class meeting today.**

**Week 5 (October 17<sup>th</sup>): POW narratives from the U.S. Civil War**

- Excerpt from James R. Compton, *Andersonville: The Story of Man's Inhumanity to Man* (1887)
- Excerpt from M.V.B. Phillips, *Life and Death in Andersonville: or, what I saw and experienced during seven months in rebel prisons* (1887)
- Excerpt from John Worrell Northrop, *Chronicles from the diary of a war prisoner in Andersonville....* (1904)
- Excerpt from John Levi Maile, *Prison Life in Andersonville* (1912)
- Excerpt from Robert C. Doyle, *Voices from Captivity: Interpreting the American POW Narrative* (1994)
- Excerpts from Clifford Canku and Michael Simon, trans., *The Dakota Prisoner of War Letters* (2013)

**Week 6 (October 24<sup>th</sup>): WWII internment camps**

- Letters from interned Japanese American children to Clara Breed (1942-1945) ([www.janm.org/collections/clara-breed-collection](http://www.janm.org/collections/clara-breed-collection))
- Drawings, paintings and photographs by Japanese American internees: Stanley Hayami, Hisako Hibi, George Hoshida, Estelle Ishigo, and Jack Iwata ([www.janm.org/collections/](http://www.janm.org/collections/))
- Excerpt from George Takei, *To the Stars: The Autobiography of George Takei* (1994)
- George Takei, "They interned my family. Don't let them do it to Muslims," in *The Washington Post*, 18 November 2016
- "Allegiance: A New Broadway Musical" website: [allegiancemusical.com](http://allegiancemusical.com)

**October 31<sup>st</sup>: Reading Week. No class meeting today.**

**Week 7 (November 7<sup>th</sup>): POW narratives from the Vietnam War**

- Excerpt from E.G. Gruner, *Prisoners of Culture: Representing the Vietnam POW* (1993)
- Excerpt from Michael J. Allen, *Until the Last Man Comes Home: POWs, MIAs, and the Unending Vietnam War* (2009)
- Excerpt from Eugene B. McDaniel with James Johnson, *Scars and Stripes: The True Story of One Man's Courage in Facing Death as a Vietnam POW* (1975)

- Excerpt from Jeremiah A. Denton, Jr. with Ed Brandt, *When Hell was in Session* (1982)
- Excerpt from Jim and Sybil Stockdale, *In Love and War: The Story of a Family's Ordeal and Sacrifice During the Vietnam Years* (1984)
- Excerpt from John McCain with Mark Salter, *Faith of My Fathers: A Family Memoir* (1999)
- Excerpt from James A. Daly, *Black Prisoner of War: A Conscientious Objector's Vietnam Memoir* (2000)

#### **Week 8 (November 14<sup>th</sup>): Prison writings**

- Henry David Thoreau, "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience" (1849)
- Jack London, "'Pinched': A Prison Experience," from *The Road* (1894; pub. 1907)
- Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" (1963)
- Excerpts from Leonard Peltier, *Prison Writings: My Life is My Sun Dance* (1999)
- Huey Newton, "Prisons," 12 July 1969, in *To Die for the People* (2009)
- Excerpt from Huey P. Newton, *Revolutionary Suicide* (1973)
- Eldridge Cleaver, "Letters from Prison," in *Soul on Ice* (1968)
- Huey P. Newton, "Prison, Where is Thy Victory?" in Philip S. Foner, ed., *The Black Panthers Speak* (1970)
- Afeni Shakur, "We Will Win: Letter from Prison by Afeni Shakur," in Philip S. Foner, ed., *The Black Panthers Speak* (1970)
- David Gilbert, *Love and Struggle: My Life in SDS, The Weather Underground, and Beyond* (2012)
- Ken Kesey, *Kesey's Jail Journal* (2003)

#### **Week 9 (November 21<sup>st</sup>): Famous women captives**

- Excerpts from David Kent, *The Lizzie Borden Sourcebook* (2010)
- Excerpt from Joseph A. Conforti, *Lizzie Borden on Trial: Murder, Ethnicity and Gender* (2016)
- Paula Uruburu, "Monster in Muslin: Lizzie Borden, American Myth-Making, and the Regeneration of the New England Spinster" in *Critical Issues of Our Time* (Vol. 7, 2011)
- Excerpt from Patricia Campbell Hearst with Alvin Moscow, *Every Secret Thing* (1982)
- William Graebner, *Patty's Got a Gun: Patricia Hearst in 1970s America* (2008)
- Christopher Castiglia, "That Was Not My Idea of Independence: The Captivity of Patty Hearst" in Castiglia, *Bound and Determined: Captivity, Culture-Crossing, and White Womanhood from Mary Rowlandson to Patty Hearst* (pp. 87-105)
- Excerpt from Rick Bragg, *I am a Soldier, Too: The Jessica Lynch Story* (2003)
- Jessica Lynch's website: [www.powjessicalynch.com](http://www.powjessicalynch.com)
- Jessica Lynch, "This is why we serve," in *West Virginia Gazette Mail*, 8 November 2018

#### **Week 10 (November 28<sup>th</sup>): Cults**

- Excerpt from T.B.H. Stenhouse, *“Tell It All”*: *The Story of a Life’s Experience in Mormonism—An Autobiography* (1874) and “Foreword” by Harriet Beecher Stowe
- Excerpt from Ann Eliza Young, *Wife No. 19, or, the Story of a Life in Bondage, Being a Complete Exposé of Mormonism* (1874)
- Excerpt from Leigh Fondakowski, *Stories from Jonestown* (2012)
- Excerpt from Deborah Layton, *Seductive Poison: A Jonestown Survivor’s Story of Life and Death in the People’s Temple* (1998)
- Excerpt from Jenna Miscavige Hill, *Beyond Belief: My Secret Life Inside Scientology and My Harrowing Escape* (2013)

**Week 11 (December 5<sup>th</sup>): Modern captivity narratives**

- Travis Walton, “An Ordinary Day,” condensed account from Walton’s book *Fire in the Sky* (1979)
- Excerpt from David Clarke, *How UFOs Conquered the World: The History of a Modern Myth* (2015)
- Lucas Tromly, “Race, Citizenship, and the Politics of Alien Abduction; Or, Why Aliens do not Abduct Asian Americans,” in *The Journal of Popular Culture* (Vol. 50, No. 2, 2017)
- Excerpt from Richard Phillips, *A Captain’s Duty: Somali Pirates, Navy SEALs, and Dangerous Days at Sea* (2010)
- Excerpt from Aron Ralston, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place* (2004)
- Excerpt from Elizabeth Smart with Chris Stewart, *My Story* (2014)
- Elaine Showalter, “Dark Places: The stories of Amanda Berry, Gina DeJesus and Michelle Knight could join a distinguished tradition of captivity narratives,” in *The New York Times*, 9 June 2013.
- Heather Hillsburg, “Urban Captivity Narratives: Captivity and Confession in Women’s Writing,” in *Canadian Review of American Studies* (47, No. 3, 2017)

**Additional Statements:**

Please review the Department of History Course Must-Knows document,

<https://www.history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/Docs/Department%20of%20History%20Course%20Must-Knows.pdf>,

for additional information regarding:

- Academic Offences
- Accessibility Options
- Medical Issues
- Plagiarism
- Scholastic Offences
- Copyright
- Health and Wellness