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*The Captive's Position: Female Narrative, Male Identity, and
Royal Authority in Colonial New England* (review)

Ralph Bauer

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gathers together sixteen important essays that consider early modern notions of the self, what went into forming that self, and how it could be expressed. Although the quality of the essays is at times uneven, the collection should prove an important resource for scholars of autobiography and early modern culture alike.

Jessica C. Murphy

Teresa A. Toulouse. *The Captive's Position: Female Narrative, Male Identity, and Royal Authority in Colonial New England*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2007. 225 pp. ISBN13 978-0-8122-3958-4, \$49.95.

Perhaps the most popular genre in early American literature, the colonial captivity narrative continues to fascinate readers and scholars. But while some critics have focused on the generative role that the colonial captivity narrative allegedly played in bringing about other, more “literary” genres such as the novel in other places and times (i.e. England or the nineteenth-century US), Teresa Toulouse’s new book interrogates the culturally complex functions that the colonial captivity narrative played in its own place and time—colonial New England during the last two decades of the seventeenth century and the first decade of the eighteenth. Also, while other critics have often tended to read the captivity narratives as historical, autobiographical, or ethnographic documents, Toulouse is interested in these narratives as rhetorical constructs that fulfill particular political purposes at the time at which they were published. Finally, in contrast to critics who have frequently found in these narratives manifestations of a “subversive” self rebelling against religious, social, or political orthodoxies, Toulouse reads them as allegorizations of a thoroughly conservative and patriarchal socio-political ideology in an age that saw the steady erosion of the cultural and political authority of the ministerial oligarchy.

“From the Restoration of 1660 to the Peace of Utrecht of 1713,” she writes, “imperial conflicts over the larger meanings of political legitimacy and authority in Europe both exacerbate and evoke a crisis in cultural identification for some second- and third-generation New English ministers which eventuates in a defensive reworking of their English-born (grand) fathers’ original ‘errand’” (15–16). Yet, the ministers’ filial relationship was ambivalent, Toulouse suggests, precisely because the second- and third-generation “sons” aimed both to appropriate as well as to redefine the authority of their first-generation “fathers.” In pursuing this line of argument, the book focuses on the various publications of four key texts: Mary Rowlandson’s archetypal *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God* (1682), about her captivity during King

Philip's War (1675–1676), the narratives about the captivities of Hannah Dustan and Hannah Swarton during King William's War (1690–1697), and John Williams's *The Redeemed Captive* (1707).

Thus, in Chapters Two and Three, Toulouse reads Rowlandson's famous captivity account, published with different titles in both New England and London, as a political allegory supporting the conservative jeremiadic rhetoric of prominent New England ministers—most notably Increase Mather—who were faced by internal and external challenges to their interpretive authority, as calls for religious toleration became louder, and imperial efforts were under way to tie the colony more closely to the metropolis by attempting to revoke New England's colonial charter. The story of the solitary, passive, submissive, and obedient female captive dragged into the wilderness, Rowlandson's narrative imagines how to “remain loyal to and to escape from the ‘fathers’ without destroying the community or oneself,” hereby giving expression to the social values of the second-generation ministerial elite, who aimed to assert a “connection to fathers precisely through a representation of separation from them” (55).

Similarly, Chapters Four and Five focus on Cotton Mather's rhetorical uses of the narratives of Hannah Dustan and Hannah Swarton in the aftermath of the “Glorious Revolution,” particularly his political attempt to defend Governor Philips and the new colonial charter that had been negotiated by Mather's father, Increase, from critics such as John Leverett, William Brattle, and Solomon Stoddard. In Toulouse's reading, the liberal positions that these critics represent are equated in these captivity narratives with those of “sleepy and indifferent ‘Seers’” at a time when New England is threatened both from the inside as well as on the outside by quasi-Catholic English interests (99). Although the story of Hannah Dustan, who overcame and scalped her captors in their sleep, presents a certain difficulty for Mather in his effort to affirm the social value of passivity and obedience, he is nevertheless able to cast Dustan as the figure of *Judea capta*, and the narrative of her captivity as a call to restore traditional New English modes of authority, partially by appending the narrative of Hannah Swarton, a more orthodox female captive. At the same time, Toulouse argues, Dustan's violence articulates Mather's more general rage against the New English “family” that has strayed from its obligatory obedience to the “fathers” (113).

Finally, in Chapters Six and Seven, Toulouse turns to John Williams's *The Redeemed Captive* to argue that Williams replaces the theme of the female captive among Native American captors for that of the male captive among French Catholic captors in the context of a general discontent among elite ministers with the royalist and Enlightened politics of governor Dudley,

thereby linking the colony's "afflictions" to the abrogation of New England's charter rights, and asserting a particularly New English (i.e. Congregationalist) political and social vision without appearing disloyal to English imperial authority. Reading Williams's captivity narrative in the context of his other published works, such as the sermons *God in the Camp* and *Warnings to the Unclean*, Toulouse argues that it articulates more emphatically than the other captivity narratives preceding it the theme of "seduction"—physical as well as spiritual—hereby foregrounding a new dimension in third-generation "sons'" ambivalence to the "fathers'" authority that realizes that "only the continuing seduction of the 'father' by 'sons' . . . can keep the 'father' authoritative and legitimate" (143).

More than any other treatment of the colonial captivity narrative of which I am aware, Toulouse's book takes a thoroughly historicized approach in her textual analyses. Her point in favor of the dense rhetorical signification and conservative political ideology of these captivity narratives is carefully argued and seems to me to be thoroughly persuasive. By drawing heavily on the work of social and political historians of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century America and England, she is able to tease out the metaphorical and rhetorical subtleties of these narratives better than any comprehensive study to date. Combining astute rhetorical analysis with thorough immersion in historical scholarship, her book exemplifies at its best the interdisciplinary cooperation that has increasingly characterized early American studies in recent years.

Ralph Bauer

Lorraine Carroll. *Rhetorical Drag: Gender Impersonation, Captivity, and the Writing of History*. Kent, OH: Kent State UP, 2007. 251 pp. ISBN 0-87338-882-8, \$28.95.

Scholars have often noted either the reality or the probability of editorial emendation in early captivity narratives written by or about women in North America. They have revealed how male editors not only sandwiched these texts between prefaces or concluding comments, but also actively and intrusively meddled *within* them. Lorraine Carroll's new study takes this meddling to another level, arguing that we have neither looked deeply enough at what is signified by the recurrence of this practice over time, nor have we adequately examined its effects. For Carroll, what she variously calls the "impersonation," "imposture," "identification," and most pointedly, the "rhetorical drag" practiced by male appropriators of largely first-person female texts intentionally *shapes* the ways in which "we interpret representations of gender, subjectivity, experience and authorship" in early captivity narratives. Analysis