

Captivity in Print:

Indian Captivity in the Urban Public Discourse of the French and Indian War

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Newspaper reports describing the situations in which Native Americans took white settlers captive significantly shaped the way urban colonists viewed the frontier and the roles white settlers and Native Americans played on it. For many readers, stories describing violent deaths, kidnappings, and the pillaging of homes would be the closest they would ever come to the frontier or to an Indian. Like many people today when dealing with places and people far away, colonial urbanites of the mid-18th century relied on published materials and public discourse to shape their opinions and beliefs regarding such personally inaccessible topics. This paper examines what exposure Euro-Americans in colonial cities, most notably Philadelphia and New York, had to Indian captivity during the French and Indian War and how it influenced their perceptions of the frontier and the Native Americans who lived there. Through reading “advices” in newspapers and captivity narratives that told true stories about the plight of settlers on the frontier during the French and Indian War, these people absorbed feelings of dislike and distrust for Native Americans that served as a foundation for the hatred that would come out of the frontier and eventually become a part of the character of American identity at a national level later in the century.

By the mid-18th century, the cities of the British colonies in North America were cosmopolitan centers of trade and, in residents’ minds, almost as civilized as London. The threat of an Indian attack so far east was practically non-existent, despite the conflicts that raged between the French, English, and Native Americans throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. Settlers living on the colonial frontier in the 1750s and 60s did not have the same sense of security. The possibility of Indian attack on the isolated homesteads and small towns of the frontier and subsequent captivity was very real and very high, due to almost constant

warfare over white encroachment on Indian lands, the poor treatment and disrespect showed Indians by colonists in British North America, and French encouragement to fight against the English. Between 1670 and 1770, roughly 3-4,000 white colonists were forcibly taken from their homes in New England and the Mid-Atlantic colonies by Indian or French and Indian raiding parties, perhaps as many as 2,000 during the French and Indian War alone.¹ While settlers in the cities were not concerned with being captured themselves, it was a reality they were familiar with through published works, such as newspaper reports and captivity narratives, relating to the frontier and conflict. These sources of information helped to shape their perceptions of the frontier and the people who inhabited it.

The threat of Indian captivity was a part of life in the colonies from the very beginning of European exploration on the North American continent. The act of taking captives and the process that accompanied it had been a part of intertribal warfare for centuries, and Native Americans incorporated Europeans into these practices. Traditionally, war parties took captives as part of the mourning process after the death of a loved one. The family of the deceased would choose whether to adopt the person as a replacement for the lost man or

¹ This number is a rough estimate arrived at by compiling the work of various historians and does *not* include incidents of known French or Spanish captives in New Spain or New France, nor those from the southern colonies. Alden T. Vaughan and Daniel K. Richter identify 1,641 prisoners from New England alone between 1675 and 1763 in *Crossing the Cultural Divide: Indians and New Englanders, 1605-1763*, reprinted from the proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society, Vol. 90, Part 1, April 1980, (Worcester, MA: American Antiquarian Society, 1980). In turn, their numbers are based on work done by Emma Lewis Coleman, who traced over 1,000 in *New England Captives Carried to Canada Between 1677 and 1760, During the French and Indian Wars*, (Portland, Me: The Southworth Press, 1925). Matthew C. Ward estimates that nearly 2,000 additional settlers were taken from the Pennsylvania frontier and the Ohio River Valley during the French and Indian War in "Redeeming the Captives: Pennsylvania Captives among the Ohio Indians, 1755-1765," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 125, no. 3 (July 2001): 161-189.

woman or to subject the captive to torture and eventual death; either option had the effect of replenishing a diminished bloodline. Adoption could also extend kinship networks and build ties between clans or tribes. Less traditionally, taking captives was also a way to prevent Europeans from expanding further into Indian lands. By 1704, captives had become “commercialized commodities,” with the trade in the redemption of captives from English colonies centered in Montreal.²

Captivity narratives, the stories of a captive’s experiences, emotional turmoil, and religious epiphanies, began to appear not long after the first captivities in the British colonies. These narratives usually start with a person’s capture and end upon their return to white society. Mary Rowlandson, the wife of a Massachusetts reverend, published the first captivity narrative in order to relate her experiences during King Phillip’s War in 1676. She originally wrote her story in “Her own Hand for Her private Use,” though published the narrative for public consumption “at the earnest Desire of some Friends, and for the benefit of the Afflicted,”³ as the title page to the second edition, published in 1682, states.⁴

² Vaughan and Richter, *Crossing the Cultural Divide*, 73-76; Pauline Turner Strong, “Transforming Outsiders: Captivity, Adoption, and Slavery Reconsidered,” in *A Companion to American Indian History*, Phillip J. Deloria and Neal Salisbury, eds., (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 343-344; Evan Haefeli and Kevin Sweeny, *Captors and Captives: The 1704 French and Indian Raid on Deerfield*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 147, 150-151. Matthew C. Ward discusses the transformation of captivity on the frontier from traditional reasons to extremely violent raids intended as psychological warfare in *Breaking the Backcountry: The Seven Years War in Virginia and Pennsylvania*, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003), 55-57. Daniel K. Richter examines the role of captivity and captives in Iroquois societies in *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

³ It should be noted that white 18th century English is quite similar to modern English, the writing of the language differed significantly from today’s standards. Capitalization, grammar, abbreviations, and spelling were not standardized; the writer often wrote however he or she felt. In an attempt to keep the integrity of the original sources in tact, the only changes made in

Like all other narratives, Rowlandson's benefited not only herself and other "afflicted" members of her community, but the community as a whole. From the beginning, religious and political leaders edited captives' stories to fit their religious and political propagandist goals, often embellishing or even completely fictionalizing the tales. Increase and Cotton Mather, perhaps the most highly respected Puritan religious leaders in colonial New England during the late 17th and early 18th centuries, recorded captive's stories and published them for general consumption. They saw captivity as a way to try to bring their communities back to God and induce those settling further away from Puritan centers to carry their religion with them.⁵ By stressing the importance of God in the trials members of the Puritan religious community faced with the Indians leaders like the Mathers fought to retain control of their congregations and communities, and tried to prevent a decline in religious observance and a fall into heathenism. Later on, 19th century publishers utilized the idea of captivity as a popular plot in dime novels and other adventure stories. The exaggerations of real events and the creation of new incidents so similar to what people expected the captivity experience to

quotations without explanation pertain to letter replacements, i.e. the commonly used "ff" or "f" when "ss" or "s" is meant. Otherwise, original capitalization, emphasis, and spelling have been retained.

⁴ Mary Rowlandson, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God, Together with the Faithfulness of His Promises Displayed: Being a Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*, (Cambridge, MA: Samuel Green, 1682), in *Early American Imprints, Series 1: Evans, 1639-1800*, <http://docs.newsbank.com/s/Evans/eaidoc/EVAN/0F30147E2DB1CCB8/F1583A19A56A4FB68E8EA7938A36B9BE>.

⁵ Tara Fitzpatrick, "The Figure of Captivity: The Cultural Work of the Puritan Captivity Narrative," *American Literary History* 3, no. 1 (Spring, 1991): 4-5.

he drove book sales both domestically and abroad, as well cemented ideas about captivity in readers' minds.⁶

Captivity and the Written Word

Scholarly literature on English-Indian relations and captivity narratives is vast, and, with a few exceptions, can be divided into three fluid categories: the New England and Puritan narratives of the 17th and early 18th centuries, the captivities of the Early Republic in the West, and the captivity of the mid-18th century along the western frontier. Multiple scholars have covered the Puritan connections between captivity, religion, and politics rather extensively. Scholarship on captivities around the time of the American Revolution and through the 19th century involving, for example, Daniel Boone or the tribes of the Great Plains has also been covered fairly well. Most often the same texts cover both periods.

Furthermore, work on captivity tends to focus on either the narrative or the captive. Scholars in history, English, anthropology, and gender studies have studied the written captivity narrative in terms of religion, gender, family relationships, social structures, archetype, race, images, literacy, and intercultural relations. They look at the feelings of the captive, how they reacted to their own captivity, how they adapted to new situations, how they coped, and what that says about them.⁷ In a departure from most research, Gary

⁶ June Namias, *White Captives: Gender and Ethnicity on the American Frontier*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 8-9.

⁷ Excepting collections of captivity narratives, scholarly works tend to cover a broad range of time and place, just never focusing on the frontier of the French and Indian War as unique. The following includes some of the best work analyzing captivity narratives and often communities or Anglo-Indian relations: James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); James Axtell, *The European and the Indian:*

Ebersole recently studied how people read and reacted to captivity narratives over time, suggesting readers of captivity narratives made sense of captivity by questioning the text through a lens of suffering and identity.⁸

What appears to be missing in the literature on captivity and captivity narratives is the third category mentioned above, the western frontier in the mid-18th century. At least two well-respected compilations of captivity narratives that cover a broad range of time periods fail to include any from this time and place.⁹ With the exception of Ebersole, work on the reactions of the people who were not directly involved but felt affected by the experiences of the frontier has barely been touched upon. Additionally, this paper follows up on arguments made recently by Peter Silver in *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America* and Patrick Griffin in *American Leviathan: Empire, Nation, and Revolutionary Frontier*.

Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); John Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America*, (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1994); Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stadola & James A. Levernier, *The Indian Captivity Narrative 1550-1900*, (New York: Twayne, 1993); Fitzpatrick, "The Figure of Captivity"; Haefeli and Sweeny, *Captors and Captives*; Annette Kolodny, *The Land Before Her: Fantasy and Experience of the American Frontiers, 163-1860*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984); Namias, *White Captives*; Roy Harvey Pearce, "The Significances of the Captivity Narrative," *American Literature* 19, no. 1 (March 1947); Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860*, (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1973); Pauline Turner Strong, *Captive Selves, Captivating Others: The Politics and Poetics of Colonial American Captivity Narratives*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999); Teresa A. Toulouse, *The Captive's Position: Female Narrative, Male Identity, and Royal Authority in Colonial New England*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007).

⁸ Gary L. Ebersole, *Captured by Texts: Puritan to Postmodern Images of Indian Captivity*, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1995).

⁹ Both Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stadola, ed., *Women's Indian Captivity Narratives*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1998) and Gordon M. Sayre, ed., *American Captivity Narratives*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000) do not contain captivity narratives published during the time this paper covers. The exception to this would be the narrative of Mary Jemison, which does appear in Derounian-Stadola. The narrative begins during this time but was not written or published until 1824.

Both posit that relations with Indians in western Pennsylvania soured in the mid-18th century, beginning a tradition of “Indian-hating” in the region that would eventually become a significant aspect of American identity on a national level. Despite tensions between Presbyterian Scots-Irish and German settlers on the frontier and Quakers running the government in Philadelphia, colonists united in a shared an identity as “white” and “civilized” as opposed to “Indian” or “savage.”¹⁰

Another way colonists distinguished themselves from their Indian neighbors was through the use of writing and literature. Jill Lepore examines this in detail in *The Name of War*, her study of the post-war re-imagining of King Phillip’s War. Lepore argues that words and wounds cannot be separated, and together they define boundaries between people.¹¹ Colonists reclaimed their whiteness and civility and changed the perception of the violent and “savage” acts they perpetrated during the war by creatively reinterpreting their history in a text-based manner. Reading the written word, in this case, offered a sanitized view of the past, altering how colonists viewed themselves and the Algonquian Indians at the end of the 17th century, and in fact, well into the 18th century and through today.¹²

Gordon Sayre agrees, suggesting that colonial literature can provide insight into the way Europeans constructed identities for themselves and their views of Indians. In *Les Sauvages Americains: Representations of Native Americans in French and English Colonial*

¹⁰ Peter Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2008). Patrick Griffin, *American Leviathan: Empire, Nation, and Revolutionary Frontier*, (Hill and Wang: New York, 2007). Michael C. Ward looks at the growth of Indian-hating after the French and Indian War in *Breaking the Backcountry*, 236-240.

¹¹ Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Phillip’s War and the Origin of American Identity*, (New York: Knopf, 1998), x.

¹² Lepore, *The Name of War*.

Literature, Sayre analyzes colonial literature produced by English and French explorers and ethnographers in light of what he sees as their defining features: the point of view of the author and descriptions of Indians. By looking at texts that include both of these elements, the exploration of physical space and the ethnography of its populace, these authors were able to convey knowledge about Indians and America, as well as control how Europeans perceived this foreign land and culture.¹³

It stands to reason, then, that the ideas of Lepore and Sayre should extend beyond the restrictions imposed by those scholars, beyond French and English colonial literature and 17th century New England. Public discourse gives cultural context to personal experiences shaping opinions and identity as much as those events. What the colonists read continued to shape their perceptions of themselves and Native Americans. Discussions in public, primarily through written sources such as newspapers, were essential to how people in cities thought about what was happening away from their immediate vicinity, such as on the frontier and how those events affected the settlers and Native Americans involved. By publishing reports of violent behavior and attacks on the frontier, white colonists were able to take ownership of those acts. They were able to shape Native Americans and white settlers into what they wanted them to be and influence how readers would react to the situations.

This paper examines the way Euro-Americans *not* on the colonial frontier reacted to Indian captivity during the French and Indian War. What did the people in cities like Philadelphia and New York say in public about captivity and captives? What influences did it

¹³ Gordon Sayre, *Les Sauvages Américains: Representations of Native Americans in French and English Colonial Literature*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 24-25.

have on how they viewed other inhabitants of the North American continent? Even Ebersole did not discuss what else these people were reading to influence their opinions.

Captivity has an extensive history in this country. This paper will be limited to the period of the French and Indian War (roughly 1754-1763), primarily focusing on captivities along what was then the frontier of Pennsylvania and the Ohio River Valley. It argues that the perceptions of the frontier held by colonists living in cities such as Philadelphia and New York were affected by the public discourse surrounding those captivities. Despite cultural differences based on variations in religion and European roots, urbanites still found enough in common with frontier settlers to accept and identify with them, for the most part, as “white” and “civilized,” as opposed to the “savage” and “barbarous” Natives Americans attacking their settlements. What city-dwellers read in newspapers added to the sense of dislike for Indians growing in the colonies, eventually contributing to the Indian-hating that would later become a part of American identity.

The Land Between

Recent scholarship on white-Indian relations has relied on the idea that the western frontier of the mid-18th century was significantly different from the cities of the East Coast, such as Philadelphia and New York. Peter Silver’s *Our Savage Neighbors* stresses the divide between the frontier and Philadelphia. He argues that the fears of the English, German, Irish settlers on the frontier remade society and the political landscape. Though there were deep tensions between these three nationalities, the fear brought on by the Indian attacks on the frontier of the Seven Years War brought them together. Manipulation by provincial leaders for

their own ends convinced the settlers they had meaningful commonalities and gave rise to the concept of these various European groups as a singular “white” group. Silver establishes that fear became the driving factor for the residents of the backcountry and convinced them to force change in the Quaker-run government in Philadelphia.¹⁴

Patrick Griffin goes as far to say in *American Leviathan* that because of regional differences, the American Revolution fought on the frontier was for different reasons and lasted almost a decade longer than it did in the eastern part of the new nation. The Revolution in the west centered more around the violence between “civilized” whites and the “barbarous” Indians fighting for the British than even the fight for independence from Great Britain. That violence, Griffin argues, led to a deep hatred of Indians on the frontier that would eventually come to define American identity in general in the years following the American Revolution during the process of nation building.¹⁵

The frontier itself was a meeting ground for a variety of peoples, an in-between land filled with tension where Native Americans and Europeans met in violence, for trade, and negotiated for peace. Richard White called this area “the middle ground,” a violent place where French traders and the Indians of the Great Lakes region, the *pays d’en haut*, created new cultural forms due to creative miscommunication between the two groups. Jane T. Merritt calls a similar region the “crossroads” in her study of 18th century Pennsylvania. In light of the variety of scholarship on the impact of European contact on Indian societies, she

¹⁴ Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors*, xviii-xix.

¹⁵ Griffin, *American Leviathan*. The focus of Griffin’s book is actually the 1763 onwards, especially the American Revolution and the years immediately following it. While this is not within the scope of this paper, his argument illustrates the chasm between the frontier settlers and the colonists back east.

suggests that the New World looks like “a crossroads, a place where many paths converged, providing divers possibilities and directions to those who passed through.” The crossroads was a place where Indians and whites cooperated, but “in negotiating their differences redefined themselves and each other.”¹⁶

The French and Indian War was perhaps the most significant conflict in colonial American history, matched only by the American Revolution, because of the impact it had on the balance of power in the colonies and in Europe. Much of it took place on the frontier.¹⁷ Like previous conflicts between the French and English in the colonies, this war was, in part, a North American conflict being fought for local reasons at the local level, and also an extension of a European war, the Seven Years War being fought across the globe primarily between France and England.

In 1749, English fur traders began to push their way westward out of Pennsylvania and Virginia into what had previously been an area only the French entered, the trans-Allegheny West. The French were determined to resist this intrusion. Between 1752 and 1754, they forced the British out and themselves as far east as modern-day Pittsburgh. The next year, London and Paris ordered troops to the colonies and fighting began in earnest. As in previous conflicts, tribes were courted by both sides, and though some were unwilling to break all ties with Britain, many from the Ohio Valley saw the war as a way to take revenge on the white

¹⁶ Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, empires, and republics in the Great Lakes region, 1650-1815*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Jane T. Merritt, *At the Crossroads: Indians and Empires on a Mid-Atlantic Frontier, 1700-1763*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 2, 3-4.

¹⁷ Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1763*, xvii, says that it is “the most important event in eighteenth-century North America,” quoted in Gary Nash, *Red, White, and Black: The Peoples of Early North America*, (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006), 246.

communities that had forced them out of their lands. From the summer of 1755 until General John Forbes captured Fort Duquesne in fall 1758, French and Indian forces, especially Indian forces, stepped up the raids on the Pennsylvania frontier, decimating the English, Scots-Irish, and German communities there. The Ohio Indians, mostly Delaware and Shawnee, are estimated to have taken almost one thousand captives during that three year period.¹⁸

On a grand scale, the most significant aspect of the end of the French and Indian War was its outcome. Fighting began to wane in 1759 with Anglo-American victories at Fort Niagara and Quebec, and ended with the fall of Montreal in 1760. Under the terms of the Treaty of Paris, signed in 1763 by France, England, and Spain, the French lost all of their North American possessions. French territory east of the Mississippi was ceded to England, west of the Mississippi to Spain, and England acquired Spanish Florida. The result was England's unparalleled control of the continent east of the Mississippi. This significant alteration in the balance of the power in the New World would have drastic consequences for the relationships between Euro-American settlers and Native Americans, who could no longer use their previously successful strategy of playing European powers off one another as part of their strategy for maintaining their independence.¹⁹

¹⁸ Nash, *Red, White, and Black*, 244-247. Matthew C. Ward, "Redeeming the Captives: Redeeming the Captives: Pennsylvania Captives among the Ohio Indians, 1755-1765," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 125, no. 3 (July 2001), 162.

¹⁹ Nash, *Red, White, and Black*, 254.

Captivity in Public Discourse

Colonial newspapers are one of the most popular sources of public discourse in the British colonies and give insight to the scope of the world colonists inhabited. The newspaper editors of Philadelphia and New York frequently re-published news items they read about in other papers and “advices” of which they had been made aware. These advices were usually updates obtained via personal correspondences by a local person in contact with someone in the place these events were taking place. This was often noted at the beginning of the article, though it was not always clear where the information from a particular source ended. The August 28, 1758 *New-York Gazette* included the line “By Express from Goshen we have Advice,” before describing the particular attack in Goshen, Pennsylvania.²⁰ The February 16, 1756 *New-York Gazette* reporting an attack in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, quoted on pages 15-16 in this paper, begins with the headline “PHILADELPHIA, February 12.”²¹ The same article contains news from Lisbon, Portugal and Spain, indicating not only how widely aware of the world colonists were, but also how quickly news could travel throughout the colonies. Not included in this paper are articles about captives in other colonies printed in these Philadelphia and New York newspapers, news of which originated in such places as Boston, Providence, New Jersey, Virginia, and South Carolina.

These newspapers projected the same attitude when discussing Indian attack and the taking of captives, encouraging disbelief at the savagery and violence perpetrated against

²⁰ *New-York Gazette*, August 28, 1758, Page 3, in America’s Historical Newspapers Database, <http://docs.newsbank.com.proxyau.wrlc.org/s/HistArchive/ahnpdoc/EANX/10DAADE1916B9C28/F1583A19A56A4FB68E8EA7938A36B9BE>.

²¹ *New-York Gazette*, February 16, 1756 Page 2, in America’s Historical Newspapers Database, <http://docs.newsbank.com.proxyau.wrlc.org/s/HistArchive/ahnpdoc/EANX/10DEEF98DD2384B8/F1583A19A56A4FB68E8EA7938A36B9BE>.

white settlers. Captive-taking discussed in these newspapers during the Seven Years War followed much the same pattern it had for the past hundred years, if on a larger scale than it had previously. While some captives might be killed or ceremonially tortured, Matthew Ward asserts that the primary reason Indians took prisoners was to increase their own numbers. In fact, adoption was what most captives could expect, and the kindness with which they were treated and trust given to them encouraged many to choose to remain with their captors. The violent ends so many feared were often reserved for young men of “military age,” especially those who refused to cooperate with their captors or were obstinate.²²

The kindnesses shown in captivity, though, were not what other colonists read about in newspapers and other published works. For the most part, instances of captivity were included in the same section as descriptions of violent raids, murders, and the burning of homes and barns. In fact, many of the articles seem to follow a pattern, though it is unclear whether this was created in the writing of the incident to invoke a feeling of sympathy or if the pattern really did exist. In most articles, the “innocent and unknowing” settler is minding his or her own business, usually tending to farm chores in the fields or animal pastures or in the home. The colonist is then attacked by a group of Indians, usually shot at, and then killed or captured. An alternative situation is sometimes seen among men only. Rather than be the victim of a surprise attack, those men a part of colonial militias or other fighting forces, were captured in skirmishes with Indians. This is how Robert Eastburn is taken in his captivity narrative, *A Faithful Narrative, of the many Dangers and Sufferings, as well as wonderful*

²² Matthew C. Ward, *Breaking the Backcountry*, 52-58. For a larger discussion of captivity, see James Axtell, *The Invasion Within* and *The European and the Indian*.

Deliverances of Robert Eastburn, during his late Captivity among the Indians, originally published in 1758.²³

An extract from a letter from Hanover Township, Lancaster Country, dated August 11, [1757], relates two attacks, one “[l]ast Thursday” which the author found out about on Sunday, and one the next Wednesday, after the author had returned from looking for Indians’ tracks. The first paragraph of the letter details the first attack: the capture of a woman and her child when her horse was shot out from under her, the killing of two boys and a soldier as they were out bringing in the family’s cows, the narrow escape of a third boy on the same errand, and the attack of two young men plowing, one of whom was shot and scalped and the other captured. A few lines later, the writer continues, stating that in the Wednesday attack “ten Indians surprised Isaac Williams’s Wife, and the Widow Williams... killed and scalped the former, in Sight of the House, she having run a little Way, after three Balls had been shot through her Body; the latter they carried away Captive.” The writer ends with the importance of the soldiers in protecting the harvest and thus the survival of the town. The piece continued similarly.²⁴

Newspapers frequently listed the names of those murdered and carried off in raids as well as where they were from. Naming people killed or captured made the attacks seem more real and reminded readers that these victims were people, possibly people they knew.

²³ See pages 18-19 of this paper for a brief examination of Eastburn’s narrative. Robert Eastburn, “A Faithful Narrative, of the many Dangers and Sufferings, as well as wonderful Deliverances of Robert Eastburn, during his late Captivity among the Indians,” in Richard VanDerBeets, ed., *Held Captive By Indians: Selected Captivity Narratives, 1642-1836*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1973), 151-176.

²⁴ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, August 18, 1757, Page 3, in America’s Historical Newspapers Database, <http://docs.newsbank.com/s/HistArchive/ahnpdoc/EANX/10D80DF65F565E90/F1583A19A56A4FB68E8EA7938A36B9BE>.

Personalizing the story also created a greater sense of empathy. The Indians involved in these raids were rarely mentioned by name, or even individualized is. One of the few exceptions is found in William Flemming's captivity narrative discussed below. A typical example of this name/no-name system is the March 11, 1756 issue of the *Pennsylvania Gazette*: "We hear from Berks County, that on Saturday Evening last the House and Barn of Barnabas Sietle, and the Mill of Peter Conrad, were burnt down, and the Wife of [Baifar Neytong?] killed, and his Son, a Child of eight Years old, taken Captive, by three Indians..." A year earlier, the *New-York Mercury* printed a "true Account the Damage done by the Indians at the Canalways in Cumberland County, on the 28th of last month [February 1755]," which in a single paragraph mentions how Indians killed and scalped three people (James Leaton, Catherine Stillwell, and one of her children), took two children prisoner (Stillwell's other two children), destroyed or stole over 30 animals (belonging to Elias Stillwell and Samuel Hicks, among others), and burned three houses and a barn (owned by John McKeney, Samuel Eaton, Richard Malone, and John Hicks). McKeney and Malone both lost animals and buildings, or more practically, food, income, and shelter. In the next paragraph, "advice from Carlisle" references an attack on Patterson's Fort described in a previous edition of the newspaper. Those that went to bury the dead from that attack "found one Sheridan, his Wife, three Children, and a Man Servant, all murder'd; also two others in another House... And that two Persons have been found murder'd on the Potowmack."²⁵

²⁵ *New-York Mercury*, February 16, 1756, Page 2, in America's Historical Newspapers Database, <http://docs.newsbank.com.proxyau.wrlc.org/s/HistArchive/ahnpdoc/EANX/10DEEF98DD2384B8/F1583A19A56A4FB68E8EA7938A36B9BE>.

Again and again, incidents of captivity were surrounded by descriptions of what readers would certainly consider atrocities, the behavior described as “inhuman” in other print sources. Rather than letting captivity stand on its own, it is discussed within the context of a larger event. This endows it with the same emotional triggers as, in the examples above, the murders of children. Purposeful or not, by planting most of the information regarding captivity in this context, the editors of these newspapers made it easy for captivity to influence feelings of hatred towards Indians.

The articles also overwhelmingly extol those who fought back against Indian cruelty. At the end of August 1758, the *New-York Gazette* praised the “Alertness and Activity of the Militia” in pursuing a party of Indians who attacked Goshen, Pennsylvania. Isaac Cooley reported that Indians scalped and killed his wife in his own house, took his three children captive, and then attacked him on his way home; were it not for the militia, “many more of the Neighbors doubtless must have fallen a Sacrifice to the Inhabitants of the Wilderness, whose tender Mercies are Cruelties.”²⁶ The editor of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* paraphrased the author of the August 11, 1757 letter, “[h]ad it not been for forty Men, which the Province had in their Pay, in that Township, little of the Harvest that Way would have been saved; and as the Time that these Men were engaged for is near clasped, the Inhabitants hope the Government will continue them in their Service, else the Consequences are to be dreaded.”²⁷

²⁶ [Train; Pieces; Cammon; Carriages; Provisions; Carrying-Place; Wood-Creek; Capt. Ogilvie]; *New-York Gazette*, August 28, 1758, Page 3 in America’s Historical Newspapers Database, <http://docs.newsbank.com.proxyau.wrlc.org/s/HistArchive/ahnpdoc/EANX/10DAADE1916B9C28/F1583A19A56A4FB68E8EA7938A36B9BE>.

²⁷ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, August 18, 1757, Page 3, in America’s Historical Newspapers Database, <http://docs.newsbank.com/s/HistArchive/ahnpdoc/EANX/10D80DF65F565E90/F1583A19A56A4FB68E8EA7938A36B9BE>.

These people were not only celebrated, but also relied upon by frontier settlers for protection for themselves, their possessions, their livelihood, and even their very food.

In addition to these reports *The Pennsylvania Gazette* printed an “Ode to the Inhabitants of Pennsylvania” on September 30, 1756. By this time, the English colonies had faced years of raids and defeats at the hands of French soldiers and Native warriors, but the tide was beginning to turn. The poem acknowledges the hardships Pennsylvania has faced and is an attempt to bring morale up, a celebration of Britain’s might. The poem calls for “illustrious Britons” to “rise” in order to pursue freedom and “save your Country’s shame.” Especially, it calls for Pennsylvanians to take revenge on the enemy for the atrocities they committed, including taking captives from among the white settlers of the colony:

“But chief let PENNSYLVANIA wake,
And on those foes her Terrors shake,
Their gloomy troops defy;
For lo! her smoaking Farms and Plains,
Her Captive Youths and murdered Swains,
For Vengeance, louder cry.”²⁸

The author of the poem relied on the idea of captive whites to motivate the men of Pennsylvania into action. Captivity, then, wasn’t something that just happened. It had severe political and personal ramifications, at least enough that one could expect its mere mention could convince men not personally involved with it to pick up arms against the French and Indians.

²⁸ “Ode to the Inhabitants of PENNSYLVANIA,” *Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 30, 1756, Page 1 in America’s Historical Newspapers Database, <http://docs.newsbank.com.proxyau.wrlc.org/s/HistArchive/ahnpdoc/EANX/10D80D9779771AF8/F1583A19A56A4FB68E8EA7938A36B9BE>.

Even the safe return of a captive was often accompanied by that person's description of what he or she had been through; those experiences often included tales of the capture, torture, or murder of other whites. William Flemming described the capture and treatment of one of his neighbor's sons during his own captivity. The "unhappy Youth" was not used to "such Treatment as he now met with... and could not be prevailed upon to keep silent." When the group approached Flemming's home to kidnap his wife, the lad was

"seized by the Indian who was with Capt. Jacob, whose Name was Jim, who with remorseless Cruelty gave him a Blow with the Back of his Tomahawk which stunn'd him; but before he fell another was repeated in the same Manner, which brought him to the Ground where he some Minutes motionless... upon finding him stir... [he, the Indian] took up the same Tomahawk... and with one fatal Blow sunk it in his Skull... there remained nothing now... but to scalp him which was done in almost an Instant."²⁹

To a city-dweller who had not had a personal encounter with Cooley's "Inhabitants of the Wilderness"³⁰ these descriptions of terror and atrocity were how they saw Indians most often portrayed. These people would not be influenced by the kindness captives were generally shown once they were adopted into a family. Instead, they learned in the August 18, 1757 *Pennsylvania Gazette* of the two boys attacked and killed by fifteen Indians.³¹ They

²⁹ [Narrative; Sufferings; Deliverance; William; Elizabeth; Fleming; Captive; Captain], *New-York Mercury* March 8, 1756, Page 1 in America's Historical Newspapers Database, <http://docs.newsbank.com/s/HistArchive/ahnpdoc/EANX/10DEEF9F1DDF3398/F1583A19A56A4FB68E8EA7938A36B9BE>.

³⁰ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, August 18, 1757, Page 3 in America's Historical Newspapers Database, <http://docs.newsbank.com/s/HistArchive/ahnpdoc/EANX/10D80DF65F565E90/F1583A19A56A4FB68E8EA7938A36B9BE>.

³¹ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, August 18, 1757, Page 3 in America's Historical Newspapers Database, <http://docs.newsbank.com/s/HistArchive/ahnpdoc/EANX/10D80DF65F565E90/F1583A19A56A4FB68E8EA7938A36B9BE>.

read about William Flemming's young neighbor, killed with "inhuman Barbarity."³² Samuel Webb of Goshen, Pennsylvania, they read, "was inhumanely butchered and scalped by a Party of Indians as he was fetching home his Cows; at the Distance of about half a Mile from his own House, and not above two Miles from the Court House, which is situated in the thickest settled Part of the Town."³³ For some, the most unnerving part of this story could not be the murder, but that Indians were attacking inside a town large enough to have a courthouse.

Captivity narratives themselves were also popular reading material. They provided people with entertainment, an idea of what life with Indians were like from those who had experienced it, and could also prepare people in a position to be captured for such an eventuality. In 1760 *A Journal of the Captivity of Jean Lowry and her Children* was published in Philadelphia, telling the story of her captivity from April 1, 1756 until her return to Philadelphia in 1759. She begins quite similarly to other printed accounts, an attack on the fort built by a group of neighbors in Rocky Springs, Pennsylvania. On that day, "Savage Indians surrounded the House," killed her husband John when he tried to fight them off, set fire to the house with she and her children still inside, and took all five children and the pregnant Jean Lowry captive. In spite of a short moment of hope when it appears they might be rescued, the Lowrys, like many other captives, were taken to various Indian villages and towns, to Canada, finally to Montreal. The narrative contains heavy religious prose

³² [Narrative; Sufferings; Deliverance; William; Elizabeth; Fleming; Captive; Captain], *New-York Mercury*, March 8, 1756, Page 1, in America's Historical Newspapers Database, <http://docs.newsbank.com/s/HistArchive/ahnpdoc/EANX/10DEEF9F1DDF3398/F1583A19A56A4FB68E8EA7938A36B9BE>.

³³ *New-York Gazette*, August 28, 1758 in America's Historical Newspapers Database, <http://docs.newsbank.com.proxyau.wrlc.org/s/HistArchive/ahnpdoc/EANX/10DAADE1916B9C28/F1583A19A56A4FB68E8EA7938A36B9BE>.

reminiscent of the Puritan narratives of the earlier part of the century, a description of the torture of one of Lowry's would-be rescuers, the modified gauntlet Lowry went through upon her adoption, the loss of her children, and the work she did as first a servant to the Indians who had taken her and then his wife, as well as the process of her redemption.³⁴

The narrative of Robert Eastburn, a blacksmith and deacon of the First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, was taken in 1756 by a party of French soldiers and Indians while en route to Oswego, New York to engage in trade with the Indians. Eastburn responded to an alarm of an attack from where he and his party were staying at Fort Williams; he was separated from the rest of the force during the fight, caught, and "obliged... to surrender to prevent a cruel death."³⁵ From there, he accompanied the party to the destruction of Bull's Fort, where "all [were] put to the Sword, except for five Persons, the Fort burnt, the Provision and Powder destroyed; (saving only a little for their own Use)."³⁶ Like Lowry and many other captives, Eastburn was taken to Canada, where he spent over a year first as an adopted son and brother and then a laborer around Montreal and Quebec. He returned to Philadelphia on November 26, 1757, after a four-month journey by way of England, Boston, Newport, and New York. Despite Eastburn's position as a deacon, there is not as much religious imagery or wording in his narrative as compared to Lowry and earlier narratives. In fact, there is little mention of religion at all, except when his adopted family try to force him to attend Mass, a

³⁴ Jean Lowry, *A Journal of the Captivity of Jean Lowry and her Children*, (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1760) in *Early American Imprints, Series 1: Evans, 1639-1800*, <http://docs.newsbank.com/s/Evans/eaidoc/EVAN/0F30147D313E9CF8/F1583A19A56A4FB68E8EA7938A36B9BE>. See especially pages 3-18 for Lowry's description of her captivity.

³⁵ Eastburn, "A Faithful Narrative," 154.

³⁶ Eastburn, "A Faithful Narrative," 155.

mention here or there to God, and the end, where he compares how useful Indians “make better use of a bad Religion [Roman Catholicism], than we of a good One.”³⁷ *A Faithful Narrative* spends quite a few pages describing the journey to Canada, differences and similarities in his treatment by the Indians and the French, and even contains a bit regarding Eastburn’s family. At one point, Eastburn is united briefly with his son, who had been captured when Fort Oswego fell, and then reunited for the return home.

Published captivity narratives from earlier periods were still popular reading material in the mid-18th century. Mary Rowlandson’s *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God* went through thirty editions, and was read by settlers across the colonies and abroad. In the narrative, she describes her capture with twenty-one others, including her children, from her town of Lancaster, Massachusetts. The majority of it, though, covers her three-month captivity with Nipmucs, Narragansetts, and Wampanoags, including King Phillip himself.

John Williams’ *Redeemed Captive, Returning to Zion* was also popular throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, selling over on hundred thousand copies in twenty editions until 1918.³⁸ Williams was the minister of Deerfield, Massachusetts, and was taken with a large number of his townsmen and his family in the 1704 French and Indian raid on the village. Though Williams spent much of his captivity in relative comfort in Quebec due to his position as a prominent minister in the colony, he endured the death of his wife on the march to Canada, separation from his children, and the knowledge that his daughter Eunice has transculturated after her adoption into a Catholic Abenaki village. Like Rowlandson, his

³⁷ Eastburn, “A Faithful Narrative,” 176.

³⁸ Namais, *White Captives*, 9.

narrative ends with his redemption.³⁹ Both narratives were more than likely popular reading material during the French and Indian War, especially with incidences of captivity appearing in most newspapers making them appear more and more relevant to people's daily lives.

By printing these "advices" and narratives, white colonists were able to take ownership of what had transpired. Without conflicting stories from the Indian point of view, the colonists enjoyed sole possession of the meaning of every encounter with Indians. They were able to redefine who they were and how they acted and reacted to Indians. The text also influenced how other whites viewed the events of the frontier, and ensured that sympathy and anger were aimed at the correct parties.

Conclusion: The Influence Colonel Bouquet's Return of the Captives

The end of the French and Indian War brought significant change to the colonies. The most important was the removal of the French presence from North America. While this would drastically change the relationships many tribes had with English colonists, the absence of the other European power would not prevent Native Americans from continuing to take captives, as a quick glance at many compilations of captivity narratives will prove. General Jeffrey Amherst re-wrote official English policy towards Indian relations in 1763 without an

³⁹ Rowlandson, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God*; John Williams, "The Redeemed Captive, Returning to Zion. A Faithful History of Remarkable Occurrences in the Captivity and Deliverance of Mr. John Williams, Minister of the Gospel," in Alden T. Vaughan, and Edward W. Clark, eds., *Puritans Among the Indians: Accounts of Captivity and Redemption, 1676-1724*, (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1981), 165-226. Neal Salisbury's edition of the Rowlandson narrative provides additional documents for a more complete study of the narrative, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God by Mary Rowlandson with Related Documents*, (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin, 1997). John Demos' *The Unredeemed Captive* is a larger study of Williams' narrative that deals extensively Williams' children and his relationships with his them.

accurate understanding of the implications of his decisions. His carelessness in getting rid of the practice of giving presents, giving his officers Seneca land, prohibiting the rum trade, requiring furs to be brought to English forts, generally restricting trade, and increasing British garrisons led to active resistance of the new politics, war. Less than a year after the fighting of the French and Indian War had ceased, the Seneca proposed war again.⁴⁰ Indian anger at British policy coincided with the rise of the Delaware prophet Neolin, who called for pan-Indian unity and a rejection of European influence. Under Neolin's message, an Ottawa warrior, Pontiac, restarted hostilities in May 1763 at Detroit and began to make his way east, beginning a war that would last until 1765.⁴¹

Henry Bouquet, born Swiss but fighting for the British, started negotiations for peace in the Ohio Valley with the Delaware and Shawnee as early as 1763. The November 19, 1763 edition of the *New-York Gazette* reported that Colonel Bouquet had sent dispatches to General Gage, supposedly on the matter of settling a peace agreement with the Shawnee and Delaware, "the chiefs of whom, it is said, met the Colonel soon after he left Pittsburgh, and begged, in the most abject Manner, for Mercy and Forgiveness..." The article continues that peace might be possible, on the condition that all prisoners taken from white settlements were to be "delivered up" to the English, including women who have Indian husbands and any

⁴⁰ Gregory Evans Dowd, *War Under Heaven: Pontiac, the Indian Nations, and the British Empire*, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2002) is a book-length study of Pontiac's Rebellion, arguing that the war broke out over how Indians and the British Empire related to one another, concluding that colonial thinking towards Indians became more open, systematic, contentious, and inconclusive (2). See also Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1745-1815*, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1992) for the influence of pan-Indian unity and nativism; see also Nash, *Red, White, and Black*, 255-264; Ward, *Breaking the Backcountry*, 219-254.

⁴¹ Nash, *Red, White, and Black*, 256-259. On nativism, see Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance* and *War Under Heaven*.

children born to white women in their time with the Indians. “[T]he Savages delivered up 17 or 18 Prisoners, and made Returns of 367 Captives they had in all, which they were quickly to bring in.”⁴² Bouquet himself reported that by November 15, 1764 he had received over two hundred prisoners and expected at least one hundred more.⁴³

Indeed, part of the agreement was the return of over 300 captives, many of whom no longer identified as Euro-American or Anglo-American and were not eager to leave their adopted families. Women especially had created new lives for themselves, many marrying Indian men and giving birth to children of mixed ancestry. Children who had been captured young had only vague recollections of their former lives, if any, and only knew their Indian families.⁴⁴ These people were not eager to return to white settlements, and many had to be forced by their adopted families to English forts and into the arms of their waiting families.

Equally as destructive was Pennsylvania’s decision to protect groups of “Anglophile Indians” at provincial expense after Pontiac’s War. For settlers in the backcountry, who had suffered greatly at the hands of Indians and were still without homes or food, this was unacceptable. They felt their own government had abandoned them. The sense of betrayal they felt after the conflict is understandable, and in their eyes, made the hatred they felt for all Indians and the actions taken against them, such as the Paxton Boys’ slaughter of peaceful

⁴² *New York Gazette*, November 19, 1763 in America’s Historical Newspapers Database, <http://docs.newsbank.com.proxyau.wrlc.org/s/HistArchive/ahnpdoc/EANX/10D376B352FC1798/F1583A19A56A4FB68E8EA7938A36B9BE>.

⁴³ Ward, “Pennsylvania Captives,” 186.

⁴⁴ For a longer discussion of return of the prisoners to Bouquet see James Axtell, *The Invasion Within*, 305-308; Ward, “Pennsylvania Captives,” 185-188; William Smith, *An Historical Account of Colonel Bouquet’s Expedition Against the Ohio Indians in the Year 1764*, (Philadelphia, 1765), in *Early American Imprints, Series 1: Evans, 1639-1800*, <http://docs.newsbank.com/s/Evans/eaidoc/EVAN/0F3015CF1A6F3258/F1583A19A56A4FB68E8EA7938A36B9BE>.

Conanoga Indians and the march against the government in Philadelphia, justified. Over time, especially as the Revolution loomed, the anger and hatred burning in the people of the frontier spread further east, building easily on the foundations left by talk of captivity during the French and Indian War.

Bouquet's return of hundreds of white settlers to their birth culture was seen as a great success by those left behind in Indian attacks. In the minds of the wider public, both on the frontier and in the cities, these people were returning to where they belonged, to their families and their friends and their homes. To them, it did not matter that many of the captives had started new lives and were happy in them. The return of children borne by white women in captivity was an even bigger success. By forcing Delaware and Shawnee leaders to give up individuals considered members of the Delaware and Shawnee tribes, especially those born into the culture, dictating terms of surrender, and setting conditions of peace, the British government established its political and cultural dominance over Native Americans in British territory. What they saw as "redeeming" the captives, even against their will, both continues the series of events found in most captivity narratives and the idea that British culture was significantly superior to the native cultures they had been living in for anywhere from mere days to enough years to rise to leadership positions with political and social prominence within the tribe.

The language and format of public discussion about captivity during the French and Indian War also contributed to these beliefs. Indeed, it did not leave much room for interpretation. White colonists taken against their will from their homes and into Indian lands were portrayed as the blameless victims of Indian violence, and more often than not, their

capture was part of a larger attack against a frontier settlement, which usually included deaths and injuries on both sides, the destruction of property, stealing, and pillaging. At no point were attacks like this or the taking of captives ever justified, explained, or contextualized in these public spaces. Instead, they were portrayed in a manner that encouraged city-dwellers to marvel at how uncivilized Indians were, how “inhuman” they acted, and how little they cared for the lives of white people. Though reading published materials might not have had an instantaneous effect on the opinions of all urban residents, the messages sent out during the French and Indian War allowed them to form stronger negative opinions regarding Native Americans later on, the late 18th and early 19th century Indian-hating of modern scholarship.

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Statement of Future Plans:

I am done with this project.