

## 21A.441

### Study Questions: Rowlandson Narrative

Why was captivity so meaningful? What kinds of issues did it raise? How are other famous captivities similar or different from Rowlandson's? (Patty Hearst, Terry Waite, Aldo Moro, John McCain, the Israelites in Egypt and Babylon, the Iranian hostages and "Conragate")

What advantages does the chance to write about her captivity give Rowlandson? Other white captives?

What framework or frameworks does Rowlandson use to interpret her own story and explain it to readers? What details and remarks reinforce that interpretation? How did she impose meaning on what happened to her?

How does she divide up the story? Is that device significant?

Who are the significant individuals in the story? What do they stand for more generally?

What other kinds of writing might her narrative be patterned on or connected with?

Is Rowlandson's narrative entirely consistent and unified? Does she contradict herself in different places or say things that undercut her dominant interpretation?

Apart from what Rowlandson says about what happened to her, are there things she is trying to avoid saying or things she wants the reader to understand did *not* happen? What would have been upsetting or threatening?

What does it mean that it was a woman writing? Was that a problem? How did Rowlandson and her advisers handle that problem, if there was one?

How do Indian/white questions intersect with male/female questions?

Was captivity *by* the Indians different from captivity *of* the Indians?