

Reconceptualizing Domesticity: Shifting Transatlantic Spheres in New World Female Narratives

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This article investigates the influence of New World seventeenth-century female narratives on sentimental Romance fiction of the 1840s. The influx and origins of writing by women in the seventeenth century was encouraged in the New World by their unique frontier experiences (captivity narratives), as well as their extraordinary perception of the new land (poetry). The origin and subsequent popularity of female captivity narratives allowed for a new kind of transatlantic fiction; female New World stories that combine adventure, the fainting yet virtuous heroine, and the introduction of the exotic other. The 'other' is not only referred to as the foreign element and a marker of difference from the Puritan settlers that came from England, but it also refers to foreign invasion; women that were captured and in danger of succumbing to the foreign culture, to becoming part of the cultural other. The 'foreign' is a term commonly used to distinguish from 'domestic' when referring to a community or a country's policies and affairs. However, the capturing of these Puritan domestic homemakers by a foreign nation has complicated the relationship between domestic and foreign. These captivity narratives were ostensibly published in order to impart moral lessons, or in Mary Rowlandson's case to comfort the afflicted. These well-meaning and moralistic aims allowed women the freedom to keep their modest integrity, yet sanction their decision to publish with worldly impunity. Writers such as Mary Rowlandson, the unnamed female character of *The Panther Narrative* and Anne Bradstreet were New World intermediary messengers operating on a transatlantic level, reporting and creating a cultural exchange on the one hand, often between the Native Americans and the white settlers, as well as writing distinctly 'American' narratives that travelled across the Atlantic to a fervid and interested British public.

Sentimentality and domestic sentiments play a two-pronged cultural approach which, on the one hand, divided women from men by creating a new kind of privatized cultural space while on the other hand, as Amy Kaplan argues, allowed a way to sanction women's influence and interest into the

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wider civic and economic sphere.¹ Reconceptualising domesticity, Kaplan explains, requires fine tuning our understanding of the separate spheres. When we think of domesticity (as household) in relation to “the market or political realm,” we see a differential social terrain between men and women. However, the opposition of the domestic to the foreign drastically altered boundaries, where the men and women are united together against the foreign / alien and “the determining division is not gender but racial demarcations of otherness.”²

The moralistic and cautionary captivity narratives of Rowlandson and the heroine of *The Panther Narrative*'s tale can be seen as a particular genre that is distinguishable from Mary Jemison's captivity narrative of assimilation, which as Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse write, brings up the idea of 'going native' or becoming the 'other', “an entirely different and ideologically hostile kind of tale.”³ The dangers of the invasion of the other are not only limited to the Native Americans, whom are described in these captivity narratives in the language of territorial invasion and ownership, but also the acquiesced or willing submission of those kidnapped, losing their quintessential 'superior culture', moral chastity, cultural 'Britishness' and homeland.⁴

However, this idea of domesticity substituting for national Identity and politics is more complicated than a simple parallel or metonymy of body as a stand in for one's country. The 'domestic' can also be referred to as being related to the imperial project of 'civilizing' or taming wild and foreign elements that have endangered the home front. Rowlandson's survival amidst her eleven weeks and five days of capture, according to her narrative, was made bearable due to her domestic homemaking skills. Ultimately what saves Rowlandson – and contributes to her survival – is her developed form of domestic practices: her knitting allows her to make money for extra food, her ability to clean and cook for her Indian masters grants her leniency and more freedom in her captivity. Rowlandson's ability to make clothing for the children in the tribe allows her to have access to extra rations to aid in her survival. With the extra food that she collects from sewing, she invites her master and mistress to dinner utilizing hospitable domesticity as a form of

¹ Amy Kaplan, 'Manifest Domesticity,' *American Literature*, vol. 3 no. 1 (1998), p. 600.

² Kaplan, 'Manifest Domesticity,' p. 582.

³ For more research on this interesting concept of assimilated captivity narratives, see Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse on Mary Jemison's and John Marant's stories as 'anti-tale within the hagiographical narrative': *The Imaginary Puritan: Literature, Intellectual Labor and the Origins of Personal Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), p. 203.

⁴ Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse, 'The American Origins of the English Novel', *American Literary History*, vol. 4, no. 3 (Autumn, 1992), p. 392.

finesse and negotiation.⁵ Domesticity, in this case, is no longer considered something static, but a process that helps in smoothing the path in negotiating foreign diplomacy.

Catharine Beecher's *A Treatise on Domestic Economy* titles the "peculiar responsibilities of American women" that feature "the affairs of a housekeeper", which include an exhausting "ten thousand desultory and minute items"⁶ for the American woman to attend to as well as fortitude and hardiness of living in a "newly settled country."⁷ Beecher mentions that there is a propensity for more American women to go into domestic service, of which the proportion that are available and willing is substantially in the minority. This lack of domestic service is not only considered lamentable, but is described in Beecher's essay as detrimental to increasing American prosperity and character, moving domesticity into the male arena of market and capitalism.⁸ In relating domesticity to monetary finance, Beecher cites Alexis De Tocqueville in commenting that the precarious fortunes of American men are only stabilized by the backbones of the frontier women, creating a familiar domestic home in the New World emphasizing that "they take their wives along with them, and make them share the countless perils and privations, which always attend the commencement of these expeditions."⁹ However, in addition to the need for hardiness and toughness of character to cope with domestic labour, Beecher also emphasizes the particular delicate temperament and sensitivity of American women, prone to sickness and fading health. This reinforces the contradictory ideas of seventeenth-century women (on the one hand) being commended for the toughness, multitude of energy in coping with domestic labour, while on the other hand, not losing any of their prized femininity by citing delicate and enfeebled constitutions. *A Treatise on Domestic Economy* describes the duties of domesticity in the imperialistic language of nationhood and identity, declaring that "American women are called to the responsibilities of domestic life, the degree in which their minds and feelings are taxed, is altogether greater than it is in any other nation."¹⁰

⁵ Mary Rowlandson, *The Narrative of the Captivity and Removes of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* (Lancaster: Carter, Andrews and Co., 1828), p. 30.

⁶ Catharine Beecher, *A Treatise on Domestic Economy for the Use of Young Ladies at Home and at School* ([Boston: Thomas H. Webb & Co., 1841] Charlestown: BiblioBazaar, 2006), p. 36.

⁷ Beecher, *A Treatise*, p. 41.

⁸ Beecher, *A Treatise*, p. 39. Beecher also points out in the same paragraph that the deficiency in domestic service leads to ill reputed morals, as well as "perplexities and evils."

⁹ Beecher, *A Treatise*, p. 41

¹⁰ Beecher, *A Treatise*, p. 44.

Critics such as Nancy Armstrong, Richard Tennenhouse, and Richard Brodhead have strongly argued that eighteenth-century sentimental narratives such as Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* and *Clarissa* were anticipated and strongly influenced by the seventeenth-century narratives of domesticity and hardship of their American female predecessors. Rowlandson's captivity narrative (a narrative that resists assimilation of both body and spirit, and cultural identity) can be compared to Samuel Richardson's novels *Pamela* and *Clarissa* in which the heroine's refusal to submit her chastity allows her to retain her innocent and unsullied body and character. What is even more surprising, as Armstrong mentions in her article 'Captivity and Cultural Capital', is that Richardson's heroine is able to not only maintain her chastity but convert the libertine, who "metamorphoses on the spot from villain to hero and agrees to marry on her terms."¹¹

This transformation of the seducer is important as it symbolizes that Pamela's subsequent marriage to the said seducer is not a betrayal into the culture that seduces her. Armstrong relates this to Mary Rowlandson's captivity and her repeated avowals of her chastity during her captivity written in her narrative as proof and representation that not only was her body was kept virtuous and uncontaminated, but that her culture and ideology remained distinctly Puritan. In a similar vein, Armstrong points out that the interesting phenomenon about Pamela is that though the dastardly seducer manages to disguise himself as a maid and trick his way into her bed at night, he is foiled from raping her by her verbal refusal. Because she refuses him verbally, he is unable to play out his rape / seduction. According to Armstrong, both Rowlandson and Richardson's heroines play out this idea of writing and literacy as a stronghold and safeguard against the invasion of losing their culture and chastity.¹² Pamela is able to stop her libertine in his tracks by a forceful verbal refusal, even up to the moment of him climbing into her bed. Clarissa writes letters asking for protection from her father, Armstrong pointing out that she writes in the language of the captivity narrative, her home becoming a prison as her father refuses to allow her to leave her room until she agrees to his choice of a financially advantageous husband.

Sentimental narratives became a bestseller in Victorian England, with authors such as Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Hagar Churchill and Sarah Payson Willis (*nom de clef* Fanny Fern) becoming popular between 1840–1870, grossing several thousand pounds annually, and being read by thousands of women. This popularity of women's fiction in turn bolstered what was

¹¹ Nancy Armstrong, 'Captivity and Cultural Capital', *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, vol. 31, no. 3 (1998), p. 375.

¹² Armstrong, 'Captivity', p. 374.

considered the ‘public male arena’ of the economic market. Preceding and primarily influencing sentimental fiction was the influx of captivity narratives in the seventeenth century. *The Narrative of the Captivity and the Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* was widely distributed in both the Old and New World when it was first published in 1682.¹³ The beginning of the captivity narratives arguably allowed America to assert its own identity by demonstrating its cultural difference and ethnicity from an indigenous native population. Rowlandson (as a second generation American Creole) is in a unique position to assert both her similarity to and difference from the native people during her captivity in creating a distinct ‘Americanness’, detailing what Annette Kolodny describes as a new literary history of the American frontier.¹⁴ Bauer argues that Rowlandson’s narrative defies and alters the traditional European literary dialogue that “has been inventing America as “colonial space” in countless sixteenth–seventeenth century travel narratives and imperial histories.”¹⁵ Rowlandson does not affirm the European self, nor does she simply discount the Native other. Instead, she occupies an in-between space that necessarily widens the boundaries and contradicts the exclusion of persons conceived as racially foreign within expanding national boundaries.

It would be an exaggeration to state that Rowlandson learns to thrive in this captured environment in the wilderness, but she does become resourceful, commissioned to make various articles of clothing for the Indians in exchange for food, and avoiding starvation and exhaustion as well as demonstrating a measure of usefulness to the Narragansett Indians. As mentioned earlier in the paper, it is Rowlandson’s adaptable domesticity that allows her to survive in the unfamiliar environment. This is in contrast to Mrs. Joslin, the other captured British female settler that Rowlandson encounters early on in her narrative, upon whom she looks with a measure of disdain. Rowlandson wrote that the woman consistently annoyed the Indians by asking to go home until they ended up burning her at the stake in irritation, and reported in her narrative that the woman “did not shed one tear.”¹⁶ Ralph Bauer supports this idea of Rowlandson “subtly undercutting” the woman’s martyred achievement,

¹³ Ralph Bauer, ‘Creole Identities in Colonial Space: The Narratives of Mary White Rowlandson and Francisco Nunez de Pineda y Bascunan’ *American Literature* vol. 60, no. 4 (1997), p. 666.

¹⁴ Annette Kolodny, *The Land Before Her: Fantasy and Experience of the American Frontier, 1630–1860* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), p. 80. Kolodny cites Mary Jemison in particular for constructing a historical tale that moves beyond the captivity narrative into “something approaching the wilderness accommodations of Daniel Boone.”

¹⁵ Bauer, ‘Creole identities’, p. 667.

¹⁶ Rowlandson, *The Narrative of the Captivity*, p. 21

countering most critics who see this story as an example of Rowlandson's "outraged maternity theme."¹⁷ Rowlandson's narrative and other captivity narratives become an artful example of mixing domestic space with the foreign, constructing an expedient foreign policy in international relations that evolved distinctly from international policy back in the British homeland. This international foreign policy, forged out of an attack on their family domesticity, in turn allowed the New World to create a distinct 'Americanness', forging their new identity and what Richard VanDerBeets has called an 'American genre'.¹⁸ This Americanness, once seen as monolithic, devised from an empty vacuous space, and stemming from a masculine territorial conquest of the new frontier, is reconceptualised through the lens of Rowlandson's narrative as participatory in multiple cultures, instead of exceptionalist or nationalistic, inclusive and transculturally linked. This distinct 'otherness', written in captivity narratives and creating a new American genre, can also be viewed as influencing the formation of the British novel, as the narratives were transported back across the Atlantic to widespread popularity, playing a part in influencing sentimental fiction later in the century.

Anticipating Rudyard Kipling's 'Christmas in India', poem that intermixed the colonial exotic other with British traditions, Rowlandson's longing for her home inscribes a type of strange cultural hybrid of both Old and New world, writing in her narrative as they trudge along, that she "saw a place where English Cattle had been: that was a comfort to me, such as it was: quickly after that we came to an English path, which so took me by surprise that I thought I could have freely lain down and died."¹⁹ Ralph Bauer cautions us that the theme of colonial landscape and the word 'frontier' has very different meanings and connotations in different parts of the Colonial Americas. In Spanish America, the word frontier denotes different aspects of society (e.g., the Church, Crown and Settlers) all having active and distinct interests in the local Native American population; whereas in British America, 'frontier' was more likely to refer to an area of exclusions, a racially and culturally defined distinct society.²⁰ Rowlandson's narrative houses a unique cultural identity in that her writing perspective is unique and therefore infinitely valuable. She is neither British nor Native American but somewhere in between, which Bauer states as her 'creoleness', managing to meld the two cultures together. The narrative also acts as a type of familiarization of the wilderness landscape.

¹⁷ Bauer, 'Creole Identities', p. 660.

¹⁸ Bauer, 'Creole Identities', p. 668.

¹⁹ Rowlandson, *The Narrative of the Captivity*, p. 26

²⁰ Bauer, 'Creole Identities', p. 686

Douglas Edward Leach writes how Rowlandson's tale is so chronologically accurate in recording the Narragansett Indian movements that it could act as a historical reference document of the 1787 battles between the settlers and the Native Americans.²¹ Rowlandson familiarizes us not only with the ways of the Native Americans, but the landscape of the New America, a terrain becoming familiar once trekked by a person of their own. Domestication, as Amy Kaplan writes, is "related to the imperial project of civilizing, and the conditions of domesticity often become markers that distinguish civilization from savagery."²² Relating domesticity to imperialism is an intriguing idea, particularly when applied to the early American Colonial period. Rowlandson's narrative describes herself as the alien in the landscape moving from Native American community to community, until finally learning to adapt and familiarize the wilderness.

Traditional scholarship assumes that nationalism and foreign policy lay outside the concern and participation of women. Yet, in Rowlandson's narrative, we can see that it plays an integral part of shaping American foreign policy; her captivity leading to a distinct localized foreign policy that was separate from Britain. Female domesticity, at first glance viewed as a local privatized household sanctum and space, is complicated with international concerns and crisis in the captivity narrative. The capturing of the body and spirit but the refusal to relinquish chastity and soul can be viewed in the language of politics of enclosure and safeguarding identity and nationalism. Captivity narratives, to a certain extent, acted as the feminine counterpoint to masculine frontier adventure tales in early nineteenth century American literature. Female captivity narratives became extremely popular among the New Frontier; Mary Rowlandson's tale in particular going through four editions and several printings in both Britain and America in its very first year of printing (1682), with summarized versions of the tale in other magazines, publisher's reports, even advertisements for other books.²³ This popularity was not a novelty but longstanding; Armstrong and Tennenhouse further noting that by the end of the eighteenth century, (forty years after Rowlandson's original publication) almost thirty editions of the text had been printed in England. Not limited to Rowlandson, other captivity narratives also went through several printings in Britain as news travelled back across the Atlantic in the form of captivity and adventure tales about the curious and wild New World.

²¹ Douglas Edward Leach, 'The "Whens" of Mary Rowlandson's Captivity', *The New England Quarterly*, vol. 34, no. 3 (Sept., 1961), p. 353.

²² Kaplan, 'Manifest Domesticity,' p. 583.

²³ Armstrong Tennenhouse. 'The American Origins', p. 393.

Captivity narratives were popular and subversive in that they paved the way for best-selling female sentimental fiction of the eighteenth century. They also allowed a subversive avenue for women to begin emerging from the private sphere and creatively air their thoughts in public without fear of immodesty. The famous 1787 pamphlet ‘A Very Surprising Narrative of a Young Woman, Who Was Discovered in a Rocky Cave’, commonly referred to as *The Panther Narrative*, reinforces this idea of blurring the boundaries between private and public sphere and challenging conceptions of femininity even further. As chronicled by Annette Kolodny, the narrative reveals the tale of Abraham Panther, a man who travelled for thirteen days west of Kentucky with his companion to generally hunt and enjoy “the agreeable picturesque prospect” of their travels when they heard “the sound of a voice” on the fourteenth day and encountered “a most beautiful young LADY sitting near the mouth of the cave.”²⁴ The young lady in question, after offering the men home-made Indian teacakes – note the offer of genteel domestic hospitality – fascinates them with her story.

Once the tale of *The Panther Narrative* begins, the narrative voice switches to the female captive as it overrides the primary frontier adventure tale with which the story begins and transforms into her captivity narrative. Our young heroine escapes to the New World away from a disapproving father only to be captured by Indians. Her young fiancé in question is barbarously murdered in front of her. The young lady, however, manages to escape and survive in the woods for fourteen days subsisting on raw food and her own shelter. On the fifteenth day she meets a gigantic man who at first shows humanity by feeding and sheltering our heroine, but when he begins to show signs of forcing our heroine to submit her chastity, the lady chews away her bark bindings and chops off his head with a hatchet. The tale thus far aligns with the usual themes of the female captivity narrative. Similar to Mary Rowlandson and other captivity narratives, our heroine is able to leave with her chastity intact. However, *The Panther Narrative* adds a further twist to the story. The woman left alone to fend for herself does not falter here, and instead, thrives in the wilderness by sustaining herself with berries and fruit, harvesting a few bushels of corn as well as taking over the man’s shelter.

Gardening and cultivating the land suggests an important precedent which Kolodny carefully details in ‘Turning the Lens’, as well as in her larger study *The Land Before Her: Fantasy and Experience of the American Frontiers, 1630–1860*. In the New World, women became active partners in the creation of a new frontier, taking charge in a type of gardening and

²⁴ Annette Kolodny, ‘Turning the Lens on “The Panther Captivity”: A Feminist Exercise in Practical Criticism.’ *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 8, no. 2 (Winter, 1981), p. 332.

cultivation of land while men were more occupied in conquering land. Shifting ideas of the domestic into the transnational, many pioneer women brought seeds from their homeland and planted them into the wild American frontier. This allowed them to permanently alter and familiarize landscapes otherwise appropriated by men.²⁵ *The Panther Narrative* is subversive in that it explicitly interrupts the Daniel Boone-like narrative of the solitary hunter figure conquering the harsh realities of the Western Wilderness by the arrival of a white woman overturning the story into her sentimental captivity narrative. The heroine of *The Panther Narrative* asks readership to subtly alter their imaginative constructs of the person and place of the white woman in the new frontier.²⁶ The heroine survives for nine years in her apprehended captor's cave, which consisted of four compartments housing "a spring of excellent water", four skulls, and a large supply of weapons including "three hatchets, four bows, and several arrows, one large tinderbox, one sword, one old gun, etc."²⁷ The four skulls are suggested by the narrator to have belonged to "persons murdered by the [former] owner of the cave", lend an interesting ghoulish note to the tale. Why would the woman live in a cave for nine years without discarding the human remnants of her previous captor? The influx of weapons and the human skulls juxtapose with the heroine's delicate emotions (her screams of fear upon the men's arrival and finishing her story with tears).

Both components of the story suggest a necessary reimagining of the frontier woman as necessarily tough in order to survive, but just as unable to relinquish the trappings and sentimentalism that are imparted along with feminine domesticity. Kolodny adds that the end of the tale, the heroine agrees to accompany the men back to civilization and reunites with her estranged father, completes the formulaic cycle of the sentimental tale, in that the readers are given a happy ending. *The Panther Narrative* is also unique in that a female captivity narrative is turned into a kind of "acculturation and accommodation to the wild."²⁸ The passive heroine of the sentimental romance is able to thrive in the woods, gardening and cultivating a home, as well as necessarily slaying her enemies when threatened. The narrative has a healthy appreciation for the hardships and physical dangers that were present in the new American frontier, but puts a white woman at the centre of the tale, one that not only triumphs over physical adversity, but importantly, keeps her status as a lady and a genteel women protected. Kolodny supports this idea of changing landscapes, explaining that the territorial expansion of the men, viewing the New Frontier

²⁵ Kolodny, *The Land Before Her*, p. 48.

²⁶ Kolodny, 'Turning the Lens', p. 332.

²⁷ Kolodny, 'Turning the Lens', p. 335.

²⁸ Kolodny, 'Turning the Lens', p. 335.

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as a blank surface to be imprinted on, was mitigated by the pioneer women, cultivating and reworking the land, practicing a kind of metaphorical domestic collaboration between the learning to plant and cultivate the Old world seeds in the soil of the New Frontier and forging a new kind of homeland.

Gardening became a legitimate activity for women from the early eighteenth century when Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus taught his classification system to his daughter.²⁹ The recognition of several local vegetables in the wilderness as well as important flora helped familiarize the landscape of the New World and utilize it for their families. Kolodny reveals the history of relentless, hardy women who survive their men to be resourceful in their use of materials and land. The story of many-times widowed Anne Kennedy Wilson Poague Lindsay McGinty, a woman who survives six husbands in order to carry on, implies a necessary cultivated toughness that out-performs Frontier men. While retaining her prized femininity, Anne Poague helps her husband William to clear about “ten acres of corn” as well as identifying a means of using a local fibre made of nettles and other weeds as a substitute for flax so her family would stay warm with warm cloth.³⁰ Other historical accounts such as sixteen year old Eliza Lucas, in charge of managing three of her father’s plantations in South Carolina,³¹ show that competent and courageous women, through necessity and circumstance, often ended up mapping landscapes and reforming and transforming them through domesticity and cultivation. Domesticity here, again acts as a fluid process; it is not only social housekeeping and maintaining the home front, but also creating a homeland that alters the scenic frontier. Domesticity as a changing landscape becomes politically and nationally motivated, reconceptualising the term as static and only concerned with introverted cultivation. When viewed in this way, domesticity begins to become a framework for looking outwards, towards the terrain not in the masculine view as conquerable, but habitable through process and alteration.

In this new colonial country, laws and customs of the British were transformed into equalization between genders as women such as Eliza Lucas became the sole manager and caretaker of plantations. The frequency of widowhood and the shortage of men often left women in charge of their own land, allowing for female ownership rights that were unprecedented in Britain. This in turn allowed a change of ownership. As men were occupied with conquering uncharted terrain, women became caretakers of land conquered, absorbed with adapting, familiarizing the inhabitable into the charted.

²⁹ Kolodny, *The Land Before Her*, p. 78.

³⁰ Kolodny, *The Land Before Her*, p. 49.

³¹ Kolodny, *The Land Before Her*, p. 49.

A woman such as poet Anne Bradstreet was often left alone while her husband was off hunting and foraging. The printing of her first book was hugely controversial. Thomas Parker, her own brother, was cited as declaring with strong emotion in a letter to Bradstreet that “your printing of a Book, beyond the custom of your Sex, doth rankly smell.”³² We can find Bradstreet’s spirited response to her brother in the prologue of her poem ‘The Four Elements’, mischievously replying: “I am obnoxious to each carping tongue / who says my hand a needle better fits.”³³ Even as bold as this response may seem, at the same time Bradstreet was not a woman who rejected the role of domesticity, lovingly dedicating her first book to her children, even referring to her first manuscript as “a monstrous birth.”³⁴ Indeed, *The Tenth Muse* is referred to by the author in domestic metaphors as “an ill-formd offspring of my feeble brain which was ‘expos’d to publick view / Made thee in rags, halting to th’press to trudge.”³⁵ This metaphor is interesting in that Bradstreet refers again to her writing as a production of birth (she is the mother, her writing is her child), yet she makes the distinction that the offspring is of her ‘feeble brain’, referring to the Classical Greek allusion of Helena, springing fully formed from Zeus’s brain. This gives a masculine connotation to the birth of her manuscript, yet at the same time, acknowledging her role as a mother and caregiver of children.

Like Rowlandson, Bradstreet’s foreword to *The Tenth Muse* details her reluctance to publish and enter the public eye. As Kolodny writes distinctly, seventeenth-century New World women were not suitable to be figures in the wild new frontier. Kolodny uses the example of Rebecca Boone, who does not appear in her famous husband Daniel Boone’s travelogue at all as a character but exists as a shadowy figure whom Daniel Boone does not refer to by name, but simply as “my wife.”³⁶ In many of the earlier frontier tales by famous pioneers – Davy Crockett, Daniel Boone, etc. – the main players, the pioneers and the Native Americans, play central focus with the women acting as little more than stock characters that exist in the background and are given a passing mention, rarely by name. The formation of this history (pioneers and Native Americans) we see now as flawed, largely through the research of such scholars as Annette Kolodny, Nancy Armstrong and Ralph Bauer. The

³² Stanford, Anne. ‘Anne Bradstreet: Dogmatist and Rebel’, *The New England Quarterly*, vol. 39, no. 3, (June, 1966), p. 375.

³³ Stanford, ‘Anne Bradstreet’, p. 375.

³⁴ She had eight children. Reid, Bethany, “‘Unfit for Light’”: Anne Bradstreet’s Monstrous Birth’, *The New England Quarterly*, vol. 71, no. 4, (Dec., 1998) p. 518.

³⁵ Reid, ‘Unfit for Light’, p. 525.

³⁶ Kolodny, *The Land Before Her*, p. 271.

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cultivation of land, gardening and captivity narratives also played a large part in creation of domestic goods, the survival and thriving of a new American People, foreign diplomacy in a new world, and a geographical mapping across the United States. Anne Bradstreet's fame and reluctantly published poetry is given a stamp of respectability by her reluctance to publish and by her brother in law stating in the foreword that Bradstreet wrote this only in her 'spare time' in between her primary household and domestic duties. The emphasis here on Bradstreet's spare time devoted to creative writing and poetry highlights the idea of domesticity playing paramount performance, maternal duties being of primary importance compared to the 'hobby' of creative writing.

It is important to note in Bradstreet's case and in Rowlandson's, that even with entering the commercial and male/public realm of markets, they retain their femininity, modesty, and themes of domesticity, much like the later sentimental writers of the eighteenth century. *The Panther Narrative*, for example, as Kolodny explains, is particularly subversive in the way that it overtakes the grand adventure tale of the men and instils a sentimental feminine tale in its place. This proves its subversiveness in two ways: Firstly, in the way that a sentimental tale overtakes the men's frontier adventure story, and secondly in the way she requires imaginative constructs to adapt to the wilderness.³⁷ Even though she displays hardiness, preservation and toughness, this woman, much like Mary Rowlandson, was able to maintain her soft, feminine image; beginning the story by fainting at the sight of the two men and upon completion of her tale dissolving into "a plentiful shower of tears."³⁸

The creation of the idea behind the cult of domesticity must go hand in hand with the ideological term separate spheres. When men and women began creating separate living and cultural spaces in society, it was only at this point that women claimed the term domestic, and as Amy Kaplan adds alongside, the culture of sentimental values. While the cult of domesticity necessarily requires a "retreat from the world-conquering enterprises of men", it is not necessarily inward turning.³⁹ Rowlandson's capture necessitated an international cry-out, a revealing of a private family tragedy of international proportions to the world's public. Bradstreet's poetry was still published in England; *The Panther Narrative*, embedded in a male frontier adventure tale, still manages to reveal a woman's voice of hardiness and survival. The New World gave women a unique position to domesticate the outside world, to domesticate the wilderness and to create a creative voice and identity that was soon to travel back across the Transatlantic as the formation of a distinct identity.

³⁷ Kolodny, 'Turning the Lens', p. 332.

³⁸ Kolodny, 'Turning the Lens', p. 335.

³⁹ Kaplan, 'Manifest Domesticity', p. 582.