

# Carey Page Turners

## January Discussion

*News of the World* By  
Paulette Jiles



Characters:

Captain Kidd makes a living traveling through north Texas, reading the news to audiences who pay to hear him. Obviously, the novel's title refers to this activity, but what else might "the news of the world" refer to in the novel?

Why does Kidd accept the difficult job of returning Johanna home? What drives him to complete the job despite the danger and obstacles?

What connects Kidd to Johanna? Why does she seem to trust him so easily?

Discuss the various tensions in the novel: Indians and whites; soldiers and civilizations; America's recent past and its unsure future. In what ways do these tensions underlie the story of Kidd and Johanna?

All literary stories follow the arc of the hero's journey. How does this novel adhere to that ancient narrative? Who is the hero—and in what way? How do both Johanna and Kidd change or grow as individuals during the course of their travels?

What were some of the memorable encounters along the journey?

Were you satisfied by the novel's ending? Does Captain Kidd do the right thing for Johanna? Would you have made the same choice, or a different one?

Jiles asserts that, "using quotation marks is like surrounding human speech with barbed wire." Was the omission of quotation marks distracting or confusing?

What will you take away with you from this novel? What will you remember?

Rating:      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10