

The Colonel's Lady Discussion Questions

by Laura Frantz

1. *The Colonel's Lady* opens by introducing Roxanna Rowan, the main character. How would you describe her in the first few chapters? How has she changed by novel's end? Would you have traveled several hundred miles into hostile territory in that era to join a loved one? Why or why not? Do you feel Roxanna's motivations were sound or flawed? Do you think she is running away from something or toward something, as she herself sometimes wonders?
2. Colonel Cassius McLinn is based upon the actual historical figure, George Rogers Clark. Though a man of multiple talents and Herculean accomplishments, he had a tragic end. If Roxanna hadn't come to Fort Endeavor, how might Colonel McLinn's life have been different based on his portrayal in the novel? What heroic qualities does he have? Which qualities are less than heroic?
3. Spies were rampant during the Revolutionary War on both the British and American side. Who did you suspect might be the British operative at Fort Endeavor? Were you surprised when the spy was revealed? What seemed to have been the spy's motivations for betraying his country?
4. Forgiveness is a major theme in the novel. Roxanna is faced with forgiving Cass, her mother, and even her soldier father for being absent when she needed him most. In the most real sense, her choice to forgive Cass results in saving his life. What might have happened if she had withheld forgiveness? How would their lives have turned out differently? Why is it always better to choose forgiveness than to nurse a grudge?
5. Another major theme in the novel is loss. Name all the things, large and small, that are taken from both Roxanna and Cass. How did they respond? If you were in their shoes, how might you respond to losing everything? To whom or what would you turn?
6. Bella becomes Roxanna's closest friend during her stay at Fort Endeavor. What traits does Bella have that serve her well during that very difficult time and circumstance? How was she a help to Roxanna? How was Roxanna a friend to her? Why was their friendship unusual for this period in history?
7. Like Roxanna, our direst circumstances often yield the greatest blessings. How has this been true in your own life? Why is it always best to trust God from the outset even if things do not seem in our favor? As Christians, what should our attitude be toward suffering and loss?
8. Fort Endeavor is a prototype of many garrisons that existed during the Revolutionary War. Conditions in these places were extremely taxing. What would you have found the most difficult to deal with? The loss of privacy? Poor rations? Illness? Fear and isolation? Why?
9. Colonel McLinn is a complicated man who has two sides to his personality. He is both a gentleman and a soldier. In many ways, the stone house is the embodiment of who he really is. The fort is who he has become. How does Roxie help him regain his true self during the course of the novel?
10. What do you love most about historical fiction? What did you like best in *The Colonel's Lady*? What spiritual truths did you find within the hearts and lives of these characters?