

Captive Arizona, 1851-1900

Victoria Smith

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Captivity was endemic in Arizona from the end of the Mexican-American War through its statehood in 1912. The practice crossed cultures: Native Americans, Mexican Americans, Mexicans, and whites kidnapped and held one another captive. Victoria Smith's narrative history of the practice of taking captives in early Arizona shows how this phenomenon held Arizonans of all races in uneasy bondage that chafed social relations during the era. It also maps the social complex that accompanied captivity, a complex that included orphans, childlessness, acculturation, racial constructions, redemption, reintegration, intermarriage, and issues of heredity and environment.

This in-depth work offers an absorbing account of decades of seizure and kidnapping and of the different "captivity systems" operating within Arizona. By focusing on the stories of those taken captive—young women, children, the elderly, and the disabled, all of whom are often missing from southwestern history—Captive Arizona, 1851–1900 complicates and enriches the early social history of Arizona and of the American West.



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