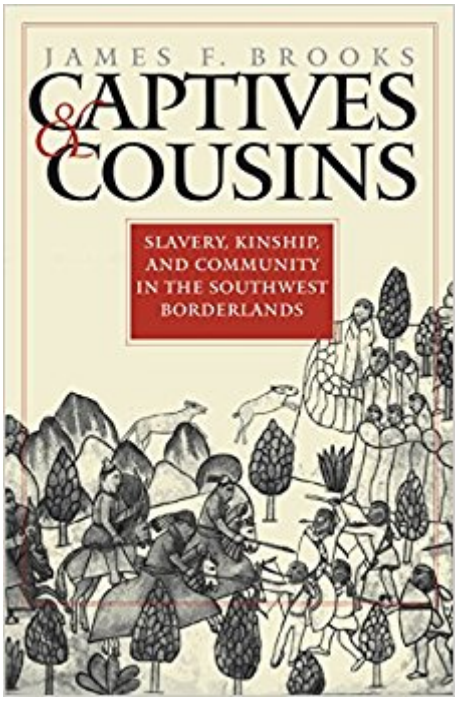
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Captives And Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, And Community In The Southwest Borderlands



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Synopsis

This sweeping, richly evocative study examines the origins and legacies of a flourishing captive exchange economy within and among native American and Euramerican communities throughout the Southwest Borderlands from the Spanish colonial era to the end of the nineteenth century. Indigenous and colonial traditions of capture, servitude, and kinship met and meshed in the borderlands, forming a "slave system" in which victims symbolized social wealth, performed services for their masters, and produced material goods under the threat of violence. Slave and livestock raiding and trading among Apaches, Comanches, Kiowas, Navajos, Utes, and Spaniards provided labor resources, redistributed wealth, and fostered kin connections that integrated disparate and antagonistic groups even as these practices renewed cycles of violence and warfare. Always attentive to the corrosive effects of the "slave trade" on Indian and colonial societies, the book also explores slavery’s centrality in intercultural trade, alliances, and "communities of interest" among groups often antagonistic to Spanish, Mexican, and American modernizing strategies. The extension of the moral and military campaigns of the American Civil War to the Southwest in a regional "war against slavery" brought differing forms of social stability but cost local communities much of their economic vitality and cultural flexibility.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Makes it impossible for historians to ignore colonial relationships in the Southwest that began

contemporaneously with Jamestown and Plymouth and developed throughout the colonial period. (Karen Ordahl Kupperman, New York University)This is a stunning book, likely to be controversial in its particulars. (Richard White, Stanford University)Bold and brilliant. ÃƒÂ•ThisÃ Â¨ vivid narrative tells us why people simultaneously preyed on one another and absorbed one another in this violent land. (David J. Weber, Southern Methodist University)Bold and brilliant. [This] vivid narrative tells us why people simultaneously preyed on one another and absorbed one another in this violent land. (David J. Weber, Southern Methodist University)"Makes it impossible for historians to ignore colonial relationships in the Southwest that began contemporaneously with Jamestown and Plymouth and developed throughout the colonial period." Karen Ordahl Kupperman, New York University"Brooks tells this history with clarity and judiciousness." -- "Journal of American History""This is a stunning book, likely to be controversial in its particulars." -- Richard White, Stanford University"Bold and brilliant. [This] vivid narrative tells us why people simultaneously preyed on one another and absorbed one another in this violent land." -- David J. Weber, Southern Methodist University"Contributes important new perspectives to continuing debates and opens new doors for comparisons and syntheses of borderlands as contested spaces of power and merging identities." -- "New Mexico Historical Review"

From its first memorable sentences until its final words, Captives & Cousins will hold many of its readers hostage.--Journal of American HistoryBrooks tells this history with clarity and judiciousness.--Journal of American HistoryI opened up this book and could not put it down. I was just knocked out by the fact that someone could be writing about slavery in such a new and totally fresh way that expands our horizons geographically and chronologically. It’s so rare that you get bowled over by a work in your own field.--Scott McLemee, Chronicle of Higher EducationThis is an extraordinary book based on an imaginative reading of the documentary record and a judicious use of anthropological theory. By weaving ritual, folklore, and individual stories together with legal, ecclesiastical, and statistical evidence, Brooks has produced a book that satisfies the heart as well as the mind.--Theda Perdue, American Historical ReviewThis is a stunning book, likely to be controversial in its particulars. . . . A kaleidoscopic history, Captives and Cousins is a wonderfully specific study about New Mexico but full of big ideas that will illuminate other places at the margins of states and empires.--Richard White, Stanford UniversityCaptives and Cousins presents a creative rereading of the historiography that produces a new vision of slavery, kinship, and community; its fresh look at the sources leads to a completely new understanding of slavery in the region.--Hispanic American Historical ReviewThis evocative study explores the captive exchange

economy and the interactions between slave, Native American, and Euramerican communities in the Southwest Borderlands.--Civil War Book Review[A] masterful, splendidly written book.--Western Historical QuarterlyJames Brooks takes the sources seriously--including transcribed oral traditions, drawings, folklore, dances, pageants, and archaeology as well as Spanish written reports. In his argument, he stretches our understanding of the nature of colonial slavery and of the dynamic processes through which kin networks created new peoples. This beautifully written book makes it impossible for historians to ignore colonial relationships in the Southwest that began contemporaneously with Jamestown and Plymouth and developed throughout the colonial period.--Karen Ordahl Kupperman, New York UniversityOffers a fresh and insightful new perspective. . . . A synthesis of borderlands history that is relevant not only for students of northern Mexico and the American West, but for all who are interested in the interconnections between slavery, race and ethnicity.--American StudiesContributes important new perspectives to continuing debates and opens new doors for comparisons and syntheses of borderlands as contested spaces of power and merging identities.--New Mexico Historical ReviewBold and brilliant, James Brooks's fresh look at raiding and slaving takes us beyond the familiar categories of Indians and Hispanics to reveal the deep divisions of gender and class within each group. Sweeping over four centuries, his vivid narrative tells us why people simultaneously preyed on one another and absorbed one another in this violent land.--David J. Weber, Southern Methodist UniversityCaptives & Cousins is an important book that has the potential to reconfigure the study of slavery, colonialism, trade, violence, and gender and even the language in which such histories are written. Brooks achieves such important contributions because of his prodigious command of sources and his able use of anecdotes to bring this lost past alive. Hopefully the book will mark not so much the next generation of middle ground studies but instead signal a new conceptual direction for American historians to take.--Canadian Journal of HistoryBrooks's broad and ambitious interpretation of the Southwest is carefully argued in its details and is based on exhaustive research in Spanish-language archives. It is furthered bolstered by an impressive use of anthropology, especially the well-developed literature on African kinship slavery. . . . An innovative and truly important work. It will inform scholarship on early America and on borderlands regions for many years to come.--William and Mary QuarterlyAn interesting study of [a] little-known slave system. . . . Brooks illustrates the similarities of Spanish and Indian cultural traditions of capture, enslavement, adoption, and exploitation of outsiders, then examines the groups' similar notions of honor, shame, and gender. . . . Reveal[s] [a] heretofore incompletely understood social and economic Southwest slave tradition.--Choice

In Captives and Cousins, Brooks provided me with a dioramic view of lifestyles and conditions of my genÃƒÂ-zaro ancestors. Church records that were previously found described my Navajo GG Grandfather as adopted, "hijo natural adoptivo", while an 1865 Indian Agency report numbered him with the "Indian Captives acquired by purchase and now in the service of the citizens of Conejos County". I found that Captives and Cousins put many of the family stories that I've heard into prospective that I would not have previously understood.

An important book for anyone interested in the frontier history of New Mexico. The extent to which raiding and captives played a political role in relations between groups is little known, and here well-documented.

Love the stories in the book way easier to read

Many facts in this book

Excellent study of the history of slavery among the Native Americans and Spaniards in 1800's US.Too much underlining from previous owner.

A most reading for New Mexico history.

The information revealed more about history that relates to reading other books and research documents found in historical records. Great for research

James F. Brooks, in Captives & Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands (2002), examines the origins and legacies resulting from interaction between and within distinctive Euro-American and Native American societies in the Borderlands region of the U.S. Southwest during the Spanish colonial and Mexican periods. Within this new culture (what he terms an ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“intercultural exchange networkÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•), colonials and natives were inexorably drawn together by a tradition of capture, servitude, and kinship and participated in a common economy based largely on a distinct slave system. Brooks, as the title of his book suggests, devotes a great deal of Captives & Cousins to the captive exchange economy that emerged within Borderlands society, illustrating its long-standing place in native society and contrasting its form with Southern chattel slavery. In essence, as men married their slaves and

produced offspring, the captives became ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“cousins.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•The origin of this Southwest Borderlands culture seems to lie in similar Spanish and native traditions of violence, capture, adoption, and exchange, as well as perceptions of honor, shame, and gender. He offers great insight into the form of slavery that evolved in the Southwest Borderlands. Slavery in the Southwest Borderlands, he claims, was ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“soft slavery,ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• similar to that practiced by indigenous African societies, as opposed to the more familiar form of chattel slavery employed in the American South. It was based not so much on racism as on a means of establishing social prestige or promulgating honor for the captors. Not surprisingly, as males dominated Borderland society, women and children (objects of honor among the men) largely operated as pawns within the slave system. Slavery served many purposes in the Borderlands; slaves were used as sacrificial objects in religious worship, to provide information about enemy societies, as laborers, as hostages, and as wives. Most viewed it as a temporary period of servitude or as a means of permanent assimilation into a family through marriage, adoption or Catholic godparenthood. Only the Navajo seem to have indulged in the practice of the more familiar Southern chattel slavery, going so far as to establish a slave-holding class (although on a much smaller scale).As has been noted, Brooks implies somewhat convincingly that there was much commonality between the Spanish and native cultures historically. Spanish colonials, for instance, who had participated in captivity and slave systems with Muslim enemies for hundreds of years, eagerly joined the natives and their slave system in the Borderlands ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ ignoring both Crown and Church. To a large degree, Brooks explores the effects of Spanish colonialism, capitalism, and U.S. pacifism upon the people of the Borderlands, specifically noting the effects of horses, sheep and slaves (captives) on establishing social class or improving rank.According to Brooks, the borderland culture of ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“captives and cousinsÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ which persisted largely because of the regionÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s geographical isolation from political centers in Mexico and the United States ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ was ultimately ended by U.S. invasion of the region in the late 1840s and its incorporation into larger capitalist markets in the late nineteenth century. Only when the remote area became part of the mainstream of society (and thus ceased to exist as a ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“borderlandÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•) did the slave system perish and the region as a whole lose its cultural and political autonomy. Capitalism replaced slavery, individualism replaced community, and free labor and immigration replaced captivity ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ forever altering the historical and cultural pathos of the borderlands. One positive result of this change was stronger security for women and children, no longer participants in the slave system.Brooks, in Captives & Cousins, builds on the previous work of

historian Herbert E. Bolton, who wrote authoritatively about the Spanish colonial experience in North America. His use of the borderlands concept places him squarely in the camp of middle ground historians, a useful yet controversial clique of researchers who often stir debate by their notions of what constitutes cultural borderlands and centers. For Brooks, the concept of a borderland (and therefore its center) appears to be a geographical space. He defines the Southwest Borderlands as a region consisting of three distinct but interconnected areas: the southern Great Plains, adjacent mountain ranges, and the pastoral plateaus of the Rio Grande. A central theme for his work is the manner in which diverse groups co-exist in a landscape ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ in this instance, a borderland ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ lacking a strong political organization where no single element maintains a firm grip upon power.The central argument of BrooksÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ Captives & Cousins seems to be that colonial and native traditions melded into a unique Borderlands culture where men from both societies generally participated in an interdependent culture ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“of violence and retribution, of loss and redemption that drew the protagonists together while forcing them apartÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ a culture that was ultimately destroyed by ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“the power, economy, and moralism of the broader modernizing world.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• Of specific interest to Brooks is the captive exchange economy that was so prevalent in the Borderlands, which seems to best prove his thesis. A thorough examination of the footnote section reveals an overwhelming variety of sources for Captives & Cousins ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ books, papers, lectures, journals, muster rolls, theories ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ and easily establishes the author as an authority on the subject. BrooksÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ detailed commentary on African slavery and the concept of a Spanish Borderlands within the footnote section is highly interesting and shows great sensitivity to the issues.Captives & Cousins is large in scope and primarily interdisciplinary (and thus innovative) in its approach. It is commendable for its clear and precise treatment of the complicated and confusing relationships that existed among the people and societies of the Southwest Borderlands for roughly three hundred years. Brooks does well to show the complex nature of Native American societies and dispel the myth that they were universally pacifistic, egalitarian, and harmonious ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ in effect opening up a new line of badly-needed dialogue. He also offers a fresh treatment of slavery ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ first in clarifying its existing condition, later in identifying its role as a social device. Surprisingly, he indicates a Borderlands world where captivity served as a coalescing force between colonials and natives.

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