



Family History in the Rio Abajo

Andres Armijo

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Written in the form of essays, biographies, transcribed oral histories and analysis of primary source documents, Family History in the Rio Abajo provides context on how people lived and what they did during unique periods in New Mexico's history. Recovering people's life stories and placing them in a historical, cultural and familial context provides the reader a strong understanding of Nuevo Mexicano's social and cultural history during the later part of the Spanish Colonial Period, the Mexican Period, and the Territorial period. What Andrés Armijo has accomplished is quite remarkable. In recent years, many nuevomexicanos have traced their family history, following numerous lines over the generations. Andrés has done that through his painstaking research on many of his relatives, notably the Armijo, Bernal, and Gallegos lines, among others. But he has done something far more significant: he has told the history of the Río Abajo through the lens of his family. This is an intimate portrait of a place and the people who lived there, painted in loving brush strokes on a wide canvas. In many respects, this book is a model of what a family history can be. This book is a most welcome addition to the historiography of New Mexico.-Rick Hendricks, New Mexico State Historian This wonderful book may be mistakenly assumed to be "only" a family history, as it is entitled. It certainly provides a great history of the author's New Mexico family, and includes excerpts from much of the documentation he has found to "validate" his ancestors. In that sense, it is a genealogy book, but it is much more: This is a primer on how to do genealogical research, documentation, and writing to produce an excellent family history. Most importantly, this book provides many vignettes of New Mexico's Hispanic history and folkways that everyone will find interesting. The reader doesn't need to be one of the author's many New Mexico primos to find this a rewarding book.-Michael Stevenson, past-President, Historical Society of New Mexico Place is not only defined by geography and landscape. A sense of place emerges and is sustained from the experiences of people and their relationship with each another as family and community in contact with landscape. Andrés Armijo skillfully combines family history, sense of place, and cultural expressions with historical documents, personal stories, written words and audio recordings of relatives, photographs, and historical context to illustrate a vibrant pattern of cultural development and expression of the people of New Mexico's Hispano Río Abajo. This is an exceptional guide for those who want to better understand Nuevomejicano culture and how to document their own family history.-José Antonio Esquibel, Caballero de la Orden de Isabel la Católica.

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