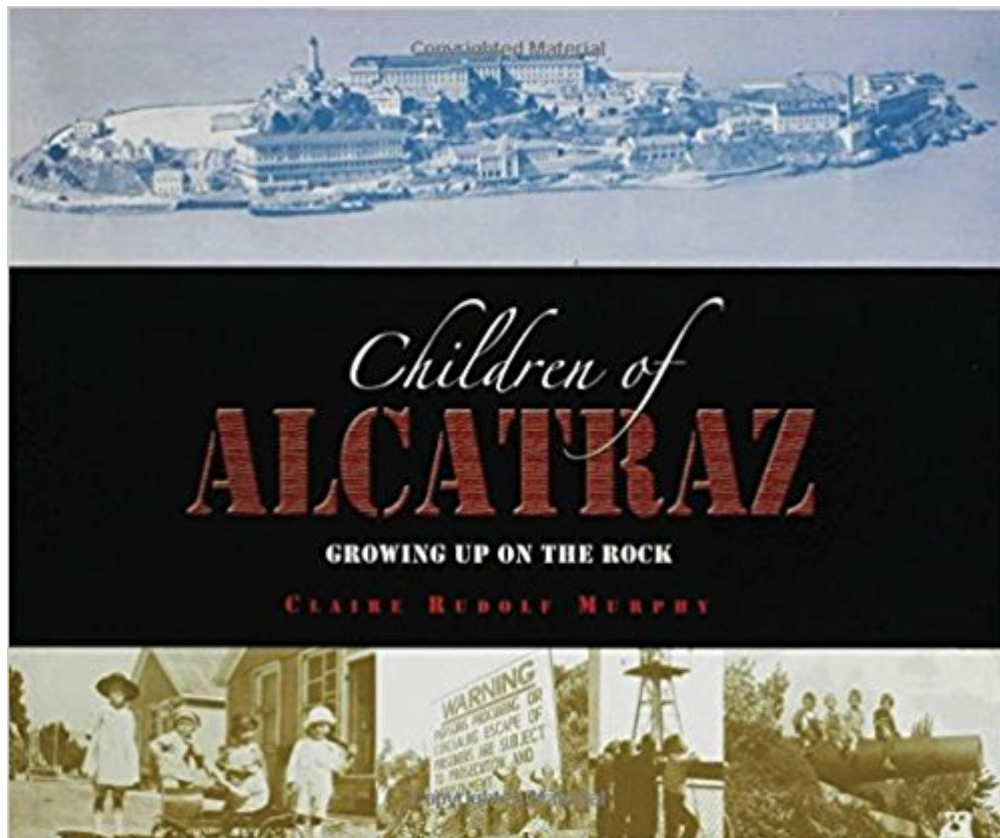




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# The Children Of Alcatraz: Growing Up On The Rock



## Synopsis

Alcatraz Island is one of the most infamous places in American history. The maximum-security prison on the "Rock," once home to criminals like Al Capone, Machine Gun Kelly, and the Birdman of Alcatraz, has long since captured our country's imagination. But what few people realize is that during the past 200 years, Alcatraz was not only home to criminals—it was home to many children, too! Over the years, the island has been home to the children of Native Americans, lighthouse keepers, military soldiers, and prison guards. Imagine playing hide-and-seek in the prison morgue, having a convict as your babysitter, or having Al Capone as your neighbor. This compelling photo-essay profiles generations of children who had the unique opportunity of growing up on this isolated island in San Francisco's shadow. With personal anecdotes, revealing interviews with the surviving Alcatraz Kids, historical documents, and archival and family photographs, *Children of Alcatraz* reveals a one-of-a-kind childhood sure to fascinate readers young and old.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 and up

## Customer Reviews

Grade 4-7 "While other books cover the history of Alcatraz Island for this audience, none of them give more than a brief mention of the many children who lived there over the years. Murphy's clearly written history starts with the island's use by Native Americans in the pre-Colonial era and continues through its various incarnations as a lighthouse, military post, and then prison. She follows the federal penitentiary years, the island's rearming during World War II, the Native American

occupation of 1969-71, and the island's current incarnation as a National Historical Park. The young people who lived there were mostly children of employees and of the Native Americans during the occupation, but also included youthful prisoners. Liberally illustrated with black-and-white archival photographs, the book also includes print, AV, and Internet resources. While useful for reports, this title will appeal to general readers.â Nancy Silverrod, San Francisco Public Library Copyright Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Most people associate Alcatraz with notorious criminals such as Al Capone, but few think of children. Some children, however, did grow up on "the rock," and this is their story--from the earliest Indian children to those whose parents occupied Alcatraz during the 1969--71 Native American protests. In between, children of lighthouse keepers, soldiers, and prison authorities played on the grounds and called it home. A few photographs feature famous prisoners, but most are snapshots of the islands youngest residents. The anecdotal narrative, connecting photos and families, makes this more family album than wanted poster. The narrow focus may disappoint some, but it reveals a unique portrait of children who have generally been invisible. A list of further resources and a time line are appended, but no sources are cited. Linda Perkins Copyright Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved

I had expected a bit more in depth description of the life of the children, so was disappointed. It was purchased for my grandson as he hopes to visit Alcatraz and felt it would give a new dimension to his understanding. It will, but not as much as I had hoped.

Every reader who enjoyed "Al Capone Does My Shirts" should be steered to this book. Claire Rudolf Murphy gives a fascinating survey of the progression of "communities" at different times in history in her book about the "Children of Alcatraz." Following native Americans, the earliest families to live there were those of the lighthouse keepers in the 1850s, then the military came. When the island was transformed into a high security prison in 1934, the families of guards lived there until 1963. It isn't known whether any prisoner ever survived an escape attempt; the prison was considered a fortress, and the Bay formidable. There was another stressful period from 1969 to 1971 when Native Americans occupied the island to protest the injustices of U. S. law. This protest lasted eighteen months. The stories of each group are of great interest and pictures are particularly helpful in implementing these. Reviewer mcHaiku is always surprised at the very small acreage of the island & the many buildings, including cell blocks, in close juxtaposition. Living in such extraordinary

circumstances brought about close friendships and later reunions strengthened those unique relationships. Alcatraz Island is not so much a symbol of the city's past but more a multiple historic marker. Today, of course, it is a destination for curiosity-seekers, but all visitors will be surprised by the wide interest generated which can also stimulate many enthusiastic searches for more information via a computer or library. Author Claire Murphy may have inspired many readers to discover why the island was originally named "Pelican" - - and it had nothing to do with the "Birdman of Alcatraz" either.

This is a story many people have not heard. We knew that my wife's aunt uncle and cousins lived on the island for 20 years but we knew none of the details. Most people hesitate to believe you when you mention it. The book is crammed full of facts, pictures and human interest stories that will entertain anyone who picks it up.

This book is an exciting look at Alcatraz. How many people knew that children lived on Alcatraz? Surely, not many. I love how Claire Rudolf Murphy seamlessly includes enough detail to bring the island to life during each era of children living upon the island. With gangsters like Al Capone and the Bird Man living there, would you want your child living on the island? Find out the how and why of the children living there. Both adults and children will love this book.

CHILDREN OF ALCATRAZ: GROWING UP ON THE ROCK doesn't focus on the usual prison history of the island, but on how it also served as home to many children, from Native Americans to lighthouse keepers, prison guards and beyond. Photos of generations of such children who grew up there blend with memoirs, interviews with the surviving Alcatraz Kids, and history to provide a fascinating survey adults as well as kids will want to pursue.

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