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| Nota di contenuto       | Frontmatter -- Table of Contents -- List of Illustrations, Figures, and Tables -- Acknowledgments -- Introduction -- Introductory text -- Abduction, marriage, and consent -- Abduction marriage for all -- Sources -- Structure -- Works cited -- 1. Perks and Perils of Being an Heiress -- Introductory text -- Reputation, property, and ages of consent -- From excommunication to decapitation -- Age and consent as legal parameters -- Increasing criminalization: Ghent (1191-1438) -- Conclusion -- Works cited -- 2. Abduction's Who, How, and Why -- Introductory text -- The impossible marriage -- A gendered offense? -- A family affair -- Conclusion -- Works cited -- 3. Consent In and Out of the Courtroom -- Introductory text -- Communicating consent and coercion -- Judging consent and coercion -- Explaining and understanding consent and coercion -- Life after abduction -- Conclusion -- Works cited -- 4. What Authorities Did to Help -- |

Introductory note -- Secular authorities: between repression and reconciliation -- Two- and three-party cases before the consistory courts -- Conclusion -- Works cited -- Conclusion -- Abbreviations -- Bibliography -- Index

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## Sommario/riassunto

The Middle Dutch term *schaec* referred to abduction with marital intent. This book explores this phenomenon to understand wider attitudes towards marriage-making in the fifteenth-century Low Countries. Whilst exchanging words of consent was all that was required legally, making marriage was a social process that evoked public concern and familial scrutiny. Abductions embodied contrasting evaluations of what mattered when selecting a spouse and resulted in polarized trials in which narratives on consent, coercion, and family strategy coincided and competed. *Abduction, Marriage, and Consent* draws from a wide range of legal records to assess how men, women, families, and authorities used, navigated, and dealt with abductions during this period. It contributes to debates on consent, family involvement, and women's access to justice and demonstrates that abduction should be approached as a comprehensive social phenomenon, one that is crucial in the history of marriage and women's social and legal status.

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