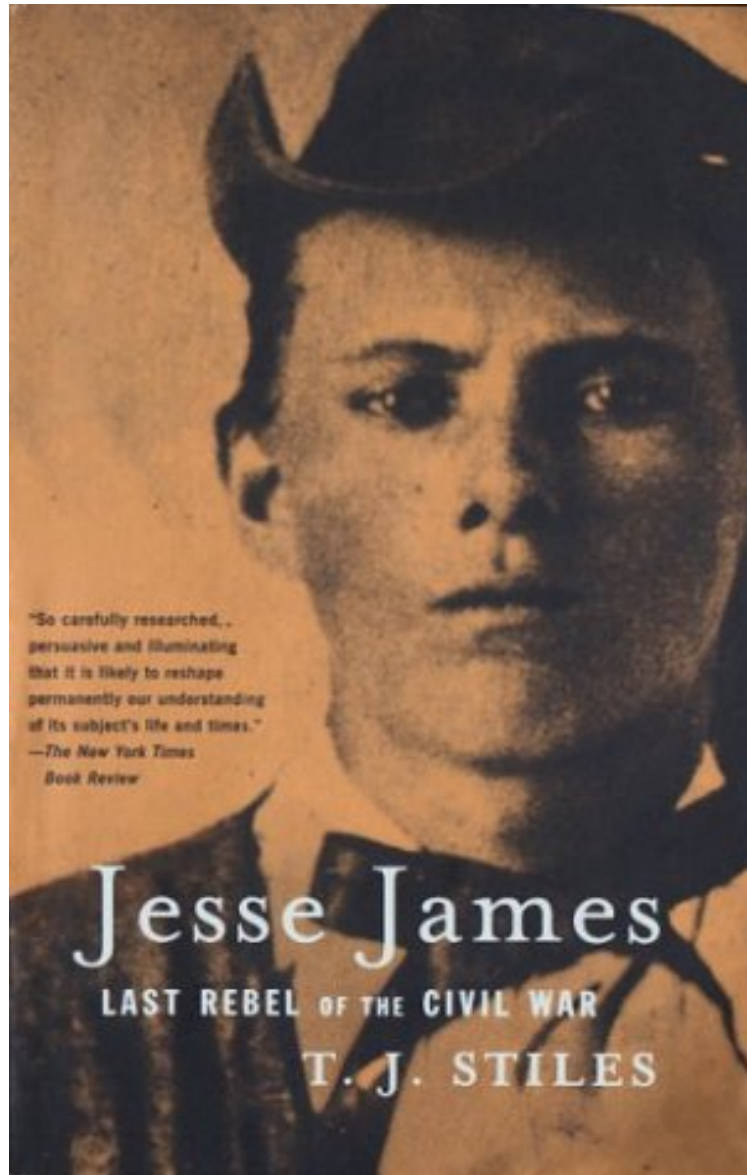


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## Jesse James: Last Rebel of the Civil War

*T.J. Stiles*

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#82949 in Books T J Stiles 2003-10-28 2003-10-28 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.00 x 1.10 x 5.20l, 1.19 #File Name: 0375705589544 pages Jesse James Last Rebel of the Civil War | File size: 25.Mb

**T.J. Stiles : Jesse James: Last Rebel of the Civil War** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Jesse James: Last Rebel of the Civil War:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Putting an American Legend in the Context of His Times By Lionel S. Taylor This is a thoroughly researched book that puts Jesse James in historical context and tries to separated the myth from the man. Stiles also explained why there was a myth to begin with. Why out of all the outlaws that were around

during that time did Jesse James get so much attention? The author argues that James's public personas was a combination of the publicity that he got from a sympathetic newspaper editor John Edwards and his own efforts to publicize his exploits and justify what he did. James was symbolic of the larger political struggle in Missouri and other border states during the Civil War and his notoriety was in part due to his usefulness as a symbol and rallying point for pro Confederate and anti Reconstruction forces in the state at the time. Stile implies that as the forces that originally supported him got what they want, James became less useful as a political rallying point and the very people that at one time supported him or looked the other way from his crimes turned against him. James at the end of his life became a man out of time. After reading this book I had mixed feelings I found myself very unsympathetic to Jesse James's cause and political ideas and the chapters about his time with "Bloody Bill" Anderson made me look forward to his and his brothers death. But I also felt after having finished the book that this was the story of a person that had been one of the surviving casualties of the Civil War. His formative years were spent with a terrorist group committing atrocities against fellow citizens and when the war was over he James did not seem to be able to move on like his older brother Frank. This well written book portrays Jesse James as the living embodiment of the Civil War in the border states and the destructive effect it had on the people that were a part of it. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Jesse James: New Info for Me About His Early Life and Influences of His Mother and Surrogate Fathers By addict This book by T.J. Stiles is an amazing recounting of the life of Jesse James. Dominated by a strong and pro-slavery mother who was widowed when her minister husband died when Jesse was just two years old, the James brothers were active in guerrilla activities during and after the civil war. J.T. Stiles is a meticulous writer. I enjoyed the book tremendously and recommend J. T. Stiles as a great historian and author. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. There were some wonderful details that linger after reading. By Paul Jones Johnson The book seemed to ponder what it wanted to be. It walked a line for this reader between being a sociological analysis of the context of the times that produced and sustained Jesse or a detailed biography of the man. There were some wonderful details that linger after reading.

In this brilliant biography T. J. Stiles offers a new understanding of the legendary outlaw Jesse James. Although he has often been portrayed as a Robin Hood of the old west, in this ground-breaking work Stiles places James within the context of the bloody conflicts of the Civil War to reveal a much more complicated and significant figure. Raised in a fiercely pro-slavery household in bitterly divided Missouri, at age sixteen James became a bushwhacker, one of the savage Confederate guerrillas that terrorized the border states. After the end of the war, James continued his campaign of robbery and murder into the brutal era of reconstruction, when his reckless daring, his partisan pronouncements, and his alliance with the sympathetic editor John Newman Edwards placed him squarely at the forefront of the former Confederates' bid to recapture political power. With meticulous research and vivid accounts of the dramatic adventures of the famous gunman, T. J. Stiles shows how he resembles not the apolitical hero of legend, but rather a figure ready to use violence to command attention for a political cause—in many ways, a forerunner of the modern terrorist.

.com Probably no American outlaw has attracted more attention--much of it flattering--than Jesse James. This revisionist biography by T.J. Stiles delves into the exciting life James led--"a tale of ambushes, gun battles, and daring raids, of narrow escapes, betrayals, and revenge." Yet it also places James within a specific political context, showing why it was possible for this murderous bandit to emerge as a folk hero among Southern sympathizers following the Civil War (in which he fought as a teenager). James is often grouped with famous frontier criminals like Billy the Kidd and Butch Cassidy, but he's best understood as a Southerner who forged partisan alliances in postwar Missouri and promoted himself as a latter-day Robin Hood. Stiles describes James as "a foul-mouthed killer who hated as fiercely as anyone on the planet" and places his life in the context of "the struggle for--or rather, against--black freedom." Stiles's fundamental point about James is as startling as it is convincing: "In his political consciousness and close alliance with a propagandist and power broker, in his efforts to win media attention with his crimes ... Jesse James was a forerunner of the modern terrorist." Tough words, but also deserved. --John J. Miller From Publishers Weekly In a lucid reexamination of one of the nation's most notorious outlaws, independent historian Stiles argues that Jesse James (1847-1882), like his fellow "bushwhackers," had a political agenda and that this made him more terrorist than bandit, and more significant than we credit. "He was," Stiles says, "a political partisan [who] eagerly offered himself up as a polarizing symbol of the Confederate project for postwar Missouri." By the age of 16, James was engaged in guerilla warfare against Union forces; when the war was over he remained a staunch and outspoken ex-Confederate. His letters to friend and newspaper editor John Newman Edwards, in which he described himself as "the target of unjustified, vindictive persecution," and exonerative articles published about him after the war, show that James used and was used by the newspapers to further Missouri's opposition to Reconstruction. White-supremacist bushwhackers targeted Unionists as well as institutions that benefited the Union. Political posturing aside, though, James and his ilk used the booty to line their own pockets and if James mirrored the bigger picture of a society that pushed him into a life of crime, he also embraced that life without remorse. That said, Stiles's painstaking research has

produced a compelling book that recreates, sometimes graphically, the ruthlessness that prevailed in Missouri, where neighbor fought neighbor and nobody was safe. He also offers a critical understanding of how deep-seated hatred breeds self-righteous fanatics, who can justify violence against anyone deemed an enemy. 16 pages of illus. and six maps. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Cold-blooded killer? Missouri Robin Hood? Romantic Western outlaw? Jesse James has been portrayed as all these things, yet many of these portrayals are either too simplistic or too one-sided. The last scholarly biography of James (William A. Settle's *Jesse James Was His Name*) came out over 30 years ago. Much has been published since then in terms of documentation, and Settle perhaps concentrated more on distinguishing between the legend and the man than popular historian Stiles does in this new biography. Stiles has focused here on the outlaw in the context of his times, in particular the political era. James was very much a political man, a frequent writer of letters to newspapers, and a diehard Confederate in a state more bitterly divided over the war than perhaps any other. Stiles suggests, interestingly, that James was not simply an outlaw but a sort of terrorist, both during and after the Civil War. The ferocity and cruelty of war and politics in Civil War Missouri are captured vividly, as is their effect on the development of the young James, who was only 16 when he joined the Confederate guerrillas. Well written, amply illustrated, and supported by chapter notes, this title is recommended for both public and academic libraries. Charles Cowling, SUNY at Brockport Lib. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.