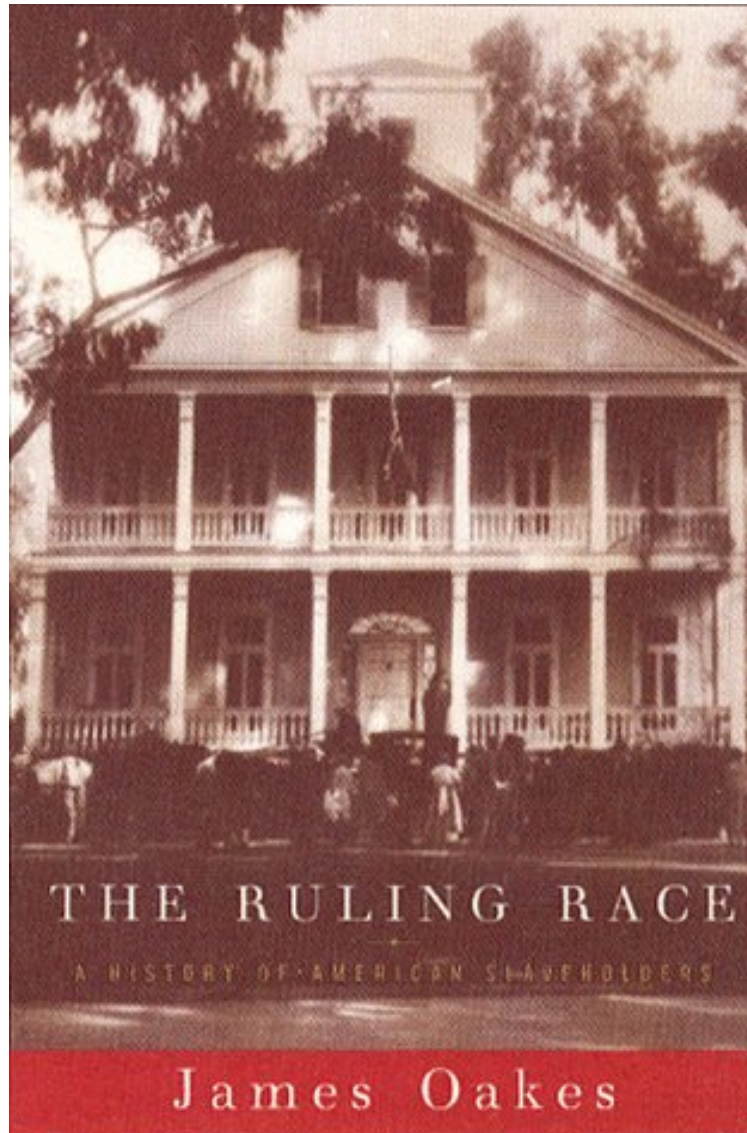


(Download pdf ebook) The Ruling Race: A History of American Slaveholders

# The Ruling Race: A History of American Slaveholders

*James Oakes*

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**James Oakes : The Ruling Race: A History of American Slaveholders** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Ruling Race: A History of American Slaveholders:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great book on a fairly well covered topicBy Jonathan WellerThe Ruling Race is an in-depth look at the demographics of the slaveholding class in the years prior to the Civil War. James Oakes' book attempts to make two main points: the development of the diversity of the southern slave owners, and to explore the patterns of political ambitions, ideological beliefs and demographics the "ruling class." Oakes also

addresses the complexities of the slave economy in relation to American capitalism, while pointing out the contradiction of slave holding in a society that put an immense value on freedom. Oakes makes his first two points successfully; however, his most interesting point is when he attacks Eugene Genovese's idea of a benevolent paternalistic southern society. Oakes explains that the South was just as entrepreneurial and capitalistic, and that most slave owners were just as much market materialists as their northern rivals. While Genovese's argument is a tough one to refute, Oakes successfully navigates the reader through Genovese's assertions to show that slave owning paternalism was not the driving economic force in the antebellum South, having and being able to maintain their human property was. Oakes' work is an essential read to anyone interested in the antebellum slave-owning South. The book offers an effective, yet viable explanation for the continued existence of slavery throughout the region, and why the South was so willing to fight, and die for an institution that many in the country saw as archaic. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By CustomerMint condition! 3 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Every American Should Know This Stuff...But Few Do. By Lowell "RaceMan" Thompson This is not for casual readers. You have to really want to know the real history of our "guilty land" to stick with it. It can be pretty dry at times, but it also gave me insights that I never learned in school.

"A sweeping and spirited history of Southern slaveholders." David Herbert Donald This pathbreaking social history of the slaveholding South marks a turn in our understanding of antebellum America and the coming of the Civil War. Oakes's bracing analysis breaks the myth that slaveholders were a paternalistic aristocracy dedicated to the values of honor, race, and section. Instead they emerge as having much in common with their entrepreneurial counterparts in the North: they were committed to free-market commercialism and political democracy for white males. The Civil War was not an inevitable conflict between civilizations on different paths but the crack-up of a single system, the result of people and events.

"Invaluable." - Los Angeles Times About the Author James Oakes is the author of several acclaimed books on slavery and the Civil War. His history of emancipation, *Freedom National*, won the Lincoln Prize and was longlisted for the National Book Award. He is Distinguished Professor of History and Graduate School Humanities Professor at the Graduate Center, CUNY.