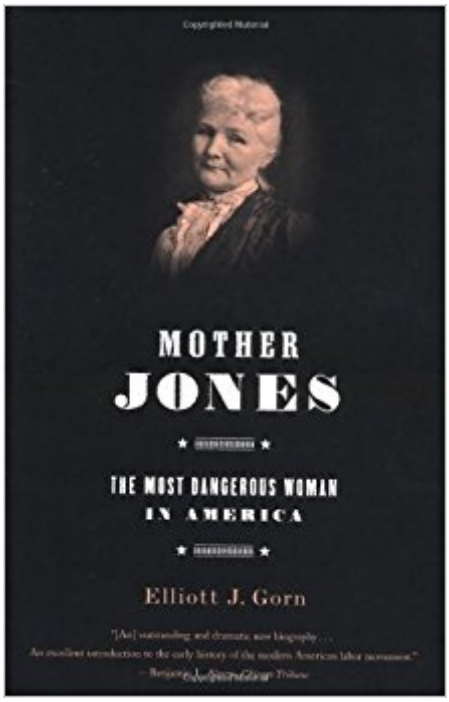
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Mother Jones: The Most Dangerous Woman In America



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Synopsis

"... imaginatively written and meticulously researched biography." --Elizabeth Sherman, The Boston Sunday GlobeHer rallying cry was famous: "Pray for the dead and fight like hell for the living." A century ago, Mother Jones was a celebrated organizer and agitator, the very soul of the modern American labor movement. At coal strikes, steel strikes, railroad, textile, and brewery strikes, Mother Jones was always there, stirring the workers to action and enraging the powerful. In this first biography of "the most dangerous woman in America," Elliott J. Gorn proves why, in the words of Eugene V. Debs, Mother Jones "has won her way into the hearts of the nation’s toilers, and . . . will be lovingly remembered by their children and their children’s children forever."

Book Information

Paperback: 432 pages

Publisher: Hill and Wang; Reprint edition (April 15, 2002)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0809070944

ISBN-13: 978-0809070947

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 22 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #212,329 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #80 inÃ Â Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Professionals & Academics > Social Scientists & Psychologists #192 inÃ Â Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Specific Topics > Labor & Industrial Relations #193 inÃ Â Books > Business & Money > Economics > Labor & Industrial Relations

Customer Reviews

"Pray for the dead but fight like hell for the living" was the rallying cry that made Mother Jones (n‚e Mary Harris) one of the most famous union organizers and rabble-rousers. This highly engaging biography (the first since 1974) charts the life and work of one of the U.S.’s most important and captivating political figures. Born into an impoverished Irish family in County Cork in 1837, she immigrated to North America at age 15. After working as a seamstress and teacher, Harris married George Jones, a member of the International Iron Molders Union. At 30 she was widowed when her husband and four young children died in a yellow fever epidemic. Caught up in the mid-century’s roiling labor and social upheavals, Jones threw herself into the political fray. Speaking tirelessly and effectively for the rights of workers and unionists--often using bold, flagrantly

rhetorical and poetic metaphors--"Mother" Jones reached the height of her fame and influence by 1913 when, in her 70s, she campaigned for the United Mine Workers in West Virginia, where she was arrested for conspiracy to commit murder (she had urged striking minors to protect their families against the military brought in to break the strike). Gorn, professor of history at Purdue University, has successfully separated fact from myth (some of it promoted by Jones in her Autobiography), situating Jones's story within a wider cultural frame. Exploring issues from the complicated role of women in union organizing to the relationship of the Catholic Church to the working class and labor movements, he has produced a new and needed addition to contemporary labor and feminist literature. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Gorn (history, Purdue; A Brief History of American Sports) restores Mother Jones from leftist poster icon to imperfect flesh-and-blood radical. The author successfully fills in the gaps and puts Mother Jones's remarkable life into context. Before becoming a labor organizer and Socialist tribune, Jones witnessed the Irish potato famine, became an educated woman against heavy odds, and lost her children and husband to disease. In her efforts to unionize the working class, she pitted her courage, oratory, and organizing talents against the industrial robber barons and their government allies. Yet she deliberately clouded her past and often shaded the truth to promote her mythic status as "Mother" to the nation's toilers, and at times she was na ve and patronizing. This engaging biography recalls an almost forgotten American radicalism and reminds readers that the Gilded Age fa ade hid an industrial system built on exploited labor and poverty. Recommended for academic and larger public libraries. Duncan Stewart, State Historical Society of Iowa Lib., Iowa City Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Elliott J. Gorn's scholarly yet engaging biography of Mother Jones (the woman and the icon) has both enlightened and inspired me. A fearless activist, an orator, and by her own words, a "hell raiser", Mary Harris Jones led armies of miners, steel and mill workers to fight for their right to freely organize, and for their right to earn a livable wage under humane conditions. She saw life as a battle between the economic classes and believed government to be a "prisoner of capital."That Elliott Gorn, a professor of history at Purdue Univesity and author of The Manly Art: Bare-Knuclke Prize Fighting in America, and A Biref History of American Sports, should be enthused enough about the life and times of an old woman in Victorian dress to write her story, has earned my respect as well.

Gorn brings to life the woman in well-researched, elucid prose. His understanding of the Progressive Era is fully evident. While acknowledging her failures and inconsistencies, Gorn recognizes and identifies her singular lifelong passion, committment, and her power. Mother Jones was far more than a fiesty old lady who meddled in labor affairs. Professor Gorn shows why she was considered by wealthy operators, capitalists and "lap dog politicians" to be "the most dangerous woman in America."As a 56-year-old woman, I took heart that I can still make a difference in the world, that through the power of words I can still be influential. After all, by Mother Jones' yardstick I'm still in the infancy of my career.Ã Â Friday Night Knife and Gun Club

this has more information as a source.. not only about the labor movement but about Mother Jones. Her autobiography is great for a primary source.. but as pointed out in this book.. her image and her larger than life.. icon for labor.. is what her own book is about. this offers other events as well as history during the time frame putting her in context with the labor movement.This woman knew tragedy and yet continued to struggle forward .. giving her life.. and that of others.. meaning. this book continues to put into context her struggles with the leaders of the labor movement, what she wanted to see happen, what actually happened. Mother Jones "never to be forgotten" .. however she certainly was, sadly, this is a great book for research on labor and her personally.

A well-written biography of Mary Jones (Mother Jones) that is an honest account of her early life, as best as it could be pieced together, and her life as an activist in the U.S. labor movement. Author Gorn honestly points out many of the exaggerations and embellishments from Mother Jones's autobiography. However, Gorn's overall assessment is a complimentary account of an amazing woman rising to recognition during a time when American women had very little power and opposition to women suffrage was rampant. Very much worth the read.

good book

Gorn brings history to life with this one. I read it while riding the train to work back and forth every day for a week and was transported to the turn of the last century. This is a must-read for anyone who wants to know more about Mary Harris Jones and her life and times. I would highly recommend this book for history nerds like me.

I am a re-enactor who has a one woman show called "An Afternoon With Mother Jones." This book

is a wonderful reference.

Excellent history to get an idea of the importance of the labor movement in the United States.

Not just a biography but an account of the union movement and struggles of the working class. Asks timely questions about the rights of workers to strike and the rights of corporations to exploit resources they never made and cannot replicate.

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