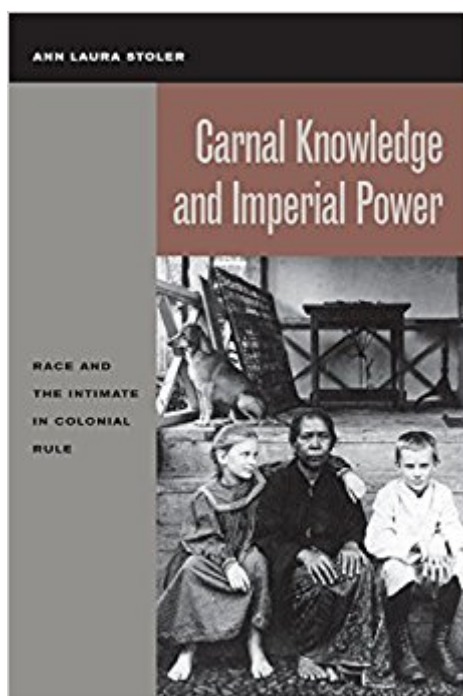


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# Carnal Knowledge And Imperial Power: Race And The Intimate In Colonial Rule



## Synopsis

Why, Ann Laura Stoler asks, was the management of sexual arrangements and affective attachments so critical to the making of colonial categories and to what distinguished ruler from ruled? Contending that social classification is not a benign cultural act but a potent political one, Stoler shows that matters of the intimate were absolutely central to imperial politics. It was, after all, in the intimate sphere of home and servants that European children learned what they were required to learn of place and race. Gender-specific sexual sanctions, too, were squarely at the heart of imperial rule, and European supremacy was asserted in terms of national and racial virility. Stoler looks discerningly at the way cultural competencies and sensibilities entered into the construction of race in the colonial context and proposes that "cultural racism" in fact predates its postmodern discovery. Her acute analysis of colonial Indonesian society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries yields insights that translate to a global, comparative perspective.

## Book Information

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"To my knowledge, there simply is no one else writing on questions of colonialism, gender, race, and intimacy who brings this depth and reach of historical and anthropological illumination to bear."-Nancy F. Cott, author of *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation* "This new book brings our collective agenda forward with a degree of maturity and flexibility that makes narrow academic preferences both unnecessary and misleading."-Doris Sommer, author of *Proceed with Caution, When Engaged by Minority Writing in the Americas*

"To my knowledge, there simply is no one else writing on questions of colonialism, gender, race, and intimacy who brings this depth and reach of historical and anthropological illumination to bear."#151;Nancy F. Cott, author of *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation*"This new book brings our collective agenda forward with a degree of maturity and flexibility that makes narrow academic preferences both unnecessary and misleading."#151;Doris Sommer, author of *Proceed with Caution, When Engaged by Minority Writing in the Americas*

This book provides remarkable insight on aspects of colonialism that is rarely broached in scholarly literature. That colonial powers and governments as well as businesses did so much to engineer, manage and control the sexual activity of people, both Europeans and colonial subjects, and that on the basis of race, is amazing and disturbing. The primary previous information I had about this kind of thing is to be found in the works of Indonesian novelist Pramoedya Ananta Toer, who spent many years in prison, both under the colonial regime and the Indonesian national government. Some of his most remarkable and revealing work shedding light on these topics are his quartet of novels *THIS EARTH OF MANKIND*, *CHILD OF ALL NATIONS*, *FOOTSTEPS* and *HOUSE OF GLASS*. Stoler's work is a remarkable and very welcome addition and correction of much previous scholarly work on the 350 year colonial history and culture of the Netherlands East Indies.

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