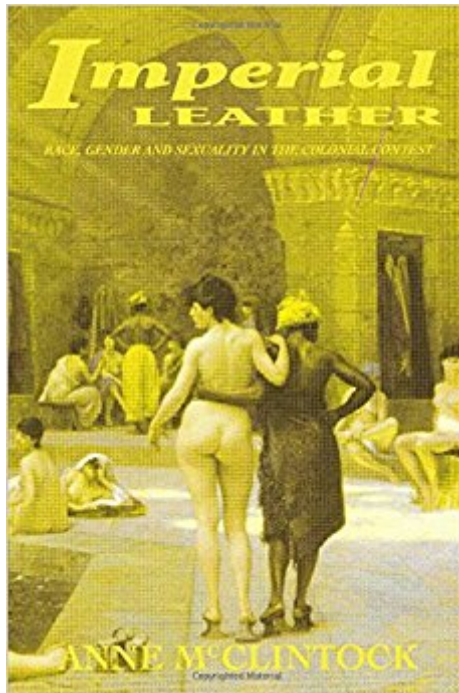




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Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, And Sexuality In The Colonial Contest



Synopsis

Imperial Leather chronicles the dangerous liaisons between gender, race and class that shaped British imperialism and its bloody dismantling. Spanning the century between Victorian Britain and the current struggle for power in South Africa, the book takes up the complex relationships between race and sexuality, fetishism and money, gender and violence, domesticity and the imperial market, and the gendering of nationalism within the zones of imperial and anti-imperial power.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

McClintock (English, Columbia Univ.) interprets 19th-century British imperialism as the focal point for that era's major "disclosures," including feminism, Marxism, and psychoanalysis. She describes Victorian urban space—including advertising—as being oriented to exhibit imperial spectacle based on racism and sexism. In turn, the colonies become stages for exhibiting a reinvented patriarchy, with Westerners symbolizing power and indigenous peoples a subdued domesticity. The text is an exercise in demonstrating preconceptions. While some of McClintock's evidence is original, the argument as a whole is conventional bien-pensant wisdom unlikely to convince anyone not already committed to the thesis. The presentation is further burdened by its reliance on the clichés and jargon of feminism, deconstructionism, and other currently fashionable academic ideologies. Imperialism was at once a simpler and a more complex phenomenon than McClintock's perspective allows. For large academic collections only. —D.E. Showalter, Colorado Coll., Colorado Springs

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"The author and Routledge are to be congratulated on a big, beautiful book that many students of the history of sexuality will find alluring."-"Journal of the History of Sexuality ""Imperial Leather is what an academic book ought to be: intelligent, informed, socially committed, engaged, and engaging."-"Women's Review of Books ""Imperial Leather is a wonderful book."-"Women's Review of Books "McClintock's magisterial study...is a daring articulation of the race-class-gender triad."-"Choice "Anne McClintock's "Imperial Leather takes a prominent place among a number of recent works...that question the relegation of the imperial enterprise to the back benches of the Victorian sensibility....Ms. McClintock's astute reading of novels, diaries, and advertisements, among other sources, demonstrates how images of domestic life can be incorporated into an ideology of imperial domination."-"The New York Times Book Review

Was expecting a more objective look at the topics of race, gender, and sexuality during imperialism but from the very beginning, the tone is quite clear - obsessively hardline feminist and anti-imperialist.

Thanks!

It's been a while since I read this book (in Fall 2002), but I remember being highly surprised with what it taught about how the contemporary, taken-for-granted ideological practices of cleanliness (daily bathing, soap, house cleaning), etc., came into being during the time period discussed, and how class and race (racism) functioned -- more blatantly then -- to promote certain practices and consumer products to the point that they now are often assumed to be "universal" and go unquestioned in terms of their historical development. Additionally -- and not mentioned in the reviews -- is the discussion of resulting fetishizations, particularly in the accounts of certain historical persons. It's a fascinating read, and includes hard visual evidence of the racist advertising that promoted certain practices and products that have continued from the colonial past to today.

It was one of those books that you want to own and make a part of your library. It talks about the intersection of race, gender, sexuality and class in colonies and metropolises. Unlike some of the other books on colonialism, this book analyzes the various discourses that served the purpose of power but without reifying race. It makes you see the exploitation of colonized and their exercising of agency in an extremely unequal relation. It throws light on the gender dynamics in this power play

that had been ignored for a long time.

I don't agree with the reviewer for Library Journal because I found McClintock's book thorough and solid. She situates the book in a very clever way in the myriad of "isms" and scholarly debates on post-colonialism. She argues that one cannot talk about colonialism without at the same time investigate how gender, race, sexuality, class etc, has shaped the colonial discourse and discussion. I would recommend this book to people interested in feminist, gender, postcolonial studies but also to anyone who wants a more indepth and creative analysis of the current debate on postcolonialism and gender.

The book was okay not worn out on the outside. But the previous owner had underlined a lot of stuff inside using INK, I thought that was a little inconsiderate. All said, there were no tears or other damages, so it is okay given its price.

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