



Frontiers of Fear: Tigers and People in the Malay World, 1600-1950 (Yale Agrarian Studies Series)

Mr. Peter Boomgaard

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For centuries, reports of man-eating tigers in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore have circulated, shrouded in myth and anecdote. This fascinating book documents the relationship between the 'big cat' and humans in this area during the 350-year colonial period, recreating a world in which people feared tigers but often came into contact with them, because these fierce predators prefer habitats created by human interference. Peter Boomgaard shows how people and tigers adapted to each other's behaviour, each transmitting this learning from one generation to the next. He discusses the origins of stories and rituals about tigers and explains how cultural biases of Europeans and class differences among indigenous populations affected attitudes toward the tigers. He provides figures on their populations in different eras and analyses the factors contributing to their present status as an endangered species. Interweaving stories about Malay kings, colonial rulers, tiger charmers, and bounty hunters, with facts about tigers and their way of life, the book is an engrossing combination of environmental and micro history.

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