

KELLY L. WATSON. *Insatiable Appetites: Imperial Encounters with Cannibals in the North Atlantic World*. (Early American Places.) New York: New York University Press, 2015. Pp. xiii, 239. \$40.00.

Insatiable Appetites: Imperial Encounters with Cannibals in the North Atlantic World analyzes the discourse of cannibalism in European colonial expansion in six easily read chapters. Focusing primarily on texts written from the late fifteenth through the eighteenth centuries, Kelly L. Watson details how European and North American writers deployed cannibalism to mark civilization and savagery. She pays particular attention to the creation of gender boundaries, arguing that stories of cannibalism reveal the tensions and power dynamics in early modern colonialism. In focusing on cannibalism's role in the definition of savagery and otherness, Watson points to the colonial project of bodily control in New World environments.

The book's introduction is straightforward, introducing sources and delineating acts of anthropophagy from the idea of cannibalism. Watson sets out that this book focuses on the latter. Given this concentration on the power dynamics revealed in cannibalism rhetoric, she guides the reader through an interdisciplinary historiography including anthropology, psychoanalysis, and comparative colonialism, alongside histories of sexuality and empire. Chapter 1 presents an overview of centuries of European print discussions of cannibals. Beginning with ancient Greek texts, Watson moves through anti-Christian writing to medieval constructions of monstrosity in travel narratives to explore how each constructed images of otherness through stories of cannibalism. This lengthy history provides a background for the four case studies of early modern cannibalism in the colonial context.

Chapter 2 focuses on the Western "discovery" of cannibals, in particular how the early European text and visual portrayals depicted Caribbean Indians in exploration narratives. Watson convincingly details the connections between uncontrolled sexual and anthropophagic appetites, and argues that (mis)classifying various indigenous groups as cannibals allowed for further institutionalization of colonial rule. Like other scholars, Watson argues that Europeans' critiques of indigenous gender norms were central to the classification and subjugation of indigenous people. Chapter 3 shifts to an analysis of documents from New Spain in order to trace the similarities between Mexican conquest narratives and Caribbean stories. Watson continues to show how Europeans discursively linked sex and cannibalism together to demonstrate examples of savage sinfulness. In addition, she focuses on the use of sodomy to denigrate indigenous social and sexual practices in these Iberian narratives.

Relying largely on *The Jesuit Relations*, chapter 4 turns to New France. Watson relatively sympathetically explains how Jesuits saw ritualized cannibalism in light of their preconceived hierarchies of indigenous savagery, and compares Catholic notions of martyrdom to Iroquois views on torture and bodily suffering. Chapter 5 explores English perceptions of cannibalism through the eighteenth century. Here Watson notes the relative absence

of discussions of cannibalism in English New World travel writings. While she includes a detailed analysis of cannibalism stories that circulated at Jamestown's founding, the chapter focuses largely on the well-plumbed genre of captivity narratives, arguing that English colonists, like many writers before them, reinforced notions of masculine prowess by denigrating challengers as savage cannibals. The book's concluding chapter reviews the various gendered hierarchies enforced by discourses of cannibalism, and offers a postscript on nineteenth-century shifts away from the association of female sexual power and cannibalism.

This chronologically and geographically wide-ranging book is an enjoyable and enlightening read. It brings together occasional commentaries to form a coherent viewpoint that highlights cannibalism's connection to early modern European colonialism. It would be useful in courses on American studies, gender studies, or an array of courses on North American colonialism. Occasionally, the clear writing can veer into the overly directive ("we must pause one more time" [35]) or stiffly unnecessary ("sexuality and gender were inextricably intertwined in sixteenth-century Spain as they were everywhere" [95]). And there are moments when Watson might have pushed her analysis beyond gender's importance to more fully engage with the material power behind the discourses. Overall, however, this slender monograph provides ample food for thought by bringing together extensive evidence on the role of cannibalism in European conquest discourse. Watson offers a coherent reflection on the ways that cannibalism was a tool of European colonial projects, and in so doing, centers the body more fully in our understanding of colonial conflicts.

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CRAIG THOMPSON FRIEND and LORRI GLOVER, editors. *Death and the American South*. (Cambridge Studies on the American South.) New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015. Pp. xii, 280. \$95.00.

Quite appropriately, Craig Thompson Friend and Lorri Glover, editors of this volume, open the collection with a scene from William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*, the classic 1930 novel that uses death to illuminate the complexity of life in the American South. The plot of the novel revolves around the death of Addie Bundren and her quest to be buried in her hometown of Jefferson, Mississippi. Most notably, Faulkner uses multiple narrators to tell the story and each of the fifteen chapters introduces a new character's perspective on the quest to fulfill Addie Bundren's wishes. Similarly, *Death and the American South* presents eleven original essays that offer readers multiple perspectives on the compelling history of southern deathways. Driven by a goal to explore how death has framed southern history, the editors clarify that they are not making the case "for the uniqueness of southern death and deathways," but rather seek to consider, "what were the causes and implications of the South's defining experiences with death" (2). The book tackles a broad range of