

October 14, Indigenous Peoples' Day

# Cannibal Encounters: The Two-Way History of People- Eating in the Era of European Colonization

Monday Oct 14  
at 1:10 pm  
Garland 101



The invasion of the Americas that began in 1492 brought tales of bloody native rituals that titillated public imaginations in Europe and fueled religious and legal debates over the humanity and treatment of the New World's indigenous peoples. On the other side of the Atlantic, rumors of “white cannibals”—Europeans who cut up Indians' bodies to use as medicine—terrified native people in Mexico and sparked riots in Peru. While the origins of fears about white cannibals in the Americas are unclear, the popularity of medicinal cannibalism in western Europe in the 16<sup>th</sup> century is well-documented. Reflecting on this almost-forgotten tradition of European people-eating casts a provocative light on the blind spots and hypocrisies that have perpetuated bodily violence against indigenous peoples and violations of indigenous rights for 527 years.

Beth A. Conklin is an Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Anthropology. She has conducted long-term research with indigenous rainforest communities in Brazil and is the author of *Consuming Grief: Compassionate Cannibalism in an Amazonian Society*.



Peruvian pishitaco retablo



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