



Racial Indigestion: Eating Bodies in the 19th Century (America and the Long 19th Century)

Kyla Wazana Tompkins

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Winner of the 2013 Lora Romero First Book Publication Prize presented by the American Studies Association

Winner of the 2013 Association for the Study of Food and Society Book Award

The act of eating is both erotic and violent, as one wholly consumes the object being eaten. At the same time, eating performs a kind of vulnerability to the world, revealing a fundamental interdependence between the eater and that which exists outside her body. *Racial Indigestion* explores the links between food, visual and literary culture in the nineteenth-century United States to reveal how eating produces political subjects by justifying the social discourses that create bodily meaning.

Combing through a visually stunning and rare archive of children's literature, architectural history, domestic manuals, dietetic tracts, novels and advertising, *Racial Indigestion* tells the story of the consolidation of nationalist mythologies of whiteness via the erotic politics of consumption. Less a history of commodities than a history of eating itself, the book seeks to understand how eating became a political act, linked to appetite, vice, virtue, race and class inequality and, finally, the queer pleasures and pitfalls of a burgeoning commodity culture. In so doing, *Racial Indigestion* sheds light on contemporary "foodie" culture's vexed relationship to nativism, nationalism and race privilege.

For more, visit the author's tumblr page: <http://racialindigestion.tumblr.com>

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