

BORDER/LINES

CULTURES CONTEXTS CANADAS ISSUE NO. 26 1992

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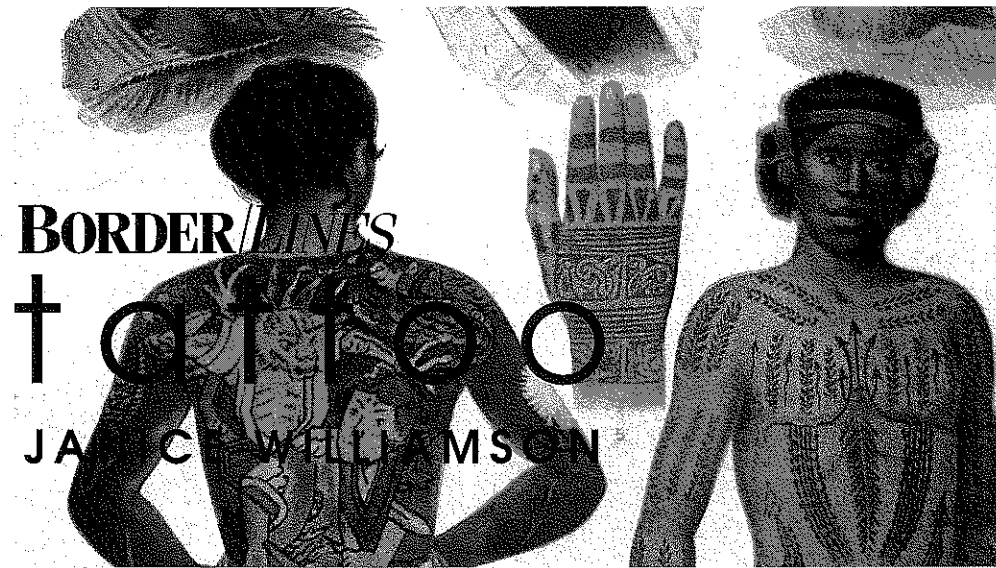
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I Was a Teenage FOB:

Designed by Celine Cassar



BORDER/LINES

memory tattoos under my skin: interlinked domestic occasions - home to certain passions, occasional miseries and lots of critical pleasures. Collective work on a magazine like Border/Lines had all the makings of what an ideal intellectual community might be: theoretical inventiveness, creative engagement, interdisciplinary richness, companionable support and an understanding of social justice. While the editorial collective initiated word & image production, my memories of early Border/Lines days are ordered by domestic locations: the beautiful watery garden I wanted to wander in and the stomach aches I assumed after the populous meetings in Alex Wilson's sensual coach house; the wine and discussions about magazine names, typos (alas, once all my publishing naivete's fault), and cultural politics at dinners in Peter Fitting's backyard; the good talks in my neighbour Christine Davis' installation-filled loft while working together on my first image/text collaborative work (How can I forget the rude cockroach which one morning emerged from under the bodice of C's dress?).



For several years, a number of the women had been meeting independently as The Bad Sisters, a feminist reading group which explored borderlines between feminism and psychoanalysis. We strategized about how effectively to raise feminist issues in a mixed gender feminist-positive collective full of good will. Origin of the stomach aches. I remember bad-girl belly laughs shared with Kass Banning and Brenda Longfellow when we orchestrated our "Bad Sisters in the Big Apple" piece in three scintillating voices. Consuming Kass's delicious kitchen cappuccinos, we contemplated the ethics of the outrageous in writing about the whiteness of a feminist film critic's underpants.

This is my Border/Lines tattoo: friends with energy, intelligence, and occasional companionable lunacy - many of us juggling too many part-time jobs, graduate school and political activism. Or this spatial tattoo: a community of placed - scarred tables burdened with food, gardens promising a new season, and a city busting up all over with stay-up-all-night political and cultural work.

I miss all but the stomach aches. Janice Williamson is Associate Professor of English at the University of Alberta and the author of *Telltale Signs*.

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