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Ten Years Of Border/Lines

A Reminiscence. A History.

In 1983 some of us took part in a conference organized at York University on "The Alternative Press in Canada," which explored various journals and magazines operating outside the commercial mainstream of Canadian publishing. These included *This Magazine* (represented by Susan Crean and Rick Salutin), *The Canadian Forum* (represented by John Hutcheson), *Rampike* (represented by Karl Jirgens), *Impulse* (represented by Eldon Garnet), *The Body Politic* (represented by Alex Wilson), *Last Post* (represented by Patrick McFadden and Rae Murphy), *Shades* (represented by Sheila Wawanash and Paul Wilson), *C Magazine* (represented by Richard Rhodes), *La Vie en Rose*, *The Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory* (represented by Arthur Kroker), as well as stringers for *Canadian Dimension*, *Parachute*, *Fuse*, *Vanguard*, *Parallogramme*. Even the student press was there (the editors of *Excalibur* at York who are, for instance, now the proprietors of *Now*); so was Luc Jutra from the Canada Council. Of these magazines at least six do not exist anymore and one, *CJPST*, lives on in an electronically mutated form.

Some of us, who had tried to establish a Canadian Studies association (lethargy and disorganization prevented it from getting too far), decided that it was time to establish a magazine - not a journal - which would create a different presence on the magazine scene. We had all worked with different magazines or journals (I with *CJPST* and the *Forum*), but in many ways the conference showed some of us that there was an evident gap in combining academic perspectives and cultural/social happenings. Thus, two groups were drawn together, one academic (which included Philip Corrigan, Jody Berland, Ian McLachlan, Bruce Elder, Peter Fitting, Ivan Varga, Alan O'Connor, Jody Berland, Geoff Miles, Monika Gagnon, Andy Payne, Gail Faurischou, Janice Williamson and Michael Boyce) and one practical (Rosemary Donegan, Alex Wilson, Christine Davis), though practice and theory

necessarily overlapped. We debated titles, format, editorial structure, funding, printing, everything that a magazine needs to think about. We settled on *Border/Lines* as a name (not without disagreement), a large format, and a collective structure. We found some seed money from York University and individual donors and somehow came out with issue #1 in October 1984. The editorial collective formed and reformed, and we struggled to find money to put out enough issues so that we could apply for public funds. Alex Wilson, in effect, became the (unpaid) Managing Editor, and the offices were split between York for business and his house for editorial work until, in 1986, we found editorial offices in the basement of a Christian charity on Madison Avenue.

There were disagreements on the direction we were taking. In 1988 some of the collective split off to establish their own journal, *Public*. As the *Public* exit showed, debates within the collective formed an ongoing exercise in thinking about what cultural critique was for, and also what our collective purpose was. (Canada Council juries regularly asked the same questions.) We realized, however, that we were nothing if not monitors of discourses in cultural analysis everywhere and that, at best, we were the only magazine in Canada that tried to establish a bridge between academia and a wider public on a whole range of cultural issues. With the scarce resources that were at our disposal, we were able to give our readers a sense of the critical issues that emerged in Russia, Hungary, feminist discourse, Britain, South America, India, the culture of nature, TV news coverage, the Vancouver Expo, prison writing, First Nations.

We decided that we had to keep going and try a slightly different tack. The cost of publishing was a major issue. We had always employed a designer (in particular David Vereschagin who produced some marvellous work), but this cost us one-third of our production costs. For two issues we had employed Lachlan Brown as Managing Editor, but we

also retained the services of David. The budget could not cope. Why not merge the post with that of managing editor, reduce the size to the standard 11 X 8, and systematize special issues? In this, we could put our budget to good advantage and also consolidate what was best in our work. Thanks to Stan Fogel, who joined the collective in 1991, and also to Joe Galbo, Kass Banning, Gary Genosko, Michael Hochsmann and Alan O'Connor, we put the magazine on a course which alternated theme issues with general ones. Above all, we found Julie Jenkinson. With her appointment as Managing Editor, we found a designer, office manager and friend, who would keep us all in place and produce the magazine in a style within which we would all feel comfortable.

The issues that have appeared since 1991 display this new organic sense. The issue on First Nations was established when Lauchlan Brown was Managing Editor, but, in many ways, set the pattern for subsequent special issues on Latin America, Race, Queer Culture and Virtual Reality where guest editors, in or outside the collective, put the issue together. With the general issues, which alternated with them, we tried to be both Canadian and international. We would like think that the new *Border/Lines*, will be taken into classrooms, onto picket-lines, into the different workplaces within which we all spend a large part of our creative lives, so that it informs the culture of the everyday as practice.

As you read through this Miscellany and Index, which we hope you will find useful in finding us in libraries or in buying past issues, we hope that you will also think about your part in a wider collective. We would like your input. There has been a moral basis to our work: there has to be an alternative voice to the suffocating, smelly subterfuge of those who would take culture as that which is only commercially viable. Are we that voice? How can we improve?

Please let us know. **Ioan Davies**

MISCELLANY: A B/L RETROSPECTIVE: 10 PROGRESSIVE YEARS

Selected by Stan Fogel

1984

#1: "From time to time literature must be revitalized by new materials and new techniques. As Synge, who wanted to give utterance to the peasantry of Western Ireland, said to Yeats, style is born out of the shock of new material. We have the English novel in part because of the English Dissenters and their preoccupations - money and the growth of the soul. Recently we have seen the impact of various submerged groups on Canadian and American literature: Blacks, women, gay men and lesbians, all with compelling stories to tell. New writing by newly vocal communities may become fashionable for a while, but the only enduring ways to keep the work available are the alternative networks of presses, bookstores, and magazines, enterprises which are often run as co-ops."

Bert Almon, review of *The Republic of Letters: Working Class Writing and Local Publishing* and *Dockers and Detectives*

#2: "Until Canadian country music songwriters feel able to draw with equal facility for their images, analogies, and metaphors from within Canada as well as from the geographical mythology of the United States, they can do little to further the cause of Canadian identity. In the meantime, Canadian country music will simply have to remain as Canadian as possible...under the circumstances."

John C. Lehr, "As Canadian As Possible...Under The Circumstances"

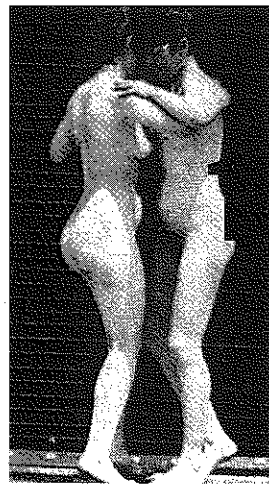
#3: "One of the most consistent and public statements about the Kreuzberg area and the Instandbesetzer movement is the local graffiti which permeates the entire district and speaks the politics and emotions of the neighbourhood. . .

the symbol of the squatters who repair both the architecture and the community fabric
 Occupied - that is enough
 Too bad cement doesn't burn
 Unrest in the deep freezer
 You have the power but we have the night
 Power is always without Love
 Love is never without Power
 Taking a house is better than waiting to be given one
 It is better that our youth squat houses than foreign countries
 Be realistic - demand the impossible
 It is better to squat and repair a house than to own a house and let it fall into ruin
 Under the paving stone - the beach"

Rosemary Donegan (ed.), "Tom Burrows on Squatting, Instandbesetzer Graffiti"



South Bronx, 1984. Photo by Tom Burrows



Eadweard Muybridge

1986

#4: "Love of the Same is necessary for there to be love of the Different. And from this point of view, it is true that the mother-daughter relation is the most complex and much more potential, productive..."

"An interview with Luce Irigaray," conducted and translated by Heather Jon Maroney

#5: "By removing the lace bustier and stockings, bracelets, hair ribbons, objects upon which the fetishization of Madonna, the stripper, are pinned, the structural function of these fetish objects is destroyed, for they no longer cloak her 'lack.' Revealing the naked body and genitals of Madonna Louise Veronica Ciccone, is, well, not pornographic."

Monika Gagnon, "Bella-donna: Madonna at a Glance and in Retrospective"

#6: "in grade school i learned our notorious p'tit catéchisme and read Katy Keene comix "In My Room" with the Beach Boys. at convent i went to mass every a.m. and fantasized about Marianne Faithfull up through grades called syntaxe versification, rhétorique. my friends turned péquistes and fans of our chansonniers (folksinger- songwriters) but the Stones had put the touch on me so i defected. exil-e in Anglophonia. so close yet so far away West of the Main. says Ahmed: "Excessive assimilation of the dominant model is a typical language attitude of the colonized, the bourgeoisie being the class most affected."

Susanne de Lotbiniere-Harwood, "I Write Le Body Bilingual"

#7/8: "In both Québec and Catalonia, the current situation suggests that little respite is in store for those who feel that there are specific national communities worth defending. Those Québécois who expected that economic progress would obviate the basis for national demands should look at the history of Catalonia, whose development demonstrates that such a pattern can never be taken for granted. In fact, despite unequal and even diverse patterns of development, the specific national concerns experienced in Québec and Catalonia today are fundamentally similar. To the extent that those concerns are born out of resistance to operations of delimitation and marginalization on the part of larger central states, their respective responses will have much to learn from each other. At first Catalans may be tempted to look toward Canada for glimpses of a more generous federal system and Québécois toward Spain for a peek at the successes of a minority national bourgeoisie. But in the long run I would suspect they would do better looking at each other, learning from their respective interrelations with their central states. Thus they may plan the political and cultural forms of intervention that will make their collective futures viable."

Robert Schwartzwald, "Wealth and Nations: Modern Nationalism in Catalonia and Québec"

#9/10: "Telemarketing is a contemporary instance of the interplay between speech and writing, and of our belief in the presence and precision of speech and verbal communication over the indeterminacy of the post and the written word. The phone gives you three to five minutes of the undivided attention of the other which you must use expeditiously: make your sale, disguise your intention, for telemarketing - aural sex - is capitalism's ultimate talking cure."

Kim Sawchuk, "Telemarketing and the Disembodied Voice"

1988

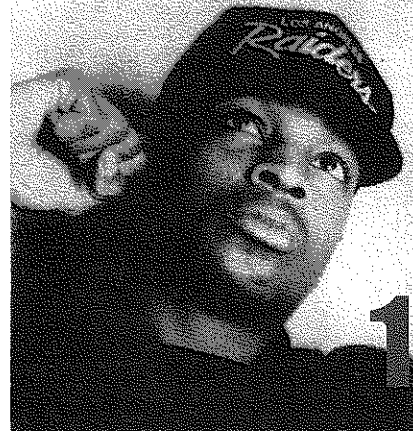
#11: "I will not place the word race in quotation marks as Gates ("Writing", "Talking") and Tzvetan Todorov have suggested because, although I believe it is important to point out how racial difference is constructed, I do not believe the concept can be discounted entirely. It persists as a mode of ordering: Gates in particular still works with an idea of "black" as being essentially different from "white" at the core of his writings. Although he wants to locate black criticism in culturally derived manifestations, he still refers to "black" or "white" authors and critics. This seems to connote something like race."

Cameron Bailey, "Writing B(l)ack: The Call and Response of Black Literary Criticism"

#12: "As rural tourist development proceeded, its geographical focus shifted from natural features of the landscape to 'artificial' ones like golf courses or African animal safari parks. The reasons for this are complex, but they had mostly to do with the need for the industry to differentiate its products in order to serve a rapidly expanding market. Scenic legitimacy came to rest on the marketing strategies of the tourist industry as well as the vagaries of land speculation."

All of these changes led to new fields of study like tourist motivational assessment and scenery evaluation, which by the 1960s had become the subject of intense scrutiny within the industry."

Alexander Wilson, "The View From the Road: Nature Tourism in the Postwar Years"



Chuck D., Public Enemy. Photo by Rick McGinnis



ad for the Asphalt Institute, mid 1950s

#13: "With the rise to power of Pierre Trudeau in 1968, the pressure was on to settle the Indian lands "problems" once, and for all. Accordingly, Trudeau and Jean Chrétien, then Indian Affairs Minister, concocted the ironically-named White Paper policy. Its objective was to complete the job of assimilating the Indian people by placing them under the jurisdiction of the provinces. They proposed repealing the Indian Act and amending the constitution to eliminate all references to Indian people."

Christopher Plant, "Indian Self-Government: Triumph or Treason?"

#14: Corporations like Petro-Canada may call themselves "proudly Canadian." But the same federal government that owns both Petro-Canada and Canada Post did not hesitate for an instant to employ scabs to attempt to break the strikes by Canadian postal workers in the summer of 1987."

Tom Wayman, "What Use is Canadian Culture?"

#15: "In (practical) audiophonic terms, Lacan's thesis allows us to understand a range of listening behaviours described by those studying the social behaviours of audio consumers: why, for instance, many people listen to the radio or other audiophonic equipment in darkened rooms, or just prior to sleep; why listening aids digestion; why muzak increases commodity production in factories and commodity consumption in shopping malls."

Bruce Barber, "Radio: Audio Art's Frightful Parent"

#16: "Justice MacKay, in a remarkable departure from conventional courtroom practice, allowed the Haida to give testimony in traditional oral fashion, without lawyer intercession, and it is this element which drew me to the text. Working from the printed transcript (for which I thank the Council of Haida Nations) I attempt to "hear" Diane Brown's words in a way that might, hopefully, give them meaning in the white, Eurocanadian context of this magazine."

The reader might situate her or himself, in approaching this text, as a kind of eavesdropper on an ongoing interethnic, intercultural conversation. Part of the problem of Eurocanadian-aboriginal communication and discourse is the question of place: how, and therefore where, does the discourse happen? On the printed page, the oral, which is essential to the Haida way of speaking, is rendered mute. On the other hand, if the text that oral testimony produces does not get "out," beyond the specific location where the words happen, its political potency is reduced."

Norbert Ruebsaat, "Speaking With Diane Brown: A Text in Progress"

#17: "I really am asking writers how we can develop and popularize a language of reproductive freedom; how we can convey and clarify the subtlety and complexity of our concepts? We need to hear from media workers how we can influence the media to take up our frame of reference and how we can stay on the media's agenda, even when our issue is not "hot." I think cultural workers exploring how theatre, poetry, fiction, painting and other media could portray women's strength and independence as they fight to control their reproduction can make a significant political contribution to the choice movement."

B. Lee, "Whose Bodies/Whose Lives? Cultural Struggles Around Abortion"

#18: "The moist, wet, inner pink space of her mouth had become a tender womb to bad words, any words - mother's cunts, pricks, dicks - the words were embedded deep inside Miranda filling up all the secret places and spaces created by the forbidden. Like Chaucer's male characters the words had plumbed her depths - mother's cunts and all. No one, not even the guardian of space and words, her mother, could take them or any of her words from her. They're all mine now, Miranda thought as she lay in bed, remembering how she had panted and her forehead had broken out in sweat after she was done swearing."

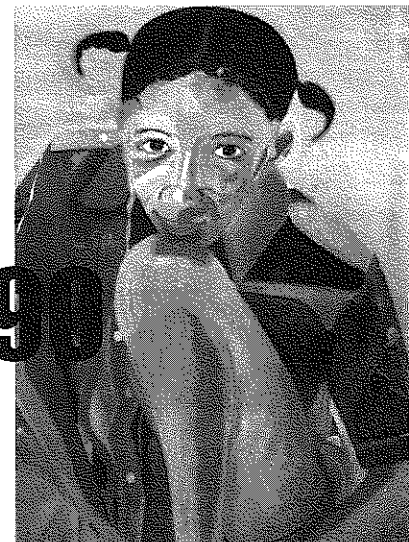
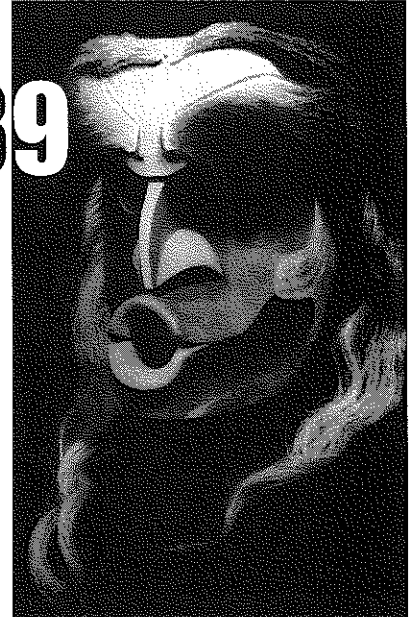
Marlene Nourbese Philip, "Bad Words"

#19: "The message implied by the promoters of the Wall fragment is clearly a thinly veiled ideology. Capitalist free market ideology asserts itself by offering itself to the consumer, thus negating in one fell swoop any hint that there might be any choice. What makes it a collector's item is not really that it is in limited supply; it is a collector's item only while it still contains an aura of the Cold War. In its commodity form it's sold as if it were a cultural treasure. In the examples on display at the major shopping malls you'll find it enclosed in a velvet draw-string bag."

Joyce Nelson, "Culture and Agriculture II - Monoculture"

1989

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Buseje Bailey

1990

#20/21: "Cultural Studies Now and in the Future? Within the academy, what should the future of cultural studies be? Should it aim to become a "discipline," thereby imparting a set of skills to students and perhaps reconstructing the university, yet probably capitulating to the forces of deradicalization and institutionalization? Should it remain instead a program or centre, thereby regaining its radical edge, yet probably remaining highly eclectic and peripheral within the university?"

John Rodden, "Cultural Studies and the Culture of Academe"

#22: "My friend Karen (who is in this class) and I decided we would get together on the full moon, which happened to fall on the day after the class on Goddess Religion and celebrate our womanhood and the fact that we are goddesses. We got together and talked about how CUNT is beautiful and how we are unafraid and proud of beautiful CUNT. I drew up her birth chart and we looked at that, and then I spilled my guts about the problems I have been having with my boyfriend and how I don't really feel like I have been treated much like a Goddess lately. To my surprise, tears came as I told her the story (it is very hard for me to cry), and she hugged me and gave me a back massage. We talked about what I could do to patch things up with Steve and she said, "Angela, you are a Goddess!" Then she took my fancy calligraphy pen and on a piece of paper she wrote GODDESS, folded it up, and gave it to me, saying, "Go talk to him." I did, and I told him everything that has been bothering me.... Since then he has treated me like the Goddess I am. A Goddess appreciates herself enough to not need anyone worship her, but loves herself enough to ask for what she needs, and if she is rejected, she loves herself enough to leave. Well, Steve and I are still together and he has dubbed me the Honorary Goddess of "Black and Tan" beer at the Lion's Brew Pub. I have never had a more bonding experience with a female than I did yesterday with Karen under the fat full moon."

Jane Kalbfleish, "See Jane Play, See Dick (Run)"

#23: "My brief excursion into the prostitution of Hawaiian culture has done no more than give an overview. Now that you have heard a Native view, let me just leave this thought behind. If you are thinking of visiting my homeland, please don't. We don't want or need any more tourists, and we certainly don't like them. If you want to help our cause, pass this message on to your friends. Thank you."

Haunani-Kay Trask, "Lovely Hula Lands: Corporate Tourism and the Prostitution of Hawaiian Culture"

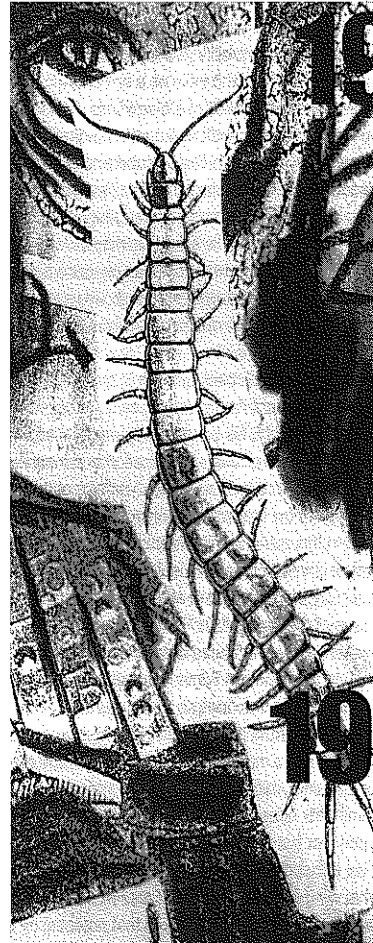
#24/25: "In *Cronenberg on Cronenberg*, Cronenberg states that he felt so close to Burroughs when writing the screenplay that had Burroughs died he could write his next novel. The limit to this fusion is quite explicit—Cronenberg implies that it is his heterosexuality which dissociates him from Burroughs and which forced him to make his own very different *Naked Lunch*. This oedipal dissociation gets rehearsed throughout the film."

Danny O'Quinn, "War On: Naked Lunch"

#26: "Hallelujah!
It works.
We blew the shit out of them.
We blew the shit right back up their own ass
It works.
We blew the shit out of them.
They suffocated in their own shit!
Hallelujah.
Praise the Lord for all good things.
We blew them into fucking shit.
They are eating it.
Praise the Lord for all good things.
We blew their balls into shards of dust,
Into shards of fucking dust.
We did it.
Now I want you to come over here and kiss me on the mouth."

Harold Pinter, "American Football (a reflection upon the Gulf War)"

Jennifer Stowell



1992

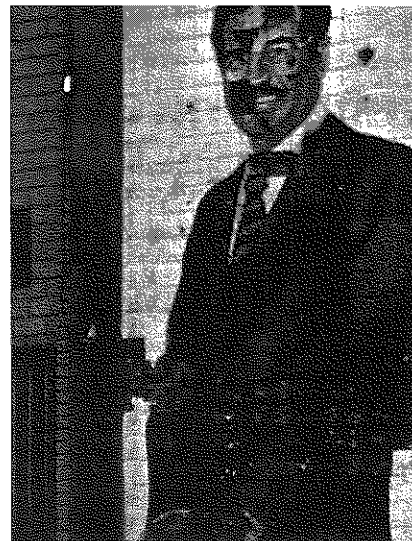


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#27: "When the first leather jackets and Elvis pompadours appeared on the streets of the *barrios*, the over-forty guardians of culture, nervous that Mexico City youths would arm themselves with switchblades and roar Harleys through elegant Zona Rosa establishments à la Marlon Brando in *The Wild One*, mounted an all-out assault. Films like *The Blackboard Jungle* were pulled from movie theaters and newspapers apprised the populace of the dangers of *rocanroleando*: gang violence, lax morality, and, especially, the destruction of *la cultura nacional*. Maybe the single thing the government, the Catholic Church and the Marxist left could all agree on was that Mexican Youth was imperiled by the Protestant, decadent and individualistic North."

Ruben Martinez, "Corazón del Rocanrol"

#28: "the site:
The subject area of "homosexuality. lesbianism" – Library of Congress designation, HQ75 – is not only a region within a map of the logic of power, but also a place and time made physically concrete. Here, the discursive taxonomic abstraction is made articulate within a non-discursive institution."

Nicholas Packwood, "Browsing The Apparatus"

#29/30: "...one cannot be a Latina without recognizing one's African heritage: without it, we are caricatures of the Iberians, or we are "American" simulacra, not Latinas."

Gladys M. Jiménez-Muñoz, "The Elusive Signs of African-ness: Race and Representation Among Latinas In the United States"

#31: "One Hundred Starting Points of the Post-Modern. . .

- "100. Yuri Gagarin manned space flight, 1961, orbit and weightlessness make time and space more relative than any person has experienced before.
- 99. Paolo Soleri's cave-house-studio, Scottsdale, Arizona, 1961, and his search for 'Arcologies' (architectural ecologies), the paradoxical blending of high tech and the eco-freak.
- 98. Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 1961, the attack on artificial, order-imposing city planning begins.
- 97. Berlin Wall, 1961, the admission of failure by Soviet Communism.
- 96. John Cage, *Silence; Lectures and Writings*, 1961 mainstreaming the avant-garde notion of chance in composition.
- 95. Michel Foucault, *Folie et déraison*, 1961, reempowering madness."

Dennis Sexsmith, "When Does Post-Modernism Begin?"

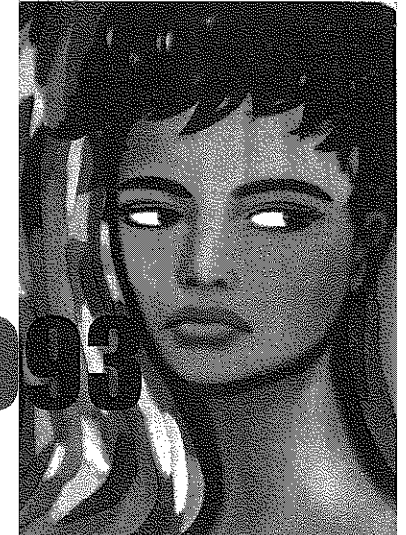
#32: "The high living of the 1980s gave way to the recessionary 1990s and the world needed a new sexual orientation to give meaning to the decade. The media seized upon lesbians. They were the perfect image for the scaled-down, nesting 1990s. Their sex was safe and their relationships were long lasting. According to the media, lesbians had shed the negative image that had plagued them in the 1970s—as man-hating separatists. In the intervening years, lesbians had apparently discovered sex, Nair and Armani. And the media was ready to discover *them*."

Rachel Giese, "Lesbian Chic: I feel pretty and witty and gay"

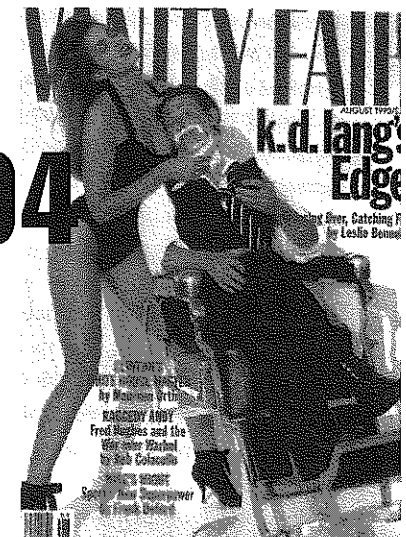
#33: "The arrival of Hong Kong money in Toronto has recomposed power relations within the Chinese community and has also somehow changed central Chinatown. Conflicts developed along class lines during the late 1970s when the new elite entrepreneurial class tried to take over Chinatown's development. Before the 1970s, Chinatown and its political, economic and cultural life were influenced by social workers and community activists, and a relatively small group of wealthy merchants whose authority relied mainly upon kinship. Both groups were inward-looking. With the new entrepreneurial class, business is business – capitalist production and profits are central concerns. It is in part this mentality that generated the modern residential-commercial buildings such as the Dragon City and Wenhua Centre standing today at the southwest corner of Spadina/Dundas, the outcome of a compromise development project in the late 1970s. The entrepreneurial class's original vision of a "commercial Chinatown" was to turn the heart of Chinatown into a multimillion dollar commercial/residential complex consisting of expensive boutiques and high-priced condominiums. Its realization would have deprived hundreds of garment factory workers' of jobs."

Xiaoping Li, "One Face, Many Stories: Redefining Chinese Identity"

Nadedge, Licia Bronzin



1993



1994

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