

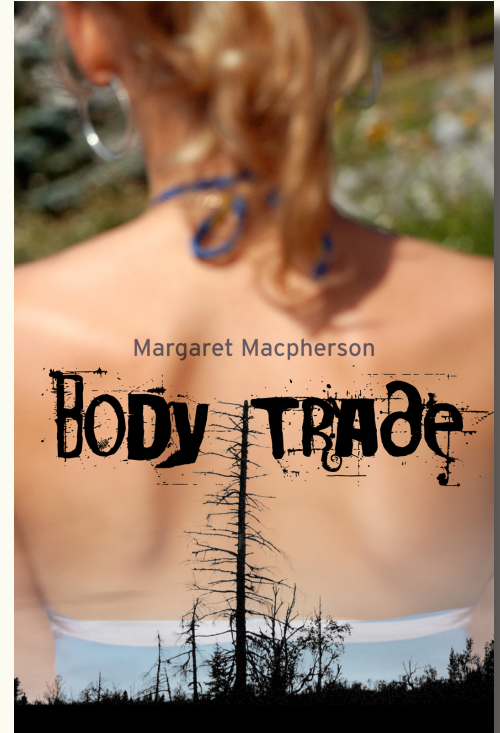


# Body Trade

by Margaret Macpherson

## Questions for Readers

1. The voices of the two female protagonists, Rosie and Tanya — innocence and experience — are juxtaposed in alternating chapters. What are some other polarities that operate in the telling of this story?
2. While parallels can easily be drawn between Tanya and Marten Hartwell, Rosie and Davidie Watchamacallit, some other exchange is going on between the two girls. Each seems to become more like the other as time passes. What is the significance of this trade between the two girls?
3. Tanya is only happy when she is in control. Her sexual history prevents her from forming intimate relationships. How does she eventually learn to give up control and what are the results of that surrender?
4. Rosie is guided by spiritual principles passed down from generations. How do those principles help her cope with the increasingly dangerous situation the girls find themselves in? How does Tanya cope? Why?
5. How does Rosie's idea of procreation relate to the drum? What significance does the day of the dead have for her? Why does this matter in the end?
6. Ethnic visibility and values changes as the young woman go farther and farther south. What is the author attempting to say about race and gender politics?
7. In weaving together a non-fiction event and a fictional story, Macpherson has attempted to illuminate the consumption of the female. How does eating/being eaten further the themes of the book?
8. How do the vignettes of the plane crash inform the story of Rosie and Tanya? Are the stakes of equal weight?
9. The later part of the story is set on a pig farm. Does this have resonance with the reader given recent events in Canadian news? Is Tanya's betrayal shocking in light of her love for Rosie?
10. With survival at the core of this book, how does the ending affect the reader? What does it say about lost girls and women? Is Rosie's Aboriginal background important as to who is left behind?



Trade paper, \$16.95  
ISBN 978-1897109-50-2

Also available as an eBook, \$9.99  
ISBN 978-1897109-60-1

[www.signature-editions.com](http://www.signature-editions.com)

*Signature*  
EDITIONS

## Questions from Readers to Margaret

1. What is your process? Do you write and revise as you go, or write draft after draft?
2. How long did it take you to write this book? And what do you want your readers to take away from it?
3. How did you ever bring these two disparate stories together? What was the inspiration?
4. Given the raw tone of the the novel, do you think it's in keeping with the themes of survival at all cost?
5. Rosie and Tanya are unlikely friends. How did you come up with such distinctive voices for your characters? And in your mind, which character is more complex and fully drawn?
6. *Body Trade* has a haunting and devastating ending, particularly after the reader becomes deeply emotionally invested with these two characters. Was that difficult to write? Why did you choose to end the book in such a way? Did you consider alternative endings?



Margaret Macpherson's web site: <http://www.margaretmacpherson.com>

Margaret Macpherson's blog: <http://the505050project.blogspot.com>