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Barry Humphries, whose sardonic impersonation of a Moonee Ponds housewife has entertained a British audience who feel secure in knowing that the gaucheries of the colonial suburbanite are as laughable as were the pretensions of their country cousins a generation before. In a finely nuanced conclusion, Alomes suggests that in the era of globalization and international treaties that encroach on our ability to protect the production of a homegrown culture, we need to find mechanisms for making Australia attractive to artists, so that fresh representations of the country may be made. Only then would we more completely understand the experiences of those who left and their ambivalent relationship with "home."

SIMON RYAN
Australian Catholic University

Peter Dickinson, *Here Is Queer: Nationalisms, Sexualities, and the Literatures of Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.

Revisionist readings of literature and identity in Canada are even more prevalent than in Australia, given the various separatist movements in Quebec in the last few decades. To say that Peter Dickinson adds homosexual/queer representations to the canon of Canadian literature would be to underestimate the project: *Here Is Queer* analyses the work of queer writers in the context of nationalist debates, providing a substantive discussion of the country's literature.

The title may seem unusual and even ungrammatical but, as Dickinson explains in his introduction, it echoes a significant moment in Canadian literary history. In the 1960s, Northrop Frye posed the question, "Where is here?" to generate deliberations about the nature of a nascent Canadian national literature. Dickinson combines this iconic question with a more recent queer slogan ("We're here, we're queer, get used to it!") to produce "Here is Queer." This combination of a nationalist dialogue with a queer inflection describes his project in this book.

Dickinson provides lucid and socially contextualized readings across a broad spectrum. While many critics of Canadian literature tend to choose to study either writing in English or writing in French (or compromise by considering one or the other in translation), Dickinson reads both English and French writers with equal ease. He covers texts

by well-known writers, including Timothy Findley (and he is particularly good on *The Wars* and *Famous Last Words*), Daphne Marlatt, and the playwrights Tomson Highway and Michel Tremblay. He also encompasses the lesser known earlier poets Patrick Anderson and Scott Symons, poets Nicole Brossard and Dionne Brand, and up-and-coming Quebecois playwrights René-Daniel Dubois and Michel Marc Bouchard. He also crosses gender, genre, and race divides seamlessly (Highway's indigeneity and Brand's Caribbean background are both important to their writing), although the playful treatment of Marlatt's and Brossard's poetry is not as convincing an examination as the others. Not content to address only gay/lesbian writers, Dickinson also exposes a number of heterosexual writers whose gay characters amount to cartoons. He also uncovers gay themes and relationships that have not been recognized in several canonical and historical texts.

While he is a very good closer reader of texts, Dickinson is occasionally less than generous with the work of other critics. At times, he risks hectoring his colleagues when he discovers that previous critics (who were involved in different projects) have not engaged in queer readings or have missed/refused the queer signals in the texts. The barely disguised conclusion here is that this is an attempt—however unconscious—to dismiss the possibility of queer readings, rather than representing the wealth of interpretational possibilities regarding a text/writer. It is, however, compensated by the excellent investigation and the generally meticulous research.

Here Is Queer thoroughly assesses the ways in which the work of gay and lesbian writers has shaped a nation, even if the queer component is often overlooked. Dickinson clearly outlines how queer sexualities have influenced the construction of the literature and identity of the nation in spite of their critical absences and, more importantly, how queer sexualities continue to shape the development of Canadian literature.

JOANNE TOMPKINS
University of Queensland

Anthony Elliot. *The Mourning of John Lennon*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1999.

Using a multidisciplinary approach that draws on psychoanalysis, politics, biography, cultural studies and postmodernism, Elliott's study