

Critical Canadiana

Jennifer Henderson

In 1965, in the concluding essay to the first *Literary History of Canada*, Northrop Frye wrote that the question “Where is here?” was the central preoccupation of Canadian culture. He equivocated as to the causes of this national condition of disorientation, alternately suggesting historical, geographical, and cultural explanations—the truncated history of a settler colony, the lack of a Western frontier in a country entered as if one were “being silently swallowed by an alien continent” (217), a defensive colonial “garrison mentality” (226)—explanations that were unified by their unexamined Eurocentrism. Frye’s thesis has since proven to be an inexhaustible departure point for commentaries on Canadian literary criticism—as witnessed by this very essay, by the title of one of the four books under review, as well as a recent issue of the journal *Essays in Canadian Writing*, organized around the question, “Where Is Here Now?” The question was first asked at what many take to be the inaugural moment of the institutionalization of *CanLit*, when the field began to be considered a credible area of research specialization.¹ Since then, as one of the contributors to “Where Is Here Now?” observes, “Canadian literature as an area of study has become a rather staid inevitable in English departments” (Goldie 224).

So Frye’s question has become a somewhat tired one. Canadians who watched the first five years of *The X-Files* television series and saw familiar British-Columbian landscapes deployed as low-cost backgrounds stretching from New Mexico to New England might be forgiven for continuing to ask the question “Where is here?” however. The landscape of *Minus Time*, a 1993 novel set in Toronto, seems to comment on this right-price versatility of Canadian locations, as its protagonist bikes past blue mailboxes that transform her city into “New York or Boston or Baltimore” (Bush 79). According to this analysis, Canada’s status as a Hollywood set is the product of a generalized postmodern condition. Dionne Brand’s poetry collection, *Land to Light On* (1997), offers a different analysis, one that counters the Eurocentric assumptions of Frye’s explanations for the condition of disorientation and “strangled articulateness” (Frye 220), by representing these

New World Myth: Postmodernism and Postcolonialism in Canadian Fiction
By Marie Vautier
McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1998

The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada
By Eva Mackey
Routledge, 1999

Writing a Politics of Perception: Memory, Holography, and Women Writers in Canada
By Dawn Thompson
University of Toronto Press, 2000

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

Turning to Canadian literature as an object of study has become a problematic move, requiring a more critical motivation than mere promotionalism or even the desire for self-knowledge.

as the particular experiences of the minoritized migrant subject. In Brand's poems, speakers renounce the nation-building project and the commitment to "offices or islands, continents, graphs"—especially when this commitment demands the surrender of "parentheses" about the "engine turning up refugees, / corporate boards, running shoes, new economic plans" (47, 102). The critical trend that accompanies the emergence of these new takes on the question "Where is here?" is indeed distinguished by a greater willingness to engage such untidy parentheses, to explore internal differences and border conflicts (as opposed to differentiating Canada from external others). Turning to Canadian literature as an object of study has become a problematic move, requiring a more critical motivation than mere promotionalism or even the desire for self-knowledge.

In the fiction of English-speaking Canada and Quebec from the 1970s to the 1990s considered by Marie Vautier and Dawn Thompson, the authors locate textual strategies that speak to wider questions in postcolonial and feminist theory, pointing the way beyond the impasses of self-other problematizations and identity politics founded on a *right* to self-representation. The question of national specificity is displaced here by a focus on literary mode and formal technique. Vautier discusses a myth-making practice that extends beyond Canada to the entire New World (minus the US); Thompson isolates a nonmimetic "holographic" technology at work in Québécois and English-Canadian fiction but is unwilling to "insist on a unique Canadian specificity that renders its literatures most appropriate to this kind of study," preferring to frame her retention of national boundaries in terms of a decision to "act locally" (7).² Eva Mackey and Peter Dickinson provide more considered approaches to Canada as a "specific site of social contestation" (Davey, "Contesting" 257). Mackey discusses a wide historical sweep of English-Canadian texts and social discourses from the colonial period to the present in order to investigate the identity-constructing practices of a former settler colony that reconstitutes itself as a multicultural nation. The point of making Canada an object of study here is to work through a hypothesis with applicability across the field of cultural studies—that the "recognition of difference, in and of itself, is not necessarily the solution, just as the erasure of difference *per se* has not always been the main problem" (173). Dickinson shares Mackey's interest in nationalist discourse as well as her methodological commitment to a level of analysis capable of uncovering the historical and geopolitical contingencies of this discourse's production. Unlike the kind of thematic study of 20 years ago that might have read the literature for a "Canadian homosexuality"

(had sexuality formed a legitimate object of investigation), Dickinson conducts a genealogical inquiry that exposes the discontinuity of his object.

In spite of the play on “Where is here?” in its title, Dickinson’s study has very little to do with Frye’s prescriptions for Canadian literary criticism. As numerous critics have noted, Frye the Canadianist was very different from the protostructuralist Frye associated with the elaboration of systems of literary myth. He viewed Canadian literature as an exception to his own definition of the properly literary, for turning to Canada, he seemed to see a largely descriptive, experiential literature that showed few signs of being pulled toward an autonomous and disinterested center of literary experience. The peculiar nature of Canadian literature, Frye wrote in his famous “Conclusion” (1965), called for a critical practice capable of reading texts “innocent of literary intention,” a form of “cultural history” that would address literature as an aspect of “Canadian verbal culture generally” (214–15). For the generation of critics emerging in the late 1960s, this call would be realized in criticism focused upon the discovery of nationally specific thematic patterns, following the lead of Frye’s statements on the “garrison mentality” as the central social myth in Canada’s “echoing literary collective unconscious” (236). In this criticism, myth was theme and theme reflected a national mentality. By the late 1970s, however, thematic criticism had come under attack from various quarters for its prescriptive and exclusionary effects (its circular privileging of mythopoeic writing), its disregard for literary form, and its parochial concern with Canadian content. Barry Cameron and Michael Dixon would publish *Minus Canadian: Penultimate Essays on Literature* (1977), a collection of essays prefaced by a manifesto demanding literary criticism (that is to say, New Criticism) “versus” Canadian criticism. Frank Davey would publish *Surviving the Paraphrase* (1983), modeling a form of author-centered criticism stressing the self-referentiality of literary language. Others pursued phenomenological criticism (especially of poetry) or semiotic analyses of narrative. The emergence of postcolonial criticism in Canada in the 1980s involved a return to questions of national mentality as well as reconsideration of the wholesale rejection of social mythology as a legitimate focus of literary criticism. Diana Brydon, a student of the authors of *The Empire Writes Back* (1989), would argue that English-Canadian culture was characterized by a Miranda complex—the dutiful daughter’s condition of internalized colonization—which made it especially difficult for English-speaking Canada to reject its colonial legacy.³ This situation called for an effort to decolonize the mind, an effort that might be spearheaded by a criticism cog-

nizant of the fact that “the colonised have their own myths” (“Myths” 1).

Vautier’s *New World Myth: Postmodernism and Postcolonialism in Canadian Fiction* draws attention to a body of contemporary fiction engaged in a complex reworking of inherited myths and a reformulation of the concept of myth itself, as a provisional narrative grounded in a specific history. She proposes the term *new world myth* to describe a form of narrative that uses local and popular materials to dismantle European worldviews. These contemporary anglophone-Canadian and Québécois historical novels betray a “didactic urge” to accord mythic significance to events in the history of the New World, even as they work to undercut assumptions about the immutability and transhistoricity of myth (285). One of the distinguishing features of *new world myth*, Vautier argues, is its self-conscious grounding in the contingencies of the present. She frames a corpus of fiction written between the mid-1970s and mid-1980s—a period of political insecurity in Canada, involving intense debates about Quebec’s place in the federation and the legitimacy of a new, repatriated constitution that Quebec refused to sign because it failed to recognize the province as a “distinct society.” Thus, although these novels represent distant and sometimes incredible characters and events, they also offer oblique commentaries on the political issues of their present: the contradictions of *pure laine* nationalism, the politics of representing “others,” and the need for reparative justice in relation to groups historically constructed as “internal enemies” of the Canadian state.

Vautier observes that the flight from mythopoeia in Canadian criticism has produced a critical climate that has been especially unreceptive to metafictional explorations of the power of myth. Several of the authors she discusses have been met with baffled silence or confusion in the critical mainstream, or have come under attack for perceived political improprieties, when irony or visions of hybridity have failed to translate across borders of various kinds. The different idioms of postcolonial criticism in English-speaking Canada and Quebec have posed one of these communicative barriers. As Vautier notes, in international critical practice, the study of Canadian literature in relation to questions of postcoloniality is divided along linguistic lines, so that discussions of postcolonial literatures in English ignore literary production in Quebec, while comparative criticism of literatures written in French maps connections between Quebec and nations such as Haiti, instead of exploring the relationship between different postcolonial literatures within Canada (26). Comparative criticism within Canada has tended to describe dialectical relation-

ships between the literatures of Quebec and English-speaking Canada, relationships that are always resolved in a single, binding figure. (The latest figures to be added to this proliferation of national literary emblems—the lattice-work fence and the border field—mark a move away from the restrictive model of two “founding nations” to the pluriethnic mosaic, paralleling changes in the nationalist discourse of the state.)⁴ Vautier’s concept of *new world myth* avoids the homogenizing tendencies of this kind of comparative criticism by relating the mythmaking strategies of English-speaking and Québécois authors to different ideological and historical conditions. She uses this picture of two contexts of literary production and reception—two contexts of postcolonial sayables—to translate exemplary texts across the cultural and discursive boundary, as well as to defend authors who have been misunderstood in their own contexts precisely because their work already speaks across the divide.

As Vautier notes, anglophone-Canadian postcolonial criticism has been shaped by the self-other, center-periphery binaries that characterize postcolonial criticism in the commonwealth tradition of *The Empire Writes Back*. This paradigm is not always suited to discussions of Canada’s multitiered histories of conquest and assimilation. Its oppositionality renders illegible the work of Quebec authors such as Jovette Marchessault and François Barcelo, who write out of French Canada’s different historical relationship to First Nations people—a relationship that was relatively open to military collaboration, intermarriage, and the *métissage* or interweaving of cultures. Marchessault’s semi-autobiographical novel, *Comme un enfant de la terre* (1975), is marked by the absence of a self-other dichotomy and narrated from within what Vautier calls the “double insidedness” of a complex Québécois–First Nations (and lesbian-feminist) perspective (108).⁵ The power struggle staged by this novel is “not white French Quebec versus Amerindian, as some contemporary cultural commentators would perhaps wish to frame it . . . but French Quebec *plus* Amerindian *versus* Catholic Church” (108). Marchessault’s insistence on hybridity as an originary condition anticipates by 20 years recent developments in cultural discourse on the Left in Quebec. In English-speaking Canada, however, nationalist constructions of settler-aboriginal hybridity have recently become the object of a critique that takes up Ella Shohat’s reminder that the reversal of racist tropes can operate to reconsecrate rather than disturb hegemonies.⁶

In Quebec, irony has not enjoyed the currency as the post-modern mode par excellence that it has had in English-speaking Canada. Québécois critics have thus responded to Jacques God-

bout's ironic allegory of Quebec as a monstrous two-headed being in *Les Têtes à Papineau* (1981) with unease and even hostility. In English-speaking Canada, on the other hand, George Bowering's parody of traditional ethnographic representations of the Native in *Burning Water* (1980) has generated controversy because the novel runs afoul of the current progressive consensus on the politics of representing "others," a consensus that has no equivalent in Quebec. In the 1980s questions of authenticity and cultural property/propriety were at the center of a debate in English-speaking Canada about the abuse of signs of aboriginality and non-Native writers' disregard for Native copyright systems. Not coincidentally, in the 1980s First Nations writing in English began to compete for institutional resources, as it was collected into anthologies, encouraged through new First Nations-run publishing houses and journals, and established as an object of critical attention.⁷ Perhaps the concept of cultural appropriation has had comparatively little play in Quebec because, as Vautier observes, there has been no comparable move to establish a body of First Nations writing in French. (The federal administration of First Nations people has ensured that the most common non-Native language among First Nations people in Quebec is English.)

Vautier affirms a longitudinal tradition in Quebec literary criticism that dates back to a study by the Haïtian-Quebecer Max Dorsinville, *Caliban Without Prospero: Essay on Quebec and Black Literature* (1974), which called for an identification with the postcolonial nations of the Black diaspora, against the pull of France, the *mère patrie*. This call was renewed in the 1980s in the pages of the Quebec literary journal *Voix et images*, by the critic Gilles Thérien, who proposed a north-south axis of cultural production that would connect Quebec to the whole of the formerly colonized Americas. Vautier affirms this appeal to a "post-European" literature of the Americas, noting that although it has become "de rigueur to flog myth criticism" in Canada, there is currently a resurgence of myth criticism in Latin America and the Caribbean (xiii). Canadian critics would do well to look south (further south than the US), she argues, in order to learn how to read their own postcolonial literature's engagement with "home-ground" issues through self-conscious mythmaking (xvii). Implicit in this recommendation is the suggestion that English-speaking critics should also look to recent developments in the critical and literary discourse of Quebec in order to find their way past a certain impasse of the political imagination, an impasse anchored in the entrenchment of proprietary authenticities and the oppositions of colonial discourse. In English-speaking Canada, the scandalous comments of former Quebec premier Jacques

Parizeau following the 1995 referendum on Quebec sovereignty—and the success of the “No” vote by an extremely slim margin—have come to serve as a standard synecdoche for retrograde, intolerant ethnic nationalism. (Parizeau’s claim that the “yes” side had been lost to “money and the ethnic vote,” as Mackey argues, allowed English-speaking Canada to differentiate itself from a backward Quebec and to reaffirm tolerant multiculturalism as the core of its own identity.) However, *pure laine* nationalism is hardly hegemonic in Quebec, especially not among cultural producers in Montreal, where an anti-essentialist approach to thinking about collective identity as a syncretic construct, built up through a politics of solidarity and articulated differences, is now crystallizing around the term *l’identitaire*.⁸ This neologism, collapsing *identity* and *ground*, signals an attempt to reconceive Quebec as a terrain of cultural convergences and slippages, a place of creative confrontations between what the novelist Régine Robin has called the two currents of contemporary Québécois literature, “le courant légitime et l’écriture migrante” (221). Although Vautier gestures toward this emergent discourse, her own critical practice remains bound to a prominent strain of English-speaking Canadian criticism that is less committed to the principles of confrontation and specificity.

For Vautier, *new world myth* coheres around a set of techniques that includes parody, irony, intertextuality, and self-reflexivity. It corresponds almost feature by feature to a Canadian poetics of the postmodern that has been defined by the critics Robert Kroetsch and Linda Hutcheon. Although there are differences in the ways that Kroetsch and Hutcheon take up the term, both elaborate a theory of postmodernism through a form of applied criticism that reads poststructuralist theory in Canadian fiction.⁹ Their criticism composes an extremely inclusive canon of postmodern fiction, organized around a validation of process, contradiction, and epistemological uncertainty. Kroetsch, a Western-Canadian poet and novelist, and an editor of *Boundary 2* in the early 1970s, tends to read for a phenomenologically inclined deconstructive stance, which he specifies as a peculiarly Canadian resistance to systematicity and totalization. Kroetsch’s postmodernism, as Davey has observed, is always in the service of Canadian specificity. It “flickers” with a “Canadianness that, in some momentary but privileged Heideggerian unveiling . . . various theories are directed to reveal” (“Contesting” 256). “By Lyotard’s definition,” Kroetsch has written, “Canada is a postmodern country” (22), characterized by a refusal of European and American metanarratives and a “low level of self-definition” (28). Of course, this kind of proclamation attempts to remedy the problem of self-

definition by claiming lack and discontinuity as national characteristics.¹⁰ But whereas Kroetsch claims postmodernism for Canada on the basis of an experience of national space as “an open, discontinuous system of communication” (Neuman and Wilson 112), Hutcheon has tended to understand Canadian writers’ propensity for postmodern poetics as a matter of historical timing. Vautier, who is closer to this view, notes that the novelists in her study strive to establish new myths of the past just as “all the ‘foundations’ upon which an emerging literature could conceivably be built have been problematized” (33). Her greater debt to Hutcheon’s considerable body of work on postmodernism, however, lies in the centrality that she assigns to paradox in her definition of *new world myth*, the presence of which is always signaled by the coexistence of contradictory processes in a text: on the one hand, that of installing the significance of the history of the New World, on the other, that of exposing or “flaunting” this very act of mythologization. Myth thus emerges in Vautier’s selection of texts as “comforting *and* disquieting, structuring *and* decentring, old *and* traditional, and new *and* generative” (50).

The “systematically paradoxical” nature of this postmodernism stems from a privileging of metafiction (Davey, “Contesting” 258), the genre that transforms the properties of fiction into its subject matter.¹¹ The metafictional text draws attention to its complicity with the comfortingly traditional, and it is this acknowledgment of an inescapable complicity with received discourses and practices that forms the progressive edge of postmodern fiction for Hutcheon, and new world myth for Vautier. Hutcheon’s reliance on the figure of paradox has been criticized as a means of rather breezily resolving ideological contradictions and of distancing literary criticism from social and political critique.¹² Vautier’s overuse of the word *flaunt* is symptomatic of these same problems, for too much of the distinction Vautier would draw between myth as metanarrative and myth as provisional, flexible new world narration depends on the self-consciousness of her authors’ deployment of conventions and their communication of this knowingness to readers. The liberal humanism that grounds this communication explains why Vautier’s analysis of the rewriting of biblical narratives sometimes reads as a pre-Althusserian discussion of religious belief systems. It also accounts for her rehabilitation of the imagination as the terrain on which writer and reader meet to participate in the “perpetual coming-into-being of New World Myth” (284).

Although *new world myth* celebrates the destabilization of received history in contemporary fiction, this seems to require the resanctification of the literary. Vautier argues that Canadian crit-

icism (especially the criticism of English-speaking critics influenced by an imported self-other model of postcolonial discourse) has fallen behind advances in literature. This claim works to reserve a vanguard position for the imaginative writing of post-Europeans. It rhymes with the move by one of Canada's foremost postcolonial critics, Stephen Slemon, to underline "significant discrepancies" between the practices of postcolonial writers and the prescriptions of "mainstream"—that is to say, European and American—theory and criticism ("Post-Colonial" 157). Slemon has further argued that among postcolonial literatures, it is the literature of the Second World (the former settler colonies of the British Empire) that best embodies the "radical ambivalence" defined by "First-World critical theorists" as the condition and limit of postcolonial resistance ("Unsettling" 38). By implication, the literature of this Second World (perhaps especially Canada's) should be accorded a paradigmatic status in the field of postcolonial literary studies. Slemon's exceptionalist argument is almost identical to Kroetsch's, except that Kroetsch argues for Canada's advance purchase on the other *post*: if Canada can be said to be a postmodern country, it is because "disunity . . . becomes our dance of unity" (29). Mackey's *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada* shows how different these nationalist celebrations of ambivalent resistance or tolerance for disunity look when they are historicized.

The House of Difference reframes the "Canadian 'plus'" as an effect of power/knowledge, rather than a product of the literary imagination. In Mackey's interdisciplinary study of national identity construction in Canada, the flexibility and overtness of new world mythmaking—interpreted by Vautier in terms of postmodern irony—are understood as features of a governmental rationality specific to officially multicultural settler societies. If new world mythology seems to flaunt its constructedness, it is because nation-states like Canada and Australia, formed out of displacement and discontinuity, cannot help being caught in the act of urgent, defensive attempts to create identifiable, differentiated national cultures. If these nationalist mythologies appear to be flexible and pluralist, it is because these "qualities" are in fact strategies of power that have been improvised in the management of diverse populations through the mobilization, rather than the repression, of differences. Mackey argues that the example of Canada troubles a key theoretical assumption running through studies of nationalism and hegemony, the assumption that the Western will to power necessarily functions to create homogeneity and to erase difference. Using a Foucauldian analysis of power (focused on the productivity of differentiating and classifying

practices), Mackey attempts to move the critique of liberal (in)tolerance beyond questions of exclusion and homogeneity. She argues that these terms fail to grasp the flexibility of strategies aimed at rendering populations governable, strategies that turn on the hierarchical organization of plurality in the case of Canada.

Beginning with early constitutional documents, Mackey traces a history of complex maneuvers to incorporate differences within the nation-building project. The particular challenge of the settler colony has been the management of First Nations cultures in combination with other subordinated cultures within a normative "whole way of life." A national "core" culture has been produced and sustained in Canada, Mackey argues, through the incorporation of First Nations people as "necessary others" and the limited authorization of "ethnic" cultures as "folk survivals" (2, 151). Critiques of "indigenizing" settler culture and of a multicultural policy that promotes "ossified" ethnicities are not new in Canadian cultural criticism.¹³ What is original about Mackey's staging of these critiques is the way that she brings them together as two moments in a critical genealogy of "tolerant" nationalism. "Canadian Mountie greets Chief Sitting Eagle," the postcard on the cover of *The House of Difference*, represents a fragment of the Canadian myth of the benevolent "Mountie" policeman, agent of a kindly dispensation of civilizing British justice in nineteenth-century Western Canada. This myth has provided a key point of nationalist differentiation from the US, associated with a war of extermination against "its" Native people. Mackey argues that the nineteenth-century Canadian policy of protecting, civilizing, and assimilating First Nations people is replayed in today's multicultural policy.¹⁴ The tolerant Mountie's "greeting" of Chief Sitting Eagle reappears in the strategy for "greeting" "ethnocultural groups" enshrined in the Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 1988. The act both recognizes and limits cultural differences, defining them within a rhetoric of national contribution that works to disassociate the celebration of cultural particularity from the claiming of political rights. Although multiculturalism has replaced Britishness as the official meaning of Canada, multicultural policy draws on a historically constituted discourse of tolerance that was designed to maintain British hegemony. Canada's heritage of tolerance thus survives as a strategy for limiting access to power and managing the crises produced when cultural difference becomes politicized.

Mackey uses an eclectic research methodology that combines textual analysis of documents of public culture (government policy, historiography, literary and artistic manifestos) with a more local, "event-centred" ethnography of nationalist festivals

and exhibitions. Research on the latter was conducted during 1992, a year of state-sponsored identity-exploration that included a campaign to celebrate the 125th anniversary of Canada's formation as a nation, public debates on the place of historically defined "ethnic" and racial groups within the nation, and a referendum on a revised constitution. In analyses of official campaign literature and local identity practices (reaching to the vernacular of a 14-year-old in a speech at a rural flag-raising ceremony), Mackey traces the emergence of a populist discourse of national unity centered on the concept of the "ordinary," nonpolitical but patriotic "Canadian-Canadian." At first this discourse would appear to contradict the logic of the cultural mosaic, often used to distinguish Canada's nurturing of linguistic, cultural, and regional diversity from the American melting pot. But as Richard Day has argued, the mosaic metaphor and the constant foregrounding of the problem of disunity in state policy discourse structure the disposition of the good Canadian citizen in terms of a dutiful yearning for national unity. In Canadian multiculturalism, the proliferation of mosaic fragments is supposed to occur within the bounds of a core culture committed to the unity and progress of the nation, as well as to the project of national self-differentiation from external others, such as Canada's overbearing neighbor to the south. (As Mackey notes, the populist, anti-immigrant discourse of the "Canadian-Canadian" ironically mobilizes the keystone of the Left-liberal Canadian nationalism of the 1960s and 1970s—the image of Canada as a fragile nation, besieged by more powerful external others.) The "Canadian-Canadian" differentiates him- or herself from the politicized constituent of the "special interest group," who is seen to betray the mosaic by inhabiting a subordinate culture inappropriately. The un-Canadian advocate of special interests disrespects a crucial conceptual opposition which silently operates to bind the fragments of the mosaic: the distinction between the definition of culture as commodified, mosaic-enriching "folk" practices—the definition that applies to the cultures of *others*—and the definition of culture that applies to the national "core" culture. This normative "core" culture reserves for itself the unmarked and supposedly universal liberal values of tolerance, rationality, equality, and progress associated with the sphere of civil society or *community*. It mobilizes these liberal values to dismiss demands for Native self-government or for antiracist institutions as examples of destructive divisiveness. In a new twist, this populist nationalism is legitimated by a calculated disconnection from the state and an association with the neutrality of private capital: thus, in 1992, responsibility for organizing celebrations of Canada's 125th

anniversary was conspicuously delegated to an arm's-length corporation representing a coalition of business sponsors. *The House of Difference* uses this specific national conjunction of corporate interests and commodifying multiculturalism to remind us that the hybridity often held up by postcolonial theory as a critical, resistant mode of imagining culture is not immune to absorption by hegemonizing global mass culture. "Western forms of power happily construct a world (increasingly corporatist and economically driven) in which we have *many cultures, one project*" (Mackey 166).

Mackey is a Canadian trained in social anthropology at the University of Sussex. Of these four books, hers is the only one published outside of Canada, and the only one that caters to readers with little knowledge of the country. (Mackey does not even take familiarity with the Canadian flag for granted, whereas Vautier and Thompson assume a bilingual reader who will not require translation of passages cited in French.) Although this mode of address means that the argument of *The House of Difference* occasionally suffers from an extra burden of explication, it also accounts for the text's power to defamiliarize received ways of thinking about the construction of Canadian identity. Critics of Canadian literature have, for example, been very slow to work the cultural studies edge of literary inquiry. Until very recently, there was no referent for Frye's description of Canadian literary studies as "cultural history" other than the rejected practice of reading literature as a mimesis of the national "mentality." Jonathan Kertzer's genealogy of national literary history in *Worrying the Nation: Imaging a National Literature in English Canada* (1998) and Daniel Coleman's work on the history of normative masculinities indicate openings in the direction of a cultural history steered by recognition of the constitutive role of representation in the formation of cultures and subjectivities. Smaro Kamboureli's *Scandalous Bodies: Diasporic Literature in English Canada* (2000) examines the historically and socially contingent production of ethnicity, moving beyond the identity-consolidating criticism of the collection *Literatures of Lesser Diffusion* (1990). However, there has been no widespread move toward the exploration of nonliterary intertexts and the description of discursive formations since Barbara Godard's 1987 observation that this work had been left to sociologists, political and communications theorists—first centered around the journal *Border/Lines* (until its folding under the pressure of arts-funding cutbacks in the 1990s) and now regrouped around *Topia*.¹⁵ One of the consequences of the attachment to author-centered criticism and close textual explication in Canadian literary criticism is that the field has not yet seen a sig-

nificant turn toward the analysis of normative categories such as whiteness or heterosexuality, a form of criticism necessarily connected to contextual analysis. The inaugural text of whiteness studies in Canada is Mariana Valverde's *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885–1925* (1991), a work in social history; and since the publication of that text social historians in the main are the ones who have continued to explore this terrain. Mackey's critical focus on the reproduction of a core culture and the subjectivities of those who consider themselves representatives of the mainstream makes an important contribution to this criticism of Canadian normativity. *The House of Difference* also demonstrates to Canadian literary critics that the question of multiculturalism should not only, or necessarily, be taken up in relation to writing by hyphenated Canadians, as it is also involved in the construction of such unmarked, dominant categories as tolerant Canadianness.

Thompson's *Writing a Politics of Perception: Memory, Holography, and Women Writers in Canada* is a book partially funded by Multiculturalism Canada. It follows a trend that is somewhat more solidified (though still relatively new) in multicultural literature and criticism: the critique of the valorization of the ethnic specimen or what Rey Chow has called the subjectifying demand for the true voice behind the defiled image.¹⁶ First Nations writing in the 1990s has been at the forefront of this critique of the demand for authentic or sanctifying self-representations. These expectations are treated ironically in Thomas King's *Green Grass, Running Water* (1993), a novel in which white tourists frequent a First Nations–run restaurant called the “Dead Dog Cafe” and a Cree character plays an Italian playing “injun” in Hollywood. The implicit rules for the authentication of the First Nations–authored text are also the subject of self-reflexive commentary in *A Really Good Brown Girl* (1996), a poetry collection by the Métis writer Marilyn Dumont. *Writing a Politics of Perception* contributes to this emergent problematization of self-representation as Thompson discusses contemporary Canadian women's fiction that she understands to be putting into play an alternative, nonrepresentational epistemology. She sets out to intensify the political potential of feminist novels through corrective readings that attempt to rescue the texts from criticisms of utopianism, cultural appropriation, onto-theology, naive autobiography—and occasionally, from themselves. The success of this venture, according to the terms Thompson lays out for herself, depends on the extent to which the novels can be shown to bypass representational epistemology by staging processes akin to that of holographic inscription.

In approaching the problem of self-representation from the

oblique angle of holographic theory, Thompson takes her inspiration from a key text of contemporary Québécois feminist writing, Nicole Brossard's *Picture Theory* (1982). Brossard has been at the center of feminist modernist experimentation with language and form in Quebec writing since the mid-1970s. She is one of the main figures associated with the mode of feminist "fiction theory" and the broader movement of *écriture au féminin*, an expression coined by Brossard to refer to a female-embodied practice of building a culture cognizant of women's being.¹⁷ Although feminist writers in English-speaking Canada have been slower to abandon the realist psychological quest narrative, bilingual venues such as the journal *Tessera*, founded in 1984, have provided sites for fruitful conversations and exchanges between these divergent aesthetic traditions. In the last decade, the model of feminist founding nations has been opened to question by anthologies such as *Telling It: Women in Language Across Cultures* (1990), the proceedings of a conference of lesbian and women of color writers on conflicts and exclusions in Canadian literary feminism. And *Tessera* has given itself a new subtitle, "Feminist Interventions in Writing and Culture," signaling a move to expand outward from the cross-cultural dialogue on gender and form. By combining discussion of Brossard's *Picture Theory* with readings of texts by Margaret Atwood, Marlene Nourbese Philip, Beatrice Culleton, and Régine Robin, *Writing a Politics of Perception* works to further desegregate "fiction theory" from feminist writing that neither foregrounds its rejection of mimetic presuppositions nor privileges gender over questions of nation, race, and migrancy.

Thompson is less interested in *Picture Theory's* allegory of the spiraling formation of a collective feminist subject than she is in its narrative structure. This structure is modeled on the holographic process, which involves the splitting and refraction of light beams to produce a three-dimensional image out of light-wave interference patterns. Thompson sees in this process the possible basis for a politics of the virtual image that would not founder in prescriptive essentialism. The holographic process is nonrepresentational in the sense that the image cannot be reduced to the copy of an original object. And because the three-dimensional image can be constructed from multiple perspectives, neither is the relationship between object and image that of a one-to-one correspondence. The object itself is displaced in its holographic reconstruction and it is "no longer possible to visually distinguish between reality and its representation" (23). What Thompson wishes to import from holography into literary criticism is the possibility of moving beyond the tasks of improving representations or altering their social meanings. Instead,

Thompson wants to ask how a text can work to generate virtual memory-traces and thereby modify its reader's consciousness through a process of cognitive mapping. She finds the meeting point of reader-response theory and holographic technology in recent theories of brain functioning, which suggest that thought itself is a kind of holographic process. The problem with this attempt to extend reader-response theory into a "politics of perception" is that Thompson's excursions into the fields of quantum physics and neurology are not always well integrated into the literary-critical discourse of her text. This is not only a stylistic complaint but also a criticism of the nature of the interdisciplinarity modeled by Thompson's study, an interdisciplinarity that tends to reinforce formalist analysis instead of opening texts to historical and contextual readings. Thompson's laudable desire to discover a "more material grounding" that "intensifies and augments th[e] impetus for social change" in these texts unfortunately turns her toward a literal understanding of the "material" as physical matter (32), rather than social and discursive relationships. This means that while she is able to demonstrate the ways that these novels suggest alternative epistemological frameworks and even implicate their readers in cognitive experiments, she cannot address more public patterns of reception of minority self-representations.

Thompson's attempt to demonstrate that the holographic process enacted quite deliberately in *Picture Theory* is relevant to other feminist texts that simply thematize questions of knowing occasionally stretches the holographic connection rather thinly. Ironically, her critical interventions are strongest where the binding force of this organizing figure is weakest. For example, one of the surprising inclusions in Thompson's selection of novels is Beatrice Culleton's *In Search of April Raintree* (1983), a Métis woman's first-person narrative of alienation and traumatization in racist white Canadian society. The text has been read as an unliterary autobiographical document, valuable only for its social significance. Thompson suggests that it is not Culleton's text that is naive, but rather this simplistic reading of it. She argues that Culleton's narrative subverts the mimetic and expressive presuppositions of the genre of autobiography, through the paradoxical inscription of an oral narrative in written form. Building on an emerging body of criticism that identifies the antimimetic, performative impulse in First Nations women's texts, she demonstrates that *In Search of April Raintree* asks to be read as an event in which truth is unfolded in and as provisional interpretation.¹⁸ It is not through attempts to save *In Search of April Raintree* by reframing it as fiction that critics will honor its complexity, Thompson ar-

gues. The text poses the greatest challenges to mimetic imaging and to conceptions of the unique and autonomous subject of expression when it is read as autobiography in performance. This is a valuable reading of Culleton's text but it is not clear how it is enabled by the connection to holography. Another unexpected inclusion in *Writing a Politics of Perception* is the early Atwood novel, *Surfacing* (1974), the narrative of a retreat into a natural-psychological wilderness and an initiation into a mystical connection with nature. The names *Atwood* and *Brossard* are very rarely brought together even in comparative Canadian feminist criticism, but in arguing that *Surfacing* develops the notion of non-representational holographic inscription, Thompson wishes to make the larger point that experimental language writing does not have a monopoly on the critique of liberal humanism.

Surfacing was originally embraced as an expression of the contemporaneous Left-liberal nationalist discourse's gendered construction of the nation as a powerless, colonized woman, but the novel eventually came under critical scrutiny for its appropriation and emptying-out of signs of aboriginality such as shamanistic initiation and Ojibwa pictographs. Thompson proposes a revision of this revisionist reading, arguing that *Surfacing* can be read for its dramatization of an enfolding of self into place that appropriates, rather, the holographic technology of three-dimensional mapping. In *Surfacing*, Thompson argues, the landscape becomes a memory theater, a map on which all sites are repositories of textualized memories. Thus, a feminist novel like *Surfacing* needn't be relegated to the dustbin of indigenizing settler nationalism if it can be reread for clues as to how a feminist and ecological politics that uses Western science and technology against themselves might work in tandem with (rather than in the place of) First Nations ideologies and practices.

Dickinson's *Here Is Queer: Nationalisms, Sexualities, and the Literatures of Canada* is another study interested in the relationship between strategic memory and the renewal of perception, but in this case the construction of a memory theater is the work of the criticism itself. Wider than any individual text, it is the product of an ambitious project of reclamation and reassessment which proposes that queerness or counternormative sexuality is an absent presence in Canadian literature. What this book renders visible is not so much a new body of writing (most of these authors are well known in Canada) as a different set of relationships—different lines of identification and affiliation, different tropological traditions, different ways of distinguishing inside from outside or primary from subtext. As Dickinson begins by noting, in the narrative of Canadian literature's canonization, "the discourse of

(homo)sexuality, and its role (or non-role) in the formation and organization of a literary tradition in this country, is virtually non-existent" (4). The "(homo)sexual" lacuna exists not just at the level of the canon itself, in other words, it also exists at the level of metacritical narratives of canon making, which have tended to stage their contestations around questions of nationalism, mimeticism, regionalism, definitions of institutionality, and, to a lesser degree, gender—but never sexuality. This situation requires a response that goes beyond gap-filling. It calls for reconsideration of entrenched ways of reading canonical texts as well as reevaluation of the sexual norms that have been operative in the writing of national literary history.

Dickinson approaches his massive subject from several angles, armed with a number of critical practices, including the Sedgwick-inspired "que(e)rying" of apparently heterosexual foundational texts (29), revisionist literary history, and contextual analyses of the contingencies of production, reception, and translation. He rereads colonial texts for a frontier homosociality and foregrounds the work of gay writers marginalized in the canonical narrative of Canadian modernism. It was not just the woman writer that this modernist aesthetic of post-Victorian virility effectively excised, Dickinson shows, but also later gay writers such as Patrick Anderson and Scott Symons, who were dismissed as effete foreigner and oversexed seditious respectively.¹⁹ Like Mackey, Dickinson is also attentive to the importance of scrutinizing inclusions as well as exclusions, visibilities as well as invisibilities. He thus attempts to save a number of contemporary writers, whose work enjoys a certain canonical centrality, from "federastic" (nationalist and heteronormative) recuperation, drawing out their transnational intertextualities and contextualizing their "symbolic usefulness" (130).²⁰ Novels by Timothy Findley and Daphne Marlatt, which have been subjected to the centripetal pull of the standard designations for contemporary English-Canadian fiction—"historiographic metafiction" and "documentary-collage"—reach in other directions that do not so easily confirm national tendencies, he argues.²¹ Dickinson's chapter on the contemporary Québécois playwright Michel Tremblay provides the sharpest critique of the uses of homosexual figuration, demonstrating that what looks like gay-friendliness from one perspective can be shown to be phallocentric nationalism from another. In Quebec's anticolonial and nationalist discourses, homosexuality has often provided the emblem of a national condition of marginalization and exile within Canada. The reception of Tremblay's plays in Quebec seems to have involved widespread acceptance of transvestism and homosexuality as figurative expres-

sions of Quebec's national predicament. Dickinson's reading of the impermanent exchange value of homosexuality draws the work of Tremblay closer to the masculinist anticolonial discourse of 1960s Quebec, a discourse that responded to the historical domination of the Catholic church in the province through gynophobic attacks on the effeminizing cult of the Virgin Mary.²² If Tremblay's homosexual allegories of colonized nationhood were relatively uncontroversial, Dickinson argues, this was only because his dramaturgical formula implicitly associated the recovery of national identity with a return to proper masculinity. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that the work of a younger generation of gay playwrights more inclined to insist on sexual specificity has not been greeted with the same willingness to identify Quebec with queerness, or that critics have begun to indicate an ominous fatigue with the public staging of homosexuality.

Dickinson's pronouncements on nationalist discourse in English-speaking Canada are less nuanced. The title of his book is a rejoinder to Northrop Frye's 1965 question, "Where is here?" For Dickinson, Frye's sense that the "mystique of Canadianism" is "full of wilderness" is the symptom of systematic exclusions (220). Frye's Canada is a mythological Canada of two "founding nations" that erases the presence of First Nations peoples, non-Europeans, and queers. Dickinson's reply to Frye borrows the discursive strategy of *Queer Nation* in order to bring these groups out of the forest, as it were. However, the strategy of reversal sometimes leads Dickinson to assume too much homogeneity in the discourse of English-Canadian nationalism that he associates with this big-"F" father-figure. For instance, he proceeds from the assumptions that English-Canadian nationalism has been "gendered as patriarchal" (although "frequently eroticized as homosocial") (5), and nation and sexuality have been seen (however mistakenly) as discrete entities (3). The first of these assumptions is surprising given the marked feminization of the nation in 1970s nationalist discourse, which constructed Canada as a vulnerable, uncorrupted woman forced to defend herself against the external force of American cultural imperialism. The woman-colony analogy has been difficult to shake off and has long supported a view of Canada in which all questions of oppression are externalized.²³ It is to this nationalist discourse that we owe the often-repeated claim that Canadian literature has been a virtual matriarchy of letters, a claim that has been disputed by feminist literary archeologists.²⁴ As recent historical work informed by a gender studies perspective has also demonstrated, literary representations of domestic femininity, female heroism, and maternal expertise in government were central to the articulation of a nor-

matively British Canadianness in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Canada.²⁵ Dickinson's claim to be unearthing the hidden coimplication of nation and sexuality suggests a lack of awareness of the much-publicized function of the "daughter of empire," the white settler woman who was to serve as a prophylactic against mixed-race breeding in nineteenth-century Canada, especially in the Canadian West. Although it is true that English-Canadian nationhood has been articulated with conceptions of robust heterosexuality, that robustness—even virility—has not been exclusively masculine.

Besides this dialogue with Frye, what the deictic indicator of positionality in the title, *Here Is Queer*, also points to is the situatedness of the critic. Dickinson foregrounds the geographical, historical, social, and sexual particularity of his point of view, even recounting the history of its uncloseting and the various geographical displacements that brought him to the place of a British Columbian "criti[c] on/of the margins" (189), guilty of the "hats backwards syndrome" of high performance queerness (187). This "personalist discourse," as Dickinson calls it in a half-apologetic concluding "Coda," is not about the revelation of interiority but rather the documentation of the material contingencies of the subject position undergirding the book's shift in perspective on the national literature. It is a conscious strategy of self-objectification that can also be seen (although in a far less sustained form) in Vautier's acknowledgment of her "gradual migration from Eastern Quebec to Victoria, British Columbia (and from French-Québécois theory to Anglo-American-Canadian theory)" (x), and in Mackey's recollection of Canada centennial-year school assignments and pilgrimages to Expo '67, in the context of a discussion of Canadian pedagogies of patriotism. This trend owes something to the feminist politicization of the personal, and indeed there are as many feminist as gay critics in the list of scholars to whom Dickinson's work is indebted, many of whose fugitive essays on Canadian and Québécois literature he synthesizes and expands in *Here Is Queer*. The "personalist" discourse in this book emphasizes the place of the critic as a *reader* situated within a number of specific counterdiscourses and code systems. This emphasis distinguishes the marked presence of the *I* in *Here Is Queer* from the signature of the poet-critic in an older tradition of personal essays in Canadian criticism, a tradition that tended to privilege the unified artistic sensibility and identity of the male poet as the basis for authority.

The commitment to historical specificity in Dickinson's minority narrative of Canadian literature occasionally verges on martyrdom: when, for example, in order to illustrate current dy-

namics of subjectification in institutionalized minorities studies, he is willing to depict himself purchasing velvet pants and green shoes to participate in a queer literature panel. But this willingness to situate himself as a historical subject also allows Dickinson to tell an unfamiliar story of contemporary Canadian literature. This story begins with the late 1960s period of centennial celebrations—reframed as a moment of masculinist and heterosexist normalization in literary criticism—and concludes with the discussion of a Vancouver lesbian and gay bookstore's legal battle against Canada Customs obscenity regulations in the mid-1990s. The assumption of extraliterary cultural and political literacy in his readership may be somewhat risky given the current condition of CanLit as the "staid inevitable" in university English departments, but it is also well overdue. In this regard Dickinson and Mackey can be said to be filling out the small but growing company of Canadian critics asking questions about literature's relationship to wider social discourses and less bounded, impermanent linguistic acts and events.²⁶

Notes

1. This is a contested claim. See Robert Lecker's "The Canonization of Canadian Literature" (1990) and Frank Davey's response "Canadian Canons." This essay was written with the support of a postdoctoral fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.
2. Vautier's new world transnationalism closes up around the power imbalance between Canada and the US. This is especially evident in her discussion of Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* (1981), a novel about the internment of Japanese-Canadians during World War II, and a central text in the contemporary Canadian literature canon. Vautier objects to the "attempted cultural take-over" of *Obasan* by American critics who occult the novel's references to specifically Canadian symbols and policies (103).
3. Brydon makes this argument in "Re-writing The Tempest" (1984). For a critique of English-Canada's literary "Miranda complex," see Chantal Zabus, "A Calibanic Tempest in Anglophone and Francophone New World Writing" (1985).
4. On the lattice-work fence, see E. D. Blodgett, *Configuration: Essays in the Canadian Literatures*. On the border field, see W. H. New, *Borderlands: How We Talk about Canada*. M. Jeanne Yardley discusses this proliferation of emblems in "The Maple Leaf as Maple Leaf: Facing the Failure of the Search for Emblems in Canadian Literature" (1987).
5. Marchessault is the initiator of a stream of mystical-visionary feminist writing in Quebec. This writing focuses on the recovery of feminine symbolism and

the representation of specifically female experiences on the other side of patriarchal language, in contrast to another stream of contemporary Québécois feminist writing that centers on the remapping of reality through deconstructive play with the surface of language. See Barbara Godard, "Flying Away with Language" (1986). Brossard, the foremost practitioner of the latter stream, is discussed by both Dickinson and Thompson.

6. See, e.g., Neil ten Kortenaar, "The Trick of Divining a Postcolonial Canadian Identity: Margaret Laurence Between Race and Nation" (1996).

7. For the debate on cultural appropriation, see the essays by Anne Cameron, Lee Maracle, Lenore Keeshig-Tobias, and Marlene Nourbese Philip in *Language in Her Eye: Writing and Gender, Views by Canadian Women Writing in English* (1990). For some of the early attempts to establish a criticism of First Nations writing in Canada, see issue 124–25 of *Canadian Literature: Native Writers and Canadian Literature* (1990) and *The Native in Literature: Canadian and Comparative Perspectives* (1987).

8. See the anthology *Fictions de l'identitaire au Québec* (1991).

9. See Godard's "Structuralism/Post-Structuralism: Language, Reality, and Canadian Literature" (1987). For critiques of this postmodern criticism, see Godard's "Other Fictions: Robert Kroetsch's Criticism" (1984) and Frank Davey, "Contesting Post(-)Modernism" in *Canadian Literary Power*. It is important to note the different critical practice of a group of poet-critics associated with the journal *Open Letter*, who have espoused a more antihumanist, grammatological approach, inspired by language poetry and focused on signifying practices at the level of the letter or grapheme. See, e.g., the collected essays of Steve McCaffery, *North of Intention* (1986).

10. See Kieran Keohane, *Symptoms of Canada: An Essay on the Canadian Identity* (1997), for a recent attempt to work out an identification of the national culture with lack, through Lacanian psychoanalysis and ethnographic investigation of Canadian recreational practices and popular culture.

11. The title of Hutcheon's first book is *Narcissistic Narrative: the Metafictional Paradox* (1980).

12. See Davey's "Contesting" 260–61.

13. See Marjery Fee's "Romantic-Nationalism and the Image of Native People in English-Canadian Literature" (1987). Terry Goldie's *Fear and Temptation: Images of the Indigene in Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand Literatures* (1993) is the classic text on indigenization. Himani Bannerji discusses the "multicultural ossificatory imperative" in an interview with Arun Mukherjee in *Other Solitudes: Canadian Multicultural Fictions* (1990).

14. "Protection, Civilization, Assimilation: An Outline History of Canada's Indian Policy" (1991) is the title of an often-cited essay by John L. Tobias.

15. *Fuse*, a journal focused on art criticism and activism, has been another venue for interdisciplinary cultural studies. For the portion of the Canadian

visual arts community associated with this journal, the critiques of institutionalized racism and of minority-culture (hetero)sexism are at least 10 years old. The norm of a virile, northern whiteness that Mackey sees inscribed in Canada's "quintessential nationalist texts" (40)—the early-twentieth-century landscape paintings of the Canadian modernist school known as the Group of Seven—has been subjected to critical scrutiny in several art exhibitions, including *Private Thoughts/Public Moments* (Art Gallery of Ontario, 2000) and Jin-me Yoon's *A Group of Sixty-Seven* (Vancouver Art Gallery, 1996). It is tempting to see the new populist nationalism discussed by Mackey manifesting itself in the recent purging of Ontario's McMichael Gallery of any art *not* produced by members of the Group of Seven or not espousing the Group's wilderness ideology. This purging involved the removal of contemporary, nontraditional artwork by First Nations artists.

16. See Rey Chow, "Where Have All the Natives Gone?" (1994) for an elaboration of this critique.

17. In "Theorizing Fiction Theory" (1994), Barbara Godard, Daphne Marlatt, Kathy Mezei, and Gail Scott define the genre in terms of a "theory working its way through [the] syntax, language and even narrative of a female as subject, a fiction in which theory is woven into the texture of the creation, eliminating . . . distinctions between genres, between prose, essay, poetry" (56). Thompson fails to note the important distinction between the expression that has had wider circulation internationally, Hélène Cixous's *écriture féminine* and Brossard's *écriture au féminin*. The latter refers to a specifically feminist, and not just anti-logocentric writing, and adds the preposition in order to emphasize the process or activity of culture building. See Susan Knutson, *Narrative in the Feminine: Daphne Marlatt and Nicole Brossard* (2000), for a discussion of the two conferences that put this expression into circulation—"L'émergence d'une culture au féminin" (Montreal, 1982) and "Women and Words" (Vancouver, 1983, for which the proceedings were entitled *In the Feminine*). Knutson situates Brossard's project as an intervention in French and American debates about gender essentialism that refused their polarized terms.

18. See Lee Maracle, "Preface: You Become the Trickster" (1990). Barbara Godard, "The Politics of Representation: Some Native Canadian Women Writers" (1990), and Julia V. Emberley, *Thresholds of Difference: Feminist Critique, Native Women's Writings, Postcolonial Theory* (1993).

19. Carole Gerson made the argument about the excision of women writers in "The Canon between the Wars: Field-Notes of a Feminist Literary Archeologist" (1991) and "Sarah Binks and Edna Jacques: Parody, Gender, and the Construction of Literary Voice" (1992).

20. The term *fédéraste* is from Scott Symons's *Combat Journal for Place d'Armes: A Personal Narrative* (1967) (141).

21. On "historiographic metafiction," see Hutcheon, *The Canadian Postmodern: A Study of Contemporary English-Canadian Fiction* (1988). On "documentary-collage," see Manina Jones, *That Art of Difference: "Documentary-Collage" and English-Canadian Writing* (1993).

22. See Patricia Smart, *Writing in the Father's House: The Emergence of the Feminine in the Québec Literary Tradition* (1991), for a discussion of this project of "self-virilization" consisting in vengeful rebellions against castrating mother-figures.
23. See Jill Vickers's "Liberating Theory in Canadian Studies" (1994).
24. See Gerson.
25. See Misao Dean, *Practising Femininity: Domestic Realism and the Performance of Gender in Early Canadian Fiction* (1998); Cecilia Morgan, "'Of Slender Frame and Delicate Appearance': The Placing of Laura Secord in the Narratives of Canadian Loyalist History" (1994); and my own forthcoming "Conducting Selves: Feminism and Freedom in Nineteenth-Century Canada."
26. See, e.g., M. Nourbese Philip, *Frontiers: Essays and Writing on Racism and Culture* (1992) and *Ghosts in the Machine: Women and Cultural Policy in Canada and Australia* (1998).

Works Cited

- Bannerji, Himani. Interview with Arun Mukherjee. *Other Solitudes: Canadian Multicultural Fictions*. Ed. Linda Hutcheon and Marion Richmond. Toronto: Oxford UP, 1990. 145–52.
- Brand, Dionne. *Land to Light On*. Toronto: McClelland, 1997.
- Brydon, Diana. "The Myths That Write Us: Decolonising the Mind." *Commonwealth* 10.1 (1987): 1–14.
- . "Re-Writing *The Tempest*." *World Literature Written in English* 23.1 (1984): 75–88.
- Bush, Catherine. *Minus Time*. Toronto: HarperCollins, 1993.
- Chow, Rey. "Where Have All the Natives Gone?" *Displacements: Cultural Identities in Question*. Ed. Anjelika Bammer. Indianapolis: Indiana UP, 1994. 125–51.
- Coleman, Daniel. "Immigration, Nation, and the Allegory of Manly Maturation." *Essays in Canadian Writing* 61 (1997): 84–103.
- Davey, Frank. "Canadian Canons." *Critical Inquiry* 16.3 (1990): 672–81.
- . "Contesting Post(-)Modernism." *Canadian Literary Power: The Writer as Critic Series IV*. Edmonton: NeWest, 1994. 245–93.
- Day, Richard. "Constructing the Official Canadian: A Genealogy of the Mosaic Metaphor in State Policy Discourse." *Topia* 2 (spring 1998): 42–66.
- Fee, Marjery. "Romantic-Nationalism and the Image of Native People in English-Canadian Literature." *The Native in Literature: Canadian and Comparative Perspectives*. Ed. Thomas King, Cheryl Calver, and Helen Hoy. Oakville, ON: ECW, 1987. 15–33.
- Frye, Northrop. "Conclusion to a *Literary History of Canada*." 1965. Rpt. in *The Bush Garden: Essays on the Canadian Imagination*. Toronto: Anasi, 1971. 213–51.

- Gerson, Carole. "The Canon Between the Wars: Field-Notes of a Feminist Literary Archeologist." *Canadian Canons: Essays in Literary Value*. Ed. Robert Lecker. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1991. 46–56.
- . "Sarah Binks and Edna Jacques: Parody, Gender, and the Construction of Literary Voice." *Canadian Literature* 134 (1992): 62–73.
- Godard, Barbara. "Flying Away with Language." Introduction to *Lesbian Triptych*, by Jovette Marchessault. Toronto: Women's Press, 1986. 9–28.
- . "Other Fictions: Robert Kroetsch's Criticism." *Open Letter* 5.8–9 (1984): 5–21.
- . "The Politics of Representation: Some Native Canadian Women Writers." *Canadian Literature* 124–25 (1990): 183–225.
- . "Structuralism/Post-Structuralism: Language, Reality, and Canadian Literature." *Future Indicative: Literary Theory and Canadian Literature*. Ed. John Moss. Ottawa: U of Ottawa P, 1987. 25–51.
- Godard, Barbara, et. al. "Theorizing Fiction Theory." *Collaboration in the Feminine: Writing on Women and Culture from Tessera*. Ed. Barbara Godard. Toronto: Second Story, 1994. 53–62.
- Goldie, Terry. "Blame Canada." *Essays on Canadian Writing* 71 (2000): 224–31.
- Kroetsch, Robert. "Disunity as Unity: A Canadian Strategy." *The Lovely Treachery of Words: Essays Selected and New*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1989. 21–33.
- Lecker, Robert. "The Canonization of Canadian Literature." *Critical Inquiry* 16.3 (1990): 656–71.
- Maracle, Lee. "Preface: You Become the Trickster." *Sojourner's Truth and Other Stories*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1990. 11–13.
- Morgan, Cecilia. "'Of Slender Frame and Delicate Appearance': The Placing of Laura Secord in the Narratives of Canadian Loyalist History." *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 5 (1994): 195–212.
- Neuman, Shirley and Robert Wilson. *Labyrinths of Voice: Conversations with Robert Kroetsch*. Edmonton: NeWest, 1992.
- Robin, Régine. "Postface: De nouveaux jardins aux sentiers qui bifurquent." *La Québécoise*. 2d ed. Montreal: Typo, 1993. 207–24.
- Shohat, Ella. "Notes on the Post-Colonial." *Social Text* 31/32 (1992): 99–13.
- Slemon, Stephen. "Post-Colonial Allegory and the Transformation of History." *Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 23 (1988): 157–68.
- . "Unsettling the Empire: Resistance Theory for the Second-World." *World Literature Written in English* 30.2 (1990): 30–41.
- Symons, Scott. *Combat Journal for the Place d'Armes: A Personal Narrative*. Toronto: McClelland, 1967.
- ten Kortenaar, Neil. "The Trick of Divining a Postcolonial Canadian Identity: Margaret Laurence Between Race and Nation." *Canadian Literature* 149 (summer 1996): 11–33.
- Tobias, John L. "Protection, Civilization, Assimilation: An Outline History of Canada's Indian Policy." *Sweet*

Promises: A Reader on Indian-White Relations in Canada. Ed. J. R. Miller. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1991: 127–44.

Vickers, Jill. “Liberating Theory in Canadian Studies.” *Canada: Theoretical Discourse/Discours Théorique*. Ed. Terry Goldie, Carmen Lambert, and Rowland Lorimer. Montreal: Association for Canadian Studies, 1994. 351–71.

Yardley, M. Jeanne. “The Maple Leaf as Maple Leaf: Facing the Failure of the Search for Emblems in Canadian Literature.” *Studies in Canadian Literature* 12.2 (1987): 251–63.

Zabus, Chantal. “A Calibanic Tempest in Anglophone and Francophone New World Writing.” *Canadian Literature* 104 (spring 1985): 35–50.