Studies in Canadian Literature / Études en littérature canadienne

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Volume 37, Number 1, 2012

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/scl37_1art07

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Publisher(s)

The University of New Brunswick

ISSN

0380-6995 (print)
1718-7850 (digital)

Explore this journal

Cite this article

Neuhaus, M. (2012). Inventions of Sexuality in Kathleen Winter's*Annabel*. *Studies in Canadian Literature / Études en littérature canadienne*, *37*(1), 123–140.

Article abstract

Kathleen Winter's novel Annabel ends the relative silence about intersexuality in Canadian literature while simultaneously challenging the discourses of science, religion, and law that have helped produce this silence. Tracing Wayne's journey from a peripheral existence within a heterotopia of deviation to a life-affirming presence, Annabel employs various strategies to present its readers with two interrelated stories: the story of Wayne Blake and the story of what would need to happen – or change in our societies – for Wayne's personhood to be recognized by others. The ideas of Henri Lefebvre, Michel Foucault, and Judith Butler can help construct a framework for understanding the complex interarticulation of space and sexuality in this text. In the end, the novel asks us all, in the name of non-violence, to accept difference as a necessary challenge to dominant understandings of the human; in the process, it raises important questions that cannot be dealt with by queer theory alone.

Inventions of Sexuality in Kathleen Winter's *Annabel*

Mareike Neuhaus

The manuscript of Kathleen Winter's short fiction collection, *boYs*, originally included a story about an intersex character, that is, a person with "variations in congenital sex anatomy that are considered atypical for females or males" (Dreger and Herndon 200). Winter's editor, John Metcalf, found the story "too unbelievable" and therefore suggested taking it out of the book. Whatever his reasons for describing the story as such, Winter continued working on it "just for spite" ("Winter's Tale"). Thus, what was originally conceived as a short story morphed into Winter's first novel, *Annabel*, which garnered much attention in the 2010 literary prize season, being short-listed for all three big Canadian literary prizes.

Annabel tells the story of Wayne Blake, an intersex child born in Labrador in the late 1960s. The novel's theme has essentially been a non-theme in most Euro-Western literatures, although intersexuality is not as rare as often thought.[1] Not only does *Annabel* bring an end to the relative silence about intersexuality in Canadian and other English-language literatures, but Winter's novel also challenges the very discourses of science, religion, and law that have helped produce this silence. Relying on the work of Henri Lefebvre, Michel Foucault, and Judith Butler, this essay discusses the argument *Annabel* makes for an alternative invention of sexuality that makes intersexuality a space of lived experience, grounded in a non-violent reality. As Winter suggests in *Annabel*, the struggle for human justice points less to the humanness in us all than it asks us, in the name of non-violence, to accept difference as a necessary challenge to dominant understandings of the human.

Winter's novel opens with a prologue that is as much a story of death as a prolepsis to the protagonist's rebirth much later in the novel. Graham Montague, a blind Labrador trapper, and his daughter, Annabel, are out on the Beaver River. Graham has warned Annabel many a time not to stand up in boats, but when she notices the white

caribou by the river's shore, she is so enchanted by its appearance that she cannot resist standing up to stretch out her arm toward the animal, as if to touch it. This causes their canoe to capsize, and she and her father drown. *Annabel* knows two Annabels: Graham and Thomasina's daughter who drowns, and Wayne, Treadway and Jacinta's son whom Thomasina secretly refers to as Annabel. At the beginning of the novel, both Annabels are essentially dead: one because she has disobeyed her father's warning, and the other because his parents have chosen to hide his intersexuality from the world.

Wayne's story resembles that of many intersex children born in the second half of the twentieth century. Feeling compelled "to make a decision one way or the other," Treadway determines Wayne is "going to be a boy" and sends him with his wife, Jacinta, to Goose Bay General Hospital (29-30). Using a phalometer, the doctor at the hospital measures the length of Wayne's penis, thus confirming Treadway's decision: the penis is long enough, so Wayne's "true sex" must indeed be male (50-52). Wayne's body does not fit into the binary norm of sexuality, but the doctor makes it fit by applying what Alice Dreger has called a "monster approach" that ignores all ethical guidelines usually applied in medical situations (33). Wayne is lied to; his parents are never fully informed about the implications of the procedures performed on their child; and the health of Wayne's body is risked, although there is no indication that he would die without medical intervention. Wayne grows up thinking he is a boy when, in fact, he is both male and female. It is only as a young adult that he "become[s] who he had been when he was born" (370), thus transforming into what Thomasina's daughter was unable to touch. Of all deer species, caribou is the only one "in which both males and females routinely grow antlers" (Shah, DesJardins, and Blob 477); the caribou in the novel's prologue is therefore a symbol of Wayne's intersexuality. What follows after the prologue is, then, a story about the struggle to secure what Judith Butler calls a "livable life" (*Undoing* 39), a life in which one's own personhood is recognized by others.

Sexuality is both spatialized and discursive. In order to adequately discuss the argument in *Annabel* for a non-violent invention of sexuality, the analysis that follows will examine the interarticulation of space and sexuality and its implications for individuals of "deviant" bodies, before exploring the novel's discourse of sexuality and its relation to other such discourses.

The Interarcticulation of Space and Sexuality

Annabel is concerned with the interplay between sexuality and space, which ultimately meet in the human body. Neither space nor body are thought of in contemporary theory as empty containers willingly waiting to be filled with meaning. In conjunction with the work of Michel Foucault and Judith Butler, Henri Lefebvre's notion of the three moments of social space serves as a particularly meaningful tool in analysing dominant inventions of sexuality.[2]

In *Annabel*, Lefebvre's three moments of social space — *perceived space* (spatial practice); *conceived space* (representations of space); and *lived space* (representational space) (38-39) — intermingle and overlap. Originally from St. John's, Jacinta moved to Croydon Harbour, a remote fishing and trapping village on the southeast coast of Labrador, to gain teaching experience; instead, she married Treadway Blake, one of the local trappers (8-9). Jacinta's daily routines are restricted to Croydon Harbour, particularly her house: this is her perceived space. After all these years, however, she still longs for her native St. John's (54-58), knowing well that it is "a lost world," one she can never return to (58). Turning her back on her family would cost her the comforting familiarity of material objects that "keep you anchored in a place" (150). This familiarity gives Jacinta a sense of security and points to her lived space, the ways in which she experiences and interprets her daily routines. Treadway's perceived space, too, derives from a compromise necessitated by their marriage. He would much rather live by himself on the land all year round (13-14). In fact, he thinks of the unnamed lake on his trapline, "the place where waters changed direction," as belonging to him, and their house to his wife (15). Thus, for the six months every year that he has to be in Croydon Harbour, Treadway likes to inhabit the house fully, attempting to replicate in another physical space the silence of the land and thus making his life in Croydon Harbour correspond as much as possible with his ideal of the open land (21). This act of spatial mimesis constitutes his lived space.

Treadway's and Jacinta's lived spaces, their reactions to their daily spatial routines, point to their desire to be somewhere other than where they actually are, but they are unable to escape their perceived spaces — unlike Thomasina, who is the only person besides Wayne's parents privy to the secret of his birth. Of all the characters in the novel, Thomasina's perceived spaces change the most often, from the daily rou-

tines of a mother and a trapper's wife, and those of a travelling widow in Europe, to those of a schoolteacher in Croydon Harbour. "Could you not make a life for yourself any way you wanted, and in any place?" (174), Thomasina asks at one point. Her own life suggests that, yes, you can, if the circumstances are favourable: that is, if you are independent, flexible, and strong enough to challenge social and political norms. What seems to matter most to Thomasina is that her perceived and lived spaces correspond; if they do not, she moves on, regardless of what people may think of her actions.

What makes Lefebvre's work even more relevant to a reading of *Annabel* is his argument that "the whole of (social) space proceeds from the body" (405). For Lefebvre, the bodily lived experience is an interpretation of the body as perceived in everyday life (body as physical entity) and as conceptualized and theorized (body as mental construct). Lived spaces are therefore never impartial. They are "linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life" (Lefebvre 33). As Edward Soja suggests, elaborating on Lefebvre, "these lived spaces of representation are thus the terrain for the generation of 'counterspaces,' spaces of resistance to the dominant order arising precisely from their subordinate, peripheral or marginalized positioning" (68). Lived spaces are the site of social struggles and conflicts and are both empowering and oppressive, depending on one's position in society. Both Treadway and Jacinta arguably suffer from the social constraints of marriage. However, because of her particular position in society as a woman and wife, Jacinta has fewer means available to her than her husband does to negotiate the obvious conflict between her perceived and lived spaces. This conundrum becomes particularly obvious when her mental health deteriorates as an effect of coping with Treadway's decision to raise Wayne as a boy and with her silent participation in this decision. Thomasina, on the other hand, never accepts Treadway's decision and nurtures Wayne's female side, which brings her into direct conflict with Treadway. In the end, however, and regardless of how much their movements through space vary, Jacinta, Treadway, and Thomasina all share a bodily lived experience of presence. Wayne's bodily lived experience, on the other hand, is one of absence.

When society distinguishes between normal and abnormal bodies, this distinction is drawn based on interpretations of actual bodies against preconceived notions of what bodies should look like and how

they should function in everyday life. Being born intersex does not in itself constitute a medical emergency (Dreger 30), and yet, the bodily lived experience of intersex people is determined by medical intervention because a body that is both male and female (perceived body) does not fit into medical-biological-cultural-religious notions of human binary sexuality (conceived body). Thus, the bodies of intersex people are made intelligible to what Butler calls the "cultural matrix" (*Gender* 23). Whether they are intelligible to this matrix or not, human bodies are, therefore, essentially spaces. Michel Foucault has referred to the spaces reserved for abnormal bodies as "heterotopias of deviation: those in which individuals whose behavior is deviant in relation to the required mean or norm are placed," such as psychiatric hospitals or prisons ("Spaces" 25). Like all "Other spaces," heterotopias of deviation "are something like counter-sites," located "outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality" ("Spaces" 24). Prisons and psychiatric hospitals exist on the fringes of society where, ideally, they need not be seen or experienced by those not placed in them. The same may be observed about intersex people who have undergone surgery as infants or small children. In order for them to become intelligible to the cultural matrix, they have to become invisible to themselves. Their bodies are neither truly here nor there, leaving their personhood undone. *Dis*placed within their own bodies, their lived space is that of living as prisoners in their own body.

Wayne grows up completely estranged from his parents (particularly his father) and other residents of Croydon Harbour, with the exception of Thomasina and Wally, his only friend in school. Wayne's isolation is a direct result of his perceived space: he knows that his fascination with synchronised swimming is deviant, as much as he senses that there is something utterly wrong with his body. As a result, Wayne stays away from all those spaces considered normal for boys of his age: he avoids school parties, despite his father's protests (101-04); he feels humiliated by the performance of "backhoe ballet" that Treadway arranges to encourage Wayne's masculinity (88-92); he does not seem to mind that, from an early age, his father teaches him skills in the shed (67-68), but he dislikes being lured out of the house to learn wilderness skills (87); in fact, Wayne never joins his father on the trapline. He feels oddly out of place in the small, male-dominated fishing and trapping community of Croydon Harbour. As he grows older, he has recurring dreams

about being a girl (148). In one of these dreams, he is walking alongside a river, trying in vain to make out his face in the water (192). Wayne cannot see the reflection of his face because, in order for him to become intelligible to the world, the female part of him has to become invisible. This circumstance remains entirely lost on Wayne, however, as does the reason why he continues to have dreams in which he is a girl.

The same kind of dramatic irony is present when Treadway dismantles the bridge that Wayne has started using as a hang-out place for himself and Wally (126-30, 135-38). For readers, the bridge has by this point become a symbol of Wayne's intersexuality, and his fascination with bridges an expression of his desires, hidden from himself. Not only has Wayne decorated the bridge with Wally's help, but, using the Ponte Vecchio as a model, he has also started to *live* on the bridge. Treadway's dismantling of Wayne's beloved bridge is informed by the same rationale that underlies his decision to raise Wayne as a boy. What Treadway perceives (Wayne's body, his bridge) does not conform to bodies or other spaces as generally conceptualized. However, rather than allowing the expression of an alternative intelligibility, Treadway feels compelled to silence this expression so as to make it fit dominant norms. The result for Wayne is that there is no language available to him — verbal, architectural, visual — that could render his self intelligible to himself, that could help him escape the prison that is his body. Wayne's lived space in Croydon Harbour, then, is that of a heterotopia of deviation: he is and he is not at one and the same time. What makes his body intelligible to the outside world denies his own personhood.

Wayne's lived space only begins to change when, shortly after graduating from high school, he learns the full truth about his own body, including the fetus that was once trapped in his Fallopian tube. Feeling betrayed by his family and seeing no future for himself in Croydon Harbour, he leaves. From the isolated place that is Labrador, Wayne moves to St. John's where he learns to develop some form of a presence by embracing a more encouraging model of self, if one that keeps him at the peripheries of society. Wayne decides to stop taking his pills, thus protesting the medical conceptualization of bodies as either male or female and thereby triggering his own rebirth as both Wayne *and* Annabel. Wayne's body begins to transform into a more female version. Aided by the anonymity that shopping malls offer, he starts to dress in women's clothes. The city as "other" place allows Wayne to

express his "other" sex, but he cannot run away from the implications of having a body that does not conform to binary sexual constructions. Customers start wondering whether he is male or female (365), so he begins to deliver his meat later in the day and eventually has to accept the help of Steve Keating, who offers to do the meat deliveries for him (399-400). When Wayne needs emergency medical treatment, his body is abused as "an exhibit" — "in the name of teaching and of medicine" (369). Feeling both helpless and angry, he prevents any further violence against himself by "us[ing] the only thing of influence that he owned: his voice," the voice of "his whole self," of both Wayne and Annabel (370-71). Wayne thus directly challenges those people who have claimed power over him all his life: the representatives of science who, based on the binary construction of sexuality, determine the line between normal and abnormal bodies.

The St. John's hospital scene affirms the power of voice as a carrier of change. Finally aware of the ironic displacement of his own body, Wayne is able to take a proactive approach toward his life. In allowing his body the freedom to be whatever it desires, Wayne not only reinvents sexuality, he also literally embodies this very reinvention. His decision comes at a high price, however, for it forces Wayne to live on the peripheries of society, where he is prone to the violent "economics" of a capitalist society, as his father puts it (351-54), and the aggressive coerciveness of binary sexuality in Canadian society. Parking his truck on Signal Hill one night, he is attacked, abused, and almost killed by a gang of young men whom Steve could not resist telling about Wayne's "condition" (377-81). The attack on Wayne is an example of the "spatialization of patriarchal power" that manifests itself not just in urban buildings but also "in the very fabric of urbanism and everyday life in the city" (Soja 110). Wayne is attacked for being different; indeed, he is viewed as a "little girl" (377, 381). The city allows Wayne to embrace his formerly imprisoned self, yet it is also a site of violence against him. The ambiguity of the city as a space of both self-knowledge and violence is not lost on Wayne. As he is driving through Quebec City a few years later, he sees "it from the point of view of someone who had begun to understand not just the surfaces but also the underpinnings of a city's character: its ugliness or, in the case of this place, its beauty and grandeur" (459).

Toward the end of the novel, Wayne seems to have learned how to use the city's potential for his own purposes, to be himself without hav-

ing to exist at the margins of society. When he visits Wally in Boston, one of the aspects of the college campus he notices are the students, "Many of [whom] looked to Wayne as if they could be the same as him: either male or female. There was not the same striation of sexuality that there was in the ordinary world outside a campus" (455). Encouraged by his experiences in Boston, Wayne starts university in Halifax. His decision to study "not only the design of bridges but also the architecture, design, and planning of whole cities" (459) marks his first step into translating his reinvention of sexuality into something more tangible. Readers never learn how Wayne will fare, but the novel's ending suggests that he will continue to challenge the dominant discourses of sexuality that "impose social, political, and economic hierarchies" (Cavell and Dickinson xxx), making biology a "politics by other means" (Donna Haraway qtd. in Fausto-Sterling 255). Studying city design, Wayne explores and analyzes *conceived space*, those discourses that determine people's perceived and lived spaces. Criticizing dominant social discourses, Wayne may thus claim a position from which he may alter cities and thereby facilitate change, producing real spaces for himself and the various Others of contemporary society: "Treadway was a man of Labrador, but his son had left home as daughters and sons do, to seek freedom their fathers do not need to inhabit, for it inhabits the fathers" (461). Hence, lived space, the space of social conflict and struggle, becomes in *Annabel* also a "counterspace" from within which Wayne may affect the social change that will allow him to be recognized as a person — according to Butler, a prerequisite to pursuing a "good life" (*Undoing* 205).

Wayne's rebirth is an important step on his journey from being stuck in a heterotopia of deviation and living a peripheral existence to assuming a life-affirming, potentially non-violent presence. *Annabel* achieves more than a mere critique of dominant discourses of sexuality, then. It also argues for a world in which individuals like Wayne are able to live a life that spares them unwanted and unnecessary medical interventions — a world that recognizes and respects intersex people "without having to transform them into a more socially coherent or normative version of gender" (Butler, *Undoing* 64-65). As Winter's novel shows quite eloquently, sexuality is inseparable from space; as social concepts, the two inform each other. Equally important, the novel's affirmation of that which contradicts points to the dominant construction of binary sexu-

ality as something that might well be invented using a different topos (see Butler, *Gender* 140). Like space, sexuality is grounded in language and discourse. It is apt, therefore, to examine more closely the novel's own discourse of sexuality, including its rhetoric and its relation to other discourses of sexuality.

Discourses of Sexuality

Exploring the space between sexes, *Annabel* "interrogate[s] the legitimacy of heteronormativity" (Cavell and Dickinson xxix). Through the voices of Wayne and Thomasina — the novel's two main ethical appeals — the novel proposes a non-violent reinvention of sexuality. While Wayne embodies this reinvention, Thomasina provides the necessary philosophical context. The day that Thomasina introduces Greek mythology into her classroom, she receives a late visit from Treadway who is furious that she would dare to give Wayne hints about his real self (175-81). For Thomasina, Wayne's intersexuality is not a disorder but a "different order. A different order means a whole new way of being. It could be fantastic. It could be overwhelmingly beautiful, if people weren't sacred" (208-09). Thomasina, and, by implication, the novel, argue for a change of topoi. Rather than inventing human sexuality based on the *topos of contraries* (order vs. "disorder"), resulting in binary sexuality (male vs. female), *Annabel* proposes to invent sexuality based on the *topos of difference* ("different order"), resulting in sexuality as a continuum in which intersexuality is only one variant. The argument for the use of an alternative topos in the invention of human sexuality has huge implications for intersex people. As Anne Fausto-Sterling has noted, "From the viewpoint of medical practitioners, progress in the handling of intersexuality involves maintaining the normal [rather than the natural]. Accordingly, there *ought* to be only two boxes: male and female" (8). Once sexuality is invented as a continuum, however, favouring the natural over the normal, intersexuality does no longer disqualify intersex bodies as abnormal, hence making obsolete the medical interventions, particularly genital surgeries, that are still deemed necessary by physicians, though purely for social, cultural, and political reasons.

Thomasina's reference to the myth of Hermaphroditus is one example of the novel's use of imagery and intertexts as logical appeals. The caribou in the prologue, the various kinds of bridges referred to

throughout the novel, the nameless lake feeding two rivers flowing into opposite directions — all these images point to Wayne's intersexuality and persuade by means of their beauty. *Annabel* presents intersexuality not just as a beautiful idea or as a non-violent myth, however; it also raises and simultaneously refutes challenges to its own argument for an alternative invention of sexuality. Treadway's endorsement of the binary invention of sexuality, which turns the lived space of his own child into a heterotopia of deviation, is repeated when he dismantles Wayne's bridge. "Wayne has to live in the real world" (180), Treadway keeps insisting. He hence functions as a counterbalance to Thomasina's idealist approach to Wayne's situation, which romanticizes intersexuality based on a rather one-sided reading of ancient history. Wayne is not a deity celebrated in a cult; his life is not myth. In fact, his story resembles the reality of intersex people in Greek and Roman antiquity more than it resembles the myth of Hermaphroditus. The longing for a primordial form of being, the original androgynous sex, finds expression in antiquity only in mythology (Brisson 41-71; see Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Plato's *Symposium*). The reality of intersex people in the Greek and Roman world was rather brutal: up until the Roman Republic, intersex children were regarded as ominous public prodigies and were therefore killed. Such superstition was eventually challenged during the Roman Empire, but intersex children continued to be abused as a form of entertainment (Brisson 7-40). The intertextual allusion in *Annabel* to Hermaphroditus achieves two things, then: one, it points to another discourse, if one that did not have any impact on the social, cultural, and political realities in antiquity; and two, it suggests that norms are subject to change; they may be modified, if not entirely abolished. What the result of such change may look like is indicated in another intertext, introduced very early on in Winter's novel.

The day Jacinta brings her baby to Goose Bay General Hospital, she lingers in front of the building and remembers the day she spent with Innu people at the Mud Lake encampment. There she met a baby who "had had something wrong with him," and yet "no one had found fault with him at all. His family had cared for him as he had been born" (43). Jacinta does not provide any further information about this Innu boy, so readers do not know whether he, too, was born intersex. For the sake of the novel's argument, this detail is not important, however, for Wayne's condition, too, is a "genetic anomaly" (43). At the Innu camp,

then, Jacinta becomes aware of the existence of an alternative space, one that would allow her child to live a livable life. The implicit association of Aboriginal peoples with intersexuality in this scene is not surprising given the significant role people of third and fourth genders have played in North American Indigenous communities (see Saladin d'Anglure, Roscoe). The Innu camp scene reveals how specific concepts, such as sex or gender, are always also *culturally* constructed. Finally, this scene also points to one of the ironies of the novel: though half Inuit (27), Treadway is the one who decides to raise Wayne as a boy. He embodies the effects of colonization, the silencing of certain discourses in favour of others, in this case, Aboriginal in favour of Western.[3]

In this context, it is not surprising that the Innu name for the lake that feeds two rivers, one flowing north, the other south, "remains a secret" (14). The lake is a symbol of intersexuality but, like any other discourse, it allows different interpretations. A Eurocentric reading informed by Western science would deem this figure impossible: one travels down either one or the other river, but never both at the same time, as much as one is either male or female, but never simultaneously both. There is no name for this kind of duality in Western discourses of science, so the lake's real name remains unknown to the villagers. The Innus, on the other hand, apparently more accepting of duality, seem to know the lake's name as part of their collective memory and history. Working in Inuit contexts, Mark Nuttall has called this kind of memory *memoryscape*: "the mental images of the environment" as remembered by an individual as well as the community's relationships and interactions with that particular land, in the form of "place names, memories of hunting and of past events" (39). Whether or not the lake referred to in *Annabel* indeed expresses Innu constructions of sexuality cannot be inferred from the novel. Yet, by inviting readers to connect the lake imagery with the Innu camp scene, the novel seems to propose that, in the body of discourse produced through Aboriginal memoryscapes, different inventions of sexuality become reality. Relegated to the margins of Canadian society, this alternative space remains, however, but a glimpse into life lived differently.

The logical appeals of *Annabel*, then, are spatialized, but they are not restricted to spatial imagery alone. The alternative spaces suggested through the use of intertexts ensure that the issues addressed in the novel are tied back to real life by pointing to the social and political

struggles that characterize lived spaces. The stark contrast between the novel's imagery and its intertexts raises two questions: how can life in a place as beautiful as Labrador possibly be so violent, and what needs to happen for it to become non-violent? Attempting to answer the question of human justice is a tall order, and *Annabel* offers neither easy nor definite answers. In fact, the novel's persuasiveness lies in its very indirectness. The resulting appeal to pathos is significant because the philosophy of freedom that, it argues, is needed to make the life of others livable is a philosophy that concerns society as a whole. For the non-violent reinvention of sexuality proposed by *Annabel* is also a re-articulation of the human. As Butler observes, and as *Annabel* emphasizes, "What makes for a livable world is no idle question. . . . It becomes a question for ethics, I think, not only when we ask the personal question, what makes my own life bearable, but when we ask, from a position of power, and from the point of view of distributive justice, what makes, or ought to make, the lives of others bearable?" (*Undoing* 17). Portraying Wayne's struggle for human justice, *Annabel* asks readers to do no less than use their imagination to think and move through *two* stories: the actual narrative of Wayne Blake and the story of what would need to happen for Wayne's personhood to be recognized by others. Wayne's rebirth redefines humanness because, as Annabel, he begins to "speak to and from" the very category that he has hitherto been denied (Butler, *Undoing* 3). At the same time, the possibility of his achieving a livable life also depends heavily on the transformation of others.

Annabel offers examples of characters who do not walk away from the challenge that difference poses. Instead, these characters follow the ethics Butler proposes in *Undoing Gender*, that is, to "embrace the destruction and rearticulation of the human" that difference implies "in the name of a more capacious and finally, less violent world, not knowing in advance what precise form our humanness does and will take" (35). The intern at the St. John's hospital demonstrates that there exists indeed an ethical way of treating intersex people. She views Wayne's intersexuality neither as an opportunity for science nor as a condition that needs fixing. Instead, she sees him as a person, a human being: "I see you. I see there was a baby born, and her name is Annabel, and no one knows her" (373). Similarly, when Victoria Huskins, Wayne's former school principal, describes him as "the picture of misery" (418), she does not refer to his sexuality but to wasting his youth and talent. By

challenging the social order that denies Wayne's personhood, these two characters begin to transform society by reconceptualising their notion of the human. Equally important is the transformation of Wayne's own family, particularly his father. Not only does Treadway leave Labrador to visit Wayne in St. John's after his attack, but he also sells his gold in order to help Wayne build a future for himself. Although he never says so directly, this gesture is a way of acknowledging and respecting Wayne's decision to no longer hide behind a fake and enforced male sex. Furthermore, Treadway's encouragement of Wayne to get a university education (435) may be read as pointing Wayne to that space that will help him work toward subverting the dominant ideologies of space and sexuality. Treadway, then, comes a long way from endorsing the cultural matrix that denies Wayne recognition to challenging that very matrix. There is yet another dimension to the use of pathos in *Annabel* in arguing for an alternative invention of sexuality. The interventions of medicine, law, and religion ruin Wayne's life, but also that of his family. Jacinta, in particular, never recovers from her participation in the violence done to Wayne. Her relationship to Treadway is severely damaged by their different responses to their child, and the further the couple drifts apart, the more Jacinta suffers from depression. The mental health implications of dominant social, political, and religious responses to intersexuality are obviously immense, not just for intersex people but also for their families. The social transformations of the medical intern, Victoria Huskins, Treadway, and Jacinta point to the need for a reversal of questions: "who are you?" becomes "who am I to ask that question?" and "what do I have to transform into to make you possible?" What, in other words, does it mean to be human?

The same questions are also asked in queer contexts — which brings up the matter of how the argument presented in *Annabel* stands in relation to other discourses of sexuality, most notably homosexuality. As Ellen Feder notes, there has always been a close connection between homosexuality and intersexuality (227). In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France, for example, intersex people "were subject to criminal law and could be convicted for sodomy only if they made use of their additional sex" (Foucault, *Abnormal* 67). The mere presence of both sexes was not in itself considered problematic, but the threat of homosexuality was (Feder 227). When, in the late-nineteenth century, the body became the object of scientific inquiry into the origins of homosex-

uality, homosexual people were increasingly seen as having a "tendency to embody physical and behavioral characteristics associated with the opposite sex"; that is, they were regarded as "in some sense constitutional hermaphrodites" (Terry 135). The threat of homosexuality has also been present in the medical management of intersexuality, as Feder further observes, ever "since the 1950s when the standard of care [of genital surgery] was first formulated" (227). While medical practitioners treating intersex patients clearly distinguished between intersexuality and homosexuality, parents and other lay people still tended to conflate the two. And yet, as Feder notes with reference to Anne Fausto-Sterling, heterosexual desire has always been a factor in measuring success in "intersex management," something that is still true today (227-28).

The fear of homosexuality is also present in *Annabel*, if only very subtly. Treadway is excited when Wayne tells him about his plans to build a fort over the creek, but he is all the more disappointed when he learns about Wayne's plans to hang out there with Wally rather than using the fort to play war games with the boys (124). When Treadway dismantles the bridge, he does so believing that "If Wayne dropped his habit of lolling around this bridge with that girl, . . . he would enjoy the summer the way a boy should" (135). Treadway's behaviour seems to be at least partly informed by his fear that Wayne may (appear to) be gay. Similarly, Wayne takes great care not to be seen "examining the [prom] dresses on the racks" in the local store, looking for "the dress he would choose for himself in a perfect world" (268). Obviously, he is afraid to be perceived as gay. Many years earlier, Wayne did indeed have a "homosexual" encounter with a substitute teacher, Mr. Henry, who followed him into the school's cloakroom to speak to him softly, caressing his face and hair (107-08). Wayne learns how to avoid Mr. Henry, "but he could not escape from the fact that a man had wanted him, and that his body had responded to that man with a secret desire of its own. An exquisite stirring, unwanted, involuntary, mysterious" (108-09). When Wayne masturbates for the first time, however, his penis "did not respond [to his touches], but the place behind it, buried in his body between his legs, did respond" (162). He starts going out with Gracie after prom night, and "there were times [she] made him feel desire," and yet Wayne "hold[s] back," knowing he does not truly love her (289-90). In contrast, when he reconnects with Wally in Boston, he

responds to her "presence . . . as if life at this minute was blossoming inside him instead of lying dormant" (452).

Does this make Wayne heterosexual or homosexual? Interestingly, the question of Wayne's desires toward others does not feature prominently in *Annabel*. Readers never learn if Wayne and Wally become more than merely friends, and so the question of whether this makes them a queer or a straight couple does not arise. In fact, when the novel speaks of desire, it speaks more of Wayne's desire to "become who he had been when he was born" than of his bodily desire toward others, men or women. The novel's argument for a non-violent invention of sexuality, therefore, reflects the line to be drawn between "deviant" bodies and "deviant" desires. While, in some contexts, it may make sense for queer and intersex people to unite in their causes — as, for example, Alice Dreger and April Herndon argue they should; (213) — it is important to keep in mind that their specific issues and concerns are unique because they are the result of different forms of sexual difference. Winter's novel thus highlights, if indirectly, the differences between intersexuality and homosexuality that, many intersex activists and scholars urge, need to be given more critical attention.

Intersex people and activists have traditionally found allies in LGBT communities, which is not surprising given that both groups face the stigma of shame (Feder 228). In fact, that intersex activists originally embraced the label "intersex" had much to do with the influence of queer identity politics at the time, as Emi Koyama points out. And yet, she further observes, the queer identity-politics model never proved to have much effect or force because intersex people are much fewer in numbers and more often than not strive to "live ordinary lives as ordinary men and women" rather than to take on a "new, misleading identity" (Koyama). Indeed, intersex people, or their parents, often reject the label "intersex" because of its various implications: that it "sexualizes them," denies them a "clear sex or gender identity," or assigns them a queer identity that they ultimately reject (Dreger and Herndon 208). In 2006, endocrinological societies in the United States and Europe agreed on a new nomenclature for what has formerly been referred to as hermaphroditism and, eventually, intersexuality. The new term, "disorders of sex development," has been criticized for further stigmatizing intersex people (see Feder 241n2), but it has also found supporters. Ellen Feder, for example, has argued that "Employment of the DSD

nomenclature . . . can 'normalize' in a positive sense intersex conditions by directing attention to appropriate and ethical treatment, and away from the issues of identity that are not . . . the business of medicine" (240) — that is, away from issues of genitalia to the "ordinary health concerns" of intersex people (226). Similarly, Koyama endorses the use of DSD "not as a simple gesture of either defeat or confidence" but as a way to reform medical models of treating intersex patients and to form connections with disability scholars and activists, upon whom intersex activists have always relied for strategies of activism. That Koyama emphasizes the link between intersex movement and Disability Studies makes all the more sense when one considers that the latter focuses attention on the social and cultural processes that distinguish between normal and abnormal bodies (Koyama) — processes that also produce the spatialization of sexuality that has such detrimental consequences for Wayne in *Annabel*.

In its argument for a non-violent invention of sexuality that brings an end to unnecessary genital surgeries, and in its silence on the question of sexual orientation, *Annabel* brings to our attention questions that gay or lesbian writing cannot address adequately because of the simple but crucial difference between variant desires and bodily variances. Winter's novel focuses our engagement with intersexuality on issues that are specific to intersex people and may not be fully dealt with by queer theory alone. It thus adds to Canadian discourses of sexuality and nationalism the voices of yet another "destabilizing and counter-normative sexuality" (4), to use Peter Dickinson's phrasing in *Here is Queer* — voices that, with very few exceptions, have hitherto been largely silenced.[4]

Conclusion

Winter's discussion of the interarticulation of space and sexuality is subtle but compassionate and, most of all, realistic. Wayne's journey from being trapped in a heterotopia of deviation and leading a peripheral existence to assuming a life-affirming presence is not an unbelievable story, and Winter did well to continue to work on it. According to Dionne Brand, the language of literature "opens the heart to things we may not have felt, it opens the intellect to things we may not have thought, insights we may not have gathered. Literature, art, is the extension of thinking itself; the elaborations of possible selves, the propos-

itions for new selves" (Brand 3-4). What readers make of the novel's proposition for new selves — for a new understanding of the human that makes intersexuality a space of lived experience, grounded in a non-violent reality — ultimately remains their responsibility. The point, however, is that Wayne's story has made its way into print and, as such, it provides a space in which the dominant discourses of science, law, and religion that declare sexuality a binary are challenged through language. The novel may not be able to speak for intersex people, but it speaks to the need for intersexuality to feature in Canadian discourses of sexuality, both in literary and cultural studies and in the public realm. For, as Butler puts it in *Undoing Gender*, a world in which intersex people are encountered with respect is a necessity for people like Wayne because it is their only "possibility of the livable life" (39).

Notes

[1] Intersexuality is often wrongly assumed to be a very rare phenomenon. Although estimates of intersex births vary depending on how one defines intersexuality, the "more recent, well-documented literature" assumes the number to be "roughly 1 in 1,500 live births" (Dreger 26).

[2] While the issue of Lefebvre's position toward women and feminism is relevant for the overall reception of his work, this article is concerned strictly with his model of the three moments of space. Conceptualizing social discourses as grounded in conflicts between dominant forces and peripheral voices, Lefebvre's model of social space is particularly apt for a discussion of the spatialization of sexuality.

[3] Cultural differences in inventions of sexuality are also reflected linguistically. Like all other Algonquian languages, Innuaimun (the Innu language) distinguishes grammatical gender based on animacy rather than biological sex. The question of why Winter opted to use a masculine pronoun for Wayne throughout the entire novel underlines the pervasiveness of the binary construction of sexuality in Euro-Western cultures. It also raises the issue of what linguistic and discursive changes are needed to give due recognition to intersex people.

[4] One of few exceptions is *As Nature Made Him*, John Colapinto's biography of Winnipeg-born David Reimer, excerpts of which are included in Richard Cevall and Peter Dickinson's *Sexing the Maple*.

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