to the performance of *Flesh and Blood,* I realized yet again how Canadian theatre so often perpetuates the biases of our dominant cultures and how, in doing so, it constructs a false representation of our society that excludes a very large audience.

Just as adolescent characters rarely are represented on stage, the sex lives of gay characters rarely are represented as unproblematic.[6] Gay characters hardly ever fuck. This is not the case for the gay characters presented in this book. In all the plays in this collection, the gay characters have sex or, at least, talk about having it—in positive though complex ways. This is another reason I chose these plays and one of the reasons I created the book's title. Quite simply, I wanted to publish a sex-positive book in this country where sexual activity, let alone gay sex, is regularly represented in a negative manner. Making out—without the comma—is as common a term as the activity it signifies; making out on stage, however, is rare.

Perhaps this is why David Demchuk's rather 'slight' play, *Touch,* caused such a 'heavy' commotion when it premiered in 1986 at the annual *Rhubarb!* festival sponsored by Buddies In Bad Times Theatre, a Toronto company that produces innovative gay and lesbian theatre. Two nude men slip under a rumpled sheet covering a mattress and proceed to discuss the role of pornography in their lives and imaginations. Their almost Platonic dialogue is staged in an atmosphere of homoerotic intimacy that works as a paradigm for the questions about representation and arousal that they debate. This is sex-play with intelligence, titillation with redeeming social value. The central irony of this very ironic play is that the characters' ideological positions are overshadowed by the actors' physical positions in bed. In effect, the actors perform for the audience an example of the erotics at issue. If the audience agrees with Ken who opposes the uses of erotic representation, it must question its voyeuristic position in the theatre. If it agrees with Gary who views pornography as useful, where does it draw

the line? Would the audience watch these two nude men do more than talk? If not, why not? Questions about making out become questions about making, out.

It is unlikely that *Touch* will make it into university curricula, just as it is unlikely that *Flesh and Blood* will be included in the curriculum of B.C.'s secondary schools—which is a shame, given that the insight and brevity that Demchuk brings to the topic of gay male pornography would make *Touch* an ideal text for discussion in a number of different disciplines. But just as condoms are considered too radical to distribute in prisons, I suspect that plays that present same-sex possibilities, let alone same-sex imagery, are considered too radical for post-secondary students—at least by those currently responsible for determining the curricula used in Canadian universities. Which brings me back to issues of canonicity.

Although plays by gay men *are* taught in literature courses at universities across the country (plays, for example, by Edward Albee, Noel Coward, Jean Genet, Tomson Highway, Joe Orton, Michel Tremblay, Oscar Wilde, and Tennessee Williams), rarely are they approached as the work of gay men whose particular experience of the world—experience that is affected by their homosexuality—might impact on how and what they write. One of the reasons for this is simple: when an author's homosexuality isn't immediately evident, it need not be discussed. As Robert K. Martin writes in his introduction to *The Homosexual Tradition in American Poetry,* 'Most writing has traditionally been heterosexual, not by declaration but by implication. Men and women are assumed to be heterosexual until proved otherwise. And heterosexual assumptions are presumed to be universal' (1979, xv-xvi). The consequence of this is that work by gay men can be appropriated by the dominant culture and interpreted exclusively within a heterosexual context.

Arguably, ignoring the author's sexuality, like ignoring the author's gender, has little effect on his or her text, the text being