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Public Recognition of Sexual Diversity in Canada and
the United States* By David Rayside

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Queer Inclusions, Continental Divisions: Public Recognition of Sexual Diversity in Canada and the United States.

By David Rayside. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008. xvi + 388 pp. Maps, tables, figures, notes, index. \$75.00 cloth, \$35.00 paper.

Queer Inclusions is a fascinating and well-written comparative examination of the politics of sexual diversity in Canada and the United States. David Rayside focuses on how political and legal issues affecting gay and lesbian relationship recognition, parenting, and schooling have played out in these two countries over the last decade. The author, who is not a lawyer, does an excellent job reviewing law reform processes and outcomes in an accurate yet not overly technical manner. His reliance on a variety of methodological techniques makes for a solid, well-tested analysis. In particular, I found his comparative analyses on the influence of religious beliefs and the impact of differences in legislative decision making in the two countries extremely interesting.

I would raise some quibbles with the work. The book purports to be about all queer people, but bisexuals and transgendered or transsexual people rarely have any separate consideration. While the book ambitiously tackles three complex fields, I would have loved to have seen some discussion on how issues related to sexual diversity and military service or sexual expression have played out.

My most serious criticism of the work is that it is not, as its title suggests, about queer inclusion across the continent. Rather it mainly focuses on the politics and controversies in major cities like Toronto, New York, Vancouver, and San Francisco. Little is said about how the politics of queer inclusions played out across the Great Plains jurisdictions. For example, Rayside (who lives in Toronto) does not mention that the Alberta government invoked the controversial notwithstanding clause to insulate a law purporting to prohibit same-sex marriages from judicial review, or that the first same-sex marriage challenge came out of Manitoba in 1975, or that an important case effectively denying gay and lesbian teachers the right to reveal their sexual orientation to students was decided by Manitoba courts

in 1999 (with leave to the Supreme Court of Canada denied). Saskatchewan does not even warrant a separate index entry. There is little separate analysis on why most of the Great Plains states have explicitly rejected legal recognition of either same-sex relationships or the protection of parenting rights. That said, Rayside's comprehensive mapping and charting of law reform province by province and state by state is impressive.

One measure of a significant book is whether you want to talk about it incessantly with others as you are reading it. Another is whether you can even put it down to take time to talk. Thus, in spite of my critical observations, by these two measures, *Queer Inclusions* is a significant book. I highly recommend it to anyone interested in law, politics, social movements, and equality issues. **Karen Busby**, *Faculty of Law, University of Manitoba*.