

Canadian Studies

A few Americans have been studying Canada a long time. Francis Parkman of Harvard wrote his seven-volume Canadian series in the late 1800s, and A. L. Burt, a Canadian, began teaching Canadian courses at the University of Minnesota in 1930; but the great spurt has been recent.

In 1970 the newly established Center of Canadian Studies of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) found that eighty-nine institutions were offering at least one course in which fifty per cent or more of the material related to Canada.

Today over 250 institutions have Canadian courses, and there are comprehensive programs at the University of Maine at Orono, the University of Vermont, Michigan State University, the State University of New York at Plattsburgh, Duke University, Western Washington State College and Bridgewater (Massachusetts) State College. The Canada/US Law Institute, jointly established by Case Western Reserve University School of

Law and the University of Western Ontario's Faculty of Law, instructs students in the legal systems of both countries.

The Association for Canadian Studies in the United States, created in 1970, publishes a highly regarded journal, *The American Review of Canadian Studies*. Other journals, such as *Modern Fiction Studies* and the *Social Science Quarterly*, have devoted special issues to Canada. The growing interest in Canadian studies among college students and faculty recognizes their value in fields such as government service, journalism and business.

I used to think that Canadian policy-makers had to be more enlightened. I thought, you know, what an upright little country. Now I understand that its foreign-policy decisions are often as silly as US decisions, but I've still got a better respect for the country.

Student, SAIS Canadian studies program.

Culture

The excerpts below are from an address delivered in Washington, DC, by Northrop Frye in January 1977 at a symposium on twentieth-century Canadian culture, organized by the Association for Canadian Studies in the United States and funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

. . . culture has something vegetable about it, something that increasingly needs to grow from roots, something that demands a small region and a restricted locale. The fifty states of the Union are not, in themselves, a cultural entity: they are a political and economic entity that provides a social background for a great variety of cultural developments. We speak for convenience of American literature, but its real cultural context usually turns out to be something more like Mississippi or New England or Chicago or an expatriate group in Paris. . . . Similarly in Canada: as the country has matured, more and more of its local areas have come to life imaginatively.

This fact has given French-Canadian writers, in particular, one considerable advantage. The French-Canadian poet or novelist knows that he is contributing to the articulateness of a beleaguered language, hence he need have no doubt about his

social function or the importance of being a writer in such a situation. He has no competitors closer than European France, and they live in a very different social context. The English-Canadian writer has not had this advantage, and the tedium of a permanent identity crisis has afflicted English Canada for a century. . . . I think it was partly a response to the French act of self-definition that made for a sudden and dramatic emergence of English-Canadian culture after about 1960. Since then there has been a tremendous cultural explosion, in literature and painting particularly, which has produced a mood that is often called cultural nationalism.

This is a most misleading phrase, and for two reasons. First, nationalism suggests something ag-

Really hostile and aggressive anti-American expressions are still confined almost entirely to intellectual circles and academic life.

Working-class Canadians still like not only Americans, but the idea of life in America.

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