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*"Exciting challenge"*

# Maintaining native studies

by Cathy McLaughlin

"It's an exciting challenge." Dr. Joe Couture, educational psychologist and one-time chairman of the Native Studies department at Trent University, spoke on problems of starting and maintaining native studies programs in universities.

There may be mixed motives, for instance, behind establishing the programs.

"There's the do-gooder stance, as well as the conviction

that native culture is worthy of serious academic attention."

"The push must come from the Indian side."

Five Canadian universities now have native studies programs. Brandon, Sudbury, Lethbridge, Regina and Trent offer B.A. schedules with Native Studies majors. Camosun College in Victoria has a smaller, yet "very successful" model.

"Many difficulties are operational. The universities are

Obtaining faculty is also a problem.

"Should we have an all-native faculty? A mix? A non-native staff? These questions are a source of perennial tension."

It is most important, said Couture, that faculty members have "cultural related experience." For this criterion, the manpower pool is shallow.

"There is as yet no pool of Ph.D. natives. But that is changing now."

Control of learning methods, said Couture, can also cause conflict.

"Indian culture develops the right brain function, the intuitive side. Universities develop the left, the rational, the analytical, linear side."

Native personality traits, feels Couture, should be taken into account in a learning design. He is optimistic.

"Recent developments in philosophy of science show a paradigm that takes in the whole of life, of the world. This corresponds with the traditional holistic Indian view."

Native studies are implementing such a view.

"I know of no other program that does that."



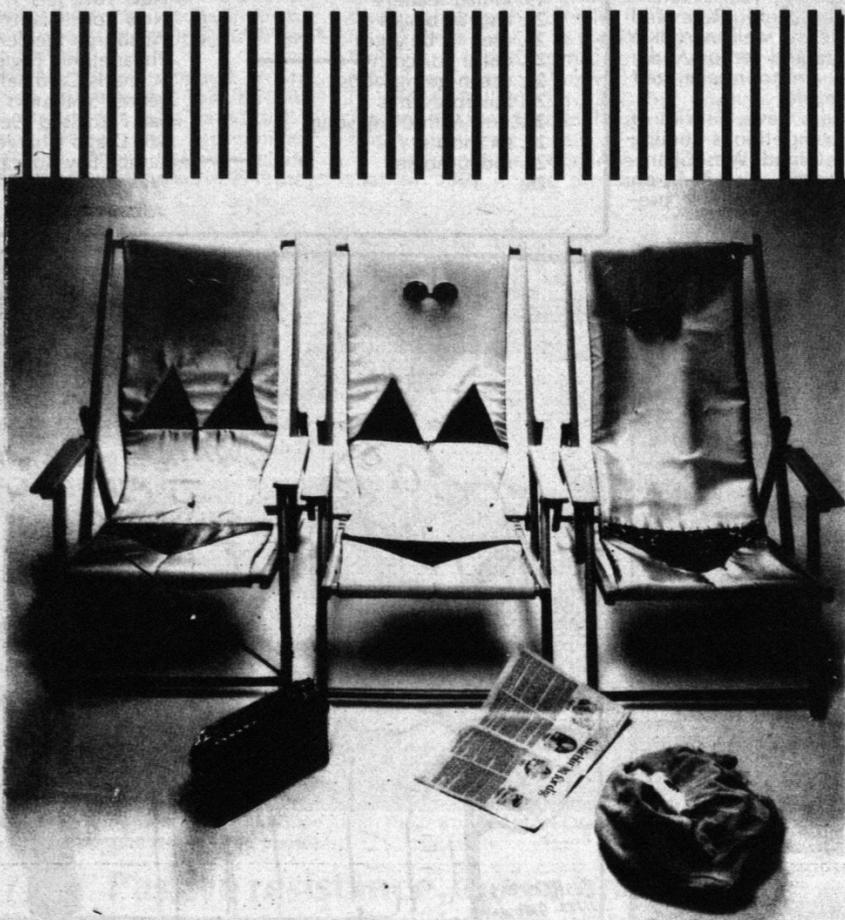
reluctant to fund Native Studies on an equal basis with other programs."

Once established, the faculty must spend much time "hustling money."

"These programs have to have an orientation with the community. This takes money."

Difficulties lie in convincing administrators of the need for a "hook-in" with the native community.

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- ensure the smooth operation of the Students' Union newspaper.

Salary: \$800/mo. (under review)

For further information, please contact: Andrew Watts, Editor-in-Chief, *Gateway*, at 432-5178, or in Rm. 282 SUB.

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