

The professor, leaning back in his chair, America reverberating in his voice, was explaining how he had set up a certain social science course:

"I did briefly wonder why there was no Canadian content in the course. Since this is a Canadian university I suppose their should be. But I was short of time so I just chose the books I was most familiar with."

The professor is popular with his students, outspoken, sort of angry young man American-style: he wears relatively worn-looking army jackets. He has been in Canada and at York for four years, and says he will become a Canadian citizen if he stays here four or five years longer. Yet he says, with chilling matter-of-factness:

"If this keeps up I think the Canadian point of view will disappear in a very short time."

"This", of course, was what two young Carleton professors, James Steele and Robin Mathews, were worried about when they proposed to their faculty association hiring practices that would keep their faculty two-thirds Canadian. The motion, needless to say, was defeated 130 to 5 and someone even moved to censure the two men. But the issue didn't die right there. Canadian Press picked it up and then Time magazine. The press published the statistics that had worried Steele and Matthews — statistics that showed that at one university, Simon Fraser, the faculty was two-thirds American; that at Waterloo, six of seven humanities and social science department heads were American.

The paucity of Canadians is most evident at the new universities — like York. Here, statistics compiled by Dean John Saywell's office show this: 43 per cent of the faculty in the arts department grew up and have spent most of their lives in Canada, 30 per cent in the U.S., 13 per cent in the U.K., .03 per cent in other Commonwealth countries, and 9 per cent in other foreign countries.

But the picture really isn't as cheery as that. Concerned academics agree that there are certain fields, like the social sciences and humanities, where Canadians would be particularly desirable. But these are the very fields where American scholars have forged the way, and some of the results are these: 36 per cent of the Social Science division count as Canadians, 46 per cent as Americans. The Sociology department: 10% Canadian, 38% American, with another 28 per cent U.K. No department in the faculty is more than 52 per cent Canadian.



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Photo by Dave Cooper