

Canadian Foreign Policy

Reflections on a Field in Transition

Edited by
BRIAN BOW AND ANDREA LANE



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1

Rethinking Canadian Foreign Policy

BRIAN BOW and ANDREA LANE

One of the things that made the 2015 Canadian federal election so compelling was the stark divide presented by parties in their campaign platforms: between two very different approaches to foreign policy, rooted in two different ways of thinking about the nature and purposes of the state. The debates surrounding the election – among academics, pundits, and journalists – were equally compelling, with informed and insightful arguments on all sides. But as academics, we found them to be strangely disconnected from politicians’ debates and from public consciousness; from recent and ongoing academic research, because they tended to play out in the news media or on Twitter; and from the substantial academic literature on Canadian foreign policy, with its deeper theoretical vocabulary and longer-term sense of historical context. This sense of disconnectedness was especially jarring because Justin Trudeau’s “Canada Is Back” rhetoric very deliberately evoked many of the core themes historically associated with the Liberal Party brand on foreign policy and more particularly with the “nationalist internationalisms” of Pierre Trudeau and Lloyd Axworthy. Thus, as many argued about the policy priorities they expected to flow from this half-formed agenda, we were disappointed that few scholars seemed to be digging deeper, to ask where those ideas came from, what those twentieth-century themes might mean in a twenty-first-century context, and what this could tell us about the Liberal Party’s evolving view of Canada and its place in the world. And, though many scholars were actively weighing in on the election debate, there were few signs that this might carry over into new collaborative research projects or sustained

research debates on the evolution of Canadian foreign policy. Most troubling, our conversations with graduate students and other junior scholars suggested that, though they did know something about specific policy questions raised during the election debates, they didn't know or care very much about the deeper questions mentioned above. Nor did they show much curiosity about how these things might relate to the study of Canadian foreign policy. From what we gathered, "Canada Is Back" didn't resonate for them as it did for us, whether personally or professionally.

Since that election, Canadian foreign policy has become even more salient and more complex, mostly because the global foundations on which it has flourished since 1945 seem to be collapsing – but our debates about it are sometimes shallow and uninteresting. We have seen, for example, some earnest arguments over whether Donald Trump's wrecking of old alliances and institutions compels Canada to become more self-reliant or to find new international partners, in which many of those arguing seem not to know that we have had this discussion before. And we've had some debate about Canada's arms sales to, and then diplomatic feuds with, Saudi Arabia. For the most part, these dialogues have been well informed about the technical and legal details of the particular issues, but they often seem disconnected from the bigger picture of Canada's international priorities and from long-standing discussions about how foreign policy is made in Canada. The disagreement over the Mali peacekeeping mission seemed to revolve around the technical aspects of the commitment, not the larger issue of Canada's involvement with the UN more generally, as has the commentary on the Trudeau government's pursuit of a UN Security Council seat.

So what's missing? On one level, what's missing is *perspective*: a broad view of Canadian foreign policy across many different issue-areas and over time. But it's more than that. We suggest that what's missing is Canadian Foreign Policy (CFP) as an academic project. We believe that, though a number of very capable scholars are working hard on their own pieces of the puzzle, the collective enterprise of bringing these pieces together and trying to see the whole has lost momentum and is in danger of dissolving completely. Some might claim that CFP has never really existed as a robust academic enterprise and that the challenge is not to revitalize the field but to build something new from scratch. We're skeptical of the claim

that it once experienced a golden age, but we do think that CFP was a fairly vibrant – though frequently problematic – interdisciplinary field back in the late Cold War years and that it has been steadily unravelling since the 1990s. This is especially troubling now, because – as we explain in the concluding chapter – we need CFP more than ever.

GENERATIONS: SOCIALIZATION AND THE SOURCES OF CFP

Reflecting on our reaction to the foreign policy debates surrounding the 2015 election, we began to think more about generational cohorts and the way one's view of the world is shaped by the times in which one comes of age – personally, professionally, and politically. Perhaps it wasn't so surprising that graduate students in 2015 didn't take much interest in the way Justin Trudeau's "Canada Is Back" rhetoric echoed the liberal internationalist tropes of the 1990s (which in turn echoed those of the 1960s and 1970s). Most of them were toddlers when Lloyd Axworthy proclaimed Canada's commitment to multilateral activism and human security. And perhaps it wasn't surprising that those same graduate students don't seem to be interested in Canadian Foreign Policy as an academic subject, since Canada hasn't had much of a coherent foreign policy since the turn of the millennium. During the Harper years, it sometimes seemed that the government was trying to tear down not only traditional ideas about Canada's foreign policy but the very idea of *having* a foreign policy.¹ And, if we ourselves look in the mirror, perhaps it wasn't surprising that we were so intrigued by the "Canada Is Back" hype – despite the clues that it had little real substance – since both of us are products of the late twentieth century, when successive Canadian governments sought to build a mythology around foreign policy to define and support particular ideas about national identity and service.

That got us thinking about how individual scholars' ideas about what they study, and why, might be shaped by their own socialization – personal, professional, and political. Why are Canadian scholars who came of age during the early and middle Cold War decades more likely to take an interest in Canadian foreign policy per se, and to think of themselves as CFP specialists, than those who grew up in the late Cold War or afterward, who seem more likely to define their expertise in terms of international politics more broadly, or other regions of the world, or specialized technical

subfields (such as defence policy or trade)? Are those who did their advanced degrees outside of Canada likely to think about these things differently? Why are most of the self-identifying CFP specialists older, white men? What sorts of students are attracted to the study of CFP now, and why are so few of them finding their way into tenure-track faculty positions? Are the patterns similar to those for other academic fields, or is there something different about CFP?

The Generations project was meant to answer some of these questions and to link them with our assessment of the state of CFP as a field of study and thereby to get started on thinking about how to reinvigorate it. We began with a workshop in Toronto, which brought together twenty-five Canadian scholars from differing generational cohorts and backgrounds. Some identified as CFP specialists, including leading lights such as Denis Stairs and Kim Richard Nossal; others taught CFP courses and/or researched aspects of Canada's foreign policy but didn't think of themselves as part of the CFP academic community. We asked invited participants to reflect on their own socialization, how they related to CFP as an academic project, and how they viewed the state of the field and its future prospects. Some tended to focus mostly on one or two of these questions, so we ended up with a wide variety of papers. Most of the papers that concentrated largely on the question of socialization and generational cohorts – by Aisha Ahmad, Ellen Gutterman, David Haglund, Asa McKercher, Bessma Momani, Heather Smith, Denis Stairs, and Srdjan Vucetic – were published as a collection in the summer 2017 issue of *International Journal*.² Those published here tend to focus more on the evolution of CFP as a field of study, but most also provide fascinating insights into the contributors' own personal experiences and perspectives.

The project overall is a mix of different kinds of essays, each asking (and answering) different kinds of questions. But, as a whole, the Generations project offers a much more complete picture of CFP as a disciplinary endeavour than we are used to seeing: one that looks from the inside out *and* from the outside in; that includes closely related (sub?)fields such as Canadian defence policy and development policy; and that brings together contemporary social science, “traditionalist,” and critical approaches.

There are nevertheless some gaps and distortions, which we will try to draw out by explaining (and disclaiming) our recruitment process. We began by listing what we saw as the best-known and most influential CFP specialists. This list would easily have filled all the spots for our opening workshop and would probably have made for a very interesting discussion. But, dominated as it was by insiders, almost all of whom were white Anglo men over the age of sixty, it would obviously have given a warped view of the field. So we cut that first list way down, to make room for other kinds of participants.

In seeking women to add to our list, we soon realized that there were very few high-profile, identifiably CFP-specialist women and that many of them were buried in administrative responsibilities at their home universities. Women who studied international politics or foreign policy at Canadian universities tended to be younger, and virtually none saw themselves as CFP scholars. We therefore sought out some female scholars whose subject-matter expertise overlapped with the traditional content of CFP but who didn't identify as part of the CFP community – such as Maya Eichler, Ellen Gutterman, and Bessma Momani – to better understand what their choices might tell us about the state of the field and about discipline building more generally. It was striking, in fact, how sharp the divide seemed to be between the men and women who participated in the Generations conversation. Most of the men were less introspective and more inclined to emphasize a bird's-eye view of the field, tended to identify personally with CFP as a field of study, generally agreed that it had declined to some extent, and hoped for a restoration. Most of the women took up our invitation to reflect on their own experiences and were ambivalent about CFP per se. Of course, there were exceptions on both sides – among the Generations participants and more generally – but it is hard to escape the conclusion that conventional CFP is mostly something done by older white men and that women and others historically under-represented in academia have presumably not seen it as relevant and accessible.

With Jérémie Cornut and Stéphane Roussel's "divided field" argument very much in mind,³ we attempted to include francophone scholars but ultimately recruited only two, both of whom happened to be best known for their English-language publications. Some francophones were evidently

not comfortable with being included “as francophones,” or perhaps they were just reluctant to go over the same ground that Roussel and others had already explored. We also hoped to include scholars of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, and Indigenous scholars if possible, but were not very successful; the bottom line seems to be that CFP, as an academic community, is just not very diverse. This is true for academia in general, but it seems especially pronounced in CFP.

CFP has always been a multi- and sometimes interdisciplinary project, with political science and history most prominent. We invited historians to participate, but only two carried through to publication – one in the 2017 *International Journal* issue and one here – so this volume is dominated by political scientists. We are therefore in a position to provide a more complete picture of CFP within political science but not in the broader multidisciplinary context.

We wanted, also, to cover the range of policy specializations that might be associated with CFP – such as diplomacy, defence, trade, development, and environment. Here we were more successful, with the notable exceptions of trade and environment.⁴ We hoped to get a better sense of the way that some Canadian scholars attached themselves to one of these subfields, in addition to or instead of CFP, and whether the same discipline-building and -breaking trends occurred in these other contexts (we outline some of our findings below). But it is also clear that no single chapter could possibly be the final word on any given subfield or its relationship with the core of CFP. For proof of that, we need only compare the very dissimilar ways of thinking about defence policy in the chapters by Maya Eichler and Philippe Lagassé, or even the differing viewpoints of David Black and Laura Macdonald regarding the political economy of Canada’s relationships with the global South. Of course, that doesn’t mean we should give up on answering these questions, but rather that we ought to ask them more often and in more contexts.

RETHINKING THE EVOLUTION OF CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY

The remaining part of this chapter runs through some themes that we have picked from the essays that follow, to give a sense of what’s at stake and what kinds of overlaps and divergences to look for. In the concluding chapter – which we have somewhat sarcastically dubbed “the manifesto” –

we try to map out a way forward, making the case for some specific, concrete steps that might reinvigorate CFP as a field of study.

We begin here, as historical overviews of academic fields often do, with some thoughts on the supposed golden age of CFP. None of the project participants made any grand claims about a golden age, but some lamented a perceived decline, which at least implied a better time in the past.

Denis Stairs and David Haglund, in the 2017 *International Journal* issue,⁵ and Kim Richard Nossal and Adam Chapnick, in this volume, all looked back fondly on the lives and legacies of some early CFP scholars who had played leading roles in developing the field and shaping each of them, as junior scholars seeking professional and intellectual homes for themselves. Each praised the work of pioneering scholars such as John Holmes and James Eayrs, who were products and purveyors of a traditional liberal arts curriculum, which was heavy on the humanities, light on social science, and interdisciplinary mostly through an indifference to disciplinary boundaries. Some of those pioneers had extensive government or military service, many had close personal connections with serving policy-makers, and most were actively engaged in public debate (and sometimes private counsel) that was meant to influence government policy.

There is room for dispute about whether the work of these early figures represents a real golden age for CFP. They were very knowledgeable and insightful individuals, and their footprint on the field is very deep, in shaping the ideas and identities of today's senior scholars, in developing vocabulary and categories that we still debate today, and in setting curricular frameworks that are still echoed in our textbooks and syllabi. But their scholarship doesn't always stack up well against contemporary expectations for theoretical and methodological rigour, in political science, history, or any other disciplinary context. With respect to that generation of scholars, though there is nostalgic lamenting of loss in CFP now, few would call for a wholesale return to the CFP of the 1960s.

What has been lost, it would seem, is a critical mass of scholarship on Canadian foreign policy as such and the sense of common purpose that once sustained it. In his chapter, Nossal describes the "fading away" of the CFP professor and the taking over of CFP teaching by poorly supported sessional instructors who are often disconnected from the rest of the field. Chapnick regrets the disappearance of traditional diplomatic history within

CFP, displaced by other kinds of “transnational” histories, a sentiment that Asa McKercher echoed in his 2017 *International Journal* article.⁶ Jean-Christophe Boucher’s social network analysis of co-authorship in CFP over the past twenty years finds a relatively small body of work, of which only a tiny part represents collaboration by scholars with an ongoing commitment to CFP. Most of the rest is a cloud of one-off publications by academic “tourists,” who produce a single work on CFP and then move back/on to other things. Boucher’s network analysis doesn’t have a time-series component, so we can’t use it to test the decline thesis directly, but the patterns he discerns in recent scholarship do seem consistent with a field that has fallen on hard times. And, on top of all this, there is our experience in trying to recruit participants for the Generations project itself, which turned up a number of senior scholars who identify with CFP but virtually no junior and mid-career scholars who think about their specialization in that way.

How are we to explain this apparent decline of CFP as an academic project? Various possible explanations are offered in this volume, but none is spelled out in detail or backed up through systematic research. We outline them here to give a sense of what might be at stake in later chapters.

First, CFP may have been weakened by the withering of Canadian foreign policy itself. One of CFP’s oldest clichés is Canada’s remarkable capacity to punch above its weight in the special circumstances of the early Cold War years, and that undoubtedly played a part in creating and sustaining academic interest in CFP. But the rise of new powers after decolonization, the end of the Cold War, and the globalization of the world economy all undercut Canada’s international importance and encouraged politicians and publics to pull back from the world to focus on urgent domestic policy challenges. In broader historical perspective, Axworthy’s ambitious internationalism in the late 1990s looks like the great exception to a longer-run pattern of general indifference, declining budgets, and lowered expectations. And, as Bessma Momani points out in her contribution to the *International Journal* special issue of 2017, the Harper government’s abrupt retreat from traditional multilateralism and generally narrow foreign policy agenda probably discouraged a lot of undergraduates from taking an interest in CFP.⁷ The high-minded foreign policy rhetoric of the Justin Trudeau government may have caught the attention of today’s

students, but the jury is still out on whether they will find much to hold that attention, in CFP or in Canada's actual foreign policy.

Second, CFP may have been undermined by structural changes throughout the academic world. Nossal's account of the fading away of the self-identifying CFP professor over the past thirty years emphasizes structural pressures such as funding cuts and the "casualization" of the professoriate more generally. As the post-war generation moves into retirement, it has not been replaced by a rising generation of new CFP scholars. Instead, the teaching of CFP courses is being taken on by a new cohort of sessional instructors. Often they are very capable teachers, but they may not be especially interested in CFP per se and may feel detached from the community of tenure-track professors in the field. Of course, these trends have occurred all over the social sciences and humanities since the 1990s, as governments cut back funding to higher education, and university administrators respond by replacing retiring faculty with much cheaper sessional instructors. There is no question that these developments have played an important part in the apparent deterioration of CFP as an academic project. But this can't be the whole story, because the reliance on sessional instructors seems much more pronounced for CFP courses – especially at Canada's top universities – than for other social sciences and humanities fields and because, as Nossal points out, the non-replacement of leading CFP scholars by new generations of experts began before the wave of casualization.

Third, CFP may have been displaced by changing academic priorities and new areas of research. Anecdotally, that would seem to fit with the reflections of Generations participants who work on issues connected to Canadian foreign policy but don't self-identify as CFP specialists. Ellen Gutterman's contribution to the *International Journal* special issue, for example, is consistent with this interpretation: like many who came of age politically and professionally during the 1990s, Gutterman was swept up in the global transformations that followed the Cold War and found her focus in global-scale, international, and transnational relations.⁸ For her and for many others at that time, CFP as a disciplinary project seemed parochial and backward, out of step with the most pressing problems of the day and generally disconnected from the theoretical and methodological debates in political science and other fields. Maya Eichler's and Laura Macdonald's chapters in this volume are also consistent with a change

in academic priorities, in that they found themselves asked to teach CFP courses in the early parts of their careers but didn't find CFP as a disciplinary category very relevant to their own priorities and perspectives.

Closely related is the tightening of technical specialization in the academic world and the subsequent decline of the kind of generalist scholarship that characterized the ostensible golden age of CFP. Both the pioneers of the early post-war years and those who followed them – and are now themselves senior scholars in CFP – were what we might call generalist-specialists: that is, they specialized in the study of Canadian foreign policy, but they often roamed across multiple issue-areas, such as diplomacy, defence, or trade and investment. This made sense in that they were looking for the general pressures and principles that drove Canadian foreign policy. We see similar tendencies in the study of American foreign policy and other parallel or related fields during the early Cold War years. But this generalist approach was under increasing pressure by the 1990s, as new research methods were developed, the academic job market contracted, and policy-makers became more selective about the kinds of academics they wanted to consult. All of these trends led to greater technical specialization in the study of international politics, with scholars concentrating more and more tightly on specific policy areas. In some areas, this specialization went with a breakdown of national or regional focus, as defence or trade specialists were encouraged to take on a broader global perspective – or at least a cross-national or cross-regional one. As Philippe Lagassé, Andrea Charron, David Black, and Laura Macdonald all describe in this volume, this increased specialization was a positive development for (sub)fields adjacent to CFP, such as Canadian defence policy or development policy, but it seems to have undermined CFP itself.

One aspect of this falling out of step with disciplinary trends is an underlying uncertainty about the scope and nature of CFP itself and the standards by which we ought to measure its progress. In previous work, Jean-Christophe Boucher argues that CFP as a whole lacks a strong commitment to conventional social science theory testing and methods.⁹ And Brian Bow has countered that CFP has always been a multidisciplinary project that draws on research standards and practices from a wide variety of fields, including history, geography, and anthropology.¹⁰ But Boucher is clearly correct in pointing out that a lot of the CFP literature is very light

on theory and often features no clear-cut research method or logic of inference, relying almost entirely on experience or anecdotes. This is exacerbated by the “tourist” problem that Boucher discusses in his chapter, where most of what is published is an author’s only contribution to the CFP field and is conspicuously disconnected from past research and present debates. Like other fields in the social sciences and humanities, CFP is divided between conventional and critical approaches, which are built on totally dissimilar epistemologies and often seem to exist as two (academic) solitudes, as described in Lana Wylie’s chapter.

These varying ways of thinking about what CFP is, and what it is for, encourage us to think more about the field’s supposed decline. In his contribution to the *International Journal* special issue, Srdjan Vucetic suggests that CFP isn’t in decline so much as in diversification, with a variety of new questions being asked and new ways to answer those questions.¹¹ But these new research projects are scattered all over the academic landscape, and the individual scholar is currently on her own in finding them and bringing them together. That, in turn, raises questions about whether and how these disparate elements fit together and whether too much stretching of the field’s boundaries undermines the coherence of the field itself. The name of the field – Canadian Foreign Policy – makes it plain that our starting place is government policy and more particularly that of the federal government, specifically in relation to external actors – which we generally presume to be other states. Asa McKercher, in his *International Journal* essay, and Adam Chapnick, in this volume, lament that historians have moved away from the diplomatic history of Canada. They call for a renewal of what they see as the traditional core of the field, based on some kind of accommodation with other approaches and subjects (such as transnational histories). Heather Smith, in *International Journal*,¹² and Leah Sarson, in this volume, argue more specifically for greater engagement with Indigenous peoples and politics to stretch the boundaries of CFP. This, of course, raises all sorts of interesting and important questions about who is a part of Canada, who makes decisions on its behalf, and who or what counts as an external actor with which Canada can engage. Those same questions are also evoked – albeit in different contexts – by David Black’s and Laura Macdonald’s critical political economy perspectives on Canada’s relations with the global South, by Rebecca Tiessen’s arguments

about youth ambassadorship as a way in which young Canadians learn about their place in the world, and by Maya Eichler's individual- and local-level reflections on Canadian defence policy.

These are very complex problems, which cannot be worked out here, and we don't need to achieve consensus on them before we can move on. This volume isn't meant to be the last word on the state of CFP as a field of study. It is meant to be a starting place for a reinvigorated conversation about what CFP ought to be, what it can accomplish, and where it might go from here.

OUTLINE OF THE VOLUME

This volume consists of three main parts, the first of which begins with four essays that provide a broad view of CFP, though from very different perspectives. First is Kim Richard Nossal's account of the field's apparent decline, which focuses on the inter-generational fading away of the CFP professor. He emphasizes the importance of new resources in sustaining the field during the 1970s and the loss of those resources – and of university resources more generally – in the unravelling that followed. Next is Adam Chapnick's lament for the loss of Canadian diplomatic history, a traditional core of CFP scholarship. Chapnick finds the source of trouble not in vanished resources but in shifting academic priorities – more specifically, the displacement of traditional state-centric histories by transnational ones. This is followed by Lana Wylie's review of "critical" approaches to/in CFP, which reflects on her own discovery of critical perspectives, her experience in co-editing (with Marshall Beier) an alternative textbook on critical CFP, and the subsequent evolution of these debates. Next is Jean-Christophe Boucher's overview of collaborative research in CFP during the past twenty years. Using an extensive dataset of publications and social network analysis to look at the causes and effects of co-authorship in the field, Boucher uncovers patterns that challenge some of the conventional wisdom about the disciplinary dynamics of CFP. Part 1 closes with an essay by John Kirton, who considers the question of CFP academics' influence on policy making. Kirton offers an overview of various Canadian governments' attitudes toward academic input over the past sixty years and concludes that there are very few times when and places where CFP scholars have had a significant impact on broad priorities and strategies.

Part 2 turns to some closely related fields of study, which could be seen as subfields of an ambitious and orderly version of CFP. All five of its chapters pick up on the question of policy influence raised by Kirton, and each makes interesting – sometimes paradoxical – connections between academic purpose and policy relevance. First, Philippe Lagassé explores the study of defence policy in Canada through his own experience, arguing that defence studies is losing ground in Canada, despite the recognized need for academic analysis and public debate. Given the sheer volume of public commentary on defence questions, we might get the impression that academics have a lot of influence on policy, but Lagassé argues that real influence depends – as it should – on an analyst’s personal credibility as an expert, which depends in turn on continuous access to detailed technical knowledge and key decision-makers. Next is Andrea Charron’s discussion of Arctic issues in connection with CFP. She suggests that much of the research on this region from CFP (and CFP-adjacent) scholars has actually undermined our capacity to think clearly about the Arctic as a set of policy challenges by emphasizing supposedly urgent national security concerns and deflecting a broader view that would also include a wide variety of complex diplomatic, economic-development, and environmental challenges. Then David Black looks at solidarity scholarship, as an academic project within the study of international development policy, with particular attention to Canada’s relationships with sub-Saharan Africa. He argues that, though Canadian government officials are partially to blame for academic experts’ lack of influence on Canada’s relations with Africa, another part of the explanation can be found among the relevant community of scholars and their skepticism about close engagement with the state. Members of the solidarity scholarship community hoped to see changes in Canadian government policy but could not trust either the federal government or most of the multilateral institutions through which it worked internationally, preferring instead to engage directly with like-minded scholars and organizations in the global South. Black notes that these choices were grounded in good reasons, but they may have resulted in lost opportunities to influence policy that could have made a difference in people’s lives. Laura Macdonald outlines the sources and circumstances of her own professional development and her ambivalent relationship with CFP. Like Maya Eichler and others, she has always been interested in issues

closely connected to Canada's international policies, but she never saw CFP – as she had encountered it – as an especially relevant and meaningful way to explore those issues, gravitating instead to critical international political economy as a framework for the study of transnational networks in North America and Central America. Like the solidarity scholarship community described by Black, Macdonald generally leans away from the state and from thinking about her research's importance in terms of policy influence, preferring instead to focus on purposive engagement with relevant non-government organizations. Finally, Leah Sarson describes her own journey as an emerging scholar, with an ongoing attachment to CFP as traditionally conceived, balanced with an interest in global Indigenous politics, which is difficult to reconcile with the conventional way of thinking about the “Canadian” and the “foreign” in CFP. She ends on a hopeful note, looking toward a more expansive definition of the field, which can accommodate new problems and new perspectives.

Part 3 examines teaching and public engagement, and each of its essays raises profound questions about the relevance of traditional CFP. We begin with Maya Eichler's personal reflection on coming to the teaching of CFP as an outsider and her experience with reframing the field for her students to bring it more in line with her own interest in individual- and local-level politics. Eichler's chapter encourages us to think more about the scope and purposes of CFP as a field and about the connection between personal experiences and scholarship. Next is Aaron Ettinger's discussion of his experience with teaching Canada's involvement in Afghanistan to undergraduate students whose historical memories don't go back to September 11, 2001. Ettinger's chapter forces us to think more seriously about historical “background” in the framing of CFP courses, in an era when students have access to unlimited information about current events, very little historical knowledge, and few intellectual tools to connect contemporary issues to the Cold War histories in which most CFP literature is grounded. More generally, it reminds us to think about today's undergraduates as the future of CFP as a field of study and about what we are (or are not) doing to make the field accessible to and useful for them. Next, Rebecca Tiessen takes us outside the classroom to think about youth ambassadorship programs as another way in which young Canadians learn about themselves and their place in the world. Tiessen states that

we need to think more carefully about the way in which these programs are structured and promoted and about how they are implicated in particular ways of thinking about Canada's roles in the world and its relationship to people in the global South. When thinking about young people and the future of CFP, we need to be especially attentive to women, who are – as mentioned above – markedly under-represented among self-identifying CFP scholars. Part 3 closes with Stéfanie von Hlatky's chapter, which highlights the importance of gender dynamics in CFP and international relations, and of efforts to increase women's participation, based on her experience as the founding director of Women in International Security Canada (WIIS-Canada).

These short synopses cannot possibly capture all the complex experiences and ideas that make up this volume as a whole. Every chapter is a very rich read on its own, offering new insights into research and teaching on Canadian foreign policy, the intersection of personal and political in Canadian academia, and academic discipline making more generally. We conclude the book with our own reflections on the Generations project and a call for further reflection and renewal in CFP. We argue that the consolidation of CFP as an academic project *and* its apparent decline over the past twenty or thirty years can be understood in terms of both changing circumstances (historical developments, available resources, university priorities) and individual choices (researchers' priorities, mentors' advice). And we suggest that a reinvigoration of the field would also depend on the right kinds of favourable circumstances (such as new resources) and individual choices (new commitments). Canada is confronted with an array of complex and sometimes threatening global developments, and its success in navigating through them will depend on the thoughtfulness and sense of purpose of its policy-makers, the knowledge and attentiveness of its voters, and, supporting each of these, the vibrancy of the relevant academic communities focusing on – or at least actively engaging with – CFP. Canada needs to understand the world, but it also needs to understand how it interacts with the world and thus to understand itself. In aid of this, CFP must continue to be an integrative, multidisciplinary academic project, which seeks to better understand – in a theoretically and methodologically rigorous way – Canada's place in the world, the mechanisms of generating foreign policy, the politics surrounding them, and

the ways in which these things are linked to Canadian domestic politics, Canadian society and culture, and the lived experiences of all Canadians. We hope that this volume will be a catalyst for renewed efforts to rebuild – and, where necessary, to reinvent – Canadian Foreign Policy.

NOTES

- 1 For more on the Harper era, see Bessma Momani, “Canadian Foreign Policy from the Roaring 1990s,” *International Journal* 72:2 (2017): 192–202.
- 2 Brian Bow and Andrea Lane, “Generations: The Sources of Our Ideas about Canadian Foreign Policy,” *International Journal* 72:2 (2017): 158–65.
- 3 Jérémie Cornut and Stéphane Roussel, “Canadian Foreign Policy: A Linguistically Divided Field,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue canadienne de science politique* 44:3 (2011): 685–709.
- 4 The absence of a chapter on trade and investment policy didn’t seem especially problematic when we started on this project, but it has become more and more regrettable as the Trump administration’s assault on the global trading order – and NAFTA in particular – has intensified. It’s worth noting here that the number of Canadian social sciences experts on trade policy – especially with some connection to CFP – seems to have declined markedly since the 1990s and is now very small in absolute terms or by comparison with adjacent fields such as Canadian defence policy or development policy.
- 5 Denis Stairs, “Life in a Canadian Foreign Policy Generation Long Ago: The Early Evolution of a Professorial Sample of One,” and David Haglund, “The Paradigm that Dare Not Speak Its Name: Canadian Foreign Policy’s Uneasy Relationship with Realist IR Theory,” *International Journal* 72:2 (2017): 166–79 and 230–42, respectively.
- 6 Asa McKercher, “Toward Canada in the World: Thoughts on the Future of Canadian Foreign Policy History,” *International Journal* 72:2 (2017): 243–54.
- 7 Momani, “Canadian Foreign Policy.”
- 8 Ellen Gutterman, “Coming of Age in Academia: Canadian International Relations and the ‘Optimistic Interregnum’ of the 1990s,” *International Journal* 72:2 (2017): 180–91.
- 9 Jean-Christophe Boucher, “Yearning for a Progressive Research Program in Canadian Foreign Policy,” *International Journal* 69:2 (2014): 213–28.
- 10 Brian Bow, “Measuring Canadian Foreign Policy,” *International Journal* 69:2 (2014): 229–32.
- 11 Srdjan Vucetic, “The Global in Canada,” *International Journal* 72:2 (2017): 217–29.
- 12 Heather A. Smith, “Unlearning: A Messy and Complex Journey with Canadian Foreign Policy,” *International Journal* 72:2 (2017): 203–16.

The State of the Field

2

F-f-fading Away: The Evanescent Canadian Foreign Policy Professor

KIM RICHARD NOSSAL

A baby boomer contributing to an edited collection about the “generations” of scholars of Canadian Foreign Policy (CFP) should be forgiven for invoking “My Generation,” the 1965 hit by The Who. That song, with its angry stuttering lyrics sung by Roger Daltrey, particularly the transgressive possibilities of the stuttered “f” in the second verse, has long been an emblematic anthem of the 1960s. But I do not invoke it just because I came of age during that decade. Rather, as the title of this chapter suggests, that one line in the song captures perfectly my overall argument: the kind of Canadian Foreign Policy professoriate to which I have belonged since 1976 is now in the process of disappearing.

This chapter seeks to trace the rise – and slow evanescence – of a distinct CFP professoriate in the Canadian academy. There is, it must be acknowledged, an autobiographical element in the tracing: I was lucky enough to be among the PhD students who were hired to teach and conduct research in the general area of Canadian international policy: foreign policy, defence policy, trade policy, or development assistance policy. But at the end of my academic career, the environment is very different. Today we see a paradox: virtually every university in Canada offers a course – usually at the third-year level, usually given by the Political Science Department – that focuses on Canadian foreign policy. These courses are persistently popular, which is one of the reasons that they remain in university calendars. But many are no longer regularly offered, and many are taught by part-time adjunct professors. Moreover, many of the full-time members of the professoriate

who do teach their university's CFP course were probably not hired *specifically* for that task, as I and many of those in my generational cohort were. Rather, they have a much broader scholarly focus.

THE MAKING OF A CFP PROFESSOR

I begin with how I joined the CFP professoriate. Among the job advertisements in the February 1976 issues of *University Affairs* and *CAUT Bulletin*, the two publications in which Canadian academic positions are advertised, was one placed by the Department of Political Science at McMaster University, seeking two lecturers or assistant professors, one in Canadian politics, the other in “international relations, comparative foreign policy, and Canadian foreign policy.”¹ I was a doctoral student in the Department of Political Economy at the University of Toronto, in the middle of my second year. My thesis – still being researched – was on a Canadian foreign policy topic. Given that I had not even completed my residency (the mandatory two-year period of residence that was common to doctoral programs back in the day), I was an unlikely candidate, but I applied for the position anyway. To my surprise, I was called for an interview. I was even more surprised when the chair of the department, Adam Bromke, telephoned me in early April and offered me the job. In July 1976, I settled into my new office in Kenneth Taylor Hall, and in September I began teaching two full-year courses: a third-year course on Canadian foreign policy and a fourth-year seminar on comparative foreign policy.

At first blush, my path to becoming a CFP professor at McMaster seems straightforward. I arrived at the University of Toronto in 1970 after completing high school in Hong Kong, where my father was posted as a foreign correspondent for the now defunct *Toronto Telegram*, covering the two major stories of the day in the Asia Pacific – the Cultural Revolution in China and the war in Vietnam. I thus arrived at U of T with a keen interest in international politics and hopes of a career in the Canadian foreign service. Given my career goals, I was particularly interested in international relations and CFP, but during my last two years as an undergraduate, POL 312, the CFP course, was not offered. James Eayrs, the professor who normally taught it, had been awarded a Killam Senior Research Scholarship to enable him to write a fourth volume of his five-volume *In Defence of Canada*, and the department chose not to offer it in his absence.

However, in my fourth year, I petitioned the department to be allowed to take a graduate CFP course, POL 2203. Since 1967, it had been taught by John W. Holmes, a former Canadian diplomat, who was the director-general of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs (CIIA) and also a visiting professor of international relations at the University of Toronto.² Happily, Holmes supported my petition, which was granted by the department, so in the 1972–73 academic year I made the weekly trek across campus to Edgar Tarr House, the headquarters of the CIIA, where Holmes offered his graduate seminar. Tarr House quickly became a favourite haunt for me and other members of the class because it was also home to the CIIA library, which in addition to extensive holdings of books and journals on international affairs had clippings files on a range of international and foreign policy issues – a magnificent resource for students in a pre-Internet era.³

Taking POL 2203 with John W. Holmes was, to use a tired but nonetheless accurate cliché, a transformative experience. He was an engaged and engaging professor. His teaching reflected his own education and training as a historian: he had studied history at the University of Western Ontario, taken his master's in history at the University of Toronto, and was pursuing a doctorate in history at the University of London when his studies were interrupted by the outbreak of the Second World War. Returning to Canada, he eventually joined the Department of External Affairs, as Canada's foreign ministry was then called.

Holmes the historian instilled in all of us an appreciation for the importance of the past and in particular the crucial role that history plays in determining a country's foreign policy. But his teaching also reflected the years he spent in the 1940s and 1950s as a public servant and a diplomat. He stressed the importance of pragmatism in foreign policy, the need to recognize the clash of interests that made compromise a necessary component of statecraft, and the necessity of balanced assessments of policy options. Above all, he sought to convey to us the paradoxical nature of world politics and foreign policy and – as he so often liked to say – the importance of living with paradox.⁴

My time in POL 2203 convinced me that I wanted to concentrate my studies in CFP and to continue working with Holmes. I was admitted to the master's program in political science at U of T for 1973–74, and Holmes

supervised my thesis, which was on Canada's participation on the ill-fated International Commission for Control and Supervision, the new truce supervisory commission created at the 1973 Paris peace conference to supervise the end of the American involvement in the Vietnam War.

It was during my master's year that the Department of External Affairs determined (quite correctly, in retrospect) that I did not have what it took to be a good Canadian diplomat, a decision that prompted me to continue my CFP studies. As Denis Stairs noted about his choice of the doctoral program that he had made a decade earlier, "if the subject was Canadian Foreign Policy, Toronto was the obvious place to go."⁵ I was only vaguely aware of the admonition that, to be a successful academic, one should never, *ever*, get all three degrees from the same institution, but in the mid-1970s the logic that led Stairs to choose U of T still held: its political science department was arguably the best in English Canada, and in Canadian Foreign Policy there were no other serious contenders.

I entered the U of T doctoral program in political economy in September 1974. At that time, Toronto's PhD program in political science had a distinctly mid-Atlantic structure – not quite British and not quite American. At British universities, most doctoral programs of that era had but one component: a doctoral dissertation, written under the supervision of a single member of faculty, that was "an original contribution to knowledge" (to use the standard and iconic definition). In most American doctoral programs in political science, by contrast, candidates normally took two years of coursework beyond the master's level. Next came an intense period of study of the literature in two fields of political science (a "major" and a "minor") that was followed by written and oral comprehensive exams to test their knowledge of these fields. Only when candidates had passed their "comps" were they permitted to move into the dissertation stage. At U of T in the early 1970s, doctoral candidates in political science could begin to work on their dissertation immediately. In their first year, they had to take courses in a major and a minor field and then had to write a "mini-thesis" – an extended literature survey in the area of their dissertation (not the field as a whole) – before completing the thesis for oral defence.

This structure had a number of advantages – but several significant disadvantages. On the positive side, it meant that I was able to start on my

thesis during my first term in the program. In the fall of 1974, John W. Holmes, James Eayrs, and Robert O. Matthews, who had taught me international relations as an undergraduate, all agreed to be on my supervisory committee. A topic – the evolution of Canadian policy toward China in the 1940s, during the war against Japan and the civil war – was agreed to. The theoretical focus of the thesis was on the applicability of Graham Allison's bureaucratic politics model that had just been published and was enjoying considerable popularity in the foreign policy analysis community.⁶ A call from Holmes to his former colleagues at the Department of External Affairs magically opened doors: the diplomatic files of the department were made available to me well in advance of the normal thirty-year rule, subject only to my promise that I would not actually use them in a publication before thirty years had elapsed. The department's Historical Division generously provided me with an office in the newly opened Lester B. Pearson Building; but because I was taking graduate courses and was a teaching assistant for Eayrs's second-year introduction to international relations, I had only one day a week to consult the files in Ottawa. So once a week I took the overnight train (back in the day when there was an overnight train) to look at the files and take notes before returning to Toronto that night. But in this way, I managed to complete much of my thesis research over the course of 1975.

Needless to say, the U of T program structure had one significant drawback: it meant that, because I had not been required to undertake a concentrated study of the literature that went beyond my thesis topic, I was certainly not as well acquainted with the literature as those students in other doctoral programs who had been through the comprehensive exam process. (It is perhaps not surprising that in the late 1970s the U of T department moved away from the structure that had allowed me, and a number of other students, to move through its program so – too? – quickly.)

My appointment to McMaster University in 1976 was largely the result of luck. After all, I was just twenty-four years old, I had not completed my PhD, my only teaching experience was as a TA, and I had precisely one book review by way of publications. But I was lucky to be in a doctoral program that permitted a quick start, and thus a quick finish. I was lucky to have mentors who, I would later discover with some embarrassment,

wrote exceptionally strong letters of reference on my behalf to McMaster.⁷ And I was lucky that Adam Bromke, the department chair, thought enough of Holmes and Eayrs that he decided, over the objections of many of his department colleagues, to take a flier on a complete unknown. (My appointment thus confirms, and in spades, Robert H. Frank's contention that luck plays an underappreciated role in life outcomes.⁸)

There was another bit of good fortune at work in 1976 that I believe also contributed to my appointment. The job for which I applied had an unusual specificity for an academic position – Canadian Foreign Policy – which was a much better fit with the focus of my PhD and the pedigree of my doctoral supervisors than would have been the case had the position been more broadly defined as just “international relations.” This would also have hugely widened the pool of applicants for the job. But, as I will show below, there was a brief period in the 1970s when political science departments were seeking faculty to teach Canadian Foreign Policy. This had not occurred in the past, and it would not recur in the future. In short, I was lucky enough to be part of a generational cohort that came onto the academic market, as it were, at a propitious time. Though the door that opened to that cohort closed fairly quickly, those who were appointed to tenure-track positions in CFP ended up remaining in place for the next thirty to forty years, and they formed a quite distinct scholarly community. To a consideration of that dynamic we now turn.

THE MAKING OF THE CFP PROFESSORiate

The 1976 McMaster ad in *University Affairs* and *CAUT Bulletin* for a CFP specialist was not at all unusual. York University had put out a similar ad the year before (David Leyton-Brown was appointed to that position), and the University of Toronto would advertise for a position in CFP the year after (John Kirton was the successful applicant). Indeed, between 1975 and the mid-1980s, thirteen of the thirty-six international relations (IR) appointments made at Canadian universities were for professors who were in the CFP field. Among those appointees were a number of the doctoral students whom John Holmes supervised after he joined the University of Toronto as a visiting professor in 1967. They found positions across the country: Danford W. Middlemiss at Dalhousie University, Michael J. Tucker at Mount Allison University, Clarence Redekop at Trent University,

Elizabeth Riddell-Dixon at the University of Western Ontario, Donald C. Story at the University of Saskatchewan, David Taras at the University of Calgary, and Douglas A. Ross, first at Trent and then at Simon Fraser University.

Why were there so many appointments in Canadian Foreign Policy – a phenomenon that we did not see before the 1970s and certainly have not seen since? The explanation, I argue, is to be found in the broader political environment. During the late 1960s, there was a growing wave of nationalism in English-speaking Canada, fuelled by an anti-Americanism generated by an antipathy toward the war in Vietnam, the racialized violence sweeping American cities, and an increasing concern about the degree to which the Canadian economy was being dominated by American ownership.⁹

That burgeoning nationalism also found a home on Canadian university campuses. In the early 1970s, universities in Canada – and their political science departments in particular – were responding to a mounting nationalist critique that the Canadian university system, which had expanded so rapidly and massively in the 1960s, was failing to teach students about their own country. To staff the newly opened universities and the increasing number of students, universities depended heavily on recruiting foreign faculty. By 1970–71, more than one-third of the professoriate were not Canadian citizens: 10.2 percent were from the United States, 15.2 percent were from the United Kingdom, and 12.0 percent were from other countries.¹⁰ The large influx of foreign faculty, particularly from Britain and the United States, was partly driven by a two-year tax holiday for professors that had been negotiated by the Canadian government and the governments of the United Kingdom and the United States as a way of staffing the expanding Canadian university system.¹¹ The large number of foreigners had a major impact in the humanities and social sciences, since many of them knew little about Canada, with the consequence that relatively few courses on Canadian subjects were offered. Increasingly, students at Canadian universities were not being given the opportunity to learn about their country.

Even though in the aggregate more faculty were from Britain than from the United States in the late 1960s, much of the focus was on the impact of American scholars on departments and curricula in the humanities and

the social sciences. The growing concern on English Canadian campuses was galvanized by two literature professors at Carleton University, Robin Mathews and James Steele, who initiated a relentless campaign against what they argued was the Americanization of the Canadian academy. In December 1968, they moved a motion at Carleton's Faculty Council deploring the fact that almost 60 percent of Carleton faculty were American-born and calling on the university to ensure that two-thirds of the faculty be Canadian; that only Canadian citizens could hold administrative positions, from department chair to university chancellor; and that departments be required to justify publicly the hiring of non-Canadians. Their short "dossier," published in 1969, had a powerful impact across English Canada, since it melded well with other manifestations of a rising Canadian nationalism during this period.¹²

The campaign by Mathews and Steele resonated on English Canadian campuses and often sparked student protests. Indeed, the position I was hired to fill in 1976 had its origins in such a protest. The Department of Political Science at McMaster University had expanded massively during the 1960s, growing from just four faculty members in 1964 to twenty-five by 1970. Most of the new hires were Americans, and one of the divisions that quickly developed within the rapidly growing department centred on the Americanization issue. After a senior American academic was appointed as department chair in 1968, the split among the faculty intensified, and both graduate and undergraduate students were drawn into the dispute. The culmination, in 1970, was a student strike over the lack of Canadian content in the political science curriculum. One result of this protest was that the department added a course on Canadian foreign policy to the curriculum; in 1971, a Canadian who was doing his PhD at the University of Alberta was hired to teach it. But the protest at McMaster was by no means unusual: during the 1960s and early 1970s, many campuses across Canada were marked by protests, demonstrations, sit-ins, and occupations, often focusing on the Americanization issue.¹³

The increasingly acerbic debate over Americanization on campuses provoked a wider institutional and political response. In 1970, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada decided to create a Commission on Canadian Studies "to study, report, and make recommendations upon the state of teaching and research in various fields of study relating

to Canada at Canadian universities.”¹⁴ However, the association did not find a suitable commissioner until 1972, turning eventually to Thomas Symons, the founding president of Trent University. At the political level, there was a similar responsiveness. In 1973, the select committee on economic and cultural nationalism of the Ontario legislature, which had been created in December 1971 to examine the dominance of American firms in the Ontario book publishing industry, widened its focus and began to hold hearings on the Americanization of the Ontario university system. Its interim report, published in 1973, was a scathing indictment of Ontario post-secondary institutions on the matter of the citizenship of the professoriate. Stung by the refusal of Ontario universities to provide it with information about the citizenship of their faculty, the committee asserted in its report that the universities could not be trusted to make the right decisions in choosing their faculty. It called on universities to “permit discrimination in favour of Canadian citizens in faculty appointments.”¹⁵ Ontario’s minister of colleges and universities, Jack McNie, responded to the select committee’s critique by pressing the federal government to make the recruitment of non-Canadian faculty more difficult, arguing that Ontario universities needed professors “who know what they’re talking about on Canadian subjects.”¹⁶

In the meantime, Symons was holding hearings across the country. His report, *To Know Ourselves*, was officially published in 1975, but it was not actually released to the public until March 1976. Just as the efforts of Mathews and Steele were central to instigating the campaign for the Canadianization of the university system, so too the Symons Report looms large in its completion. The report contained an extensive critique of the state of Canadian studies in Canadian universities, concluding that there was a broad lack of attention given to all aspects of Canadian studies, the result of a university system that was dominated by non-Canadian scholars working on non-Canadian issues, using non-Canadian methodologies and assumptions, and assigning their (Canadian) students non-Canadian texts and readings.¹⁷

Symons was especially critical of the state of the IR field in Canada. In his view, the study of Canadian foreign policy was sadly underdeveloped. “Teaching and research about Canadian foreign policy and about international relations from a Canadian perspective have been particularly