Canadian Stereotypes  
by Thijs Grootveld

University of Victoria, Canada  
  
Hey there, dear Albioneers!

I’m writing this while sitting in a bus riding through the beautiful fall landscapes of Victoria, Canada. All of the trees, and there are a lot(!), have turned yellow, the sun is shining bright; it is everything I could ever wish for in Fall. And that on the rainiest island in Canada! I’ve been in Victoria for two months now and I have to say it really feels like home. It’s a beautiful ‘little’ city that is way too proud of being the, I quote, “city of the newlyweds and nearly deaths”. The University (UVIC) is great, Canadians are awesome, and I’m still not sick of all their “aboot”s and “eh”s.

So far, I have been doing everything an exchange student should be doing: travelling, making friends, dominating karaoke, and barely passing my midterms! Canadian students are really a different species compared to us Dutchies. If they know the answer, then the entire class will know for sure! Always fun when you’re having a group discussion about Europe, as if they know what they’re talking about…

Something that is immediately noticeable about Canada is their ‘lack’ of history. One day, I decided to visit one of the oldest castles in Victoria, and I found a weird, small building that looked like it was built just the day before. Presumably, it was spooky, but I couldn’t help but wonder how spooky they would find our castles then.

Being abroad for an entire semester also brings up some difficulties of course. Being away from your family for a long time is strange for many internationals, and the amount of bonding over missing a certain someone back home is way too high! It’s also a challenge not to visit Tim Horton’s every day. Many think it’s just a lame stereotype, but let’s face it; most Canadian stereotypes are true, eh?

While Canada has been a paradise so far, it definitely sets home in a new perspective as well. The comfort of having all your friends close-by, the beautiful historical city center of Utrecht, having an AH XL around the corner (grocery shopping is always an adventure in this country; will I go for healthy? Or for something that is actually affordable to someone who is not Bill Gates?). It sure makes me miss home and I’m excited to see in what way home has changed or remained the same when I come back in winter. For now, I will continue to love this different world, root for UVIC’s great sport teams like the hooligan I am, travel for as much as possible, study a bit every now and then, and try to stay warm as it slowly turns into a winter wonderland (Christmas, yes!).

I will see you all in the New Year, have a good one!

Cheers,

Thijs (or whatever these people try to call me)