[00:00:00] **Aven:** Welcome to the Endless Knot Podcast where the more we know

**Mark:** the more we want to find out

**Aven:** tracing serendipitous connections through our lives

**Mark:** and across disciplines

**Aven:** Hi, I'm Aven

**Mark:**  and I'm Mark.

**Aven:** And today we're talking about Canada. So before we get started we're going to say thank you to a couple of new Patreon supporters, specifically Rhiannon Evans, who's one of the people who works on the Emperors of Rome podcast, Menai, and Samantha. So thank you very much to our new supporters.

**Mark:** Hurray, thanks all!

**Aven:** Second, we need to talk about our cocktail.

**Mark:**  Indeed

**Aven:** So this is a cocktail that prefigures the video whose audio we will be listening to.

**Mark:** And that video was about the etymology of Canuck, the word Canuck, which is an informal word for a Canadian. If you don't [00:01:00] know that word already.

And it has a surprising etymology to it.

**Aven:** Right. So we'll be turning to that in just a moment, but that meant that we looked for a cocktail and found one; now this is a cocktail called Le Canuck. And Mark, you just found it by Googling, right? That's right. But it's an interesting little note that the recipe is from a, an old cocktail book called "Cocktails par Jean Faitout" and I don't know really anything more better, cause it's just in a blog post, but it's, there's a picture given of it. So I'm gonna look that up and see if I can find a link to that book itself. Because it looks like it's probably, well, it's a French cocktail book and I suspect it's a Quebec cocktail book.

So the cocktail is pretty simple.

It's a rye whiskey and lemon juice and maple syrup and Angostura bitters. Cheers. Cheers.

[00:02:00] That's a sweet cocktail. It's a lot of maple syrup in it. Tasty.

**Mark:** We used Lot 40 copper kettle, rye, by the way.

**Aven:** And local maple syrup.

**Mark:** Local maple syrup.

**Aven:** A fairly dark maple syrup. So it's very tasty and yummy and could be drunk very quickly and easily if you're not careful.

**Mark:** Yeah, I'd have that again.

**Aven:** All right. So that brings us pretty quickly to the main topic of today's conversation or at least where we're going to start, which is, as you say, the etymology of the word Canuck and a little bit about sort of some of the, the myths surrounding Canada or the stories that Canadians tell about themselves.

After that, we're going to talk about some other aspects of the founding of Canada and Canadian origin stories, and then some sort of very Canadian words. All of this is I don't want to say in honour of, but in response to the fact that it's about to be Canada day, July 1st is [00:03:00] Canada day in the country.

And this will be hopefully coming out just a few days before then. But it's not a celebration of Canada. There's a lot of reasons not to be celebrating the nation state of Canada at the moment, possibly ever, but in particular this year, 2021, if you're listening later on more than, I don't want to say it's more of a problem than it has been in the past.

Maybe it's just that more mainstream people have been noticing. But in particular, very recently, there has been new ongoing revelations--though again, they're not really revelations to many people who knew, already knew about them--about many of the horrible events of and abuses within the residential school system in Canada.

And in particular of very disturbing findings on residential school properties. I don't want to go into more detail about that at the moment. But they are things that if you are in Canada or if you don't know about them, I would encourage you to [00:04:00] look that up, but take care of yourself when you do it, it's a very disturbing set of stories.

Knowing that Canada Day was coming up, we therefore thought, well, we can talk about this, but how, what will we talk about? And so rather than mark Canada day as a celebration of the country that is known as Canada, we thought we'd spend a little time interrogating some of the stories that Canada tells about itself.

However, that doesn't mean that everything we're going to talk about is going to be grim, but it does mean that some of the things we want to talk about are going to be somewhat grim. In particular, that we are going to be talking about Indigenous issues in Canada. And so, what we thought we would do is before we turn to the video doing a brief land, acknowledgement to think about the land on which we currently are sitting. So we acknowledge and are aware of the fact that we are on the traditional lands of the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek and the traditional lands of the Wahnapitae First Nation, lands that are covered by the [00:05:00] Robinson Huron treaty of 1850.

And so, now we will turn to the audio of the video about the word "Canuck", that is always the most awkward of phrasings. And then we will return with some more details about that material and some other elements about the story of Canada.

**Mark:** Canuck is a generally informal term for a Canadian. Canadians are usually surprised to hear that outside of Canada Canuck is sometimes used as a term of disparagement and often specifically applied to French Canadians. Within Canada the term has no negative connotations and is generally a light-hearted term of self-designation. It has been considered obscure in origin, however, there are a number of possible theories. Perhaps the most intuitive is that it’s somehow derived from the first syllable of the word Canada. The name Canada, by the way comes from the word kanata meaning “village or settlement” in a now extinct Iroquoian language spoken in the St Lawrence valley. But one alternate and altogether less intuitive etymology [00:06:00] is perhaps surprisingly more likely, and looking at it as well as the overall history of Canuck will perhaps teach us something about Canada itself.

This alternative suggestion is that Canuck actually comes from, believe it or not, a Hawaiian word kanaka meaning “man”. The word came to be used in English initially in reference to Polynesians, who either settled in early British Columbia and the American northwest, or became sailors on North American whaling ships–as seen in its use in sea shanties such as “John Kanaka”– and there are two theories about the transmission of the word. The first is that it was picked up by fur traders who spread the word west to east along the fur trade routes. But the other scenario is that the word was carried by those Polynesian sailors to the east coast, and became a common Americanism used by New England whalers, transferred from the original referent of Polynesian sailors to other “foreign” peoples, in particular the French Canadians because of the perceived darker colour of their skin. So it became a derogatory, racist Americanism applied to Canadians, but [00:07:00] while it retained some of that pejorative sense in the US–think of terms like “Canuckistan”–it quickly underwent amelioration in Canada, becoming used as a neutral colloquial term. It should be noted, though, that the source word kanaka does still have offensive connotations in some contexts, notably Australian English.

If this all seems unlikely to you, it actually is backed up by the earliest recorded uses of the word in the form Canuck. We have a letter which refers to kanakas written around 1830 by one Dr. John McLoughlin, the manager at Fort Vancouver, which was the Hudson’s Bay Company’s west coast headquarters, located in what is now Washington state. There were a great many Hawaiian settlers and workers at Fort Vancouver, so much so that it was sometimes referred to as Kanaka Village. Then in 1835 we have a traveller’s account of New Englanders, colloquially known as Jonathans, referring to Dutch and French Canadians as Kanucks. The two possible derivations come together in the end, though, since the wide-spread adoption of “Canuck”, whatever its [00:08:00] origins, undoubtedly was aided by the similarity of its sound to “Canadian”.

And speaking of the term Jonathan or Brother Jonathan, this figure was a national personification and patriotic emblem of New England, often depicted wearing a stovepipe hat, tailcoat and striped trousers in editorial cartoons and posters, a sort of fore-runner of the Uncle Sam figure. Well the term Canuck gets a similar personification in the figure of Johnny Canuck. He started out as a political cartoon figure in 1869, often standing up to the bullying of Uncle Sam or John Bull, the British national personification, and was commonly depicted as a wholesome lumberjack or farmer figure. Johnny Canuck was later revived in comic book form during WWII as an action hero battling the Nazis, much like his counterpart Captain America.

And Captain America was an even more obvious inspiration for the later character Captain Canuck who was created in the 1970s, in a fictional then-future world of 1993 in which for some reason Canada had become the most [00:09:00] powerful country in the world. The character, who appears in a red and white maple leaf emblazoned costume, gained his super strength from extraterrestrials and worked for the Canadian International Security Organization. The comic was independently produced and modestly successful in Canada, but never gained an audience outside the country. A more transparent allegory for the Canadian relationship to its Southern neighbour would be hard to find.

But perhaps the most well known use of the word Canuck today is in Canada’s national sport, hockey, as the name of Vancouver’s team—bringing us back to the possible west-coast origin of the term. Today the Vancouver Canucks are part of the National Hockey League [or NHL], but before that they were part of the Western Hockey League, and at that time their logo featured that old character Johnny Canuck, who also sometimes appears as part of the current Vancouver team’s uniform. The NHL has often had fractious relationships with rival hockey leagues, with teams and players moving back and forth between leagues, as was the case with the old World Hockey Association, which eventually folded with [00:10:00] four teams moving into the NHL. The sole American team that was absorbed into the NHL from the WHA had a name that is very appropriate for our story: the New England Whalers, who then became the Hartford Whalers, before eventually being relocated to Carolina to become the Hurricanes—all of which brings us back to that possible east-coast origin of “Canuck”.

So, as you can see, the word Canuck is a good illustration of how national identities are shaped by, and in turn sometimes consciously shape, the terms we use to describe ourselves. From the word Canada itself—derived from a language whose extinction is part of the story of the very nation it names—to the origins of Canuck with an immigrant people and word — reflecting the multicultural ideals dear to many Canadians — to having that word reclaimed from the American racism of those New England whalers— mirroring a Canadian tendency to consider their country free of the more problematic aspects of US history—to the wholesome figure of Johnny Canuck standing up to bigger countries like the US and UK— a [00:11:00] big part of the developing sense of Canadian nationhood in the 20th century—to the influence of American culture, like Captain America on Captain Canuck—a constant worry for champions of Canada’s culture—and finally ending up with Canada’s national sport, the ultimate identifier for many Canadians inside and outside the country. Turns out the story of the word Canuck can tell us quite a bit about our self-perceived national character.

So, as I said, there is a significant background of racism behind the word Canuck. Though, perhaps not in the way that you might've initially expected if I said there's a racist, origin to the word Canuck. But now I very briefly alluded to the etymology of the word Canada. And I want to interrogate that etymology a little bit.

I gave what is the most accepted possibility, but it is by no means universally accepted. And I also want to give a little bit more detail [00:12:00] on this language that I said had become extinct and what may have led to that and so forth. So this Iroquoian language that I mentioned is now known as St. Lawrence Iroquoian. We don't know a lot about it. So that's, that's the only way that we have to refer to this language. It's because it's in this valley next to the St. Lawrence river, that it gets its name. Sometimes it's simply referred to as Laurentian.

**Aven:** A deeply confusing name in Canada because there are multiple places in Canada known as the Laurentians and we are at, yeah, it, it, it's really very confusing and not a very useful name.

**Mark:** We do know that it was part of the Iroquoian language family. Most of what we know about the language is from the writings of Jacques Cartier who led the only certain contact or he was involved in the only certain contact between Europeans and this group of people.

And so he's our only textual source of information about them. It's possible that [00:13:00] Breton, Basque and English fishermen may have encountered the St Lawrence Iroquoians in the early 16th century. we know that they were in that kind of area. So it seems likely, but they made no specific mention of having encountered anyone there.

And by the way, one thing I learned recently because I've been looking at pidgin languages, is that there is, or was an Algonquin Basque pidgin.

**Aven:** Oh, interesting. Ah, well, it's not surprising when you think about it, but yeah, but interesting.

**Mark:** Yeah, because of this contact between fishermen, Basque fishermen and various peoples in what is now Canada.

So it's based on the Basque language, which is itself a, you know, a kind of obscure language. And it was spoken around the Gulf of St. Lawrence. It was last attested in 1710.

**Aven:**  Right.

**Mark:** Now getting back to the St. Lawrence Iroquoians as I say, they were encountered by Jacques Cartier on his visit in 1534.

And again, in 1536 in the valley [00:14:00] between Stradacona and Hochelaga which are the sites of the modern cities of Quebec City and Montreal. So that little valley along the river between those two cities is where these people resided. Now by the time Samuel de Champlain arrived in 1608, which is almost seventy-five years later, he found no trace at all of them.

He was specifically expecting to find them there because of what he read in Jacque Cartier's accounts. But there was no one with a permanent settlement in that area at that point, there were various other groups that were using that region as hunting grounds, but no permanent settlements.

So what happened to them? It's a bit of a mystery. There are various theories of their disappearance. Devastating wars waged by the Mohawk from the south is one possibility; epidemics of old world infectious diseases, presumably brought by Cartier or some of these fishermen who we know were there, were [00:15:00] generally in that area.

There could have been migration towards the Great Lakes region, so they may have just simply moved to a different area. The archeological evidence apparently points mostly towards the idea of there being some kind of devastating wars with neighboring Iroquoian tribes the Huron and the the nations of the Iroquois league, especially the Mohawk.

So that's, I think the sort of leading theory. But I, I suppose it's entirely possible that there could be more than one factor that lies behind this. And obviously more, more research will need to be done.

So Cartier did, did, as I say, write about what he experienced there. In particular he has a book called Bref récit et succincte narration de la navigation faite en -- now I've got Roman numerals. So I've got to do Roman numerals in my head to French numbers -- mille, mille cinq cent trente cinq et mille cinq cent trente six. There.

**Aven:** There you go, well done!

**Mark:** The Roman [00:16:00] numerals was harder than the French. I swear.

**Aven:** Well, those were, those were easy French numbers before they got really messy.

**Mark:** I don't have, I don't have to count in twenties. Cartier recorded some vocabulary lists totaling about 200 words. Okay. And that's, that's the sole preservation of the language.

But that's enough to establish, you know, language family and probable relationships and so forth. So the St. Lawrence Iroquoians showed one of the things that, that he writes about and one of the words that he gives, they showed him a tree, a particular tree called an anneda tree.

And it was as a cure for scurvy over the winter. Right. But when Champlain came, he was unable to find any knowledge of this. He specifically asked for that tree by the name that Cartier recorded. And no one seemed to know the word. Right. So it's possible it was mis-recorded, or this was a word that only existed in that particular [00:17:00] language.

And there was no cognate in any of the other related languages. We don't know. So it's, it's also a bit of a mystery as to what exact tree it was referring to. I think most people think it's either this sort of Northern White Cedar or a Balsam Fir. Right. But in any case they're supposed to be high in vitamin C.

**Aven:** Most of the evergreens are, like spruce tips are. And so, but, but yeah.

**Mark:** You boil it up and make tea, I guess. And,

**Aven:** and your teeth don't fall out. It's it's really very exciting. I'm sure Cartier was very, very glad to know that.

**Mark:** Now, if I asked any Canadian of about our age, what they know about how the name, how Cartier came up with this name Canada,

**Aven:** I know what you're goint to say, we would immediately quote the

**Mark:**  So I'll ask you this question.

**Aven:** That Cartier came across a group of people and he said, where are we? And they said, Ca Na Da. And he said, oh, that must be the name of this land. [00:18:00] And they said and, and then a voiceover, because I am quoting from the Heritage Minute.

**Mark:** I think it was actually one of his, one of Cartier's underlings. Yeah.

Oh,

**Aven:** I think, no, no. Cartier says" Canada. That must mean the name of this land". And then they go off and one of his, yes, one of his underlings says "I'm not sure. I think he just means that village". Or something like that. And then the voiceover says whether or not it was correct, that became the name of our land Canada, because I'm quoting, yes, I'm quoting from a Heritage Minute. Heritage Minutes are a thing. I don't have time to get into them now. I would suggest you go and listen to the podcast, the Minute Women, which is a podcast all about the Heritage Minutes and they have done this particular heritage minute

**Mark:** Well, we'll put

**Aven:** a, put a link up that link to that.

I, I cannot stress enough how much you should go and look up heritage minutes online. Yeah. But I also don't want to derail us into talking about heritage minutes for the next three hours, which I could do. So anyway, that is the story, but they, they were on TV. [00:19:00] And those of our age grew up seeing that over and over again.

So that was the story. Shock me with the news that that one minute production of the government of Canada might not be completely accurate.

**Mark:** Unfortunately, that, that story is not true. It's quite clear from Cartier's writings that he knew exactly what the word Canada meant. He wrote "they call a town Canada," right.

And his earliest name for the sort of wider territory, he wrote "Le pays des Canadas". Plural. Right? Right. So he said the country of villages, the land of villages, he may have was sort of using that as, as a name for the region or something like that. Right.

**Aven:**  But he knew that that wasn't the name of the country.

**Mark:** He used it as a plural noun, meaning villages. Right. So there you go. So he didn't, he didn't mix that up, but one way or the other that seems to have been where the name Canada came from.

Maybe to that story. It's, so I sort of thought that that was pretty cut and dry, you know, [00:20:00] whether or not the story about Cartier was right. That was where it came from. But there have been other theories and none of them have been accepted you know, by everyone. So according to the Dictionary of Canadianisms on Historical Principles which is an online dictionary, the most authoritative dictionary of Canadianisms which over the last few years had finished a big update second edition, though at the moment they're going through a server change.

So it's available to browse only. So none of the, search functions and all that work at the moment, but that server update should be completed. I think by fall 2022. So you'll have to wait a bit, but you can still go and browse the entries if you're, if you're interested and we'll put a link to that.

But according to that dictionary " the etymology of Canada is by no means clearly established. During the past 300 years, many solutions to the problem have been offered. Most of them [00:21:00] fanciful, a few examples follow." And then they give just a series of quotations, citations of the word Canada and with proposed etymologies. So I want to go through a few of those particularly the ones that are more likely to be actually plausible. Right. Yeah. Though, I'll mention some of the some of the wilder ones, wilder ones, especially when they're kind of funny. So one citation here is from 1754, so quite early and it says it's quoting an earlier source.

I don't know what that earlier source is, but it reads "certain Spaniards having entered the bay of chaleur" or that should be a title "the Baie of Chaleur before the time of Cartier, and finding no gold, often repeated the words, "Aca nada", that is, "here is nothing"."

**Aven:** Yeah. Well, that's not, that one's not real.

**Mark:**  Well, that one is probably the biggest contender.

**Aven:** that's ludicrous!

**Mark:** " which" -- and I'm sorry, this is an old quotation. So it's going to use some dated language -- "which the Indian having [00:22:00] since then uttered when they saw any Frenchman these latter concluded that Canada was the name of the country."

I find that a little weird.

**Aven:** It's that part that I don't, yeah. That doesn't make sense to me.

**Mark:** And in the end that's I think why I kind of think the Cartier connection is the most likely, but here's another quotation from 1791 " Such a prospect gave them, the Spaniards, a very unfavorable opinion of the country, inducing them all to call it "Capa di Nada", or "Cape Nothing" from which it has derived its present name of Canada."

**Aven:** What are all the Spaniards doing around here? They're like, there's not that many Spaniards in early Canada. They mean the Basque?

**Mark:** Not in that region. That's the thing. So these are, are these two citations, are from sort of one of several Iberian theories for the etymology of the name from either Spanish or Portuguese, right.

**Aven:** So it would be the, it would be the fishermen.

[00:23:00] **Mark:** Yes. And specifically the thing is, there was a lot of presence of Spanish and Portuguese in

**Aven:** Newfoundland. Yeah. But Newfoundland's not, wasn't called Canada,

**Mark:** That's quite far away.

**Aven:** And that, that never had the name Canada till 1950.

**Mark:** So somehow you have to imagine a mechanism for the name to be transferred to the mainland, the mainland and all the way down to the St. Lawrence valley. So yeah, so there was no known Portuguese presence in that part of Canada. Right. And Newfoundland Labrador, where they were is kind of remote, neither region is located anywhere near Iroquoian territory. And the name Canada does not appear on any Spanish or Portuguese maps of the North American coast that predate Cartier's visit.

So that's the other way it could have happened is it could have gotten written down on a map that say car used used or something, but no. A little detail about the Baie of Chaleur, there's no name Baie of Chaleur attested in any Spanish sources from that period. So, yeah, it's [00:24:00] unclear what that was referring to.

And the only name for Newfoundland attested in Portuguese sources is Terra Nova do baccau--

**Aven:** Bacalhao, cod

**Mark:** Bacalhao, cod after the region's plentiful cod. Now a scholar named A. Marshall Elliott worked really hard to disprove the Cartier theory on philological grounds. He really liked the Spanish Portuguese connection.

And so he tried to shoot holes in the Cartier story, pointing out that not only did Cartier know the word kanata meaning village but also emphasizedthat the spellings were different, right. It's spelled with a K and it's with a T not a D. And so he said it's unlikely to be the same word or derived from that word and concluded that Cartier already found the name Canada in existence, somehow, when he arrived at Stradacona.

**Aven:** I find any arguments [00:25:00] based on regularity of spelling choices in the 17th century, 16th century, and then 17th century to be very suspect.

**Mark:** especially when you're talking about speakers of potentially three different languages here.

Yeah,

**Aven:** yeah. And recording. Yeah. Anyway, I mean, I'm not saying that it's not worth pointing out, but you know, Shakespeare didn't write his own name the same way three times in a row. Why would Canada and Kanata be faithfully reproduced every time?

**Mark:** Well, he has a different word, so he doesn't follow the Ca Nada or Aca Nada etymology. Instead he puts forth the suggestion that it comes from the Spanish word cañada. It's spelled exactly the same, except there's a tilde over the N and that means glade, valley. And so he thinks it's a Spanish word for that valley. And he points out that that word cañada is used in lots of other places that were colonized by Spanish speakers

**Aven:** but that region wasn't colonized by Spanish speakers. So that seems a fairly [00:26:00] important problem.

**Mark:** Yeah. And the other problem is, why would the locals adopt a Spanish word for their region based on a very minor interaction, at best, with Europeans, right? Because that's what the idea rests on is that the Indigenous peoples kept hearing the Spanish word and thought, oh, that should be the name of our country for some reason.

And, and then Cartier heard that from them or something. I'm unconvinced I'm unconvinced too, but it is probably the best other theory.

**Aven:** You're not convincing me that we should move away from the Cartier theory here.

**Mark:** Well, let's look at some other possibilities. In 1760 " Canada in the Indian language signifies "the mouth of the country" from can, mouth, and ada, the country.

**Aven:** What does the country even mean there?

**Mark:** don't know. And notice, it says the Indian language. It doesn't specify what language specifically. So I mean, there have been various [00:27:00] additional theories that have attributed the name Canada to a word in some unspecified Indigenous language, right? Meaning something like this.

the mouth of the country in reference to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Again, it's hard to really go with a theory that doesn't have an actual

**Aven:** that has so few specifics. Yeah. Yeah.

**Mark:** In 1789, we have this suggestion: " some say it was named from Monsieur Cane who early sailed into that river. If so. Oh, Caprice!"

Monsieur Cane. So various theories that there was a short-lived French colony that supposedly was settled by someone named Cane. Who that Cane is, no one knows. 1811: " when the French first settled on the banks of the river St. Lawrence, they were stinted by the intendant two a can of spruce beer a day."

**Aven:** Okay. That's just totally not, not a thing!

**Mark:** "people thought this measure very [00:28:00] scant and every moment articulated "CAN A DAY!!"."

**Aven:** That must be a joke, that must've been a joke origin. There's no way anybody thought that was a real thing. Spruce beer for the record is a real thing, but the rest of it, totally ridiculous.

**Mark:** "It would be ungenerous in our readers to desire a more rational derivation of the word Canada."

**Aven:** Okay. So it was a joke. It was a self-conscious joke.

**Mark:** So yes, this claim that these early French habitants demanded a can a day of spruce beer is, is most obviously debunked by the fact that there were no cans until the 19th century. And why would the French be speaking English? Maybe it was just a joke.

1861: "the erudite author gives Canada as another form of the names Kanara and Karnata in Southern India, suggesting to [00:29:00] me the possibility that a part of the mainland was in like manner called Canada in reference to the part of India that was so named either because the Voyagers took it for a portion of India or because they fancifully chose to transfer the name to the new continent.

By the reasoning logic, they called them Indians.

I mean, they did, you know, they did think it was India.

In any case this theory was put forward by philologist B Davies.

**Aven:** these all strike me as people just making stuff up and being like, this is plausible, but there's no, there's no evidence for any of that. Right.

**Mark:** Well, and that's the fact is there isn't any evidence of any of them really.

Here's another one. 1896.

"Kanatats! Kanatats!" "They are strangers" exclaimed the Aboriginal inhabitants of what is now Quebec, when they caught sight of the first European arrivals in the St. Lawrence; and Kanata or Canada was thus understood by the newcomers to be the name of the country and was so [00:30:00] applied."

**Aven:** Any evidence that any of the languages spoken in that region use that word to mean stranger?

**Mark:** Not that I know of.

**Aven:** I feel again, that that's fairly important

**Mark:** and again it doesn't mention what people specifically, what language this might be. That basically takes us up to the present. Certainly by 1954, we have the suggestion that the name Canada itself, which means village dwellers was that of the Huron Iroquois who ranged from the lower St. Lawrence to the bottom lands around the Great Lakes. So again, a connection to the idea of a village and village dwellers. And then after that, everyone seems to run with the Kanata reference.

**Aven:** I mean, I'm not saying that the Cartier story or various stories are necessarily true. I just, it doesn't seem like any of the other ones have better evidence.

**Mark:** So you know, no certain answer but most of the other suggestions are not really sufficient. So we're left with only one plausible, [00:31:00] probably only one plausible answer. Right. And briefly on this subject of what the name of Canada is, it took a while before Canada became the official name for the unified country.

Various other names were suggested at various points that you know, when it was being made really official that this would be the name, so I'll mention a few of them because they are kind of interesting or in some cases hilarious. Tupona or Tuponia is an acronym from The United Provinces Of North America. That was, that was suggested. Even worse than that, I think, is Efisga; again, it's an acronym based on England, France, Ireland, Scotland, Germany, and Aborigines.

**Aven:** Yeah. Okay. Well moving quickly on to your other ones, it's not even pronounceable along with the other problems. Yeah.

**Mark:** Transatlantia, Transylvania, Canadensia, to get the,

**Aven:** the Latinish of it. Yeah. [00:32:00] Vesperia so the Western region

**Mark:** Mesopelagia

**Aven:** between the seas

**Mark:** land between the seas

**Aven:** from sea to shining sea or from sea to sea, to sea, which is the Canadian motto

**Mark:** and Aquilonia

**Aven:**  land of the eagles?

**Mark:** I guess. There were various names in reference to queen Victoria and Prince Albert.

**Aven:** Right. So this is around the time of Confederation, which is 1867.

**Mark:** So Albertoria, Victoralia, Alexandrina,

**Aven:** princess Alexandria, right? One of her daughters.

**Mark:** Yeah. Victorialand, which sounds like a theme park.

Also Albertsland. Other British patriotic names like British North America. Right. Which of course it was

**Aven:** really effectively. I mean, it was the British North America act, which was like our constitution until we patriated the constitution.

**Mark:** Western Britannia or Britannia west, Britannica, Albona, from Albion.

Right. Albionora [00:33:00] also from Albion, or New Albion. And a number of names that evoked, something from Canadian history. So Cabotia, after Cabot, Acadia, Hochelaga Hmm. Yeah. That might've worked. Laurentia, Nagarentia, Niagarentia, sorry

**Aven:** Yes. Oh, okay. I was like, are we going somewhere Japanese here?

Niagarentia. Yeah. ok.

**Mark:** And also other suggestions like Colonia, which is, kind of the colony.

I kind of like Ursulia

**Aven:** the land of the bears. I like that

**Mark:** a lot of bears here. Borealia, right. Superior, presumably after Lake Superior, I guess. Well,

**Aven:** or just the general, it was higher than the States, I guess,

**Mark:** Norland, land in the north, I guess. And on these various suggestions, the statesman Thomas Darcy McGee commented " now I would ask any honorable member of the House, how he would feel if he woke up some fine morning and found himself, instead of a Canadian, a Tuponian or a Hochelagander".

**Aven:** I [00:34:00] think some people who had to call themselves Canadians might've preferred the second, but anyway, I'm with them on the first though.

Yeah, Tuponian! Just kind of ridiculous.

**Mark:** So there we go. We have Canada, we don't know for sure where it comes from, but

**Aven:** at least it's not those other names. Yeah. Well, we'll come back to Canadian words for a sort of happier ending to this tale, but I want to jump off of this, the stories of, you know, early contact between explorers and European colonizers and the Indigenous peoples, and, and sort of talk about some of the things I've been thinking about myself.

Canada Day in general, but in particular, this Canada Day and with the issues of residential schools and ongoing issues of lack of reconciliation and reparations to Indigenous peoples and the story of the name of the country, have kind of all come together along with things I've been thinking about, about the nature of my own work the research and teaching I do, and [00:35:00] how it does and does not connect to Indigenous issues in this land.

And so what I want to think about and talk a little bit about is some of the stuff I've been thinking about for a while now about in particular how my field of study, how classics has been complicit in harm in the past, and can perhaps be shaped with goodwill in a way that grapples with those harms that it has done and maybe even can contribute to making some of the reparations and working towards reconciliation.

We're a long way from reconciliation because there has to be reckoning with what has happened before we can do that. So what I want to talk about is two ways in particular that classics can be connected to Indigenous issues in Canada specifically. One is the role of classics in early contact, like going back to those early French in particular contacts between Europeans and Indigenous peoples and in the Imperial and colonial actions of those Europeans. And then also to think about how to approach teaching classical subjects in a way that is responsive to the [00:36:00] colonial and settler contexts that I find myself in.

So for that first th there are several scholars that I know of working on the intersections of classics and early Canadian history. Those include Peter O'Brien and Kevin Solez, but I'm going to talk about in particular, a forthcoming chapter by Zachary Uzwa. The chapter is called "The Fall of Troy in Old Huronia", and it's going to be in a book, the *Brill's Companion to Classics in the Early Americas*, which is coming out in fall 2021.

And Zach has very kindly let me read a proof of this, so I can't link to it yet, but I will link to the book. And when it comes out, it looks like a really fascinating volume. And this article by Zach is talking about the early contact period. Specifically, this article is about 1649 to 1651, and the use of classical texts as a mediating lens through which the narrative of contact and Indigenous peoples was constructed.

I'll read a little excerpt from the beginning of the article that explains what it's about:

"Paul Ragueneau, the Jesuit superior [00:37:00] of the mission among the Huron's, renders an account of the destruction of Wendake and the subsequent exile of the Wendat, in a series of letters [in Latin] addressed to his superiors in Paris and Rome."

So Zach is tracing the explicit and implied references to the *Aeneid* specifically, and to the fall of Troy in Ragueneau’s writings about this event -- and I'll come back to what the event is in a moment -- demonstrating how this classical text was a way of making the Wendat's experiences legible both to himself and to the Jesuit community.

Both his superiors that he's writing to and the practice of the Jesuit community was to require letters from their missions, which were then collected and then sent out in these circulars that went out to all of the other Jesuits in other places so that there was sort of a community of Jesuits understanding their missionary work. And as, in the age of exploration, this became a really sort of foundational way of thinking about these new places and making them understandable. The Jesuit training, as Zach sort of explains in this article [00:38:00] was very heavily classical along with its obviously biblical and theological training.

So they did know, they were trained very strongly in the canonical Latin texts. So they have this material. And so not only would the writer have that material, but he'd know his audience had that material to hand and knew those stories. And so this classical narrative provided a common framework for him and his audience.

So the story basically of the Wendat very, very briefly is that there was a community that had been Christianized that was living in a region near where Barrie, Ontario is now on Georgian Bay and due to various ongoing political things happening. They were attacked by the Haudenosaunee people who raided the village and the village was burned down and then the Wendat people had to flee into exile. They spent a year sort of wandering, trying to establish a new community, and eventually moved to Quebec and established a community quite a lot later there. So now there's a region called the Wendake area that's in Quebec. And [00:39:00] that's where the Wendat nation or groups are now, but this whole process, Ragueneau was there when this happened.

And so he portrays in his letters the Christianized Wendat and the Jesuit who worked among them as the Trojans, fleeing a burning Troy, a burning city, and wandering in exile before re-establishing a new community that would become assimilated to the surrounding European and Christianized culture; that they were led by the, I won't go into all of the details that Zach gives about, you know, all the Aeneid connections.

But one of them is definitely that the *pius pater*, the pious father Ragueneau, and the other Patres of the, cause of course they were known as patres, the fathers of the Jesuit mission. And so I'll just read a little bit of what Zachary says: "The work of these Jesuits to establish their mission was a *labor* epic in its scale, the temporal span of 10 years matches that of the Trojan war, and like the Trojans after long years of war and suffering, these Jesuits will find their mission destroyed and themselves in exile. Thereafter, the Jesuits, and their Wendat Christians face further [00:40:00] trials. The work of their exile is similarly characterized as *labor.* The attempt to establish their defenses on Gahoendoe is a *bellicus labor*, a warlike labor.

And the task of readying that fort for winter with limited supplies is an *operiosior labor*. The eventual foundation of a Wendat community at the French settlement of Quebec represents a more thorough integration of these Indigenous Christians into the larger French Imperial program in the new world."

So, while this equation of the Wendat with heroes of Roman epic might seem complimentary Ragueneau's narrative assimilation of their story to a classical trope also removes any agency from them. They become characters in his story, and that confines them within a moral and an intellectual framework that's unconnected to their actual culture. This has nothing to do with their own stories or their own understanding of their experience, their own views. It also makes their eventual assimilation into French empire seem inevitable and appropriate because like the Romans, they will [00:41:00] become part of the glorious empire, right?

There's this teleology to the Aeneid. The whole point of the burning of Troy is so that Rome can be founded; the point of the burning of the Wendat village then becomes so that they can become part of the French empire. Also in this narrative, the Haudenosaunee, whose attacks drove the Wendat into exile are aligned with the *furor* driven barbarity of the enemies of Aeneas, and *furor* is madness or anger, and the enemies of his proto Romans.

So it creates a justification for French actions against that group. You know, this is now the warlike group that the French, if they attack them, have every justification for doing so because they attacked their poor pious Trojans, or attempts to convert them of course. So as Zach puts it, "the mythical past offers a kind of explanation for the traumatic suffering of the Wendat and the Jesuit missionaries among them. That etiology in turn suggests a teleological vision of history that allows Ragueneau and his colleagues to imagine a future in which they might be lauded as epic heroes, [00:42:00] as *patres patriae* in this new world. These Jesuit heroes can remake in this new world a Christian empire that reflects the epic virtues of the classical past."

So this story, this use of the classics of, study of the classical world, isn't just a couple of interesting phrases he throws into his Latin, right? It isn't just that he knows how to write Virgilian Latin. It's that it provides a narrative that justifies and frames the contact between the French and the Indigenous peoples in such a way as to remove their agency, turn them into, the people who are supposed to become Christianized, all of these things.

And this is really important when we look back at early Canadian history and see the history of contact, to realize the classics wasn't just along for the ride, it was shaping a lot of what happened. So that's one way to think about classics and Indigenous issues. And it's one that we really need to think about in our own field.

What our field comes from, that the [00:43:00] history of intellectual inquiry into the classical world does not stand on a hill by itself. It has interacted with the world.

**Mark:** And, you know, I would say that the result of that is still, very current. It's not just the past.

Yeah. In the way that what's going on here is that a literary tradition is being used to overwrite an existing heritage.

**Aven:** And to occlude the voices. I mean, the Wendat don't get to speak in this story, I mean, they do in his letters, but, but they don't, they don't get to construct their own narrative.

They have it imposed upon them. Yeah.

**Mark:** So the implied argument is that well, if there isn't a written history, which holds authority to us because of the way we do things, we'll supply it, right? and they, you know, enforced literacy and yeah.

**Aven:** Oh yeah, no, the history, the history of teaching of classics, there's a whole other, I'm not even getting like, that's absolutely very important too.

It's just, you know, it's another, another part of this multi-pronged involvement of classics, [00:44:00] for sure.

**Mark:** And to this day, I mean, many historians hold written history as more valuable than say oral history. which is why we, we still get, you know, most of the time, one side of the story. They privileged the accounts written by the European colonizers because they're written down.

**Aven:** Yeah. Well, Zach makes the important point that these archives, a lot of the Jesuit relations, these letters are often what are some of our only written sources for these periods and they are used not just by historians of Canada, but also historians of Indigenous peoples, trying to, you know, trying to restore and find these actively suppressed narratives of their past and find out more about their language and their culture and their places of residence and stuff.

But he makes the really important point that we really need, if we're going to do archival work or help people with doing archival work, to not recognize these narratives that are being imposed, these specifically [00:45:00] classical and other -- and of course other people are doing work on the biblical narratives, because biblical material is very important in the story too. But if we don't recognize those frameworks, then we can't read the archival material appropriately. Like even if we are going to take those stories because often, unfortunately the oral stories have been actively interrupted, right? Like the oral history of some of these peoples has, by people killing people and preventing them from learning their own language and preventing them from telling those stories.

So there has been, you know, violence done. So sometimes the written records are the only way to find this material. But you have to know. So this is one of the ways that maybe -- one can't repair these harms, but some amelioration or mitigation can be done by people working in classics today is to say, well, I can at least give you my expertise in understanding the frameworks and how they've been applied so that when you're reading these archival materials to look for actual material about Indigenous peoples I can help you unpeel and unpick the [00:46:00] parts that are actually from the Aeneid, you know, that are, are imposing a narrative onto these events. Because without, you know, without those understandings of obscure allusions to Virgil, you don't know which, parts are coming from where.

So that's one way to think about like an important connection between classics and Canada and Indigenous issues. And as you say, all of these have repercussions for relations between settlers and Indigenous people to today. These are not just interesting stories about the past. They have long lasting and ongoing effects.

I'll turn now to the second way that I was thinking about, which is more where my own work has been going. So this work about Latin writings in the new world is ongoing and very important. It's not what I myself have been doing research on or thinking about. I've been thinking more about teaching specifically but it is connected to what I've been talking about.

So I've been trying to think about focusing on the place that we're teaching Classics. Specifically for me, I'm trying to learn from and respond to Indigenous teachings about [00:47:00] the importance of the land and about knowing what land you're on and what your own relationship to that land is. So when I teach classics here in Sudbury, as I said before, I teach it on treaty land specifically the, the traditional lands of the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek and the traditional lands of Wahnapitae First Nation. And these are lands that are covered by the Robinson Huron treaty of 1850. Now I'm a settler here not just because my ancestors came from Europe, but also because I was born in Ottawa, not in Sudbury.

So, you know, I'm a settler in multiple ways. So as a bare minimum, I feel like my teaching has to respond to these facts. My classics should be affected by who I am and where I am and who my students are and where they are and what their relationship to this land is. And so one way of doing this is to think more about the role of classics in bringing me to this place.

So to think about things like Zach's article. His article is about events that took place less than a three hour drive from here. So, classics took a [00:48:00] part in shaping the history of where I am in a very direct way. So when I talk about the history of my discipline, which I do, should I not talk about that?

I, you know, I, I should be talking about how it contributed to the Imperial project that culminated in my English family settling here. And how this European subject and this university system, why it exists on this land, like that is all bound up with classics too. The university is bound up with the story of classics as a discipline. But conversely, it can also mean learning from Indigenous knowledge when I turn to classical texts, and this is one place I've been thinking about it myself. For example, to come back to the *Aeneid* when I'm reading the *Aeneid*, especially the second half, which is when Aeneas leads his men to Italy and they engage in a war with the local peoples.

We not only see issues of Indigenous peoples versus colonists and questions of assimilation and conquest and identity, many of which can be informed by people who right now are [00:49:00] undergoing and still undergoing these processes and dealing with the ramifications of them. But also there's a strong focus specifically on treaties as shaping the relationships between various groups.

And this is an interesting place where we can respond to the living history and to the current experience of Indigenous peoples to help us better understand the classical text and vice versa. So for instance, by learning more about the history of treaties in Canada, and about the legal battles that are ongoing right now about for instance, the Robinson Huron treaty, there is an ongoing battle about the interpretation of the Robinson Huron treaty with the Ontario government about the fact that the payment, the annual payment for the use of this land has remained at $4 since it was signed, and have not gone up.

So that is something that I will put a link to that legal battle in the show notes as well, because it is something that is worth reading about. But by learning more about that history, and also just in general, the history of treaties, we can better understand the language that Virgil uses in describing the [00:50:00] treaties in the Aeneid, and understand the importance of oral agreements versus written ones.

There are no written treaties in the Aeneid, they're all oral. We can think more deeply about the role of treaties in Homeric and Roman epic, and in Roman history, because of course, Roman history was also filled with treaties and we can also then use that as a trigger and as a platform for learning about our current responsibilities under the treaty that governs the land we live on.

So this is ,in my thinking, this has to be reciprocal, it can't, you know, we can't just be extractive. We don't just, oh, let's learn some things about Indigenous things and then apply it to the stuff I actually care about. It has to be, there has to be a, a two way communication. Now that kind of thing, the sort of, you know, thinking about these issues when teaching a classical text, this is only a tiny step, right?

It's just a small step to think about the relationship between Indigenous peoples and classics between Indigenous peoples and settlers. But hopefully as a mindset, it can maybe lead to further steps, lead to more fruitful and productive relationships between types of [00:51:00] knowledge and ways of knowing and ways of thinking.

Between literatures, between stories. That's a very grand hope from a very small, very small thing. But that's the kind of work I hope to think about doing in the future. And so that at least is going to be in part when I'm thinking about on Canada Day this year, is that history and hopefully that future.

So on that rather serious note, hopeful, I hope, but, shall we turn to more amusing things? Tell us about some Canadian words, Mark.

**Mark:**  All right. Well, let's start with a word that is not only a Canadianism but is a Canadianism that comes from an Indigenous language. The Muskoka chair.

So for those of you who are not Canadian,

**Aven:** okay, I'm going to have to start writing a list of all the things I have to provide pictures of or links to.

**Mark:** So the Muskoka chair is the Canadian name for the kind of slatted wooden chair with broad armrests and a [00:52:00] fan shape back, which in the US is called an Adirondack chair.

So probably most Americans will now know what I'm talking about. If you're neither Canadian nor American, you probably still have no clue. The Muskoka chair which is a symbol of the summer cottage season is named after the Muskoka cottage country region. So, which is near, very near us which in turn, takes its name from a person: the Ojibwa chief Mesqua Ukie who lived around 1817.

Okay. From the word *mesqua*, which means red and *ahkees*, which means ground. So there we go. And, in addition to the chair there's also a beer which has the Muskoka chair as its sort of logo, I guess.

**Aven:**  It's a brewery that's in that region

**Mark:** region. Now what do we call a cottage in Canada?

Well, we call it here. No, no, no, no, no.

**Aven:** You can't say "in Canada". So in what part of Canada? [00:53:00] We from Ottawa call it a cottage. Yeah. Here in Sudbury, they call it a camp. Yeah. Down in the Muskoka region, they call it a cottage. But a cottage is not the same as a camp. Yeah. A Sudbury native, when they say cottage, means gigantic summer home on the Georgian bay that has probably more amenities than houses in Sudbury.

Right. A camp is what you, and I mean, by a cottage, which has no, or doubtful electricity, you know, maybe running water, maybe not is actually in the woods. Yeah.

**Mark:** So yes, a cottage, that is a summer country house, is often referred to as a camp in North Ontario. But also in the, the Maritimes, right? Yes. It's known as a bungalow in Cape Breton.

**Aven:** Okay. They always have to be different. Yeah.

**Mark:** A chalet or country house in Quebec. Right? Of course. Cottage, which in Quebec can also refer to a two story house comes [00:54:00] from the proto Germanic word \*kuta, meaning shed. Camp comes from Latin campus, meaning level, ground, and bungalow comes from the Hindi word bangla, which means literally Bengalese.

So a house in the Bengalese style, basically.

Beaver tail. Tell us what a beaver tail is.

**Aven:** A Beavertail is a pastry, deep fried and topped with traditionally cinnamon, sugar and lemon, but other toppings are available. I don't really know why you would, but what you want is the Killaloe Sunrise. And sold specifically in shacks along the Rideau canal in the winter when you are skating there.

Yes.

**Mark:** So it's, it's a proprietary name, actually

**Aven:** I'm not at all surprised by that because it's known as other, that pastry is known as it's a big flat pastry. Yeah. They're known as elephant no elephant ears, I think. Cause I've heard them called maybe. And anyway, bear paws. I think they're sort of connected a little bit like maybe anyway.

**Mark:** Well, yes, [00:55:00] it's particular Canadian pastry and particularly Ontarian. And as you say, a particular Ottawa thing.

**Aven:** I know you can buy them at times that aren't during Winterlude on the canal now, but, but why, this is why I haven't had one in so many years, cause I haven't been in Ottawa during canal season in 20 years.

So I haven't eaten one.

**Mark:** The word beaver by the way, comes from the proto Indo European root \*bher- , which means brown. So it's literally the brown animal and is cognate with the words brown and bear; bear is literally a brown animal too.

Now, people from outside of Canada would probably be confused if I said, I'm going to sit down on my Chesterfield.

**Aven:** To be fair, a lot of people in Canada would be too. It's now a pretty old term.

**Mark:** It's a generational thing. It's disappearing.

**Aven:** I grew up with Chesterfields, but I don't use the term myself.

**Mark:** So it is a Canadian generic term for what in America is called a couch.

What the British call [00:56:00] a sofa or settee, though it may be in the process of becoming obsolete

**Aven:** and we use basically couch most of the time, but also, sofa, couch and sofa interchangeably

**Mark:** now. Well, I grew up with sofa for sure. And I think now I say couch more. That's probably because of American television or something.

But yeah.

**Aven:** Oh, it's so hard to know what the influences on our language are cause we have so many outside influences.

**Mark:** I just know that the word I used when I was kid was sofa, it was always a sofa and I never use that word anymore. So in British English, it was used to refer to a specific type of leather sofa with deep buttoned upholstery and was named after Philip Stanhope, fourth Earl of Chesterfield who lived from 1694 to 1773. The place name Chesterfield in turn comes from old English Cesterfelda, literally open land near a Roman fort, from the components ceaster, fort plus feld, open land.

**Aven:** And Chester comes from castra, which is Latin for fort.

And is the part of [00:57:00] Winchester Dorchester, all the chesters,

**Mark:** Riding is a Canadian political term. It's also used in a more limited way in Britain, but in a very specific way there. In Canada riding is the common informal term for a Canadian electoral district. Though there's a folk etymology that this comes from the idea that it's the area a rider can cover in a single day.

And therefore you cover your riding as a politician. The true source of the word is from old Norse þriðjungr which means third part of something, related to the English word three, which in medieval England was applied to the three districts into which Yorkshire was divided.

That's why it's a Norse word. Cause it's up in the Danelaw.

**Aven:** No, one's completely sure why we adopted it as a general term, are they?

**Mark:**  No.

**Aven:** Because like, why would, I mean, sure some people from Yorkshire came here, but people from a lot of places came here, but for some reason

**Mark:**  it was just the word that stuck and it is absolutely not the official word.

**Aven:** No, but everybody uses it.

**Mark:**  [00:58:00] I know everybody uses it but--

**Aven:**  including elections, Canada, even though they acknowledge, it's not the word that is in the Elections Act.

**Mark:** It's in no legislation. Yeah. Or anything it's. So it exists purely from just people using it.

Toque. A particular Canadian article of clothing that probably people do know about this word more now,

**Aven:** because yeah, this is one of the ones that comes up a lot. Yeah. And how is it spelled, Mark?

**Mark:** I think the most common spelling or most commonly accepted spelling is probably T O Q U E,

**Aven:** which is not in any way intuitive from the way that word sounds.

So that's one of the reasons I wanted you to say it. Yeah.

**Mark:** So in Canadian English, the word toque refers to a close-fitting knitted hat often with a pompom on top that has a history reaching back to the voyageurs, the fur traders. Outside of this specific Canadian sense, the word does exist, but it has a different referent.

So the word has been used to refer to a number of different types of head gear, such as a chef's hat,

**Aven:**  Really?

**Mark:**  [00:59:00] Yeah. A lawyer's hat,

**Aven:** lawyers have special hats?

**Mark:** Well, when you think of you know, like they have wigs or different in different legal traditions that there's always some specific kind of headgear lawyers wear

So it comes into English from obviously Canadian French through old French from Spanish Toka meaning a woman's head dress, possibly from the Arabic word, \*taqa, from Persian taq, meaning veil or shawl.

**Aven:** Oh, that's kinda cool.

**Mark:** Yeah. And so, you know, to those in Quebec

**Aven:** oh no, just don't don't even, don't even, I don't even want to talk about it. Yes. Yes. People who are trying to ban head coverings, they're trying to ban toques. Yeah, face coverings. Yeah. One of the things that we said in that video was that, you know, Canadians like to pat ourselves on the back, right?

Yeah. For not being racist like Americans, and it's a pile of crap is what it is. If we didn't say that clearly enough in the video, I [01:00:00] just want to take a moment. to say that here.

**Mark:** Canada has a huge racism problem and many different,

**Aven:** many different kinds. We like to do our racism in many different ways,

**Mark:** There's a lot of variety of racism in Canada.

**Aven:** And it, you know, and it is expressed both in individual and systemic ways. It's expressed through laws that are being enacted as we speak and laws that have been on the books for a very long time. Many, many people are harmed by it and to pretend that somehow, because the United States has a bigger problem with particular, certain kinds of racism that somehow Canadians are nice.

And because we're so nice and polite that we never do anything bad is just really wrong and needs to be deeply, deeply, deeply repudiated. So just wanted to do that explicitly. Yeah.

**Mark:** Well, and as I said in the video, it's all about identity, right? Constructed identity. I mean, that's just what people do.

They construct an identity that projects, what they want to [01:01:00] think of themselves as, not necessarily the reality of how they behave in the world, obviously. But it's a way of

**Aven:** at its best, it's a way of projecting an ideal that you'd try to live up to. But too often, it's a way to cover up reality and to, excuse yourself from the actions of having to fix what's wrong.

Yeah.

**Mark:** And had we not begun this episode with our cocktails, we were probably going to go with Caesars. So that is, that is a particular Canadian cocktail and a, a Bloody Caesar, a Bloody Caesar very often just called now a Caesar. It's Canadian drink made from tomato clam cocktail, which may sound weird to you. That's literally just tomato juice with clam juice in it.

**Aven:** Clam ju the liquid pressed out of clams, not something, this is not some sort of euphemism for something else. It's literally the liquid, that liquid from clams, expressed from clams. Yeah.

**Mark:** clam flavored tomato juice and vodka garnished with a stick of celery [01:02:00] and possibly many other things.

**Aven:** Yeah. Usually rimmed traditionally with celery salt, and has worcestershire sauce in it usually, and often Tabasco sauce. I'd say, I'd say a basic Caesar has Worcestershire sauce and Tabasco sauce and a celery salt rim, now. Yeah. It may not have started that way, but it is its basics.

**Mark:** Well, it was reportedly invented by Walter Chell in Calgary, Alberta in 1969 with the Bloody part of the name coming by analogy with the Bloody Mary.

Because this is a very similar drink to that. And the Caesar part as in Julius Caesar, reflecting the Italian pasta influenced flavor of tomato with clam.

**Aven:** So there's a very classic Italian pasta of tomato sauce, and clams. That is a combination. And he was trying to recreate that in a

**Mark:** in a cocktail form because why not?

**Aven:** I mean, literally why not? It's a good drink.

**Mark:** It may sound weird to those non-Canadian people out there

**Aven:** if it's a, if it's a good pasta, if it's a good flavor combination in [01:03:00] one context, why can't it be a good flavor, combination in another, and tomato sauce or tomato juice was, I mean, there was already Bloody Mary and also like on the Prairie's they, they like the combination of tomato juice and beer.

Yeah. It's a fairly common one too, which is, that's also something in Mexico. Like tomato juice is actually used in drinks, in alcoholic drinks quite often. So that part isn't really so surprising.

**Mark:** Parkade is a Canadianism.

**Aven:** I think that one's on its way out too.

**Mark:** I think it's regional though.

Maybe because it's the Canadian word for parking garage used particularly in the Prairie provinces, especially Alberta, as well as British Columbia. So I don't think it's used in Ontario as much, but it may still be alive and well, there. Also used in Prince Edward Island. So I don't know how it made its way there, but, you know it seems to be particularly linked with the Hudson Bay department stores, which built the first parkade by that name in Edmonton, in the 1950s. The Hudson bay company has deep roots in Canadian history, of course, as [01:04:00] originally a fur trading company that opened up the west of the country to Europeans.

Yeah.

**Aven:** And speaking of complicated histories and bad relations between settlers and Indigenous peoples, the Hudson bay company is

**Mark:** yeah. Especially when you throw capitalisim into the mix.

**Aven:** It needs its story, it needs its own many, many, many podcasts to discuss. Yeah.

**Mark:** So parkade, the word, is a combination of parking and arcade.

So park coming through old French parc from west Germanic \*parruk, enclosed tract of land, and arcade coming from Latin arcus, bow or arch.

Here's another Indigenous related word: nanaimo bar, another Canadian food, dessert food. So a nanaimo bar is a kind of dessert square made from a cookie crumb base, a layer of buttercream and a chocolate glaze,

**Aven:** I would've called it custard. It's complicated. Yes.

**Mark:** Well, the [01:05:00] invention of the confection is murky. It may have in fact come from England, but it seems to have been given its name after the Vancouver island city Nanaimo by the Vancouver Sun's Edith Adams, which is apparently a pseudonym, in 1953. The city takes its name from an Indigenous first nation called the -- I even wrote this down in IPA to make sure I get it right. Snuneymuxw.

Which I hope that's somewhere close to correct. It's spelled S N U N E Y M U X W. And I presume those in BC probably are more familiar with this particular First Nation name. And it's from an unidentified root in the Halkomelem language.

Another Canadian food is poutine. Poutine is a dish made from French fries and cheese curd topped with gravy. It was purportedly first sold in 1957 in the Lutin Qui [01:06:00] Rit restaurant in Warwick, Quebec,

**Aven:** I'm pretty sure this is one of those hotly contested origin stories though. I'm pretty sure there's a bunch of places that claim to have been the first poutine. Yeah.

**Mark:** With the restaurants owner, Fernand Lachance, 1918 to 2004, credited with naming the dish. Right? While it's clear that the word poutine entered Canadian English from Canadian French, its ultimate etymology is uncertain and much debated. A popular theory is that it comes from a slang term, meaning mess.

Hmm. But it has also been argued that poutine is somehow related to the English word pudding. Hm. The word pudding itself either comes from French boudin meaning sausage from Latin botulus. Which also gives us the word botulism.

**Aven:** Though, not because sausages have botulism, but because because of the shape of the bacterium looks like a little sausage, right?

Yeah. And so it was named that,

**Mark:** Or it comes from the proto Germanic root \*pud- and proto into [01:07:00] European root \*bheu- , both meaning to swell, a root which also gives us the words pudgy, which you might want to remember before eating the poutine.

**Aven:** No, never think about that. All of the foods you've mentioned are ones, which you have to think very, be very careful not to think about health when you are....

Yeah, your poutine and your BeaverTails, and your nanaimo bars. And remember it's cold in Canada and you need to build up your strength.

**Mark:** Yeah, why are all these famous Canadian foods really unhealthy?

**Aven:** I think I just told you, you gotta, you gotta make it through these winters, man. And you're gonna need a layer of poutine and nanaimo bars, that's the other reason you have to only eat beavertails when you're skating on the canal is because when you skated on the canal in minus 30 degree weather, you deserve that beaver tail.

**Mark:** Did you know the word eaves trough was, is a specifically Canadian word, especially Ontario, Alberta, and Saskatchewan.

**Aven:** I'm going to say that I did, but only because of the last time you told me [01:08:00] this, and I did not know that before.

**Mark:** And also there was an older form of it, eavestroughing.

**Aven:** Oh, that's, that's what I thought, that's the word? I think, I think of eavestroughing. Yeah. As being, not a verb, like the eavestroughing that goes around your house, the eavestroughing. What we mean by that as the gutter, the gutter, the rain gutter, the rain gutter around your house in case, since it's a Canadianism, we should probably explain it

**Mark:** Mickey in reference to the smallest size, well, not the smallest, not hotel bar size, but the smallest size of bottle of an alcoholic beverage, of liquor.

**Aven:** the sort of flat kind of, can fit into a pocket sort of like a hip flask kind of sized. Yeah. That's

**Mark:** a Mickey, that's a Mickey. Yeah.

It's an unknown origin, but you know, people think that it might be Mickey Mouse, like it's small, right? So it's Mickey. However, the one problem with that theory is that that Disney character Mickey Mouse did not appear until after the term seems to have been first [01:09:00] recorded. So

**Aven:** that would be a problem with that term.

Yeah. That origin , yeah

**Mark:** and two-four. Yeah. Which is a case of 24 beer or also not entirely unrelatedly the, the two-four weekend is the Victoria Day weekend. Which is not exactly on May 24th, but is on the the Monday close

**Aven:** to that, the first Monday after the 21st of May, I think it's something like that.

It's one of these like moveable holidays, but yeah, and it's a, it's a day that literally does celebrate Queen Victoria's birthday, which is bizarre. Though, I guess, you know, Canada being founded as a nation under Queen Victoria, maybe it makes sense. It doesn't really make any sense. It's just the first, it's the first holiday of the summer, marks the beginning of the cottage season. It's the beginning of the going out on the deck and going camping and all of those things. And so it's the May two-four weekend. Yeah. It's the weekend when everybody brings the two-four to the cottage and hangs out on the dock.

Exactly. Yeah. [01:10:00]

**Mark:** Five pin bowling is a particularly Canadian game. And so therefore the word five pin bowling is a Canadian word. It was a game devised by Thomas F. Ryan at the Toronto Bowling Club in 1909 as a less strenuous version of the game that uses 10 pins because 10 pin bowling uses a larger ball. Five pin bowling uses a smaller ball

**Aven:** We like our food fatty and our games less strenuous.

**Mark:** Fiddlehead, as in the food, there is something healthy.

**Aven:** Yes, that's true.

**Mark:** Fiddleheads are a Canadian delicacy,

**Aven:** Also in Northeast states. Right? Of course, because as many things do, they cross that boundary.

**Mark:**  They're ferns that are, young ferns that haven't unfurled, haven't unfurled yet. And they're only available for a short time of the year in very particular places in Canada .

**Aven:** And they're foraged, as far as I know, no one ever farms them.

**Mark:** Farms them. Yeah. Another sports term, five-hole, from hockey. The five hole is [01:11:00] used to describe the space between the goalie's legs. It is one of five spots that offensive players aim at when trying to score, therefore, that's how it got its name, the other four spots are the corners

**Aven:**  over the shoulders

**Mark:** corners of the net, basically. Yeah. A spile, do you know what a spile is, you do know what a spile is, don't

**Aven:** I feel like you've told me before, it's not a piece of, twist of wood or something like that, that you used to light a fire.

**Mark:** Nope. A spile is the spout used to collect maple syrup.

**Aven:** Yes. Right, right. That's hammered into the tree. Yeah. Yep.

**Mark:** First recorded in 1844. And it comes from a Northern English dialect, spile meeting splinter.

So,

**Aven:** so maybe it probably is, is used in other contexts that I feel like I've read it in like a Dickens book or something like that.

**Mark:** Yeah. It comes from middle Dutch or middle low German.

**Aven:**  Right. Yeah. Cause the early earlier on they were just literally you'd take a piece of wood and you'd carve a bit of a channel in it and you'd just stick [01:12:00] that in. Now they're metal, but they of course weren't before

**Mark:** Porketta bingo. That's a specifically Sudbury term for a very specific Sudbury activity,

**Aven:** which we have never participated in, which just proves that we are truly not proper Sudburians.

**Mark:** So yes, the porketta culture in Sudbury, Ontario runs very deep deeper than anywhere outside of Italy, probably, it's just this thing here.

And so porchetta bingo is is a bingo session

**Aven:** fundraising fundraising thing often. Yeah.

**Mark:** Which would take place on a Saturday afternoon in Sudbury and the the winner or winners I guess, cause there's multiple rounds, they would win a porketta and a sourdough bun.

**Aven:** and they still, and this is not just a historical thing.

There are, I mean, I don't know if there have been during the pandemic, but I'm sure they will recur.

**Mark:** And one thing that you think is Canadian because of its [01:13:00] connection to Canadian culture; it is from an, it's a word from an an Indigenous language, but not one in Canada, is the word canoe. So it actually, it comes from it was a word used by Columbus, Christopher Columbus that he picked up in Haiti.

So it comes from the Spanish word canoa from the name in a central American language encountered by Columbus in Haiti. And we come by it, I guess, from Europe. So it gets kind of reborrowed into,

**Aven:** Yeah, it became the word used for sort of any light boat. It was particularly a dugout canoe, I think originally.

Yeah.

**Mark:** And so this got me to thinking, well, you know, is there, what are the actual, the actual Canadian indigenous words for some kind of boat. So

for

**Aven:** what we call well for canoes, like a Birch bark canoe,

**Mark:** And I thought is kayak from... It's from specifically Greenland Greenlandic word that was picked up by the Danes and [01:14:00] then from Danish, it comes into English.

There is though also an Eastern Canadian Inuit word that is relate to kayak. But it comes into English through Danish. So. So yeah, I don't know what other words we'd have to, obviously there are words, but I don't know that there's any that have come into English.

**Aven:** No, I don't think so.

I think all of the, I mean, yes, I've, I'm sure every Indigenous group in Canada has a word for canoe or some similar boat because they were ubiquitous, but we'd have to look at each of those languages. I don't think there's any other,

**Mark:** it surprises me that that a word wasn't picked up locally at some point.

**Aven:** Yeah.

**Mark:** And a last few specifically Canadian words for you all: bank machine is a Canadianism, or ABM in the US it's usually called an ATM right automated teller machine rather than automated banking machine. And for some reason, Saskatchewan uses the US term.

**Aven:** I don't know what to be honest. I'd probably use ATM a lot now, too. But I mean, I know what ABM means,

I would say

[01:15:00] bank machines, and if I use the short form, I might say ATM, yeah, probably again, I just hear it so much

**Mark:** to book off work. In other words, to book a holiday time, time off work, a Joe job is a Canadianism,

**Aven:** which is just like an annoying drudgery kind of work.

Yeah,

**Mark:** yeah. A bird course, which is like a supposedly easy class that you take just to get a good grade in. A keener. in reference to a student who is super keen, super keen that is a Canadianism; and pencil crayon,

**Aven:** ah, yes.

**Mark:** And if you're interested in hearing more Canadian words. I have a book recommendation: "Only in Canada, You Say? A Treasury of Canadian Language" written by Catherine Barber who recently passed away sadly.

She was the editor of the Canadian Oxford Dictionary. And if there's anything about Canadian language worth knowing she knew it

**Aven:** Wordlady, on Twitter, right? Wordlady, yeah, yeah, yeah. She [01:16:00] passed away from cancer. Yeah.

**Mark:** And it's an excellent book. I've enjoyed reading. It's very entertaining.

So it's a fun little book. If you want to hear more fun Canadian word facts. And it also even has a little quiz at the end. See, you can, you know, do a little Canadian word trivia game if you like.

**Aven:** Well, I think that was a thoroughly Canadian episode. And so I'm not going to end it by wishing anyone a happy Canada Day but I do I think that we can mark it as a day where we need to think about things and hopefully we will also very soon have another paired episode to talk a little bit more about our neighbor to the south.

Yes.

**Mark:** And with that, see you next time.

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**Mark:** Bye.