

M: Well, I live on Haida Gwaii and one of the things that interests me about this place, is how our major tourist attractions are things that are no longer there. Which is something to me that's quite Canadian. I mean, we have the golden spruce that's been cut down, but people go to see the spot where the tree used to stand. And then there's a church where Emily Carr had painted and that's been burned down, so people go to see the spot where the church stood. And there's something quintessentially Canadian about that. That we define ourselves in terms of either what isn't there or other people, other nations. Especially when I was growing up in the '50's, the States. I have a poem where I talk about the difference between, one of the differences between being Canadian and American, is that. Well I'd say that Canadians are unarmed Americans with healthcare. Canadians say, Americans say no to drugs. Canadians say no thank you. We're know I think internationally as being incredibly polite, self-effacing, not great risk takers, but that's a positive thing. We don't invade other people's countries until we're invited. We don't trespass on our. You know, we're generally law-abiding. I think that's changing a bit, but a peaceable people. That's our reputation as peacekeepers. And all of those are very positive things. Oh, I had something else to say about the difference between Americans and. Sorry I've just stopped right there. Can you turn it off for a minute? Or not?

I: I'm going to keep going.

M: OK. I'm trying to think. Not being risk takers. Well, I have a poem called "Canadian Roulette" that ends, "Let's pretend we're in love with one another. You go first". Oh and we say we're sorry a lot. Like if I step on you, you'll probably say 'I'm sorry'. I bump into people all the time and they say they're sorry, but it's actually me who should say it. But we all say we're sorry. I think it's at the average of 4.8 times a minute. And I associate that with being Canadian too. Again, a positive saying it's kind of weak. We're learning to laugh at ourselves. When I was growing up, we took ourselves very seriously. I'm not big on words like pride. I think that pride turns into nationalism, which turns into wack-o-ness, as in our neighbours to the south. It's a fine line between, you know, loving and respecting your country and wanting the best for it and being yeah, yeah, yeah, waving flags and being proud. I'm just not that sort of person. I think there's probably enough kind of Anglo-Irish, the UK presence in my blood anyway to be more reticent when it comes to flag-waving. It's like getting your teeth straightened. It was considered vain and unpatriotic when I was growing up. And I think, in America, people get their teeth straightened. So those are the differences. And so I'm happy that I was, that I'm Canadian just because, when I go anywhere else, I know who I am and it's not embarrassing. I mean, I know people that have been coveting the Canadian flag for years, and putting on their knapsacks, but I don't have any. I travel with impunity. And I think, yeah that's it. I don't even know if impunity's the right word.