

Chatterbox #198 – Interview with Andrew’s dad

Episode description

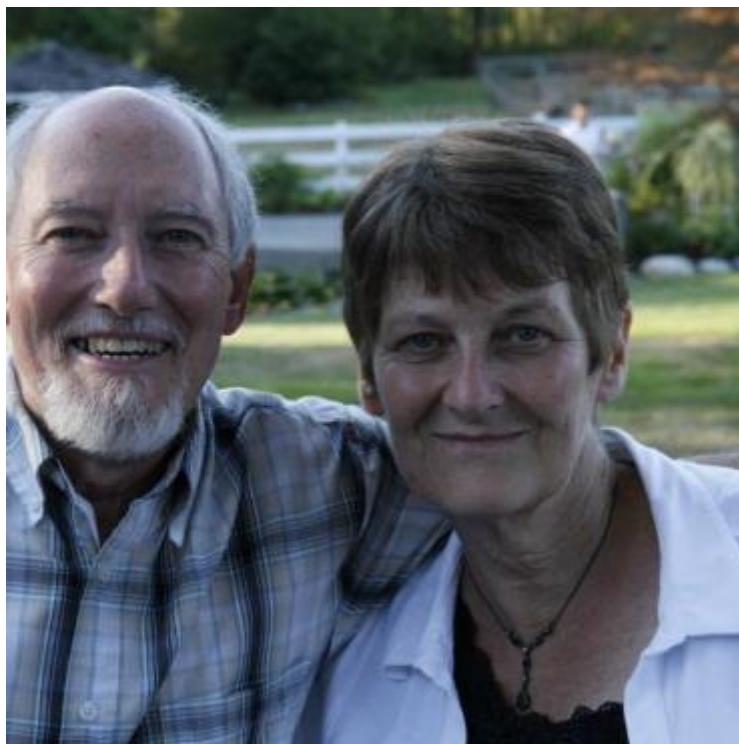
In this special Chatterbox episode, Andrew interviews his dad, Terry. Join Andrew and his dad as they take a trip down memory lane and talk about Hamilton, Ontario, and the War of 1812!

Fun fact

The Rust Belt refers to an area around the Great Lakes. The area was very well-known for its booming steel mills and factories but, over time, industry decreased as Canada and the United States began to use manufacturers from other countries.

Expressions included in the learning materials

- A pinko
- Foresight
- To whump
- To go the way of the dodo
- To give [something] a spin





Transcript

Note: The words and expressions that appear in **bold text** within the transcript are discussed in more detail in the Detailed Explanations section that follows the transcript.

Andrew: Hey, everybody. My name is Andrew and you're listening to Culips.

Welcome back to another edition of the Culips English podcasts. Today I want to introduce you guys to my dad. I visited my hometown this summer, and while I was there I did interviews with my mom, dad, and sister, and this is the third and final interview, this time with my dad.

If you haven't listened to the interviews that I did with my sister and my mom, visit Culips.com to check those out. But today you'll be able to listen to the chat that I had with my dad, and we talked all about his hometown. I had a really good time chatting with my dad for a little bit, learning about what he did growing up, some of his first jobs, and really what his hometown is all about. It was really good to learn all about that. And I think you guys will enjoy this conversation, too.

The best way, guys, to study with this episode is with our study guide. And the study guide includes a transcript, detailed vocabulary explanations, and examples, and also a quiz. So if you really want to get the most out of this episode, the most bang for your buck, visit our website, Culips.com, to download the study guide.

OK, so let's get right to it. Here it is, the interview with my dad, Terry.

I'm going to talk to you about your hometown.

Terry: My hometown?

Andrew: Yeah.

Terry: Hamilton, Ontario.

Andrew: Hamilton, Ontario, yeah.

Terry: Canada.

Andrew: So when were you born?

Terry: I was born September 24, 1951.

Andrew: In 1951, so ...

Terry: That makes me a senior citizen.



Andrew: A senior citizen.

Terry: Right.

Andrew: So for people who don't know, where is Hamilton?

Terry: Hamilton is in Southern Ontario, about 30 minutes from Toronto.

Andrew: Right.

Terry: Toronto's a very large city.

Andrew: Yeah, so it's really close ...

Terry: The capital ... Toronto is the capital of Ontario.

Andrew: Right, and I think a lot of people will be familiar with Toronto if they know anywhere in Canada.

Terry: And they should be familiar with Hamilton, because it's just down the road.

Andrew: And Hamilton has a couple of nicknames.

Terry: Steeltown was one of them. And football is a major thing in Hamilton, so the Hamilton Tiger-Cats are a major influence in the city.

Andrew: Yeah.

Terry: People get excited about the Hamilton Tiger-Cats.

Andrew: Right. My friends call it The Hammer.

Terry: The Hammer?

Andrew: Have you heard that one?

Terry: That must be a new nickname.

Andrew: Yeah.

Terry: Steeltown was in because they had steel mills for years and years and years, but they gradually decreased and steel's not a major thing now in Hamilton. But when I was growing up, virtually everybody worked in the steel mills. My dad worked at Slater Steel Company and a lot of our relatives worked in the Stelco—and it supported a lot of people.

Andrew: Right.



- Terry: Fifteen, sixteen thousand people in the 80s and 90s went down to virtually nothing.
- Andrew: So that whole area of the Midwest, North America, they call it the Rust Belt?
- Terry: In the US, right.
- Andrew: Yeah, well, I think you can include Hamilton almost in there.
- Terry: Right, that's because cars would rust out. They would put so much salt and everything on the streets when you drove your car in the wintertime. After 3 or 4 years you'd have to buy yourself a new car.
- Andrew: Well, that whole area of North America though used to be heavy into manufacturing, right?
- Terry: In steel manufacturing, right.
- Andrew: Steel, all—Detroit and Buffalo and Hamilton.
- Terry: Yeah, in other places in the US, as well.
- Andrew: Yeah, but that's all sort of **gone the way of the dodo**.
- Terry: That's gone. A lot of people have lost their jobs with the economy. But that's when I was growing up. Things have changed, though.
- Andrew: Yeah, OK. Well, let's talk a little bit more about Hamilton when you were growing up.
- Terry: OK.
- Andrew: What would you do for fun in Hamilton?
- Terry: Well, what we would do usually, well, we played football a lot of times. Everybody would just be ... We had almost like a football field probably about 3 or 4 blocks from where I lived. And it'd be grass and there'd be ... Jimmy Edge would be one guy I thought I remembered, and his brother. And there'd be about, maybe about seven or eight of us that would go and play just touch football and sometimes tackle football and everything else.
- And then in the wintertime we would just be playing street hockey, just have nets right on the road and you would be playing, and then when cars would come, everybody would yell, "Cars!" and have to move the nets.
- Andrew: Yup.



- Terry: And that was a lot of the things that you would ... Well, you would just do baseball ... I played baseball as a kid on a team. And where I lived growing up was real close to where the Hamilton Tiger-Cats used to play football, are still playing football. And we'd go to a lot of their practices, especially around the fall time where there would just be a lot of things to do with sports, football, and everything else.
- Andrew: So mostly sports? I think ...
- Terry: Mostly sports, right, yeah.
- Andrew: Some people would be surprised to hear that. It seems like football is more popular than hockey in Hamilton. Would you guys say that?
- Terry: Well, you see the thing is that Hamilton ... Well, Hamilton had a junior hockey team that was really good. I remember going to a few of the junior hockey games. As a matter of fact, in 1960, when I was 9, the Hamilton Red Wings went all the way to the Memorial Cup, which was the very top of a ... You know what? If a player's there, he went to the NHL.
- Andrew: Yeah.
- Terry: Pit Martin was one of them. There were a few others that made it to the ... And that was when they still had six teams. But Toronto Maple Leafs, they were the ones who people watched every Saturday night on TV.
- Andrew: Right.
- Terry: So it wasn't so much ... But a lot of people were pushing for an NHL team in Hamilton after the 1990s and around that period of time, when the expansion came. But they'll never get a team because Buffalo's got a team and Toronto's got a team.
- Andrew: Yeah, so you don't need three teams ...
- Terry: No need ... Three teams, although it would support them. There's about 5 million people in that area.
- Andrew: Now a lot of the listeners will be also familiar with Niagara Falls. So how far is Hamilton from Niagara Falls? It's pretty close, isn't it?
- Terry: It's probably about an hour, hour and a half drive.
- Andrew: Yeah, so did you even go visit Niagara Falls when you were younger?
- Terry: We went to Niagara Falls a few times, yes. And not only Niagara Falls but there's something there called Brock's Monument, which was during the War of 1812.



Andrew: Yeah.

Terry: And Sir Isaac Brock, he was one of the generals involved in the war and he got killed during the war. So they have a big monument in Queenston, which isn't too far from Niagara Falls. And that was really kinda neat to go up. And I actually remember that one of our Sunday school teachers took us there on a Saturday, going up to Brock's Monument and around Niagara Falls. It's spectacular.

Andrew: Well, Canadians are really proud of the War of 1812, for what reason?

Terry: We **whumped** the Yankees, we beat the Americans during that war.

Andrew: Yeah, I don't know if we'd fare too well against them these days, but ...

Terry: Not too much.

Andrew: Way back in 1812 we actually burnt a section of the White House down.

Terry: And that's right, that's right.

Andrew: Technically the British though, not the Canadians.

Terry: Not the Canadians, no.

Andrew: Anyway, so maybe that's why the monument's there.

Terry: Yeah, yeah, but Niagara Falls is one of the Wonders of the World. You go in the wintertime and it's iced over a lot of times. There's the Maid of the Mist where you can have a little boat right under the falls. I never did that. Everybody seemed to be too scared in our family to try that, but ...

Andrew: Maid of the Mist.

Terry: But, uh ... Maid of the Mist, it's a little boat that goes right under the falls.

Andrew: Yeah, I remember that. And now you hear all these tall tales from back in the day about people tightrope-walking over the falls or going over the falls in a barrel.

Terry: Over the falls in a barrel, yeah.

Andrew: Did you ever witness any of those stunts?

Terry: Never witnessed any of those, no. Heard about them, but never witnessed any of those. Those were a little bit before my time.

Andrew: Yeah, back in the 1800s.



- Terry: I don't know when they were.
- Andrew: OK, what about your first job? What was your first job in Hamilton?
- Terry: My very first job in Hamilton, somebody asked me if I was afraid of heights and I said, "Well, no, what do you want me to do?"
- Andrew: Uh-huh?
- Terry: And it was a job in a factory. It was actually International Harvester, and they had thousands and thousands of fluorescent lights. So we had to go up a great big ladder to change the light bulbs, these fluorescent light bulbs, and put them back and then clean all the light fixtures.
- Andrew: Ah.
- Terry: And that was my first, kind of, summer job.
- Andrew: Do you remember how much they paid you?
- Terry: I think it was about 75 cents an hour or something like that. It wasn't too much. I actually didn't last there too long, because although I said I wasn't afraid of heights, when I got up on that ladder I was.
- Andrew: How high was it? I guess if it's in a factory, it was probably ...
- Terry: It wasn't fun. It was a ... Yeah, it was high, high, probably about a 30-foot ladder or something like that. Then you had to take out ... It wasn't just a 4-foot fluorescent light bulb, it was an 8-foot fluorescent light bulb, so you're leaning over both sides taking these light fixtures out. Then you had to clean them and everything else, so it was a dirty, dirty job. And it was kind of about that time where I thought to myself, "I'm not gonna work in a steel mill. I'm gonna do somethin' else," so.
- Andrew: Well, I imagine that it was kind of expected that that's just what you'd do.
- Terry: That's what generations did, that's what people pretty well did ...
- Andrew: And so did a lot of your friends go into ... Just go work in the mills afterwards?
- Terry: No, I think a lot of my friends figured when they saw their parents, how hard they had to work, there were strikes. And so a lot of times, I remember my dad saying that when I was born he was on strike, and the day I was born he was walking the picket line. So there was a lot of uncertainty dealing with that too. So I didn't really want to do that, so I don't think too many of my friends got involved in working on a full-time basis.



- Terry: A lot worked in the summertime to get money for universities, because it usually paid well if you were a high school student or a university student working there for the summer.
- Andrew: Right, now what about school? What was your favourite class in high school? Do you remember?
- Terry: Favourite, I liked history.
- Andrew: Yeah.
- Terry: Yeah.
- Andrew: Did you have a good teacher?
- Terry: Mr. Westerhoff. I remember him now, yes, yes. He was actually very left-wing leaning. He was probably almost considered a communist really as far as ...
- Andrew: **A pinko.**
- Terry: His political ... His political opinions were concerned. So, but he was a really, really good teacher. I had him for grade 12. And, yeah, he was really, really interesting. The subject was good and I actually did fairly well in his class.
- Andrew: There you go.
- Terry: Yeah, so.
- Andrew: OK, anything else you'd like to tell us about Hamilton?
- Terry: No, I think that's about it. But sometimes one of the best things about Hamilton was leaving to go someplace else.
- Andrew: Well, that's a good question that you made me think of. Why did you leave?
- Terry: Well, it was just a lot of circumstances, but I went from there to live with my sister and brother-in-law, and they moved to a couple of different places in Bramalea and then Kitchener. And, actually, in Kitchener is when I had my first ... Or in Cambridge is when I had my first real full-time job after finishing school. And that was working with Frink, and they manufactured snowplows.
- Andrew: Right.



- Terry: And what I would do was, when a salesman would sell the plows, we would have to drive them back to the city where they ... Where the truck came from. So it was moving these great big plows around. And I was actually ... One aspect of note, I was one of the very first people to drive one of the snowplows that you see on the streets now.
- Andrew: The modern style?
- Terry: It's called the under-slung plow. You see it when there's about 4 or 5 inches of snow, and we just evolved that particular plow.
- Andrew: Yup.
- Terry: And the president went to lunch and he was going to be the first one, but while he was a lunch I got the keys and I drove that plow around the ...
- Andrew: So you **got to give it a spin** before he did.
- Terry: I got **to give it a spin** before he did, yes indeed. So that was a lot of fun.
- Andrew: Now is Frink still a company?
- Terry: No, they were actually established for a long time, and but I read where they went out of business in the year 2000. So I don't know if that was if they were amalgamated by another company or not, so.
- And then my other ... Talking about back to Hamilton, Tim Horton's ...
- Andrew: Yeah.
- Terry: I was one of the very first customers in Tim Horton's. The very first Tim Horton's was a block from where I lived.
- Andrew: Is that so?
- Terry: That's so. And I went in and I was one of the very ... This is 1964, so I was just 13, one of the very first customers was me when I walked in the door.
- Andrew: And do you remember what you ordered?
- Terry: I think I ordered an apple fritter.
- Andrew: You didn't have a double-double?
- Terry: No, they didn't really get too much into coffee then, it was strictly ...
- Andrew: Just doughnuts.



- Terry: Just strictly doughnuts at that time. Coffee came quite a bit later, yeah.
- Andrew: Interesting.
- Terry: My dad said, "This place will never make it."
- Andrew: Good **foresight**.
- Terry: No, no. No ... "Don't know why you're always going here," so. But that was the very first Tim Horton's on Ottawa Street.
- Andrew: And of course Tim Horton's now is ...
- Terry: Tim Horton's is the major player for doughnuts, coffee, and you name it.
- Andrew: Yeah.
- Terry: There's probably not a person probably in North America that doesn't know about Tim Horton's.
- Andrew: Well, maybe in some parts of the States, but ...
- Terry: Any parts, any part ... Yeah, right, yeah.
- Andrew: In Canada, it's ubiquitous. It's all over the place.
- Terry: And I don't think you'd find too many people if you were to ask 'em, you know, have you ever heard of Tim Horton's, that they would say no.
- Andrew: Right. Yeah, well, that's interesting.
- Terry: It sure is.
- Andrew: Yeah, OK. Well, thanks for answering some questions about Hamilton.
- Terry: OK!
- Andrew: So there it is, the interview with my dad, Terry. A big thanks to my mom, Fiona, my sister, Heather, and my dad for coming on Culips to talk with me.
- Guys, I want to remind you one more time, just before I let you go, to visit our website, Culips.com. And if you haven't picked up the study guide for this episode, go ahead and do that now. Listen one more time and I think you'll be really shocked at how much more you get out of studying with Culips when you use the study guide.



Andrew: We're also on Facebook at Facebook.com/CulipsPodcast, so make sure to check us out there. And if you have any questions or episode suggestions, feel free to send us an email as well. Our email address is contact@culips.com. OK, that is it for today. We will be back soon and I'll talk to you then. Bye.

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Detailed Explanations

A pinko

A pinko was originally a slang term for a person who supported and believed in communism. The term **a pinko** was widely used during the Cold War—a conflict over ideologies between the United States and the former USSR—to mean people who were supporters of the Soviet Union. During this era, the term **a pinko** was considered a derogatory and offensive term.

Over the past decades, **a pinko** has become a word used to describe anyone with communist or liberal (ie, left-wing) views. In other words, **a pinko** now means a person with left-wing political or economic views.

Be careful: it is not appropriate to use the term **a pinko** in formal situations or with acquaintances. You should only use this expression with close friends who do not take politics seriously.

Here are a couple more examples with **a pinko**:

Ben:	Did you hear about the political rally on campus next week?
Ted:	Yeah. Are you planning on going?
Ben:	I'm not sure. My girlfriend has strong right-wing political views and keeps saying that the rally is only for pinkos .
Ted:	Want my opinion?
Ben:	Sure.
Ted:	You need to stand up for what you believe in, no matter how much you get teased.

Lester:	What are you up to?
Lorne:	I'm just reading about the Cold War, when tensions were high between the United States and the USSR.
Lester:	I don't know a lot about that era. Is that when there was an arms race between America and the pinkos ?
Lorne:	Yes, that's exactly what was going on.

Foresight

Foresight means the ability to anticipate what will happen in the future or to correctly judge what will happen in the future based on current information. In other words, if someone has **foresight**, they carefully plan and prepare for the future or use knowledge and information to predict what will happen in the future.

It is important to note that **foresight** is not mystical, but is more of an educated guess based on current circumstances or events. For example, if you slowly put away a little bit of money each month and are able to retire at 60 years old, then you can say that you had **foresight**.

In this episode, Terry mentions that his dad did not think that the original Tim Hortons would do well, and Andrew responds jokingly, “Good **foresight**.” Andrew’s response is funny because the opposite is true. Because Tim Hortons is now a wildly successful chain restaurant all over Canada and other parts of the world, his grandfather was way off in his prediction.

Here are a couple more examples with **foresight**:

Molly:	I’ve been thinking about investing in the stock market. Do you have any tips?
Gus:	That’s a good idea, but how much do you know about the stock market?
Molly:	Not much. I was hoping to learn on my feet.
Gus:	Foresight is important. You need the ability to look at the stock market and anticipate which stocks are likely to increase in value. If you want to play the stock market, you have to be up to date on what’s going on with companies, so you can make an educated guess and invest your money wisely.
Molly:	Wow, thanks for the advice.

Chip:	What an exciting hockey game!
Susan:	I have my eye on number 22. He reminds me of a young Saku Koivu with his foresight .
Chip:	You’re right! He really has a good understanding of the game and is able to anticipate where the puck will be.
Susan:	I wouldn’t be surprised if he became a high-scoring NHL player.

To whump

The verb **to whump** means to hit or to beat really hard. So if you **whump** something, you bang or pound something, often so hard that it makes a thumping sound. To **whump** can be used literally or figuratively.

First, when used in the literal sense, **to whump** means to hit or beat something really hard. So you can use **to whump** to describe any action where someone hits or beats someone else, or any action where someone or something thumps or bangs another person or thing, producing a pounding sound. For example, if a friend were to be beaten up by bullies, you could say that your friend was **whumped** by bullies.

Second, when used in the figurative sense, **to whump** means to win or to beat someone. So you can use **to whump** to describe any action where someone wins or bests someone else. For example, in this episode, Andrew and Terry talk about the War of 1812, when the Canadian military under British rule **whumped** the American military. This means that the Canadians beat the Americans with overwhelming force.

So **to whump** means to hit or to thump someone or something.

Here are a couple more examples with **to whump**:

Kenny:	I'm glad I got back into watching baseball this year. The games have been pretty exciting.
Patrick:	I'm so jealous! I've missed a lot of games because work has just been so crazy busy. How are the Blue Jays doing so far?
Kenny:	They suck. They went up against the Orioles on the weekend and got whumped .
Patrick:	That's too bad. I used to root for them when I'd watch the games with my grandpa.

Lauren:	Did you hear what happened to James? A couple of college kids robbed him and then beat him up. They really whumped him. Apparently, he has a broken nose and a concussion!
Mary Beth:	That's so sad! I hope he heals quickly!
Lauren:	Me too! He's such a nice guy.

To go the way of the dodo

In order to understand the expression **to go the way of the dodo**, you first need to understand what a dodo means. A dodo is an extinct (no longer in existence or alive), flightless bird. Therefore, **to go the way of the dodo** means to become extinct or to no longer exist.

In this episode, Andrew mentions that steel manufacturing in the United States has **gone the way of the dodo**. In other words, Andrew means that steel manufacturing in the United States has disappeared.

You can use the expression **to go the way of the dodo** to refer to anything that once existed but has disappeared, or anything that used to be common practice but is no longer really used. For example, Walkmans (portable radio and tape players) were extremely popular in the 1980s, but now many people don't even know what they are! Because of this, you could say, "Walkmans have **gone the way of the dodo**."

It's important to know that a dodo can also mean a stupid or dumb person. Because the dodo bird was reported to be large and clumsy, this term is often used in casual conversation as an insult and a way to call someone stupid.

Here are a couple more examples with **to go the way of the dodo**:

Gertrude:	I was going through some boxes of my old stuff at my parents' house, and I found a stack of VHS tapes.
Nellie:	Wow, I haven't watched a movie on one of those in years.
Gertrude:	Me neither. I don't even own a VCR!
Nellie:	Yeah, VHS tapes and VCRs have pretty much gone the way of the dodo .

Jordan:	I've been looking for a steady full-time job, and my grandfather suggested I work at a factory.
Lacy:	That would be a great idea, except I don't think there are many factories around anymore. That type of work is done overseas or by machines nowadays!
Jordan:	I love new technology, but it's sad that factory work has gone the way of the dodo . It's what my grandfather spent his whole life doing.
Lacy:	The good old days!

To give [something] a spin

To give [something] a spin means to try something out. The expression **to give [something] a spin** is often used when someone is trying something for the first time.

To give [something] a spin can be used in many contexts. For example, if someone wants to test drive a car, drive a motorcycle, or try a game for the first time, they could say, "Let me **give it a spin**."

There are a number of expressions that mean the same thing as **to give [something] a spin**, such as:

- to give [something] a whirl
- to give [something] a go
- to give [something] a try

All of the above expressions mean the same thing as **to give [something] a spin**: to try or to attempt to do something.

Here are a couple more examples with **to give [something] a spin**:

Mike:	Have you seen the new Mazda?
Tilly:	No, why?
Mike:	I wandered into the dealership on the weekend while my wife was shopping, and the salesman let me give it a spin . I'm in love. Somehow, I have to convince my wife to buy this car!
Tilly:	Good luck with that!

Jule Ann:	This new laptop is much faster than my old one.
Reggie:	What are you doing with your old one? I'm looking for a backup.
Jule Ann:	I'm going to get rid of it. If you're interested, feel free to give it a spin .
Reggie:	Thanks, I think I will.



Quiz

1. Which of the following means to give [something] a spin?

- a) to give [something] a whirl
- b) to give [something] a whirly
- c) to give [something] a car
- d) to give [something] a game

2. The Montreal Canadiens beat the Toronto Maple Leafs last Thursday. In other words, the Montreal Canadians _____ the Toronto Maple Leafs.

- a) whirled
- b) whumped
- c) bruised
- d) none of the above

3. What does a dodo mean?

- a) an old Walkman
- b) an extinct person
- c) a stupid person
- d) an living animal

4. Mary is 75 years old and can't retire because she never saved money. In other words, Mary _____.

- a) made an educated guess
- b) planned for her future
- c) had good foresight
- d) had poor foresight

5. True or false: The expression a pinko can be insulting.

- a) true
- b) false



Quiz Answers

1.a 2.b 3.c 4.d 5.a

Episode credits

Today's guest: Terry Bates

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