

Acadia!

When All White Americans Are Labeled “Anglo-Saxon” or “European” — An Acadian Perspective

Acadians are not Anglo-Saxons.

Acadians are not accurately defined by broad or imprecise labels that erase distinct identity.

Acadians are descendants of French settlers from France who established communities in Acadia, including present-day Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island, beginning in the 1600s. Over generations, they formed a distinct people with their own language, culture, and communal identity rooted in North America.

While Acadians are of European descent, primarily French, their identity is not reducible to the generalized term “European.” Such terminology, when used broadly, can obscure the lived history, cultural continuity, and regional rootedness of Acadian communities. In this sense, Acadians may be understood as a people native to their historical homeland in North America, while not classified by law in as Indigenous, much due to politics, *many Acadians are fighting for indigenous rights.*

Some Acadian lineages may include distant ancestral connections to Norse populations through regions such as Normandy, where Viking settlement occurred centuries prior to Acadian migration.

By contrast, “Anglo-Saxon” historically refers to Germanic peoples who settled in England during the early medieval period, and in modern usage often refers to English or British Protestant heritage. This classification reflects a separate linguistic, cultural, and historical lineage.

Key Distinction

- Acadians: French colonial origin, Francophone, culturally distinct North American people
- Anglo-Saxons: English and Germanic origin, Anglophone, historically rooted in England

The use of overly broad labels to describe diverse populations diminishes meaningful differences in origin, language, and identity. Precision in language is essential to preserving the dignity and historical integrity of distinct peoples.