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Christmas Tree Hunting

Natalie Randall

natalierandall23@gmail.com

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Dallin Scott
Logan, Utah
October 24, 2017

Christmas Tree Hunting
Holiday Custom

Informant: Dallin Scott has been a friend of mine since my freshman year at Utah State University. At the time this was collected he was a 22 year old student attending the same university. He was born and raised in Santa Cruz, California and now lives in Logan, Utah while he is at school. After he graduated high school, he served an LDS mission in Colorado Springs, Colorado for two years. He is very involved in his family life and travels back to California often. He is currently studying accounting at Utah State.

Context: I collected this folklore from Dallin at 6:30 on October 24th, 2017 in his living room. We live in the same housing complex and he is just a few buildings away from me. It is not unusual for us to do homework together and on this particular evening he and I were sitting in his living room with no music playing or TV in the background, which usually doesn't happen. His roommate, who is also a friend of mine, was in the kitchen making quite a bit of noise doing dishes and working on a sewing project. We were sitting on the couch sort of next to each other and I asked him if he would help me with a project. He said he would be happy to and I proceeded with my asking him about a family custom. It was a very low-key relaxed situation.

Text: I = informant, N = Natalie (me)

I = [laughs slightly] Uh, our family isn't big on traditions, um, but uh the day after Thanksgiving um, we always go and get a Christmas tree as a family. And um, because now all my older siblings are, or a lot of my older siblings are married, um sometimes it is the whole family going and sometimes it's just me and parents [laughs].

N = Do you guys go get one at a store, or do you guys cut it down?

I = Uh, we cut it down. So I live at the base of a mountain, and at the top of a mountain uh, there's, uh, a Christmas tree farm, so that's where we go up and get it. Every year.

N = Alright, and where is this?

I = In Ben Lomond, California.

N = Mokay.

I = I can't remember the name of the place.

N = that's alright, um do you guys have anything specific that you do with the tree afterwards, do you decorate it together do you...

I = Uh, we usually decorate it together, we, we um in the morning we go get the, get the tree and when we get home we hose it down and we put it in the stand and take it inside that night and we start decorating it. So, during that time usually everyone else is pulling out the boxes, er the Christmas boxes and getting all the decorations ready for it.

N = Alright, do you guys put your tree in the same place every year?

I = Uh, yes we do. Well depending on the size of the tree, we'll put it uh, well it depends if we put it on the table or not. Um, but when you walk into our, into my house, um you'd be staring right at it, it'd just, because when you walk into the front door it opens up into the living room and then just in the corner straight ahead would be where the Christmas tree is.

N = Nice, um, I had a question and I can't remember what it was, it was probably not important I guess. Any other important traditions about the tree you can think of, is there anything that is significant in this?

I = Not really uh, I guess we always listen, so, ok yeah I guess. Um my dad, is a huge fan of a Christmas music being played on the piano. But our grand piano has a little, I don't know, it's not a CD player, but it's like one of those floppy disks, uh, players [laughs], and so he pulls out his own box of floppy disks and puts it in and the piano just plays the music and we'll listen to that when we decorate the Christmas tree.

N = Alright, so do you think people in your family have different viewpoints on this tradition, like does one person love it and one person hate it or...

I = Uh, no I think we all look forward to it, cuz really it's just good family bonding and it's just like something we've done all growing up because we've lived in that house for um, I'm turning 23, 20 years or so. Um, so so yeah we've done it for decades, literally. And so. So yeah we always look forward to it and always do it.

Texture: It took Dallin a little bit to open up and tell me about his tradition because he wasn't quite sure what I wanted to know, but once he got talking about it, his tone shifted from being slightly out of place to being totally enthralled in telling me about his family. He had a soft tone and seemed to really be reminiscing about past holidays with his family. There were certain parts where he laughed a little bit, as if noting things that his family did that he found amusing. Though there was a little bit of background noise, he didn't have to raise his voice, in fact he talked with more of a loving and happy tone than he usually does. He's usually a very sarcastic person, but when telling his story, he was more real.

Natalie Randall
Utah State University
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Prof. Lynne S. McNeill
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