Family Christmas Talent Show

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Family Christmas Talent Show
Holiday Custom

Informant: My name is Thomas Evan Lee. I was born in Columbus, Ohio and moved to North Logan, Utah when I was three years old. My parents are both from Cache Valley and most of their families still live in and around the valley. I am currently 22 years old and attending Utah State University.

Context: Ever Since I was a little kid, we have always celebrated Christmas at the home of my mother’s parents with a large family Christmas party. The whole extended family gets together and eats lots of food and treats. My grandmother is always extremely stressed out that the evening has to be perfect, and at time this can cause tension in the family. We are a very close family and we look forward to seeing each other during this celebration.

Text: During our annual family Christmas party, there is always a point in the evening where everyone has to stop what they’re doing and gather together in the living room. A talent show is held and everyone from each family is expected to share a talent that they have. The vast majority of these talents are musical, but anything is allowed. After everyone has gone, my grandparents will stand up and talk about how proud they are of everyone. The party continues after this is done.

Texture: This is one of the most notorious family traditions in our family. The talent show has become a controversial custom. When I was a little kid, the talent show was an almost sacred event. Everyone participated, and it was viewed as a required part of the family party. After a few years of the show didn’t reach my grandmothers high standards, some people in the family began to resent the talent show and participation dropped. Initially, this was very hard on my grandmother, but eventually an understanding was reached and participation in the talent show became more optional. The talent show still happens every year, but it is much more casual than it has been in the past.