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The Goat Ate the Butter

Nicole Pope
nicole.pope@aggiemail.usu.edu

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The Goat Ate the Butter
Personal Experience Narrative

Informant:
John Pope is my father. He was born in the Salt Lake area of Utah, but spent most of his growing up years in Vernal, Utah where his father transferred while working for Wheeler Machinery. He lived on a small hobby farm that had quite a few animals with his parents and siblings from the time he was 6 years old until he was 16. He then moved to Las Vegas with his family for the last half of high school. He lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico with my mother and younger siblings. He is 45 years old. He comes from a Mormon background and is still very religious, but he has a great sense of humor. He is the 3rd child out of 6 siblings and has always been known by his siblings as the tease. He likes to make people laugh especially when they are feeling down.

Context:
I interviewed my father over the phone in a series of phone calls because he still lives in New Mexico and I’m away for college. I would call and ask him to tell a story and then we would end the call so that I could check my recording. I had previously had trouble with recording so I wanted to make sure to capture everything. Every Time I picked up the phone he would answer the phone with some sort of joke before going on to tell me about a story or saying that he had. The atmosphere was really laid back because he and I talk on the phone fairly regularly and he was recounting a familiar story from his childhood that he often told me as a child. He usually just tells the story to his kids or at large family reunions because his siblings like to listen to his humorous retelling of the goat and the butter. Teasing and humor are some of the ways that my father shows love.

Text:
Ok, so you know we had goats that were about you know we had some billy goats and I think we had at least one you know female goat and you know and we and they you know anyway one time my one of my brothers or maybe it was me you know we went out and did our chores and we didn't get the gate out in the field shut all the way and so well it didn't latch. the gate was shut but it didn't get latched so the goat was able to nudge the gate with it's head and it opened up and
then it went up to the house and then whoever it was that you know and when they went in the house the door shut but it didn't latch and so the goat did the same thing it just butted it head against the door and it opened up and well it went right into there. the back door went right into our dining room area and on our dining room table there was some butter left there and so the goat just jumped right on the table and was eating the butter and my mom came in and saw the goat standing on the table and eating the butter so she wasn't very happy and she shewed the goat out the door and then sent one of us after the goat to go put it back in the field where it belonged When I would tell it to you guys when you guys were young I would tell everyone and joke around that we you know ate the butter on our toast or something and you would go eww! and I said just kidding. I did it just to get a reaction out of you.

Texture:
When telling the story he started off a little slow as if trying to make sure he still remembered all the details correctly. This was also the first story he told me during the interview and so he was a little bit awkward at first and halted frequently. He also says “you know” a lot probably because he’s telling the story to me and I’ve heard it many times before. As he got farther into the story he began to speak faster and his voice got louder. The farther along in the story we got the more he got caught up in the story and became really excited. He spoke in a tone where you could tell that he found the story humourous but was trying to be somewhat professional because I was interviewing him. When he told it when I was younger he would often stop in the middle of the story because he would start laughing so hard.

Nicole Pope
Utah State University
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Dr. Lynne S. McNeill
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