“We’re Off” Saying

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“We’re Off” Saying
Folk Speech

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 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 telling me about one of his common phrases and where it came from. He usually only uses the phrase when he is with my mother, me, or my siblings. He usually said it when we were in the car with my mother and then he would look at her while trying to hold in a laugh. He usually did to slightly annoy my mother and make us kids laugh. He often has humorous sayings that he uses to try and get people to laugh. Teasing is one of the ways that my father shows love.

Text:
Umm I can't remember where I heard it but I heard it somewhere and then I don't know if it was off a movie or something actually later on after I had been saying it for a while we saw a movie and you know it had it in there saying we're off like a dirty shirt [laughs] and I like to say it to mom I can't but anyway I just one time when we were going on a trip when we were first
married I said we're off, like a dirty shirt you know and I got to get a reaction she didn't really
like it and so I just it kind of became a way to tease her a little bit and I'd say after the first few
times I just stopped saying the last part of it and I'd just say we're off and then I'd look at her and
[laughs] and she would give me one of those looks like you do that on purpose cause the rest just
goes through my mind you know and so it was just it kind of became a standing joke when we
were going on a trip you know usually it was when I would say it like "we're off" and then I'd
look at her and she would remember the rest part of it

Texture:
When telling me about one of his favorite phrase/joke he speaks in a lighthearted tone. He speaks
in a fairly loud voice and speaks fast. He laughs often and I could tell that he was trying to hold a
laugh in the rest of the time. He’s really comfortable as he speaks and throughly seems to be
enjoying telling me about one of his favorite phrases.

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