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My Cows

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My Cows
Game

Informant:
Chet Pettengill is 25 years old and is attending Utah State University for mechanical engineering. He was born and raised in Twin Falls, Idaho. He currently lives in Logan, Utah year-round but maintains his residency in Idaho. Chet is an active member of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and has been since birth. He was raised as a member of the church and his entire family remains active. Chet served a Spanish speaking LDS mission in Guatemala after he graduated high school and before he began attending Utah State University. Some of his hobbies are basketball, Frisbee golf, guitar, and watching movies. Chet is engaged and will be getting married in December to my best friend and college roommate.

Context:
I was first exposed to this game after Chet and his fiancé Cassie picked me up from the airport in late October. They had been in Wyoming for a baptism and picked me up on their way back to Logan. As a continuation of their existing game, Chet randomly called out ‘My Cows’ while we were driving down interstate 15. Cassie gave him a look and immediately called ‘My Cows’ for a group that was standing on the opposite side of the freeway. I was curious as to what game they were playing and asked Chet to explain to me where he had heard this game and what the rules were. I conducted the entirety of the interview in the car between Salt Lake International Airport and Logan. It was mid-afternoon on a Sunday and the roads were fairly empty, allowing Chet to focus on his explanation of the road trip game. The weather was clear and beautiful, allowing us to spot cows for miles. My Cows can be played anytime you are in the car. Since my initial interview I have witnessed Chet playing hey cows on as short of a car trip as from one side of Logan to the other.

Text:
So, I was on a 25-hour ride to DC and I was super bored. This was last spring break. My best friend was randomly like, let’s play My cows. No one in the car new the game, I’m not sure where he came up with it he probably learned it from his dad. We played it with a van full of people, so it was crazy but driving through Utah there are usually quite a few cows around.

The rules to My Cows are pretty simple. If you see a field of cows, you call out ‘My Cows’ before anyone else and you get a point. If you see a cemetery you call out “Dead Cows“ and everyone besides you loses
a point. The game starts with someone just randomly calling out ‘My Cows’ unless no one in the car knows the game, and then you have to explain the rules.

Since Cassie [the informant’s fiancé] and I have been dating we have added rules to make it more interesting. If you see a sign with cows on it, such as the chic-fil-a billboard it counts for points. Also, if you call My Cows and they turn out to be horses you lose 5 points. [laughing] Cassie made up that rule because she was always losing, and I mistake them too often.

There is always the argument over if someone called the same field of cows or if the cows were separated by a fence. Its disputed whether or not you can call cows while the other person in the car is sleeping- I usually do because I am far behind. By the end of the car ride whoever has the most points wins and the game resets on a new road trip.

**Texture:**
The rules were told in a joking manner, giving off the air that there is no real seriousness to the game. As he explained the rule changes he had made with his fiancé he laughed and reminisced about why she had chosen to add her own rules to the game. The game itself is accompanied by debate, none of which are serous. The game serves as a way to pass time and give enjoyment to road trips with nothing to look at besides cows.

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