Christmas Calendar

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Title: Christmas Calendar

Genre: Holiday Custom

Informant: Sejla Hodzic is a foreign exchange student from Sweden. She is being hosted by my family who lives in Willard, Utah. She is 18 years old. She has lived in Sweden her entire life, but her parents are from Croatia. She lives with her father and her brother. She came to the United States of America for the first time at the beginning of August 2018.

Context: I collected this piece when I went to visit my family. Sejla and I went into our basement so that we could sit and talk with minimal interruption. Our basement is usually pretty quiet during the day and it has comfortable seating. I had given her previous information about what I was going to ask her, so she knew what traditions that she wanted to talk about. This tradition was shared in a collection of other Swedish customs. The “Christmas Calendar” is Swedish Christmas television series that releases a new season every December. A new episode is shown everyday leading up to the final episode which airs on Christmas Day. The first season aired in the 60’s and has become a very important part of Christmas tradition in Sweden. People view the show as individuals, families, and viewing also takes place at schools. The content of the show varies from year to year, but events are always centered around Christmas.

Text:
Sejla: I don’t know if you guys have this too but this is a really big thing in Sweden that is called uh it’s a TV show, but it’s called Christmas Calendar. So it starts on December first and it’s like one episode everyday until Christmas. That’s a really big thing cuz like all the years so far always… So it starts like every morning at like 7 o’clock. So I usually watch it at home, and then I go to school and we watch it in school because it’s a big thing in Sweden that TV show. So we watch it in school and after school, but I probably watch the same episode two or three times everyday cuz the school really wants us to watch it. I don’t know why.

A: Do you like it?

S: Usually but, so the show is always about a different thing every year so some years are better and some years are like ‘what is this?’
A: What kind of things is the show about?

S: It’s just kinda like a normal TV show but it’s just about Christmas. It can be about love it can be about like adventure, it’s always about different things and it’s not the same people. And, so that’s like a big thing in Sweden. And then like on Christmas day, that’s always when the last episode is. That’s like the first thing that we do in the morning. Okay so, we always watch the show together. If anyone watches it alone, it’s like ‘uh-oh.’ My daddy gets so mad if anyone is watching it without him. We get up we watch the last episode, and then we go and open our Christmas gifts. So that’s like the thing you look forward to when you get up. It’s like ‘it’s the last episode, yay!’ It’s really funny.

Texture: This tradition was told by the informant with enthusiasm. She enjoys this tradition and looks forward to it every year. Her comments made it seem like it isn’t clear to her on why this is such a big Swedish tradition, but she finds enjoyment in participating. Her body language was very alert, but relaxed, when she was sharing the details of the tradition with me. Sejla says that this is a loved tradition in her family and that they enjoy watching the show together every year.

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