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# Christmas Eve Caroling

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Esther Williams  
Smithfield, Utah  
December 6, 2018

## **Christmas Eve Caroling Holiday Custom**

**Informant:** Esther Williams is a 21 year old recent graduate of Utah State University. She was raised in Smithfield, Utah, and is the oldest of five sisters. She currently lives at home with her parents and two of her sisters, and is getting married in December. She graduated with a degree in human development and family science.

**Context:** I collected this after a Christmas party that we both attended, standing in the parking lot in approximately 25 degree weather while we both froze, but she knew I needed a few more traditions for my assignment so she was willing to talk really fast while being recorded. There was snow on the ground and we had just been listening to Christmas music, getting us into the mood. As for the context of this tradition, Esther's family is incredibly close and enthusiastic about family time, a trait that I've observed, and this is a quality that pours over into this tradition. They've lived in their neighborhood since Esther was a kid, so the family is familiar with most of the neighbors. Esther didn't confirm this to me, but knowing the family I'm sure that her brother in law was made to join, and that her fiance will have to participate this year. Esther is also very good at singing, and tends to downplay her own talent, so her report of the off-tune singing may not be entirely true.

**Text:** One of them is we always go caroling, and we get together with our neighbors, and we'll all bundle up super super warm and then we run around the neighborhood and stop at all of our neighbors houses and we'll sing songs really off tune but its great [laughs] and they all hate us for keeping them outside in the cold but we love it and we usually have snowball fights and shove each other in the snow banks- and then we go home and have scones and hot chocolate and then we'll sometimes watch a Christmas movie.

**Texture:** It was freezing while we talked about it, so this was a very efficient interview. She was familiar with the kind of information I was looking for from the last time I collected folklore from her, so she needed very little prodding by me as an interviewer. She chuckled quite often while sharing this particular tradition, especially as she talked about snowball fights and shoving, and I could tell she was picturing this as she looked around at the snow in the parking lot. Her voice was also warm, as it usually gets when she talks about things she does with her family, with whom she is incredibly close. She seemed very fond of all the traditions, and as active as a

bearer as anyone else in the family. I could tell that the caroling was the most important part of this tradition to her, as the rest of the sequence kind of trailed off in excitement.

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ENGL 2210: Introduction to Folklore  
Dr. Lynne McNeill  
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