

The Fast and the Furious: Americans, Their Cars, and the Stories That Go With Them.

Introduction:

It could well be said Americans are driven by their cars. Since the inception of an automobile affordable by the middle class in the early 1900s, the car has become a symbol of both American freedom and materialism. The auto revolution enabled licensed drivers everywhere to climb into the front seat and go wherever they desired. It is precisely the connection of American ideals like independence that make them such a hot seat for folklore study. Do the stories Americans, particularly young adults, tell about cars reflect the same ideal? Do narratives involving cars form their own genre, or are they a separate category for study? Questions such as these are not only important to gaining a better understanding of the stories themselves, but of the attitudes of Americans in general.

During the course of this study, it has been my intent to document a link between Americans, particularly teenagers and young adults, and their automobiles. In order to show that automobiles have become inextricably connected with American ideals of freedom, I will first demonstrate through popular literature and scholarly sources that the ideal exists in the first place. However, the bulk of my examination consists of examples from the over twenty narratives collected from my peers. By connecting the stories to existent American dogmas, the concept of freedom and cruising down the open road can be woven into one star-spangled tapestry.

Drivers Wanted:

In his article in the Las Vegas Review author John Przybys, dared to ask the question: What does a driver's license mean? The answer came reflexively and with decisiveness.

"Freedom," answered Kim Wheeler, 15.

"Freedom," Santixay Nhoybouakong, 18, and Erica Navarro, 14, agree with resolute nods of the head.

“If I want to go somewhere,” Stephon Richards, 15, elaborates, “I don't have to go, 'Mom...’”

Elaborating on the statements from his respondents, Przybys writes, “More than a century after the birth of the automobile as we know it today, that wallet-sized piece of laminated plastic with an invariably bad picture on it remains one of the most coveted possessions of American adolescent life” (Przybys, June 7, 1998, pp. 1A+). Przybys focused most of his article on the value teenagers have with driving, but the ideal seems to transcend adolescent fascination, cropping into even many normally reserved adults. He is not the only one with the opinion that Americans, particularly American teenagers, view their cars as freedom machines. Stephen Harrigan, culture writer for *Time* magazine wrote an entire article in 1998, which completely focused on American teenagers' obsession with automobiles, as well as Americans' love for powerful cars in general. Harrigan focuses a significant part of his writing towards on the changes brought about in American life due to the automobile. He even went as far to propose automobiles exist as a personification of human nature at its most adventurous, questing and dreamy (Harrigan).

Another member of the auto autocracy club is historian Jonathan Veitch. In his article published in the *Southwest Review*, suggested that the automobile has always seemed to suggest more than itself. According to Veitch:

The heretic who dares to doubt the splendor of these automobiles, doubts America itself. And it follows--in the iron-clad logic with which this country was founded--that if America is called into question, then God's very plans for the world are in jeopardy. Clearly, to doubt the automobile is to doubt much. (Veitch, 650)

From Test Track to Real Life: The Narratives:

In collecting my own narratives about cars, I found that many of the statements young adults made about their cars and driving experiences reflect the same enamored attitude about cars that Przybys, Harrigan, and Veitch have crafted. The narratives also had several recurring themes. Many of the stories revolved around evading the law and/or

parental/authority figures, outrunning or escaping danger, and pushing their machines to the limit. Sometimes, the rush from constraints lead to breakdowns, but occasionally the stories allowed them to emerge as the victor over oppressors, as well as their motorized transport, making the concept of open road impunity can be easily linked.

Many of these elements eventually came to overlap, but by far the most common narratives, and the earliest ones to crop up, dealt with getting out of some legal entanglement committed in their cars. One item offered By Jenny Ricks during the story-telling session focused on her being followed by a mysterious car and then finding out it was a police officer. Her example is typical of many stories by my informants who charged that policemen break the rules just as much as they do, and therefore, it is justifiable to speed. Another narrative from Leah Pickren focused on the fact she was speeding quite excessively. She continued to go 104 miles an hour anyway, she said, on the off chance the police officer was not interested in chasing her. It is noteworthy to mention she was not pulled over.

In telling stories about avoiding policemen, the informants are asserting their own elevation above legality. Americans tend to associate laws with restrictions on their freedoms. The opportunity to avoid punishment for a broken rule is a sure assertion of a deeper belief of a wide shield of rights. The fact that the police officers are likewise bending the rules at times may convey an attitude of a perceived elasticity of the law. In other words, the officers themselves may also consider themselves Americans-replete with freedoms-before they consider themselves part of a campaign to promulgate safe driving.

Occasionally, however, stories are told about times when drivers are grabbed by the neck by the long arm of the law. Sometimes, the stories focus on the evasion of the ticket. Such was the case in Meggan Kennedy's story about her early morning encounter with the possibility of a citation. Worrying that she would receive her fist ticket, Meggan approaches the car window of the officer, which is against protocol (usually perpetrators remain in their vehicles and the officers come to them) and she is released. Meggan believes that her confrontation with the police officer where she approached him is ultimately what help her out of her bind.

“I always tell people, if you want to get out a ticket, just go to the officer’s window,” she concluded, after offering her item. Taking the part of the assertive person in the situation can be connected to Meggan’s ideals of freedom regarding her car. It was the early morning, and she was nervous about being cited for her speeding violation, but the fact that she thinks she was released with a warning because of her approach demonstrates she also believes there is a certain liberation associated with assertive behavior. Her example also featured her car, the very object she was breaking the law in, which suggests that her driving gave her sense of assertion she may not have had if she had been confronted by the police for jay-walking, or some other ordinance violation. Meggan’s example can therefore, be considered an example to support the assertion that American’s are braver when they are in their cars, or in other words, more free.

Harrigan also connects the idea of auto-induced bravado to an inherent quality of human nature.

The automobile is the personification of human nature at its most adventurous, questing and dreamy. You step into your car, you stir the engine to life with a simple twist of your hand, you propel yourself and your machine forward with a commanding flex of your right foot on the accelerator pedal. So what if you are only going down to the 7-Eleven to pick up a microwaved burrito? (Harrigan, 80)

Besides policemen, there were also many stories told about avoiding other types of freedom redistricting figures, such as parents. Brandon Harris tells the story of when he was ditching curfew and then was racing home to nearly speed by his parents. Kerlinda Biggers, on the other hand, offered the time when she thought her boyfriend was following her, (a figure which represented restraint to her) and she ended up racing all the way home in her car. Kerlinda said she left the theater and her boyfriend pulled out behind her. “He followed me, and I am like ‘this is not the way to his house, I don’t want him following me,’ so I start speeding up . . . I am going to see how fast thing goes, and plus I want to get away from here . . . I took a really dusty road, and he told me later he almost crashed.”

What is significant about Kerlinda's narrative is that she specifically said she wanted to get away from her boyfriend, but also she wanted to see how fast the car would go. Pushing the limit of the machine falls in line with previous discussion about the desire to push the limit with the law. In this case, however, the precarious behavior has to do with the automobile itself. Also, the fact she would take her own car on a date is significant. Having her own vehicle was a way of separating herself from the boy she was watching the movie with, or a method of keeping control of herself and maintaining her freedom. Because she had to take her car with her, it is clear Kerlinda sees her car as an object allocating her more liberty.

Other stories had to do with evading complete strangers. In Peter Walker's narrative, he said that all he did was flash his bright headlights at a car and, suddenly, he was being pursued by an unknown driver. Peter even mentioned that there was a popular folklore story in circulation and said that his story may be proof that the rumor flashing headlights as a gang initiation was indeed true. Several others also offered their own tales about being followed. Being able to escape others falls in line with ideas of freedom in the sense that if a person can get out of a situation they find threatening, the chances of becoming a victim are less.

Additionally, Peter's tale can also be linked as a variant in "The Driver's Revenge" folklore. An example of this can be found in the movie *Fried Green Tomatoes*, where middle-aged Evelyn repeatedly rams into a car driven by two young girls because they stole her parking place. Another scenario can be found in the movie *Smoky and the Bandit*, where a trucker runs over the motorcycles of some gang members after he is thrown out of a bar (deVos, 128). Each of these stories, in turn, relate back to Kerlinda's narrative, where she felt more in control by driving her own car, and Meggan's assertion of bravery by daring to breach etiquette when faced with the possibility of getting a ticket.

As the story session proceeded, the stories related became more and more likely to contain all three elements of evasion of persons, danger, and pushing the limits of their cars. One example of a late contribution containing all three elements was offered by Robert

Geslison. In his narrative, he also incorporates the element of the sports car. In the *Journal of American Culture* there was an article written about the automobile and American's fascination with fashion. Particularly, the author posited that sports cars were an extension of this longing for *haute couture* as well as a manifestation of American materialism. Citing a 1958 book by John Wietz, a professional fashion designer and sports car aficionado, Richard Martin writes the sports car is inherently a fashion urge (Martin, 53). Harrigan, however, sees fast cars, such as the Porsche in Geslison's narrative as a evidence of American's captivation with freedom that has seeped into pop culture. He believes this inundation to be to the point where American's buy cars because they think of a car no longer as a diversion. Instead, he calls them blunt necessities (Harrigan).

Regardless of the variety of opinions floating around about the reasons for having sports cars, it is clear from Geslison's narrative he sees the Porsche as a something he would like to have, but does not, and so he reacts by splashing the car. Unfortunately, he and his friend end up as pedestrians. At this point, they are the ones at the mercy of someone else- someone with a car- in order to reach their destination.

. . . After about a mile walking we just started hitchhiking, ya' know, and we were like sticking out our thumbs. About ten cars passed before finally this big black jeep was lifted up and everything pulled over and was like some gangster guys in there and they were smoking and everything and playing music with foul old lyrics and everything and were like "Want a ride?" and we were like "Sure" . . . They actually took us where we were going safety and that was really nice of them.

Conclusion:

Nestled deep within the narratives offered by the young adults I interviewed, was a stronger statement about driving. As Harrigan put it, with 4,000 pounds of steel at our command, we are suddenly mobile, powerful and consequential. . . . A car, beyond all else, is a freedom machine that liberates us from our pedestrian mores (and our parents) and sets us down

revving on an unknown road. "Well, the night's busting open," to quote the great [Bruce] Springstein again, "these two lanes will take us anywhere" (Harrigan).

The examples I found through my research matched the assertions of American's obsession with the open road. The love of cars, according to some, has even kept the government of the United States from pushing more restrictions on emissions and stifled the development of more economical methods of transportation in the milieu of global pollution (Commentary, 42).

As Travis Crookston commented after telling the story of the time he and his twin sister went through two mailboxes, a fence and into a cow pasture. "I turned the car off for her, eventually someone pulled us out. That was one experience in that car. It was kind of fun." Americans regard their experiences, even the ones that are scary at the time as a kind of pleasure. The sense of diversion comes from an even deeper sense of self-sufficiency. The American ideal of freedom is not something new to the automobile generation, either. When Frances Trollope, an Englishwoman visited the United States in the 1800s talked with one native, she was trying to encourage him to shy away from his inexhaustive pursuit of autonomy. The man paused, and then asked her how any other possible aim could compare with "the freedom of a free-born American" (qtd. in Kissell, 375). Clearly, the free-born American of the modern-age has two castles; his house, as in days of yore, and now, a car.

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Autobiographical Sketch of Collector

About the time most people in Ontario, Oregon were sitting down to breakfast on August 29, 1980, my mother was strapped to a hospital bed in a modestly-equipped emergency room hoping desperately to deliver her second child.

“We’re having a slight complication,” the doctor lamented, as he towered over my weary mother. “You’re baby’s head is facing the wrong way,” he said, looking up to instruct the nurse beside him. “Forceps,” he ordered, his hand outstretched. Moments later, he had secured the necessary instrument and was preparing to turn me, the wrinkled infant, over, when he noticed that in the few seconds it had taken to obtain this instrument, I had already turned myself. The doctor was happy. His job had just become easier. My mother was thrilled. Well, as thrilled as you can be while giving birth.

Growing up I knew exactly what I wanted to be. I was destined to be a nurse. And of course, this made perfect sense. My mother was a nurse and her mother was a nurse; I had two other aunts who were nurses.

“Yes,” I thought, as family members placed white nurse’s caps on my head and snapped photographs for posterity, “I will be a nurse, too.” Then something happened that forever diverted me from the nursing track. I got a journal. Everyday I would carefully record the day’s events in my four-by-eight inch treasure. My journal was a seaweed green color and the pages were all lined. Sitting in my tree house, I would write about the funerals I could see in the cemetery from my perch. When I got in trouble, I wrote. When I was happy I wrote. If my sister refused to turn out the light and go to sleep in the room we shared, I would write about how annoying she was.

As I progressed through my high school years, I began to consider majoring in English. When I told other people about my goal, they would always say, “Oh, you want to be an English teacher. I never liked English teachers, my teacher Mrs. So-and-So made me read Hamlet.”

It was at precisely this point I would tell them, “No, I am going to be a writer.” Most people would then at least do me the courtesy of forcing a smile and saying “oh, that will be, uh, nice, too.” So, I decided to major in Chemistry instead. I didn’t get very far, though. After my freshman year of college, I ended up with an internship writing for the newspaper where I live in Ontario. Gaining experience as a reporter solidified my intent to write, and yes, even major in English. Eventually I am going to work as a technical writer because I still find enjoyment learning about and applying the sciences, especially molecular biology, geology, and of course, chemistry. Some of my other interests include being in the presence of anything foreign, shiny, or red. I have studied Spanish, French, and Japanese and am working on minors in Geography and Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages. I am also a pretty big fan of archery, roller-blading, ice-skating, distance running, and am a self-described “dancing fool.”

Being the independent person I am, naturally, I also have an interest in cars and driving. I remember well the day I got my own automobile operators’ license. I was a horrible driver. My parents took me to the Division of Motor Vehicles completely intending for me to fail so I would have to wait another month. They were wrong though. The absence of mom screaming from the back seat and dad tensing up in the front provided just enough of a tranquil environment for me to drive for the evaluator perfectly. When the clerk handed me my wallet-sized piece of plastic perfection, she quipped, “It’s official, NOW you are a person.” For me, that day was the beginning of my propulsion into adulthood. I could go whatever I wanted and not have to bum a ride. My own assumptions about the connection of driving to freedom and adventure connect well to accepted American ideals. In conducting my own study, I was able to investigate the existence of the same threads of liberation among my peers.

However, it wasn’t until I went to college that I really began to appreciate driving. Being without a car, I took the bus. Inevitably, it was always the wrong bus. One time I even thought I was finally on the right one, but bus number changed after I boarded. Eventually, I

decided I could not possibly get any further from my destination and I just got off, groceries and all. Looking around, and finding myself helplessly lost, I set out for home. About an hour later, I think I was probably in Orem somewhere. A man of Chinese origin picked me up. I was sure he was plotting to murder me.

“What kind of music do you like?” He asked while flipping through the radio stations.

“What does it matter,” I thought. “I doubt I will hear anything from the trunk.” The man, whose name was Chris, brought me home. I put away my food, and then went out and found a map with the bus routes. The next year I bought my own car. At least now when I get lost, I don’t have to walk. My own beautiful car’s name is Hannibal Haiku Alhi-itchnap. He is a 1985 Toyota Camry and the most important man in my life. I am content to drive him until either he gives up and dies, or I do.

In conducting this folklore study, I was able to learn about my peers’ opinion of the open road and revving engines, but I also had the opportunity to get to know them better as people and it was really enlightening to hear many of my friends have the same opinions about driving that I have. The ability to become closer through the telling of stories is not only connected to tales of racing and the evasion of highway patrolman. It is a characteristic of all serious attempts to understand and I identify with those around us.

Brandon Harris
October 15, 2001
Provo, UT

Personal Narrative
The Tell-tale Taillights

Informant Data:

Age: 24 Gender: Male
Place of Birth: Rexburg, Idaho
Home Region: Rexburg, Idaho
Religion: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Ethnicity: Caucasian
Relation to Collector: Friend

Occupation: The informant is employed as an electronic technician in the Provo-Orem, Utah area.

Avocation: Brandon reported that he really enjoys outdoor activities.

Other: Brandon is active LDS, and he has two sisters and one brother. In general, the informant can be described as shy and retiring.

Social: The collector invited residents of her apartment complex over for a story telling session on October 15, 2001. She told the informants that she was doing a folklore collection and asked them to come prepared to offer a story. The only parameters she gave the members of the group were that the stories have an automobile in it. The informants then took turns listening and telling stories for about an hour. The informants recited their stories into a tape recorder in the apartment of the collector. The people in the story-telling session all knew each other previously, and some lived in the same apartment and had known each other for years. Of all of the storytellers in the session, Brandon was one of the last to tell his. He seemed to enjoy the other stories, but did not react as outwardly as some of the other audience members.

Cultural: Brandon's parents owned a Cadillac, which is a type of automobile that is typically associated with the upper-class, and relatively few people own them. Because of the design of the car, the taillights are a distinctive shape, particularly if one is familiar with that type of car.

Item: (typed from a tape recording that was previously delivered)

This was back when I was in high school. I was at a basketball game, and my parents were going to a party and I didn't want to go home, so I decided to just travel the rural highways, kind of cruise them. So, I was doing 80-90 miles an hour down these back roads, and I was coming to a corner and so I was heading towards my house, and I turned the corner and started speeding up. I noticed something about this car's taillights, but I was going to pass them anyway. As I got closer I got looking and thought, "Wait a sec" and then was like "oh, crap, that's my parents!" So I was about to, but just pulled around, hit the brakes, backed off, and stayed about a half mile back, they had to cross the freeway and we had about three miles to go, and I pushed around so I could take a different way home, but when I got home, they

were still in the yard. They didn't say anything about it, but I was terrified when I realized who it was.

Collector's Name: Mary Aldred
Age: 21 Gender: Female
Date Submitted: November 27, 2001
Professor's Name: Dr. Jill Rudy

Jason Dodd
 October 12, 2001
 Provo, UT

Personal Narrative
 Flipped Over Lunch

Informant Data:

Name: Jason Dodd
 Age: 18 Gender: Male
 Place of Birth: California
 Home Region: Red Bluff, California
 Ethnicity: Caucasian
 Religion: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
 Relation to Collector: Friend

Occupation/Avocation: Jason has no job currently, and said he enjoys 4-wheeling and other types of sports.

Other: Jason reported that he comes from a family of seven, which “has it ups and downs.” Jason also has a sister, Amanda, who lives in the same apartment complex as he. Brandon is preparing to serve a mission and is living in Provo until that time. He said he had lots of car stories, but was only inclined to give one.

Social: The collector invited residents of her apartment complex over for a story telling session on October 15, 2001. She told the informants that she was doing a folklore collection and asked them to come prepared to offer a story. The only parameters she gave the members of the group were that the stories have an automobile in it. The informants then took turns listening and telling stories for about an hour. The informants recited their stories into a tape recorder in the apartment of the collector. The people in the story-telling session all knew each other previously, and some lived in the same apartment and had known each other for years. Jason’s item occurred in front of a fast food restaurant and he also said that there were a great many of his peers who witnessed this incident.

Cultural: “Senior year” is the last year of high school. The hood of a car is the front part that covers the engine and then other various parts of the automobile.

Item: Senior year, going out to lunch, lunch is like totally crazy, so I’m like speeding, pulling into my parking lot to get my friend, and he’s a big kid. So I speed up thinking he’s gonna get out of the way and I hit him. Lands on my hood, does a flip in the air and lands on the ground. He was fine, just cut himself up.

Collector’s Name: Mary Aldred
 Age: 21 Gender: Female
 Date Submitted: November 27, 2001
 Professor’s Name: Dr. Jill Rudy

John Travis Crookston
 October 12, 2001
 Provo, UT

Personal Narrative

The Pasture Incident

Informant Data:

Age: 23 Gender: Male
 Place of Birth: Bellevue, Washington
 Home Region: Maple Valley, Washington
 Religion: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
 Ethnicity: Caucasian
 Relation to Collector: Friend

Occupation/Avocation: The informant is a manufacturing engineering student at Brigham Young University Provo, Utah.

Other: The informant is known by his middle name-Travis, instead of his real first name. He reported that he is an avid sports fan, and he is a big fan of cars also. He is particularly proud of his 1987 Toyota Celica GT. He also likes drawing and computers. Travis comes from a family of five children, and he shares the position of oldest with his twin sister, Carolyn, who is engaged. His other sister, Marlene, is already married. Old Chevelle, '75 and it was the year they started making them bigger, so it wasn't a real hot rod.

Social: The collector invited residents of her apartment complex over for a story telling session on October 15, 2001. She told the informants that she was doing a folklore collection and asked them to come prepared to offer a story. The only parameters she gave the members of the group were that the stories have an automobile in it. The informants then took turns listening and telling stories for about an hour. The informants recited their stories into a tape recorder in the apartment of the collector. The people in the story-telling session all knew each other previously, and some lived in the same apartment and had known each other for years. This incident happened when Travis was first learning to drive. Because he and sister are twins, Travis said they went through a lot of the same developmental phases at the same time and generally spent a lot of time together growing up. One of their adolescent commonalities was taking turns driving. He would drive to a destination and she would drive home, for example. Travis offered two stories, one right after the other. This one deals with his sister, and the other was more focused on a brush with the law.

Cultural: The brake is the part of the vehicle that is depressed by the driver's foot when he or she wishes to stop. "Pulling the wheel" refers to his sister's grasping the steering wheel, which is a part of the car the driver uses to maneuver the automobile in the correct direction.

Item: (Transcribed from a recorded story-telling session of which Travis was a participant).

Parking is terrible at out high school, and you always have to pull up into these rural roads that are off to the side, and I pulled off kind of to the side, 'cuz I drove there, and I figured it was okay. I hated riding with my sister, she used to scare the heck out of me, and I didn't think she was a very confident driver yet and I was trying to look for a ride home with one of my friends, but I couldn't find one, so I was riding home with her and it is kind of a T-ed

intersection, at hits school parking lot, and the parking lot emptied out of this road, and she looked back and said “is it clear?” and I looked back and said “yeah, you have plenty of time” It had a big 350 engine and it doesn’t accelerate very well, but it has good torque and so she hits the pedal and gravel starts lying everywhere it gripped good enough and she was spinning good enough that it throws us out into another lane where there was a car, and so she pulls the wheel real hard, and then back across the lane we were in, and she was so scared , we went through two mailboxes, and we went through a fence and into a cow pasture and I have my hands on the dash and am just screaming “BRAKE, BRAKE, BRAKE!” and we’re sitting there and it was dead silent, except for a radio, and finally I turned the car off for her, eventually someone pulled us out. That was one experience in that car. It was kind of fun.

Collector’s Name: Mary Aldred
Age: 21 Gender: Female
Date Submitted: November 27, 2001
Professor’s Name: Dr. Jill Rudy

John Travis Crookston
 October 12, 2001
 Provo, UT

Personal Narrative

Cops, Girls, and Freeway Races

Informant Data:

Age: 23 Gender: Male
 Place of Birth: Bellevue, Washington
 Home Region: Maple Valley, Washington
 Religion: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
 Ethnicity: Caucasian
 Relation to Collector: Friend

Occupation/Avocation: The informant is a manufacturing engineering student at Brigham Young University Provo, Utah.

Other: The informant is known by his middle name-Travis, instead of his real first name. He reported that he is an avid sports fan, and he is a big fan of cars also. He is particularly proud of his 1987 Toyota Celica GT. He also likes drawing and computers. Travis comes from a family of five children, and he shares the position of oldest with his twin sister, Carolyn, who is engaged. His other sister, Marlene, is already married. Travis' car was a 1975 Chevrolet Chevelle. According to Travis, this car was built the year they started making them bigger, so it wasn't a real hot rod. However, this type of car is stereotypically fast.

Social: The collector invited residents of her apartment complex over for a story telling session on October 15, 2001. She told the informants that she was doing a folklore collection and asked them to come prepared to offer a story. The only parameters she gave the members of the group were that the stories have an automobile in it. The informants then took turns listening and telling stories for about an hour. The informants recited their stories into a tape recorder in the apartment of the collector. The people in the story-telling session all knew each other previously, and some lived in the same apartment and had known each other for years. Travis offered two stories, one right after the other.

Cultural: Stake dances are social rhythmic rituals hosted by members of the LDS church for youth age 14 through 18. The idea of these institutions is to introduce LDS youth to one another in the hopes friendships will be fostered. The dances are typically held at the LDS-owned buildings from about 9 p.m. until approximately midnight. A Datsun is a small truck that was manufactured mainly in the 1980s. These vehicles are not known for their ability to accelerate quickly. They are Japanese-made lightweight, good gas mileage pickups.

Item: (Transcribed from a recorded story-telling session of which Travis was a participant).

At a stake dance and a bunch of people were standing around. There was this girl with a Datsun 210 and she got on the freeway, and I was not going to let her little piece of junk beat me. So, we were just flying, and we were going 75, passing people and were using our blinkers so we begin pretty safe. There was a car that got on the on ramp and there wasn't enough room so I moved over into the other lane and suddenly they decided to over and they moved right in front of me, and they were going real slow, like 35 and I had time to slow

down, it wasn't like I screeched my tires or anything and I started just going the speed limit and then these red lights came on, the cop followed us for over a couple miles, since we merged on to 405, she just kept going, but he pulled me over, he comes up to me window, and he didn't even ask for a license or anything, he is just screaming and everything. He pulls me out of the car, puts me on the front. He handcuffs me, puts me in the back of the cop car and calls my parents. It's 12:30 or also and they are both asleep, and he said "I'm not going to let him drive home" and he talk to my parents. I wasn't too worried about what my parents would do; I was more concerned about whether or not I was going to lose my license. I got off with a speeding ticket and my parents said they were going to ground me for a month and I got my license back about a week later, so it actually wasn't too bad, but I learned my lesson.

Collector's Name: Mary Aldred
Age: 21 Gender: Female
Date Submitted: November 27, 2001
Professor's Name: Dr. Jill Rudy

Craig Pew
 October 12, 2001
 Provo, UT

Personal Narrative

The Hazards of Running into Parked Cars

Informant Data:

Age: 21 Gender: Male
 Place of Birth: Mesa, Arizona
 Home Region: Houston, Texas
 Ethnicity: Caucasian
 Religion: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
 Relation to Collector: Friend

Occupation/Avocation: Craig is a student at Brigham Young University and is studying optometry. He also stated he enjoys music.

Other: Craig comes from a traditional family of five boys and one girl. When asked if there was anything else the collector should know about him, he said "I'm a Pew!" as if to say he reputation should have preceded him. Craig's older brother, Jefferson, and he are roommates.

Social: The collector invited residents of her apartment complex over for a story telling session on October 15, 2001. She told the informants that she was doing a folklore collection and asked them to come prepared to offer a story. The only parameters she gave the members of the group were that the stories have an automobile in it. The informants then took turns listening and telling stories for about an hour. The informants recited their stories into a tape recorder in the apartment of the collector. The people in the story-telling session all knew each other previously, and some lived in the same apartment and had known each other for years. The people did not make him pay for the damage to the car.

Cultural: This incident occurred in the dark. Members of the LDS church frequently sponsor youth dances where teenagers 14 to 18 come to an LDS meetinghouse and dance in a small gymnasium called a "cultural hall." These dances are in the evening, and usually end around midnight. The "bumper" is an attachment on the front part of the car designed to prevent damage to the anterior portion in the event of a collision.

Item: (Transcribed from a recorded story-telling session of which Craig was a participant).

Well, we all know how stupid it is to run into a parked car, but I ran into a parked car. It was circumstances that made me run into the parked car. There was a dance at church one night, and it was late and dark, of course, so I got into my car and it was really humid outside and so it was all over the window, so I back up and I couldn't see throughout the window and I just smacked into a dark truck, and I dented the bumper and I felt really bad so I left him a note, but I didn't have a pen, so I used this girl's lipstick. I was all alone, but the girl was just walking by.

Collector's Name: Mary Aldred
 Age: 21 Gender: Female
 Date Submitted: November 27, 2001
 Professor's Name: Dr. Jill Rudy

Robert Geslison
 October 15, 2001
 Provo, UT

Personal Narrative

Beer in the Back

Informant data:

Age: 22.5 Gender: Male
 Place of Birth: LDS Hospital, Salt Lake City, Utah
 Home Region: Salt Lake City, Utah
 Ethnicity: Caucasian
 Religion: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
 Relation to Collector: Friend

Occupation/Avocation: Robert is the operations supervisor at Fred Meyer. He is also a student at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, majoring in information Systems.

Other: Robert reported that he enjoys eating, sports, or jumping over chairs into the swimming pool.

Social: The collector invited residents of her apartment complex over for a story telling session on October 15, 2001. She told the informants that she was doing a folklore collection and asked them to come prepared to offer a story. The only parameters she gave the members of the group were that the stories have an automobile in it. The informants then took turns listening and telling stories for about an hour. The informants recited their stories into a tape recorder in the apartment of the collector. The people in the story-telling session all knew each other previously, and some lived in the same apartment and had know each other for years. During the story session, Robert spent most of his time listening to the stories of others. About midway though, however, he began to also tell his own. Robert also reported that the "top was down" or the roof was detached from the car that was ruined. It never ran again.

Cultural: A Porsche is an automobile manufactures in Europe. They are typically associated with the upper-class and it is even more unusual for teenagers to own one. Beer is an alcoholic beverage that can impair one's ability to drive. Also, it is taboo in LDS culture to consume alcohol under any circumstances, and Robert is from an area where reside a high concentration of LDS people, so he may not have had a lot of exposure to watching people purchase or consume alcohol. Sticking out one's thumb is the universal sign of hitchhiking.

Item: (Transcribed from a recorded story-telling session of which Robert was a participant).

This was a few years ago. Me and my cousin were driving in his little car, and it had just rained, so there were like big puddles all over so we were just driving through like parking lots, making big splashes and we saw up ahead there was this convertible Porsche, so he just floors it, and makes this wave of water and splashes all over the Porsche and it stopped rain, so the sun was out but there was huge puddles, we just like totally drenched him. When we splashed him, we heard something' in his engine, but anyway we kept going about another four miles or so, we were on our way to his house in Sandy, but we were by my house in Salt

Lake and his car just died, and so we looked at it, and his car completely died. We were about like three or four miles from my house and his house. We were like right in between our t two houses, so we were like “now what do we do?” After about a mile walking we just started hitchhiking, y’know, and we were like sticking out our thumbs. About ten cars passed before finally this big black jeep was lifted up and everything pulled over and was like some gangster guys in there and they were smoking and everything and plying music with foul old lyrics and everything and were like “Want a ride?” and we were like “Sure.” So we hop in and we could not even like hear everything they were saying us cuz the music was up so loud, and they were like sitting there smoking and we were choking on it and stuff, and they were like, “Where should we take ya?” and we said “Oh, just down to Sandy.” So he pulls over to the gas station and the guy that was sitting shotgun goes in and buys a 12-pack a beer and we’re like “Oh, crap!” So we get back in, and luckily they put the beer in the back with us, not s we could drink it or anything. They actually took us where we were going safety and that was really nice of him.

Collector’s Name: Mary Aldred
Age: 21 Gender: Female
Date Submitted: November 27, 2001
Professor’s Name: Dr. Jill Rudy

Meggan Kennedy
 October 15, 2001
 Provo, Utah

Personal Narrative

Ticket Window

Informant data:

Age: 19 Gender: Female
 Place of Birth: Memphis, Tennessee
 Home Region: Tennessee
 Ethnicity: Caucasian
 Religion: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
 Relation to Collector: Friend

Occupation/Avocation: Meggan is an elementary education major at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. She said she enjoys music and sports.

Other: Meggan is the oldest of four children. She was also one of the first to volunteer to share her story. Apparently, her mother had received a ticket from the same officer only several months earlier. Meggan said this incident made her own encounter with the officer even more embarrassing.

Social: The collector invited residents of her apartment complex over for a story telling session on October 15, 2001. She told the informants that she was doing a folklore collection and asked them to come prepared to offer a story. The only parameters she gave the members of the group were that the stories have an automobile in it. The informants then took turns listening and telling stories for about an hour. The informants recited their stories into a tape recorder in the apartment of the collector. The people in the story-telling session all knew each other previously, and some lived in the same apartment and had know each other for years.

Cultural: Meggan noted the girls she was picking up and her mother watched from the doorway, which made it embarrassing for her. People often tell how they get out of tickets and I always tell them to go to the officer's window. Seminary is a religious instruction class for high school-aged LDS people. The classes are typically every weekday for four years and begin early in the morning so they will not interfere with school and evening activities.

Item: (Transcribed from a recorded story-telling session of which Meggan was a participant).

One morning before Seminary I was driving and I was giving a girl a ride and I told her to be ready in the morning and I would be there to pick her up. I was driving down this road and I went around this corner and I saw these red and blue lights flashing and I was like "crud." SO at this point I am in her driveway and the lights are flashing behind me. I was so tired and I was so upset that I had got pulled over I got out of the car and walked over to the officer's window cuz I had never got pulled over before and I was like, not thinking straight. So, he rolls down his window and was like "you've never been pulled over before have you?" and I was like "no, sir!" and I was like "I don't want to get in trouble," and he was like "go over and get in your car and I'll be right there," and so I am all crying and the girl is standing in front of her house and I so I go back and sit in my car and I am like "I should probably get

my license, that's the right procedure," whatever, and, uh, he comes to the window and I just, you know, he's like "Are you O.K.?" and I am like "yeah, I'm fine," and he is talking to me about five minutes, and I am telling' him "No, sir, I have never got a ticket before in my whole life and I was so tired and out of it I didn't see the lights flashing, and I said I would never speed again." He was like "Do I need to give you a ticket to remind you?" and I was like "No, sir, I promise, you don't have to remind me!"

Collector's Name: Mary Aldred
Age: 21 Gender: Female
Date Submitted: November 27, 2001
Professor's Name: Dr. Jill Rudy

Amy Jeffs
 October 15, 2001
 Provo, Utah

Personal Narrative

Do you know why I pulled you over?

Informant data:

Age: 19 Gender: Female

Place of Birth: Salt Lake City, Utah

Home Region: Provo, Utah

Religion: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Relation to Collector: Friend

Occupation/Avocation: Amy is majoring in elementary education at Brigham Young University. She also enjoys soccer, reading, cooking, singing, and outdoor activities.

Other: Amy has short naturally curly hair. She is from a family of seven children. She is the sixth of these. Amy also has two in-laws, three nieces and nephews and one of her siblings is engaged.

Social: The collector invited residents of her apartment complex over for a story telling session on October 15, 2001. She told the informants that she was doing a folklore collection and asked them to come prepared to offer a story. The only parameters she gave the members of the group were that the stories have an automobile in it. The informants then took turns listening and telling stories for about an hour. The informants recited their stories into a tape recorder in the apartment of the collector. The people in the story-telling session all knew each other previously, having lived in the same apartment and known each other for years.

Cultural: "The speed limit" refers to posted signs of statutorily designated maximum velocities for vehicles on publicly owned roads. Stoplights are devices used to control traffic flow. When a driver encounters a "red" light, he or she is supposed to stop. A "green" light is the signal to drive without stopping, or to continue if the driver was halted by a red light.

Item: (Transcribed from a recorded story-telling session of which Amy was a participant).

O.K. it was actually, in high school, I think it was my sophomore year in high school and my two older brothers and me were driving down to Provo to visit my older brother who lived there. We were going down Bangerter highway in Salt Lake and my brother doesn't know how to go the speed limit, and the cop was at the very top of the hill and so we stopped at a light, so he didn't pull us over then. So, we were stopped at a light with this cop behind us and my brother said, "Turn around and wave at him." I was like "yeah, O.K. and the cop was not too excited about it. After the light turned green, he turns on his lights and turns pulls us over and he's like "Do ya know why I pulled you over," and my brother said "Yeah, because my sister was waving at ya." and he said, "no, that's not the reason." The cop wrote him over for more than he was really going.

Collector's Name: Mary Aldred
 Age: 21 Gender: Female
 Date Submitted: November 27, 2001
 Professor's Name: Dr. Jill Rudy

Jefferson Pew
 October 15, 2001
 Provo, Utah

Personal Narrative

Outrunning the Rain

Informant data:

Age: 23

Place of Birth: Boston, Massachusetts

Home Region: Texas

Ethnicity: Caucasian

Religion: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Relation to Collector: Friend

Occupation/Avocation: Jefferson is a mechanical engineering major at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. He is minoring in Portuguese and works part-time at the BYU Creamery. He likes Redding, basketball, Star Wars politics, and ice cream.

Other: Jefferson is the oldest of six children, (five boys, one girl, a set of parents and one black sheep). He describes his family as somewhat odd, but funny; shy, but friendly once you get to know them. He served a mission for the LDS church in the Brazil-Belo Horizonte East Mission, and said he hates spiders. Jefferson and his younger brother, Craig, are roommates. Jefferson contributed to the folklore archives at BYU previously, so he was one of the most relaxed while telling his story.

Social: The collector invited residents of her apartment complex over for a story telling session on October 15, 2001. She told the informants that she was doing a folklore collection and asked them to come prepared to offer a story. The only parameters she gave the members of the group were that the stories have an automobile in it. The informants then took turns listening and telling stories for about an hour. The informants recited their stories into a tape recorder in the apartment of the collector. The people in the story-telling session all knew each other previously, and some lived in the same apartment and had known each other for years.

Cultural: LDS people are encouraged to attend temples, which are sacred houses of worship. Within the temple, patrons are ushered through several rooms, one of which is named the Celestial room. Being "off, Scot free" means that a person has emerged from a dangerous, threatening, or at least uncomfortable situation unscathed. An exit ramp is a place where a driver can leave the Interstate. An interstate is a high traffic capacity road leading between many states. The roads are designed for efficient cross-country travel and have higher speed limits than many other types of roads.

Item: (Transcribed from a recorded story-telling session of which Jefferson was a participant).

It was a dark and stormy night, which wasn't odd because nights usually are dark and it is usually stormy in Houston. Anyways, I was going to the temple that night, it was after work. It was raining hard. And, uh, ya know it was raining hard, but it always does, so I wasn't that

worried. When I got into the Celestial room, I heard something pounding, and they said “that’s rain,” and I thought, “We’re not going home, are we?” But I tried anyways, and as I tried to get out, I noticed the streets were flooded, which I should have stopped there, but I didn’t. I drive down the street; I am like an hour away from home, an hour and a half. Its flooding on one side of the street, and I am driving on the other side. I find the freeway and I am thinking’ I am off Scot-free and am supposed to met up with I-45. I am 20 yards from I-45 and there is a river across it. I thought, “I made it this far, I can keep going,” right? I met up with car with its hood submerged in water, which I should have stopped there, but I didn’t. I tried to hit up a connecting freeway so I could get onto I-45 again, once again the freeway was a little flooded. In Texas, they have feeder roads on the side, and it’s supposed to help with merging traffic and all. I took the feeder road to merge onto I-45 and once again there is water on one side of the road, but not on the other half, and there’s water all the way across. Well, I am stuck, so I start to go back. Now, I am going backwards on the feeder road on a one way street, half to go back up my exit ramp and get on the previous freeway, keeping going, trying to find another ramp, hoping to find another freeway that doesn’t have a feeder, but has a big ramp, uh, we get in this big traffic jam, we get stuck and we don’t know why. I am stuck in the cram this car is behind me and I don’t know what to do. They were doing construction in that spot and people started squeezing through the mud trying to get back on the freeway and go the other direction. The water is rising pretty fast, so I get back on the freeway and I don’t know what to do. Luckily there was this big road that didn’t have a feeder ramp, but had this big road that goes up and over the freeway onto I-45. I take I-45 all the way home just as the river behind our house floods over the street. I made it, dumb enough, I should have stayed where I was, but I made it.

Collector’s Name: Mary Aldred
Age: 21 Gender: Female
Date Submitted: November 27, 2001
Professor’s Name: Dr. Jill Rudy

Peter Walker
 October 15, 2001
 Provo, Utah

Personal Narrative

Peter and the Gang

Informant Data:

Age: 23 Gender: Male
 Place of Birth: Salt Lake City, Utah
 Home Region: Salt Lake City, Utah
 Ethnicity: Caucasian
 Religion: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
 Relation to Collector: Friend

Occupation/Avocation: Peter works as a tour guide at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, where he is also a student. He is an English major with a minor in Art and Humanities. He reported he likes art, basketball, Ping-Pong, Star Trek, baseball, and conversation.

Other: Besides his parents, Peter has three sisters and three brothers, all of whom, he noted, are “wacky and weird, just like me.” He also served a mission for the LDS church in St. Petersburg, Russia, and has a self-proclaimed disdain for Osama Bin Ladin. Because Peter is an English major, he may have already taken a folklore class, which may be why he chose this specific story.

Social: The collector invited residents of her apartment complex over for a story telling session on October 15, 2001. She told the informants that she was doing a folklore collection and asked them to come prepared to offer a story. The only parameters she gave the members of the group were that the stories have an automobile in it. The informants then took turns listening and telling stories for about an hour. The informants recited their stories into a tape recorder in the apartment of the collector. The people in the story-telling session all knew each other previously, and some lived in the same apartment and had known each other for years.

Cultural: Capitol Hill is a neighborhood in Salt Lake City, Utah. Headlights are located at the front of a vehicle and are turned on from dusk until dawn to allow drivers to see the road. James Bond is a movie character from the 1960s and 70s. His movies generally involved a lot of stunt work and the breaking down of international terrorist groups.

Item: (Transcribed from a recorded story-telling session of which Peter was a participant).

So, I live in Salt Lake, North Salt Lake, I live on Capital Hill, most of my friends live in the avenues, I am spending a Friday night at my friends house, just hanging out, I was unfortunately growing up, one of the few people that had curfew and I found I needed to go home and so get in my car, and there is a canyon, city creek canyon, that connects the avenue and its one way street and its a one-way street, and I am going across the canyon, and its like a loop and a car comes the wrong way without its lights on. I sure you have all heard of the folklore of if a car has his lights off and you flash him, that's a gang initiation? I flashed him to let him know that not only were his lights off, but he was going the wrong direction on a

one-way canyon. So his break lights come on and starts to turn around, and I am thinking; that's great, he has realized he is going the wrong way and I leave the canyon and flip a u-ie up this street to my neighborhood. The first thing I thought as kind weird was the guy runs the stop sign and does this James Bond turnaround and it took him a while to turn around, so I had some good distance on him so he was following me up this residential street and so I couldn't go home cuz I didn't want him following 'em home and shooting up my house and so I start going like a billion miles an hour, and every time I turn, I see him turn, so we've got this high speed chase thing going on, and I get to my street, pull into my drive way, flip off my lights and fortunately there are these bushes, so I kind of crouch down and look out my window and he missed me, he didn't find me, but it was a little disconcerting.

Collector's Name: Mary Aldred
Age: 21 Gender: Female
Date Submitted: November 27, 2001
Professor's Name: Dr. Jill Rudy

Kerlinda Biggers
 October 15, 2001
 Provo, Utah

Personal Narrative

Car Stories

Informant Data:

Age: 19 Gender: Female
 Place of Birth: Twin Falls, Idaho
 Home Region: Murtaugh, Idaho
 Ethnicity: Caucasian
 Religion: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
 Relation to Collector: Friend

Occupation/Avocation: Kerlinda is an open major at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. She reported she enjoys singing, playing the clarinet, tending young children, swimming, basketball, volleyball, and scrap booking.

Other: Kerlinda is from a family of six. She has one older brother and two young sisters. She is self-described as always begin happy and smiling.

Social: The collector invited residents of her apartment complex over for a story telling session on October 15, 2001. She told the informants that she was doing a folklore collection and asked them to come prepared to offer a story. The only parameters she gave the members of the group were that the stories have an automobile in it. The informants then took turns listening and telling stories for about an hour. The informants recited their stories into a tape recorder in the apartment of the collector. The people in the story-telling session all knew each other previously, having lived in the same apartment and known each other for years.

Cultural: Seminary is a religious instruction class for high school-aged LDS people. The classes are typically every weekday for four years and begin early in the morning so they will not interfere with school and evening activities.

Item: (Transcribed from a recorded story-telling session of which Kerlinda was a participant).

O.K. so I was like a junior in high school or somethin' and I had early morning seminary, so it was like 7 in the morning and we had just got out of seminary and I had to get a ride to the school because it was like a couple miles or something. I got a ride with this girl in this huge van that she had, that didn't have any seats in it, so we got to the school O.K. and we're siting in front of the school, cuz there's whole bunch of people pilin' out and we um, I guess she thought that everyone was out of the car, but I was the last to go, so I was still in there and I was gonna get out and I kind of jumped and rolled when I got up to see if anyone was looking and everyone was kinda laughing at me, but it was kind of fun, and all day at school everyone was like" yea she did a combat roll out of the van this morning" and I was like "yeah."

Collector's Name: Mary Aldred
 Age: 21 Gender: Female
 Date Submitted: November 27, 2001
 Professor's Name: Dr. Jill Rudy

Leah Marie Pickren
 October 15, 2001
 Provo, Utah

Personal Narrative

Car stories

Informant Data:

Age: 23 Gender: Female

Place of Birth:

Home Region: none (The informant states she moved around a lot, but for the past several years, she has been living in Provo as a student.)

Ethnicity: Caucasian

Religion: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Relation to Collector: Friend

Occupation/Avocation: Leah is a Classical Civilizations major at Brigham Young University and is preparing to enter law school. She also lists reading, comedy, music, politics, and “fun stuff” as her hobbies.

Other: Leah describes herself as “darn funny.” Her family consists of her mother, who is a voice teacher; her father, who is a computer engineer; a sister, and; a brother. Leah is interested in going to law school and is known as one of the most direct people in the apartment complex where she lives. People that know Leah attest to her quick wit and direct approach.

Social: The collector invited residents of her apartment complex over for a story telling session on October 15, 2001. She told the informants that she was doing a folklore collection and asked them to come prepared to offer a story. The only parameters she gave the members of the group were that the stories have an automobile in it. The informants then took turns listening and telling stories for about an hour. The informants recited their stories into a tape recorder in the apartment of the collector. The people in the story-telling session all knew each other previously, and some lived in the same apartment and had know each other for years.

Cultural: Oregon is a state notorious fro stopping and ticking traffic violators, and Leah noted she was stopped on the way back from the same trip in Oregon. Police cars are typically white in many parts of the country. The “needle” is part of the dial on the dashboard of the car that tells a driver his or her speed. Portland is the largest city in Oregon and is right on the border between Oregon and Washington.

Item: (Transcribed from a recorded story-telling session of which Leah was a participant).

This happened to me once when parents were living in Washington and I was driving ho home for Thanksgiving Break, which is a really long drive. They were living in Maple Valley, Washington and we did not take any stops along the way and it was like takin’ us about 15 hours because of the weather and stuff and I was driving forever and ever and ever, and we were just outside of Portland, and we had about two hours, left, and it was approximately 2 in the morning and I was going about 104. My needle only goes to 110 and I was going to try to keep it under 105. I was just cruising and there was a white car up ahead

and it was in the right hand lane and it was pretty far up there and I decided to get into the right hand lane. And it wasn't until I got up there that I could see next to this car and was like, "yeah, that's a cop." See, I have heard cops say before that if you are going fast and slow down, I will pull you over, but if you are going fast enough that I don't care to chase you, I will let you go by. On the chance, this cop felt this way, I just kept going and this cop did not chase me.

Collector's Name: Mary Aldred
Age: 21 Gender: Female
Date Submitted: November 27, 2001
Professor's Name: Dr. Jill Rudy

Erik Moss
 October 15, 2001
 Provo, Utah

Personal Narrative

The Triple Accident

Informant Data:

Age: 23 Gender: Male
 Place of Birth: Livonia, Michigan
 Home Region: Livonia, Michigan
 Ethnicity: Caucasian
 Religion: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
 Relation to Collector: Friend

Occupation/Avocation: Erik is a Management Information Systems major at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. He also likes camping, basketball, volleyball, cooking, eating, and reading.

Other: Erik is from a family of five children. He describes himself as “tall, dark and handsome.” He really is tall. Eric noted the car he was driving had a V-8 engine, which are known for their performance, and could still exceed 75 miles per hour.

Social: The collector invited residents of her apartment complex over for a story telling session on October 15, 2001. She told the informants that she was doing a folklore collection and asked them to come prepared to offer a story. The only parameters she gave the members of the group was that the story have an automobile in it. The informants then took turns listening and telling stories for about an hour. The informants recited their stories into a tape recorder in the apartment of the collector. The people in the story-telling session all knew each other previously, and some lived in the same apartment and had know each other for years.

Cultural: Ricks College is owned and operated by the LDS church. It has since changed its name to BYU-Idaho. The first year at college is called the “Freshman Year.” Idaho Falls is about 45 minutes or so from Rexburg where BYU-Idaho is located. A 1979 LTD is a type of car. “Turning the wheel” refers to the steering wheel, not the wheels of the car on the outside. “Overcorrecting” occurs when a driver move the steering wheel too fast. It can cause the car to out of control, especially in hazardous weather conditions. When a car is “totaled,” it means is can no longer be driven.

Item: (Transcribed from a taped story-telling session of which Eric was a part.)

I was in my freshman year of college, over at Ricks College in Rexburg Idaho, and I was driving my brother and his girlfriend home to Idaho Falls. I was chauffeuring them, so they were in the back seat and I was in the front. It was raining in Idaho Falls, so the roads were icy, but I didn't know that. So I turn the wheel a little more than I wanted to and I overcorrected, then I overcorrected again and we ended up spinning onto the should of the road in fact. So, uh, half was on the shoulder of the road, and half was on the grass. So, I said, “hey you guys O.K.?” and right as I said it, someone plowed into our trunk. We were driving a '79 LTD too, so nothing was damaged except the trunk and he was getting stuff checkout

and writing out paper work n stuff. And then someone hits the cop car, and the cop car spins around and hits my car. We drove home and the other car was totaled.

Collector's Name: Mary Aldred
Age: 21 Gender: Female
Date Submitted: November 27, 2001
Professor's Name: Dr. Jill Rudy

Jennifer Rebecca Williamson
 Provo, UT
 October 15, 2001

Personal Narrative
 Wrong Way Brother

Informant Data:

Age: 20 Gender: Female
 Birthplace: Seattle, Washington
 Home Region: Albuquerque, New Mexico
 Religion: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
 Relation to Collector: Roommate of two years.

Occupation/Avocation: Student at Brigham Young University. Jenny worked this summer as a lab technician/intern for Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque. Has also worked for Godfather's Pizza and AAA New Mexico in Albuquerque. Any kind of sporting, and she is an avid reader and writer. Every once and a while she said she does some form of visual arts project.

Other: Jenny makes funny videos with her friends and goes hot-tubbing with the roommates every chance she gets. She also tells a lot of stories about her five brothers. She is the youngest in her family and the only girl.

Social: The collector invited residents of her apartment complex over for a story telling session on October 15, 2001. She told the informants that she was doing a folklore collection and asked them to come prepared to offer a story. The only parameters she gave the members of the group were that the stories have an automobile in it. The informants then took turns listening and telling stories for about an hour. The informants recited their stories into a tape recorder in the apartment of the collector. The people in the story-telling session all knew each other previously, and some lived in the same apartment and had known each other for years. Jenny told the story after hearing Meggan tell her story about getting out of a ticket by going to the police officer's window. She said this story happened to her brother, as she is a very non-eventful driver.

Cultural: Ricks College is owned and operated by the LDS church. It has since changed its name to BYU-Idaho. Dr. Pepper and RC are cola drinks that contain caffeine, which is a stimulant people can ingest in order to avoid falling asleep. Jenny's comment about the "Utah cop" is significant because Utah contains a high concentration of LDS people, and the tenets of the LDS faith discourage losing one's temper and using swear words. "Bleepedy bleep" is an expression to cover up what really was an execration on the part of the officer.

Item: (Transcribed from a tape from a story-telling session of which Jenny was a part).

My brother was driving back from Ricks College in Idaho, and we live in Albuquerque, so that's a long drive and it he loaded up on Dr. Pepper and RC and thought he would make the trip all at once. So, it's about 3 in the morning and my brother doesn't have much experience driving because he has a seizure condition that later on they deiced would prevent him from driving, but this is before that happened. He is driving, he is kind of a scary guy was 3 in the

morning and they were on a two-lane highway and he hadn't noticed that it merged into one lane going one way, and he noticed a car off in the distance that was stopped and he just pulled onto the left lane, and so he pulled around this lane and he ended up driving on the wrong side of the freeway. He almost hit the cop, who was stopped on the side of the road, this cop starts chasing my brother and he has ya know, his hands on the top of the steering wheel, trying to be good. He thought he was going to get a ticket for speeding or something. All of a sudden this huge light passes through the window and he's staring down the barrel of a nine-millimeter, the girl next to him just lost it. The guy yanks him out of the car and starts frisking him and he still has his gun out and he yelling, "are trying to kill me bleepeddy bleep?" you know, Utah cop. And finally he's like "Sir, I didn't notice it merged into a one-lane each way and I am really sorry, and will you please stop pointing your gun at me and take me out of these cuffs and everything?" So finally he did, and that is his scary story.

Collector's Name: Mary Aldred
Age: 21 Gender: Female
Date Submitted: November 27, 2001
Professor's Name: Dr. Jill Rudy

Jennifer Rebecca Williamson
 Provo, UT
 October 15, 2001

Personal Narrative
 Car stories

Informant Data:

Age: 20 Gender: Female
 Birthplace: Seattle, Washington
 Home Region: Albuquerque, New Mexico
 Religion: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
 Relation to Collector: Roommate of two years.

Occupation/Avocation: Student at Brigham Young University. Jenny worked this summer as a lab technician/intern for Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque. Has also worked for Godfather's Pizza and AAA New Mexico in Albuquerque. Any kind of sporting, and she is an avid reader and writer. Every once and a while she said she does some form of visual arts project.

Other: Jenny makes funny videos with her friends and goes hot-tubbing with the roommates every chance she gets. She also tells a lot of stories about her family, especially her five older brothers. She is the only girl.

Social: The collector invited residents of her apartment complex over for a story telling session on October 15, 2001. She told the informants that she was doing a folklore collection and asked them to come prepared to offer a story. The only parameters she gave the members of the group were that the stories have an automobile in it. The informants then took turns listening and telling stories for about an hour. The informants recited their stories into a tape recorder in the apartment of the collector. The people in the story-telling session all knew each other previously, and some lived in the same apartment and had known each other for years. Jenny told a story about her older brother and her roommates asked her to tell this story about herself, as they had heard it before.

Cultural: The "Hells Angels" are a gang of people on motorcycles who commit crimes. The term has come to be slang for any band of hoodlums.

Item: (Transcribed from the tape of a story session of which Jenny was a part.)

I was at home this summer and I was visiting my brother who lives in an apartment complex a couple miles from my house and he didn't have a car and so I would drove him home like late at night. And after I dropped him off, I was in my mom's big minivan and so I turn right onto the street and the light was read and I saw two car headlights in the distance. It turns out, they weren't car headlights, they were two bikers like two in front, I and guess they were cruising or something and I pulled out in front of them and it wasn't like dangerous or anything but they were going sixty in a forty and they caught up to me and I guess I made them mad. They were these hug burly guys with like scantily clad women on the back of their bikes and they have me at a dead stop in the middle of the 40 mile an hour street and they

were just like looking at me and honking at me and so I thought about just running them over, because I was in a minivan and um, they just eventually started going again and we got going about 5 and eventually I turned and got on the street again. SO that is my encounter with the Hells Angels.

Collector's Name: Mary Aldred
Age: 21 Gender: Female
Date Submitted: November 27, 2001
Professor's Name: Dr. Jill Rudy

Jennifer Rebecca Williamson
 Provo, UT
 October 15, 2001

Personal Narrative
 Car stories

Informant Data:

Age: 20 Gender: Female
 Birthplace: Seattle, Washington
 Home Region: Albuquerque, New Mexico
 Religion: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
 Relation to Collector: Roommate of two years.

Occupation/Avocation: Student at Brigham Young University. Jenny worked this summer as a lab technician/intern for Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque. Has also worked for Godfather's Pizza and AAA New Mexico in Albuquerque. Any kind of sporting, and she is an avid reader and writer. Every once and a while she said she does some form of visual arts project.

Other: Jenny makes funny videos with her friends and goes hot-tubbing with the roommates every chance she gets. She also tells a lot of stories about her family, especially her five older brothers. She is the only girl.

Social: The collector invited residents of her apartment complex over for a story telling session on October 15, 2001. She told the informants that she was doing a folklore collection and asked them to come prepared to offer a story. The only parameters she gave the members of the group were that the stories have an automobile in it. The informants then took turns listening and telling stories for about an hour. The informants recited their stories into a tape recorder in the apartment of the collector. The people in the story-telling session all knew each other previously, and some lived in the same apartment and had known each other for years. Before sharing this incident, Jenny has told several other stories. This was her last one of the evening.

Cultural: Jenny said this story was about her brother Jimmy and his friend Mitchell, she calls them "dumb" and "dumber" just to give you an idea of some of the crazy stuff they do. "They always just go frolicking together," she said. New Mexico has a high population of Mexican immigrants. A "joint" is a rolled up weed of marijuana for smoking. Members of the LDS faith are sometimes called "Mormons" and they are noted by those who are not LDS for their abstention from using mind-altering substances such as marijuana, alcohol, and tobacco.

Item: (Transcribed from a tape of a story-telling session of which Jenny was a part.)

So, it was in the middle of winter and they went up to this place called Cuba, New Mexico and its in the mountains and Mitchell had this old truck hat barely ran, and they took it winter camping. On the way back, they decided to come back early cuz there was like this snowstorm and it was like white out conditions and they decided to come back early so they wouldn't get stuck. This truck slid off the road and they spent a couple of house trying to get it out, but they couldn't, they were scared they were going to die and they started walking

down this road and they said all the sudden, this big four-wheel drive truck pulls up, and there were these two guys in there from Cuba, and most of the people from Cuba are Mexican and they rolled down their window and all this smoke pours out of the window were like "Hey man, want a ride?" and so they get in, and they said there were all these like butts everywhere and beer cans, and they pass this joint back there, and they're like "hey man, wanna smoke?" and they are like "no, that's okay?" and then later they passed back a can of beer, and they were like "no, no, that's okay, and so they drive a little further, and they are like "hey, man, want a cigarette?" and they are like "no, that's okay," and then they said "hey man, what are you, Mormons?" They didn't say anything, but they got back to town safety and they were okay.

Collector's Name: Mary Aldred
Age: 21 Gender: Female
Date Submitted: November 27, 2001
Professor's Name: Dr. Jill Rudy

Jenny Ricks
 October 15, 2001
 Provo, Utah

Personal Narrative

Late night Law Encounter

Informant data:

Age: 20 Gender: Female
 Place of Birth: Boise, Idaho
 Home Region: Boise, Idaho
 Ethnicity: Caucasian
 Religion: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
 Relation to Collector: Roommate of almost two years

Occupation/Avocation: Student at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, majoring in Audiology and Speech/Language Pathology. Hobbies include climbing, music, dancing, reading, watching British movies, weightlifting, wakeboarding, and water-skiing.

Other: While in high school, Jenny had a car for one year exclusively. She only had a car by myself for one year when she was a junior. Before her sister got married, she got the car, when she goes home for summer Spencer, her brother has a car and she does not have a car, so she says she “gets the bum end of the deal.” There are six kids, and Jenny is the fifth.

Social: The collector invited residents of her apartment complex over for a story telling session on October 15, 2001. She told the informants that she was doing a folklore collection and asked them to come prepared to offer a story. The only parameters she gave the members of the group were that the stories have an automobile in it. The informants then took turns listening and telling stories for about an hour. The informants recited their stories into a tape recorder in the apartment of the collector. The people in the story-telling session all knew each other previously, and some lived in the same apartment and had know each other for years. Jenny was the first to tell her story.

Cultural: Stoplights are devices used to control traffic flow. When a driver encounters a “red” light, he or she is supposed to stop. A “green” light is the signal to drive without stopping, or to continue if the driver was halted by a red light.

Item: (Transcribed from the tape of a story session in which Jenny was a part.)

O.K., I have a car story. I think I was at my friends house and it was really late, like one so and there was this one street, and there’ no like, light. Um, so I was driving down the street it was really dark and I so I was really tired and I was speeding, really fast and this car behind me was totally tailing me and I had to keep on speeding up and he would not get off my tail. I am like get off my back I finally got to this one stoplight where I can go straight and he could turn right and totally cut me off. And so he went in that light and I was like who is that guy, and I looked over and it was a cop, in a black cop car. He did not stop me and I think I would have complained that he was tailing me and that is why I was speeding.

Collector's Name: Mary Aldred
Age: 21 Gender: Female
Date Submitted: November 27, 2001
Professor's Name: Dr. Jill Rudy

Kerlinda Biggers
 October 15, 2001
 Provo, Utah

Personal Narrative

Car Stories

Informant Data:

Age: 19

Place of Birth: Twin Falls, Idaho

Home Region: Murtaugh, Idaho

Ethnicity: Caucasian

Religion: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Relation to Collector: Friend

Occupation/Avocation: Kerlinda is an open major at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. She reported she enjoys singing, playing the clarinet, tending young children, swimming, basketball, volleyball, and scrap booking.

Other: Kerlinda is from a family of six. She has one older brother and two young sisters. She is self-described as always begin happy and smiling.

Social: The collector invited residents of her apartment complex over for a story telling session on October 15, 2001. She told the informants that she was doing a folklore collection and asked them to come prepared to offer a story. The only parameters she gave the members of the group were that the stories have an automobile in it. The informants then took turns listening and telling stories for about an hour. The informants recited their stories into a tape recorder in the apartment of the collector. The people in the story-telling session all knew each other previously, and some lived in the same apartment and had known each other for years.

Cultural: Camarros are manufactured by the Ford automobile company and are considered high performance automobiles. According to Kerlinda, this particular incident occurred at night.

Item: (Transcribed from a recorded story-telling session of which Kerlinda was a participant).

I was just 16 and I had just gotten my new car, its like an Eagle Talon, so I was pretty exited and I kinda lied it, I think I had gone on a date with this guy, he was my ex-boyfriend at the time and he wanted to go out on a date and I was trying to be nice to him and do the "friends" thing, it doesn't work. So, we went out. He had a Camarro, and I really didn't want to see him that much, so I had taken my car as well, so we just met at the movie theater, and we were coming home, I left the movie theater and he pulled out behind me, he followed me, and I am like "this is not the way to his house, I don't want him following me," so I start speeding up, so once I got out of the city I was started bookin' it. I was going like 100. I am going to see how fast thing goes, and plus I want to get away from here. I thought he was going to turn off somewhere, but he didn't and then I took a really dusty road, and he told me later he almost crashed. He was so mad at me, but he followed me home just to make sure I got home okay.

Collector's Name: Mary Aldred
Age: 21 Gender: Female
Date Submitted: November 27, 2001
Professor's Name: Dr. Jill Rudy