

Brigham Young University

LDS Missionary Poop Stories

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English 391

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## 1. Autobiographical Sketch

When I was 14 years old, I was sitting in my 8th grade English class, listening as the substitute teacher told us stories from his mission. He had only recently returned from serving in Mexico and was still very passionate about sharing all of his experiences with everyone he met — so much so that we hardly learned anything about English. While he was upfront, he made a statement that I will never forget: “You’re not a true missionary unless you poop your pants.” Naturally, we were all incredulous when we heard this. It couldn’t be that common that missionaries pooped their pants...was it? But he assured us that it was, then, he went on to tell us about the time that he pooped his pants on his mission, and then tricked his companion into cleaning the soiled trousers.

Since this experience, I have been unusually fascinated by missionary poop stories. Like most Americans, I find poop stories to be hilarious, and I continue to wonder just how common it is for missionaries to poop their pants. Before I even began this project, I had already collected a number of missionary poop stories. Through the years, I’ve found that the blanket statement, “You’re not a true missionary unless you poop your pants,” is of course not true. However, it *is* true that *many* missionaries do have some sort of poop story, whether it be having to relieve themselves on the street, having an accident on their bike, knocking on random doors in a neighborhood trying to find an available toilet, or just having a terrible reaction to the local food. Interestingly enough, there is only one way that our culture has approved of disposing of poop, and any other way that contradicts the traditional method of sitting on a toilet is, well, just utterly shocking to even think about.

This genre became particularly special to me when I went out on my mission in Bolivia and had numerous bowel movements that allowed me to become a participant in the very genre that has fascinated me for so long. Since then, I have only become even more obsessed with these stories. Learning about what others have gone through is cathartic, funny, and makes the subject matter less embarrassing — because let's be honest, as funny as poop is, it also really is a personal tragedy when you can't control your bladder.

As a returned missionary with an extremely jaw-dropping poop story, I have found that sharing my own experience with others also creates a rather interesting bonding moment, where I am vulnerable and trust others with something so personal and intimate (yes, poop is intimate. How many people have you seen poop? Precisely.) Poop stories have become more than just a funny genre, and as I continue to hear more stories I am constantly delighted with what I learn about others, their experiences, and also what our relationship must mean to them because they were so willing to share such a personal story with me.

## 2. Analysis

Are LDS Missionary Poop stories actually considered folklore?

There are several features prevalent in LDS missionary poop stories that I believe qualifies this genre to be considered folklore. First of all, all the stories I collected were either personal experience narratives (P.E.N.s), friend of a friend stories (F.O.A.F.s), or contemporary legends that had been passed around among missionaries. These three different formats are all classified as folklore. All of these stories also contained various validating formulas, where the contributor was either able to identify who told the story, where it took place, or how they heard of it. “This story is about my trainer,” “So this is the story of a friend of mine,” and “this is the story of one of my favorite companions” are some examples.

Additionally, there is great variation in the type of poop story that is shared. There are many different ways that pooping can go wrong, and I was privileged to hear several of these ways. In many stories, the missionary accidentally pooped his pants. In other stories, the missionary barely made it in time to the bathroom, or was forced to relieve themselves in a less than dignified area. It was also interesting to note that a few of these missionary poop stories were about missionaries with either preexisting medical conditions that lead them to having to use the bathroom frequently, like the Elder with a sensitive gallbladder and the Sister who developed a bladder issue in the Missionary Training Center.

While there is great variability in each poop story there are also some common themes that tie the whole genre together. For example, each story must contain poop in some form. There must also be an incident which takes place that puts the main character in each story in an awkward or embarrassing position. In many stories, the inciting incident is that the missionary eats something that upsets their stomach and gives them the runs, leading them to have to find a

place to relieve themselves as soon as possible. This is the case with the faulty gallbladder missionary story, the sister missionary who uses the sex offender's bathroom, and even the missionary who takes a dump in a trash can, to name a few.

All these stories are also time sensitive. They must happen during one's mission, when the person is usually between 18-21 years old (sometimes older, but that is the average age for LDS missionaries, male and female). After the incident has happened, the experience is mostly only shared with other missionaries, returned missionaries, or close friends and family, and usually only when the topic is brought up (I am an anomaly to this — I like talking about poop all the time and I'm usually the one who introduces the subject). From my own personal experience, I have found that RMs will begin exchanging poop stories naturally when they meet up and start talking about their missions. Food usually is the reason why many missionaries have incidents, and food is also a common conversation topic that segways easily into poop.

Though I collected many of my stories over email due to constraints, these stories are really mostly told orally, face to face. This is also an important aspect of folklore. You could say that sharing these stories is also part of a social act, where it helps to connect listeners and storytellers and allows them to deepen their relationship by sharing such intimate information.

Sharing these stories with one another also serves several purposes. If we look at William Bascom's four functions of folklore, we see the missionary poop stories fulfill several of those functions. First, missionary poop stories are amusing. They are hilarious, they are embarrassing, and you get such a good reaction out of others when you share them. I believe these stories are even educational to some extent. For example, a young audience that has yet to serve missions are learning what the lifestyle of a missionary is like, how the food and culture will affect them, what to do (or not to do) if you feel like you're about to have an accident, and understanding just

what kind of sacrifices you really are making when you devote yourself to becoming a missionary.

Weirdly enough, I also believe that these stories validate missionary culture. As I stated in my autobiographical sketch, I was previously told that every missionary has a poop story. While that isn't 100% true, many missionaries do have a poop story or have heard of one. If that is the case, you feel like you belong to this special group, and like you really had every sort of experience that you could while you were out serving your mission. You had the best things happen to you, and the absolute worst. Some missionaries may argue that you don't need to have a poop story to feel like you had a fulfilling mission, and that is true. However, I do believe that those who have had incidents really do find some sort of glee in being part of this elite subgroup of missionaries. Each time I asked if someone had a missionary poop story that they could share with me, my contributor would always smile and happily share their tale with me.

Eleanor Long identified four different types of storytellers when it came to folklore, but I believe that all of the stories I collected were told to me in the integrator fashion where the storyteller tries to stay as true to the original story as possible. The reason I believe this is because most if not all of the stories were somehow based on fact, being either personal experience narratives or F.O.A.F.s. When you are closely related to the original storyteller, there is greater motivation to retell the story just like how you heard it. Since one or two of my collected items could arguably be contemporary legends, there is a greater possibility that those stories have been elaborated on a bit more than the others, but for the most part I believe they are still integrators.

As I perused through the William A. Wilson Folklore Archive, I found many student projects, personal experience narratives, and supernatural religious legends that focused on

missionaries and their experiences. However, it did come to my attention that none of these highlighted the bowel problems that many missionaries face, an experience that is not too pleasant but is still relatively common. I asked myself why that was the case. Were poop stories too embarrassing to share? Is it, perhaps, too crass a subject matter to be deemed worthy of sharing? Was it possible that simply no one dared to ask such personal questions and that people are wary of having their poop stories immortalized forever? Surely, I told myself, missionary poop stories must be considered folklore!

As I hunted for such stories, I was disappointed to come up empty handed. However, I did come across one student project by Travis Hoyt from 2016, where he collected folktales from Mormon missionaries. Among his stories collected, I found one that caught my attention:

When I was a trainer in Brazil there was a prank we used to do to new missionaries.

There's this word in Portuguese called "fartar" which means to be satisfied like if you're done eating you can say "farte" I'm satisfied, done eating. Anyway, that sounds kind of like another word in English that we are all familiar with. And this poor little greenie Elder didn't know Portuguese super well so we'd take him to the member's house and as he got done with his plate we'd ask him, Elder, farto? And he of course would say no way I would never do that so the members hearing that would then serve him another plate full of food. (Hoyt, pg. 15)

The fart joke in this story was not lost on me, and taught me that in addition to all the lovely spiritual experiences one has on their mission, poop humor also comes into play. Of course, fart jokes are not nearly as gross as full on poop stories, but I felt encouraged to pursue this subject matter nevertheless.



As I wrap up my project, I have made several conclusions. First, missionary poop stories are in fact folklore. The types of stories that are shared, the settings that they are shared in, the manner they are shared, and the functions of such stories are met with the poop story genre. All criteria is met completely. Understandably, it may not seem to most people the missionary poop stories are folklore because so many of these stories are in fact true, but to quote my professor, just because it's folklore doesn't mean it's not true, and just because it's true doesn't mean it's not folklore.

Second, while every missionary may not have a poop story, these stories are still part of missionary culture and illustrate the various types of experiences a missionary may have while serving the Lord. While LDS missionaries are their own folk group, there are still many sub-folk groups with that. Such groups could include specific missions, zones, districts, foreign language speaking missionaries, and so on. So if all these different missionary sub-folk groups exist, why can't there be a sub-folk group for missionaries with horrendous poop stories? These missionaries certainly find camaraderie amongst each other and their stories.

Finally, the stories serve to amuse listeners and allow groups to become more intimate with one another. I did mention earlier that these stories can also fulfill other functions of folklore, but more than anything else I believe that they are meant to amuse people — and they do it so well. Though these stories are awkward and embarrassing, everytime I have heard one of these stories I have laughed and so has everyone around me. These stories lead to bonding and connection in the weirdest, most wonderful way. It's the sort of story that takes acquaintances to friends, and friends to family.

## Sister missionary uses sex offender's bathroom

Angela Wise  
November 28, 2020  
Vineyard, Utah

Genre: Contemporary legend

Title of item: Sister missionary uses sex offender's bathroom

Contributor Data

Name: Angela Wise

Gender: Female

Birthplace: Utah

Home region: Orem, Utah

Contributor's age at the time of collection: 27

Contributor's relationship to collector: Friend

Occupations and/or avocations: Office job

Ethnicity and/or country of ancestor's origins: American, European ancestry

Religion: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Social Data: This story was collected through Facebook messenger. The collector contacted the contributor and asked if she had any missionary poop stories that she could share. The contributor and collector were good friends so while the questions was a bit out of the blue, the contributor responded quickly with a story that she had heard of before. The setting was quite casual.

Cultural Data: LDS missionaries are sometimes assigned special roles to play while serving a mission. Their roles are given certain responsibilities and help keep everything organized. At the end of this story, the sister's call their district leader, a missionary who has been placed in charge of a group of other missionaries. He is responsible for teaching these missionaries, leading discussions when they have their weekly meetings, and serving in others ways that may be needed. Missionaries also have strict rules to follow, including that they cannot be alone with members of the opposite sex, hence why the sisters in this story felt the need to call their district leader to explain that they had accidentally broken a very strict rule.

Collection and Transcription Methods: This story was collected via Facebook messenger. Small edits were made with the grammar to help clarify some points and also replace typos.

Text:

One that comes to mind was another missionary's story. Two sister missionaries, I'll call sister A and Sister B, were out knocking on doors and they didn't have a car [so] they were using buses. Sister A had to go to the bathroom super bad and she thought she could hold it. But she then realized that for lunch she had eaten some curry and it was not sitting well with her. So she realized she was sweating and she either was going to fart or shart so they started walking faster. Sister B didn't know at first what was going on but then noticed that sister A was walking really stiff and sweating. So she caught on and they both started speed walking to find a grocery [store] or public restroom. They rounded a corner and realized they were still in a neighborhood so

sister A started to panic. She looked around at the houses and in her haste, she picked the first house she saw. Sister A didn't realize it at the time but she had picked the scariest looking house on the street. So sister B was [hesitant] to go up to the house. Sister A knocked on the door and a middle-aged man in a wife-beater and super gross looking answers the door. He actually looked a little drunk according to Sister B. Sister A just flat out asked if she could use his bathroom and it was an emergency. The man didn't seem to understand at first but just nodded and let her in. He pointed to the bathroom up some stairs and Sister A took off. The man invited Sister B to wait inside and she didn't know what to do so she stepped inside to wait and the man closed the door. The house was disgusting and a pigsty. Sister B got really nervous and started getting scared to be there. The man started talking to her so she decided to explain their situation a bit more. She explained they were missionaries and they couldn't find a public restroom in time. She thanked him and apologized for Sister A's abruptness.

Meanwhile, sister A was in the bathroom and she was horrified to learn that there wasn't enough toilet paper. She looked everywhere and couldn't find any. She also now saw that she had released a toxic cloud in the bathroom. She soon started to see how disgusting the house was and realized in horror that some towels were on the ground and looked like they had been used as toilet paper. So she looked and looked for actual toilet paper but couldn't find any and finally gave in and found the somewhat cleanest but still dirty towel she could find and used it. She got up and left but realized the toxic cloud was still in the air so she cracked open the bathroom window and found some cologne bottles and started spraying everything with it. Finally, she left and met with sister B who was looking very uncomfortable. So they thanked the man and he started asking more questions about what they did. They felt more and more that they needed to leave so they wrote the Elder's number on a pamphlet and gave it to him and explained they had an appointment to get to.

When they got outside and sister A finally realized how completely sketchy the man's house was she felt horrible for leaving sister B alone but not so bad for stinking up his bathroom. She explained what she had to do in the bathroom and they were both mortified. They also had broken MANY rules doing this so they called their district leader (the same phone number they gave the man) and explained what happened. They felt really bad and wanted to warn him as well about the man.

Cut to a month later they were talking about the experience with some members and when they explained the man and his location they were shown a newspaper article. They had been in the house of a man named Scotty Thompson who was a known sex offender and was now wanted for arrest for breaching his parole.

Submitted by: Amanda Ius, 23, Female  
 Fall 2020, English 391  
 Eric Eliason  
 Submitted on: November 28, 2020

## Sister missionary bowel problems

Breanna Fox  
 November 27, 2020  
 Vineyard, Utah

Genre: Contemporary legend

Title of item: Sister missionary bowel problems

Contributor Data

Name: Breanna Fox

Gender: Female

Birthplace: Utah

Home region: Vineyard, Utah

Contributor's age at the time of collection: 25

Contributor's relationship to collector: Friend

Occupations and/or avocations: Vet tech

Ethnicity and/or country of ancestor's origins: American, European ancestry

Religion: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Social Data: This story was collected in person and was recorded with a voice recorder at the time. The contributor and her husband came over to my house for a doggy play date (we let our dogs play together inside because it is too cold at the moment to go outside). This sort of setting has happened many times before, and is a very friendly, casual environment. While chatting, I mentioned that I was doing this project and was collecting missionary poop stories and was curious if they had any stories to share. Breanna volunteered this story, and after telling it the first time, I asked if I could hear it again and this time record it.

Cultural Data: LDS missionaries first begin their missions inside the Missionary Training Center where they are taught the rules, how to teach lessons, and also receive language lessons if they are serving in a foreign country. Their time in the Missionary Training Center can range from 3 to 9 weeks, depending on where they have been assigned to serve. Should something happen to a missionary at any time in their mission that makes it difficult for them to serve, they may be reassigned or sent home. After their time in the Missionary Training Center (MTC), a missionary then flies out to their mission where they meet their first companion, referred to as their trainer. The trainer has the responsibility of teaching the new missionary all the rules, how to be obedient, how to teach effectively, listen to the spirit, and learn the language.

Collection and Transcription Methods: This story was collected in person and recorded via a voice recorder on my cell phone. The story was later transcribed with small edits made in the grammar for clarification. "Ums" and "ahs" were edited out.

Text:

Okay, so this story is about my trainer, and when she was in the MTC she started to get a cough. So her companion at the time, they didn't get along really well, and she was pushing my trainer to go see the mission nurse — or I guess the MTC nurse — and my trainer didn't really want to do that. She was like, "it's a mild cough, it's probably a mild cold, not a big deal." But, finally,

after some heated discussions, they finally decided to go to the MTC nurse and get some medicine. So they did that, and then a short time after that my trainer starts to have some diarrhea problems, and she starts having to go to the bathroom pretty frequently, and then it starts to get worse, and worse, and to the point where she can't actually hold it and she's constantly, just like, dropping and running to the bathroom. And they were even in the middle of a prayer — I can't remember if it was a prayer with an investigator at the MTC or a prayer just with her district — but she was saying it, and she just flat out stopped and ran to the bathroom and barely made it on time. She's getting to the point where she couldn't even make it through the full night without having to get up to go to the bathroom and it got worse and worse to the point where she was just going to the bathroom like every 10 minutes or so, she just could not leave it, and she couldn't hold it, it was just one of those bad diarrheas where you can't hold it. So they go back to the nurse to figure out what's wrong and it turns out that the nurse gave her the wrong medicine and it is stripping the lining of her stomach. That is why it is just constantly coming out. And so, poor girl, they figured that out and tried to fix it but unfortunately, they're about to head to Germany pretty soon and they said they "can't send her to Germany if this problem doesn't get under control," cause how is she supposed to last a 10-hour flight with diarrhea problems? And so she's praying really hard really basically it's just supposed to be a miracle at this point because what else can you do and fortunately she does get to a point where she can hold herself and she is getting better so they give her the green light to go to Germany.

She gets there and she goes through the whole initiation process and she gets paired up with her trainer, and their first area is Frankfurt, the big city. And she starts to have to go to the bathroom frequently again and this time, it's cause she needs to pee a lot. And so she is having to go pretty frequently and it's pretty bad, and they finally decide to talk to the mission nurse, who then recommends going to the doctor there in Germany, and they figure out that the problem from the diarrhea and everything moved over to her urinary tract, cause everything's so close together down there. And so now she's got urinary tract problems and she just can't hold herself again. And so they figured that out, and she has to keep a pee log, and she needs to know when she's going to the bathroom, how much she's peeing, what the color looks like, basically describe it, and her trainer was, at the beginning, one of those missionaries who won't budge at all, and so you don't go to the store outside of P-day for any reason at all, and so, even though she argued "it's for the doctor! I need to do this for my medical problem!" her trainer was like, "nope!" And her trainer's really sweet, she's just trying to do her best, and so my trainer decides to just use random cups and containers around the apartment to keep track. And so her trainer just finds a cupboard full of pee in a bunch of random containers, and it's pretty funny.

And so she starts to get better as they find out what's wrong but she's still just kind of ravaged and very weak, basically, weak bladder, weak muscles down there. And at one point they're on the corner of a street and her trainer makes her laugh. And she starts laughing really hard -- it's one of those silly moments where it's not really that funny but for some reason at that time it's so hysterical, and my trainer just starts, she just "sister stop! I'm going to pee myself if you don't stop making me laugh like I cannot do this!" But then they just keep laughing, and she's like "no,

seriously, I'm going to pee myself! Stop making me laugh!" And then my trainer hits a moment of clarity, and she just gives in, and she walks over to the side of a building, hikes up her skirt, squats, and just pees on the corner of a Frankfurt street. And it was a very bonding experience for them. And then fortunately she did get better throughout her mission, but that was the first, like, two, three months of her mission! Just constantly going to the bathroom and then humiliating herself.

Submitted by: Amanda Ius, 23, Female  
Fall 2020, English 391  
Eric Eliason  
Submitted on: November 28, 2020

LDS missionary with a faulty gallbladder in Japan

Jason Fox  
November 27, 2020  
Vineyard, Utah

Genre: Contemporary legend

Title of item: LDS missionary with a faulty gallbladder in Japan

Contributor Data

Name: Jason Fox

Gender: Male

Birthplace: Utah

Home region: Vineyard, Utah

Contributor's age at the time of collection: 23

Contributor's relationship to collector: Friend

Occupations and/or avocations: Computer programmer

Ethnicity and/or country of ancestor's origins: American, European ancestry

Religion: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Social Data: This story was collected in person and was recorded with a voice recorder at the time. The contributor and his wife came over to my house for a doggy play date (we let our dogs play together inside because it is too cold at the moment to go outside). This sort of setting has happened many times before, and is a very friendly, casual environment. While chatting, I mentioned that I was doing this project and was collecting missionary poop stories and was curious if they had any stories to share. Jason volunteered this story, and after telling it the first time, I asked if I could hear it again and this time record it.

Cultural Data:

Collection and Transcription Methods: This story was collected in person and recorded via a voice recorder on my cell phone. The story was later transcribed with small edits made in the grammar for clarification. "Ums" and "ahs" were edited out, as well as minor edits in the grammar for clarity.

Text:

So this is the story of a friend of mine, served his mission in Japan. And backstory: this friend of mine has some gall bladder problems which means that he can't eat a lot of oil without suffering some issues, and one of the worst foods for him possibly is curry. And also, more backstory, you have to know Japan, you know, missionaries tend to be underdressed in Japan rather than overdressed. They're very proper and prim over there, which makes the story that much more hilarious. So his companion at the time was gonna celebrate a birthday, and he really wanted curry for his birthday, it was his favorite food, and there was a lot of back and forth because my friend really didn't want to go get curry because he suffers a lot with that kind of food but his companion really wanted it. So eventually he finally gave in and decided to go get curry with his companion so long as his companion promised to eat quickly, and head to the church and soon as they were done, the nearest church to the restaurant, so that he could poop. And then, strike one,

they're at the restaurant, and his companion just takes forever eating. My friend finishes in like, ten minutes, and his companion is just taking his sweet time, he's there for like, a half an hour or longer, and my friend just keeps trying to hurry him up. And he's just like, "It's my birthday, we just gotta, you know, enjoy this," or whatever he came up with. So anyway, it's already settled in before they leave the restaurant, I mean, he knows that he's in a bad way. So he's leaving, they get on their bikes, and he's like "Finally, we can go to the church." He speeds off down the street, and a minute later he turns around and he looks back to see his companion and he's just not there. He's just gone. And so he stops. He's like, "where the fuck is my companion?" He didn't know what to do, whether he should look for him or anything, or just stay there, and eventually, five minutes later, his companion catches up. And he asks his companion why he's going so slowly, but his companion just doesn't answer. So, annoyed, he keeps going, and it happens again. A few minutes later, he turns around, and [his companion] is nowhere to be seen, he stops on a corner and waits for his companion to catch up, and he's getting pretty mad, and his companion just won't speed up. He's just leisurely pedaling along at like, five miles an hour and meanwhile, my friend is just dying, absolutely unable to hold it in. So finally, after enough occurrences of this, my friend is really mad at this point. He tells his companion, "dude, you gotta hurry up, or else I'm not going to make it. I'm just going to crap my pants right here." And the companion replies, "Elder, you're a big boy. You can hold it." And my friend just says, "Fine." And holding eye contact, eyes locked, unblinking, he just craps his pants, right there on the street corner. And it's runny, and awful, and goes down his pants and drips down the sides and everyone can see it, and everyone can smell it, and they just walk by their bikes the remaining half mile to the church. And everyone's just staring at them, just absolutely disgusted, but my friend just kept walking with his head held high cause he was just so pissed at his jerk companion.

Submitted by: Amanda Ius, 23, Female  
Fall 2020, English 391  
Eric Eliason  
Submitted on: November 28, 2020



Sister missionary takes a dump in the desert

Amber Perry  
November 27, 2020  
Vineyard, Utah

Genre: Personal experience narrative

Title of item: Sister missionary takes a dump in the desert

Contributor Data

Name: Amber Perry

Gender: Female

Birthplace: N/A

Home region: Vineyard, Utah

Contributor's age at the time of collection: 23

Contributor's relationship to collector: Friend

Occupations and/or avocations: Animation student

Ethnicity and/or country of ancestor's origins: American, European ancestry

Religion: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Social Data: This story was collected via email. I had previously heard this story from my friend in class over a year ago when we were sharing funny life stories. When I decided to do this project, I contacted my friend over Facebook messenger and asked her if she could share the story with me again, this time over email. This initial setting when I first heard this story was extremely casual and friendly. I remember everyone laughing as she animatedly told this experience.

Cultural Data:

Collection and Transcription Methods: This story was collected via email. No edits were made in the text.

Text:

I served in Las Vegas Nevada, and served in a town called Sandy Valley. It was well named since it was literally out in the middle of nowhere and the other thing in this valley was sand. When you see old westerns where there's just mounds of sand and red rock and snakes and tumble weeds out in the desert- that is exactly where I served. To illustrate, the population of Sandy Valley according to google is exactly 1,831. There are no roads or pavement other than the one street that winds through the whole valley. Everything else is a sand dirt path with maybe a street sign. Mostly not though. My companion and I were out there one day and we couldn't drive anywhere since we had a limited amount of miles and it took all of our miles to drive out to this town we covered. When we were about 2 miles away from our car, my companion turned to me and of course, she had to go to the bathroom. I explained to her there was no bathroom anywhere, but we could try to go to the car. She informed me it would be too late by then. We were in a flat area, on a dirt road, with maybe just a couple trailers in sight. We tried the trailers to no avail, and we looked for any other homes. No one answered, and my companion's potty dance game was getting stronger. Had there been trees, we could have easily taken a dump with

no problem of anyone seeing us. But of course, we were in the middle of a FLAT desert with absolutely NO trees, NO coverage, and just people's sand yards. I told her informatively she should probably hold it or we could moon our trailer friends in the process. To which I'm sure my companion replied with some retort of how insensitive I was. Well she was about to pop and my companion staked out a sand pile, and proudly marked her territory on the top of it while I turned around in disbelief. To this day I don't know and don't want to know how she did it in tights and with a skirt. Only that respect is given to her for taking a dump on someone's lawn.

Submitted by: Amanda Ius, 23, Female

Fall 2020, English 391

Eric Eliason

Submitted on: November 28, 2020

Elder has an accident on his bike

McKay Ender Meiners  
November 27, 2020  
Vineyard, Utah

Genre: Contemporary legend

Title of item: Elder has an accident on his bike

Contributor Data

Name: McKay Ender Meiners

Gender: Male

Birthplace: N/A

Home region: American Fork, Utah

Contributor's age at the time of collection: 24

Contributor's relationship to collector: Friend

Occupations and/or avocations: Insurance salesman

Ethnicity and/or country of ancestor's origins: American, European ancestry

Religion: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Social Data: This story was collected in person and recorded with a voice recorder app on my phone. Ender, his wife, and two other friends of ours were gathered together hanging out, making cookies and playing video games. It was a very relaxed, casual atmosphere. As I was chatting with my friends, I brought up this assignment and missions and asked if they had ever heard of any missionaries pooping their pants. Ender knew this story from his previous bishop growing up, and after telling it to me first, I then asked if I could hear it again and this time record it.

Cultural Data:

Collection and Transcription Methods: This story was collected in person and recorded with a voice recorder. "Ums" were edited out.

Text:

So an old bishop of mine, he went on his mission to Brazil, and in Brazil apparently it takes a little while to get used to the food, and it tends to run through the Elders pretty quick. Relatively common to have to have accidents. But my bishop and his companion were riding through an area, and the one missionary felt like he had to fart, and he stood up and goes, "hey Elder, this is what I think of your mom!" And explosive diarrhea flew into his pants, and they had to stop on the side of the road and slowly waddle their way home and try to get everything cleaned up while holding a little bit of dignity.

Submitted by: Amanda Ius, 23, Female  
Fall 2020, English 391  
Eric Eliason  
Submitted on: November 28, 2020

Elder has to poop in a trash can

Taylor Ryan Phillips  
November 27, 2020  
Vineyard, Utah

Genre: Contemporary legend

Title of item: Elder has to poop in a trash can

Contributor Data

Name: Taylor Ryan Phillips

Gender: Male

Birthplace: Anaheim, California

Home region: Vineyard, Utah

Contributor's age at the time of collection: 29

Contributor's relationship to collector: Spouse

Occupations and/or avocations: Accountant executive

Ethnicity and/or country of ancestor's origins: American, European ancestry

Religion: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Social Data: This story was collected in person and recorded with a voice recorder app on my phone. Taylor, being my husband, knew ahead of time that I had chosen missionary poop stories as my subject matter for my folklore class. He had told me this story on a previous occasion, but on the night I recorded it we had other friends over and he shared his story first to help them feel more comfortable sharing theirs. The atmosphere was very casual and friendly.

Cultural Data:

Collection and Transcription Methods: This story was collected in person and recorded with a voice recorder. "Ums" were edited out.

Text:

So this is the story of one of my favorite companions. They had gone and eaten over at a member's home, and whatever they had eaten was bad, and they were one their way home. And this Elder just told his companion, "Elder, I can't make it. We need to go home now." But they're like, on their bikes, and they're just heading home, as fast as they can, but he can feel that like, Satan is in his stomach. And so he's like riding, and he's just clenching his butt cheeks as hard as he can, because he just knows that the second he relaxes, it's just all gonna come out. So they're booking it home, and it's just getting worse and worse and worse, and so, by the time they get to their apartment, he opens up the door, and he just instantly realizes that the distance from the door to the bathroom -- it's too great, and he's not gonna make it. So he goes to the kitchen trash can, and just like, pulls down his pants, and sits on the trash can, and he barely makes that. And just like, the demon is expelled instantly, and so he just goes and gets it all cleaned up. But he just threw away the trash can and bought new trash cans for the whole apartment.

Submitted by: Amanda Ius, 23, Female

Fall 2020, English 391

Eric Eliason

Submitted on: November 28, 2020

## Sister missionary disrupts family devotional with diarrhea

Bethanie Davies  
 December 8, 2020  
 Vineyard, Utah

Genre: Personal narrative

Title of item: Sister missionary disrupts family devotional with diarrhea

Contributor Data

Name: Bethanie Davies

Gender: Female

Birthplace: Freeport, Maine

Home region: Ohio

Contributor's age at the time of collection: 25

Contributor's relationship to collector: Friend

Occupations and/or avocations: Student

Ethnicity and/or country of ancestor's origins: American, European ancestry

Religion: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Social Data: Since Bethanie lives out of state, I decided to text her and ask if she had any poop stories. Since she was my missionary trainer, I knew she did, and she was very happy to email me her story. Though it wasn't the most naturally occurring setting, it accomplished the task.

Cultural Data: Bethanie served her mission in Bolivia. During Christmas in this country, there is a traditional food sold everywhere called panettone, or panaton. It's basically a small cake/bread.

Collection and Transcription Methods: This story was collected via email. Small edits were made in the text for clarity.

Text:

I was a new missionary serving in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. I was barely able to communicate with my Peruvian companion and struggling to understand anything. The language was certainly a novelty to me but not as much as some of the foods I ate. It was Christmas Eve. I was feeling a little homesick. However, after eating too much panatón, a Christmas bread traditional in South America, I felt more than just homesick. As we walked the dark streets trying to find someone to spread Christmas cheer to, I felt it and I knew it wasn't something I could hold. I tried walking a few steps and knew it was game over. I tried to explain to my companion and I needed a bathroom.. there was none. We were in an alleyway near a road. I tried walking a little more.. I just couldn't do it. I knew I had to at least try to spare my skirt. In my panicked and broken Spanish I tried to inform my trainer that I was going and going right now. As I started to get ready for the worst...ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD...she was like no no wait!! The bishop's house is close by! So we ran to the bishop's house. I banged on their tin door leading to the courtyard. Their teenage son answered and all I said was Feliz Navidad, I need to use your bathroom and sprinted past him to the back of the courtyard where the bathroom was. And let's just say it was not a night silent that night. When I emerged from the bathroom, I noticed the bishop and his whole family were right outside the bathroom in the courtyard clearly having

some sort of family devotional...and they were all staring at me. My companion quickly said, "I think my companion is a little sick." I have never had panaton since then.

Not really a poop story but for the first month and a half of my mission I didn't poop.. I had a little poop calendar in fact to track when I went which was once every couple of weeks.

Submitted by: Amanda Ius, 23, Female  
Fall 2020, English 391  
Eric Eliason  
Submitted on: December 8, 2020

Indian curry gives Elder the runs

Sam Arnett  
December 8, 2020  
Vineyard, Utah

Genre: Personal narrative

Title of item: Indian curry gives Elder the runs

Contributor Data

Name: Sam Arnett

Gender: Male

Birthplace: N/A

Home region: Fort Collins, Colorado

Contributor's age at the time of collection: About 23

Contributor's relationship to collector: Friend

Occupations and/or avocations: BYU Student

Ethnicity and/or country of ancestor's origins: American, European ancestry

Religion: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Social Data: Sam and I are both in the animation program at BYU. In class one day when we were waiting for the professor to get started, I was chatting with another friend about her missionary poop story that she had shared with me, and Sam overheard us. He told me that he had a story and I asked him to email it to me.

Cultural Data

Collection and Transcription Methods: This story was collected via email. Small edits were made in the text for clarity.

Text:

Well, I think my story maybe isn't as crazy as others' stories, but I believe it happened my first week or two on the mission. The first thing you need to know is that the Indian curry restaurants in Japan are amazing! You can get curry and all you can eat nan for lunch at a really affordable price. And so as 4 young elders we all decided to go get Indo curry for lunch one day with one of our good friends and recent converts. This was my first time getting Indo curry, and so I was pretty excited.

We are now in the restaurant, and I am so pumped to have my first Indo curry. The nan is a couple inches bigger than my face (so pretty big). I end up eating about 3 or 4 pieces of nan with my bowl of curry. And to top it off I drank a lassie at the end. As we were walking back to the apartment, my stomach felt so full and bloated. And one thing about me is that when I am stressed or feel anxious, my stomach tends to do weird things (I feel sick to my stomach, I feel like I can never get full, or I feel weak and tired). So these were things that I struggled with on the mission.

Anyways, we get back to the apartment, and I feel like I am gonna explode! I nonchalantly tell my companion I have to go use the bathroom. I make it to the bathroom, and not to be graphic or anything but everything starts coming out. I had some pretty bad Indo curry diarrhea, and I'm



sure my companion heard everything from beyond the wall. So I finish up, and I awkwardly walked out into our living room. And my companion and I just stared at each other, and deep down inside I was like “oh man, I hope he didn’t hear all of that.” Haha, I felt a bit awkward, and I had similar experiences throughout the mission but that one is particularly memorable.

Submitted by: Amanda Ius, 23, Female  
Fall 2020, English 391  
Eric Eliason  
Submitted on: December 8, 2020

Pooping Elder versus spider

Jeff Pinckney  
December 8, 2020  
Vineyard, Utah

Genre: Personal narrative

Title of item: Pooping Elder versus spider

Contributor Data

Name: Jeff Pinckney

Gender: Male

Birthplace: Utah or Idaho

Home region: Vineyard, Utah

Contributor's age at the time of collection: 30

Contributor's relationship to collector: Friend

Occupations and/or avocations: Stay at home dad

Ethnicity and/or country of ancestor's origins: American, European ancestry

Religion: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Social Data: Jeff is my husband's best friend and former mission companion. We hang out with Jeff and his wife a lot. When we were over there recently, I told them about my folklore class and the final project I was working on. Jeff mentioned that he had a sort of poop story from his mission, but wasn't comfortable in the moment to be recorded. He did agree to email me the story later on though.

Cultural Data

Collection and Transcription Methods: This story was collected via email. Small edits were made in the text for clarity.

Text:

I was in the bathroom trying to do my business. In this particular bathroom when you sit down you are staring at an open linen closet with deep shelves. As I was minding my own business, a massive spider dropped from the eye level shelf to the one below. It literally scared the poo out of me because I hurried to get away. What followed was an epic battle between me and the spider. The result was a victory and peace of mind for my next session on the toilet.

Submitted by: Amanda Ius, 23, Female  
Fall 2020, English 391  
Eric Eliason  
Submitted on: December 8, 2020

# Pooping in the bushes

Ben Vallen  
December 8, 2020  
Vineyard, Utah

Genre: Personal narrative

Title of item: Pooping in the bushes

Contributor Data

Name: Ben Vallen

Gender: Male

Birthplace: N/A

Home region: Saratoga Springs, Utah

Contributor's age at the time of collection: Unknown, about mid 30s

Contributor's relationship to collector: Brother-in-law

Occupations and/or avocations: Lawyer

Ethnicity and/or country of ancestor's origins: American, European ancestry

Religion: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Social Data: Ben is my brother-in-law, married to my husband's older sister. They recently moved to Utah from North Carolina, so we've been visiting them a lot more and spent Thanksgiving with them. When I started this project, I reached out to Ben and asked if he had any poop stories from his mission that he could share with me. I told me a few over the phone, but agreed to email me a full story later on.

Cultural Data

Collection and Transcription Methods: This story was collected via email. Small edits were made in the text for clarity.

Text:

It was preparation day, and the four of us missionaries decided to eat at McDonalds after shopping. McDonalds had a history of wreaking havoc on my digestive system, and this time would turn out to be no different. As we prepared to set back to the apartment to get ready to go out in the evening, two of the Elders realized they needed to make one more stop. With my stomach already acting up, I proposed that we split up, and the other two of us head back to the apartment. Well, the two of us that set back out to the apartment were both junior companions, and we didn't realize that we didn't have keys. We get back and by that point, the pressure was on. We both look at each other expecting the other to have keys, but of course we didn't. I started knocking on neighbors' doors, but nobody was home. At the risk of having an accident in my pants, I opted instead to pop a squat in the bushes outside of the apartment building, using leaves and branches as TP. The people walking by couldn't see me, but I'm sure they had to hear me!

Submitted by: Amanda Ius, 23, Female  
Fall 2020, English 391  
Eric Eliason

Submitted on: December 8, 2020

## Pooped pants from the gallon milk challenge

Mark Pledger  
 December 8, 2020  
 Vineyard, Utah

Genre: Personal narrative

Title of item: Pooped pants from the gallon milk challenge

Contributor Data

Name: Mark Pledger

Gender: Male

Birthplace: Springville, Utah

Home region: Lehi, Utah

Contributor's age at the time of collection: 34

Contributor's relationship to collector: Friend

Occupations and/or avocations: N/A

Ethnicity and/or country of ancestor's origins: American, European ancestry

Religion: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Social Data: Mark is one of my husband's closest friends. We hang out with Mark and his wife all the time. When I started this project, I asked Mark if he had any poop stories from his mission, and he had several! I asked him to email me one.

Cultural Data

Collection and Transcription Methods: This story was collected via email. Small edits were made in the text for clarity.

Text:

It was P-Day on a hot summer day in Costa Rica. It was on this day that all the missionaries in my Zone decided to get together at our Zone leaders church and do the Milk Gallon challenge. For those of you who are unaware of what the challenge is, you are given 60 minutes to down a whole galleon of milk without vomiting. So we were all there in the parking lot drinking the milk and everything was going smoothly. As time passed people started to drop out because when people starting vomiting all over the place. As the 50 minute mark reached, I finished my gallon milk. Everyone was impressed, but they said I had to hold it down for 15 minutes, to officially say I won. After 10 minutes I realized it not a problem with vomiting, it wants to come from the back door.

I jumped up and started to do that clenching walk to the bathroom. As I was about halfway there, there was no longer holding it back It came and flowed and kept on flowing. I finally made it to the bathroom but the damage was done, there was a full load of soft stool in my pants and all over my legs and buttcheeks. Then at that moment it became worse. All the missionaries (even the girls) barged into the bathroom kicked open my stall and started laughing at me being a complete mess. Eventually I was able to get them out and get myself cleaned up. My garments were completely destroyed at that point. So I thought it was best to just walk home commando

style (I'm sure god would understand). Later that night my companion and I didn't go out and work. Milk has a natural laxitive. So we spent all night pooping.

Submitted by: Amanda Ius, 23, Female

Fall 2020, English 391

Eric Eliason

Submitted on: December 8, 2020

## Sister missionary scoops up poop

Amanda Ius  
 December 8, 2020  
 Vineyard, Utah

Genre: Personal narrative

Title of item: Sister missionary scoops up poop

Contributor Data

Name: Amanda Ius

Gender: Female

Birthplace: Vancouver, Canada

Home region: Vineyard, Utah

Contributor's age at the time of collection: 23

Contributor's relationship to collector: Self

Occupations and/or avocations: Student

Ethnicity and/or country of ancestor's origins: American, Canadian, European ancestry, Filipino

Religion: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Collection and Transcription Methods: This is my own story, as recorded in my mission journal in 2017.

Text:

Allow me to tell you the most embarrassing poop story in the entire history of the world. Yes, tengo tanto verguenza, but I tell this story because it's pretty darn funny and i hope my future generations will appreciate.

So it all started in the afternoon when I got the feels to go to the bathroom. As it just so happens, I had been annoying Hna. Acevedo the entire afternoon about poop, and how every single missionary has a crazy poop story. As I was telling her about all the crazy experiences I've heard of, I came to the realization that I as well had to go poop. We decided to pass by Hna. Juli's house to use her bathroom, but her husband told us she was sleeping, so we couldn't enter, but as luck would have it, at this moment our investigator, Carmen, came out of her house to buy something! We asked to use her bathroom and she happily let us in. Well, I guess you could say the FIRST problem was that the bathroom light was out. Not having time to replace it, Carmen lent meher almost-dead cellphone to use as a lantern. I didn't mind this, and I was easily able to do my business.

I did my duty but my relief did not last very long the moment I went to flush the toilet. No, the toilet did not overflow, but the water did start rising uncommonly high. Shining the cell phone into the toilet, I could see the problem clearly: I had created a poop so huge that it was plugging up the toilet, therefore preventing itself from being flushed away. Water could still seep around it and leave, I noted as the water level diminished, but the poop itself would not so easily be moved. Several more attempts with a normal flush availed to nothing. Thinking that perhaps I could solve the problem in the tank of the toilet, I set aside the cellphone and took off the top part to peer inside.

And then the cellphone died, plunging me into darkness.

Now I really did have a problem, because I was alone in a dark toilet with a poop that could not be flushed in the house of an investigator. I panicked a bit in the dark, not knowing what to do. But eventually decided that I needed to seek help. Propping the door open, a very confused Hna. Acevedo came to my aid...but alas, she could do nothing. In fact, as I explained the situation to her, she started laughing! Neither one of us could think of anything to do to rid my poop, so we came to the conclusion that we must alert the duena, our investigator, Carmen. She saw us both exit the dark bathroom together, and she just asked me, “Hna. Ius, what have you don!?” (As a joke, she was smiling.) Well, you can imagine just how horribly embarrassing it was to explain to our investigator Carmen that I had just dropped a doozy so big that it wouldn’t flush. Slightly skeptical, Carmen went in and saw my poop with her own eyes and also tested flushing the toilet, but was met with the same results that I had.

Unfortunately, she didn’t have a toilet plunger. We called Hna. Silvia, and she also doesn’t have a toilet plunger. Hna. Juli wouldn’t answer her phone (sleeping), and as a final attempt, we called the Bishop’s wife, Aracely, and she also doesn’t have a plunger. I should mention that during this whole event, Giovanni, the 14-year-old son of Carmen, has also now become aware that this sister missionary pooped a poop SO BIG that it won’t flush. Even more embarrassing.

Well, Hna. Acevedo was laughing the whole time she made the calls, which made everyone else laugh, and Hna. Aracely suggested that we use a stick. Woohoo. Well, I was dying, and willing to go find a stick or buy a plunger myself, but Carmen suggested that it would be easier to dismantle the toilet and remove my poop by hand.

So that’s what we did.

Giovanni had to replace the lightbulb, and as he did so he promised he wouldn’t look at my poop.

Then Carmen began to disassemble the toilet, starting with the tank and then at last the body. The bathroom flooded with dirty toilet water and smelled horrible, but I did what I could to squeegee all of the water down the drain. At last, the time came for me to use a tiny baggy to reach into the toilet and pick out all of my poop. It was certainly an undescrivable sensation.

We bagged everything up but the job wasn’t over because the toilet, for some reason, was still plugged, so we went out, broke off a long tree branch, and used that to finish unclogging the toilet. Then when that was finished, we took the bag of poop and dirty stick and chucked them both into an empty terrain. There were witnesses who saw us but didn’t understand the significance of our actions.

We helped Carmen finishing cleaning up the bathroom. She was so nice and funny about the whole experience, but I felt so HORRIBLE so we went out and bought them food. Despite the fact that we had literally just turned an innocent bathroom trip into a natural disaster, Carmen still gave us a smile and then, even better, taught us how to braid saltenas! But yeah, that’s my all-time most embarrassing poop story to beat out all other poop stories in the world.

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