

atp 2616

📅 Fri, Dec 12, 2025 11:36AM ⌚ 28:58

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Christmas show, University of Detroit Mercy, Ask the Professor, holiday questions, Christmas customs, Martin Luther, Yule log, Saturnalia, nativity scene, St. Francis of Assisi, Julenisse, nine reindeer, plum pudding, prime numbers, Christmas towns.

SPEAKERS

Hugh Culik, Production Element, Claire Crabtree, Edwin DeWindt, Patrick Parsons, Student announcer, Michael Jayson, Dan Maggio, Professors, George Pickering



Michael Jayson 00:01

The University of Detroit Mercy presents another encore presentation of a classic Ask the Professor radio program. Today's show takes us back to Christmas 1996 and begins with a holiday favorite from the University of Detroit Mercy Chorale.



Production Element 01:18

(A recording of the University of Detroit Mercy Chorale from 1996)



Edwin DeWindt 01:28

Merry Christmas, everybody. The University of Detroit Mercy presents Ask The Professor, and it's our Christmas show. That was the University of Detroit Mercy Chorale. And we squeezed them all here into our little recording studio, and they just sang their little hearts out. (Laughs) And now we're going to try to try to do a show. We have some of the panel with us, and we have a special guest, and the rest of the panel is still out doing their Christmas shopping and will probably be here eventually. Hope they'll be here eventually. If not - well, coal for them. On my right from the Department of English, Professor Claire Crabtree,

C Claire Crabtree 02:22
Hi. Ho-ho-ho. This is our Christmas show, right?

E Edwin DeWindt 02:25
It is the Christmas show. That's right, that's right. And to her right from the Department of Mathematics, Professor Dan Maggio.

D Dan Maggio 02:33
Hi, Jingle Bells.

E Edwin DeWindt 02:33
(Laughs) Yes


D Dan Maggio 02:34
I was gonna try to sing it, but that was probably a good idea that I didn't.


E Edwin DeWindt 02:39
Golly, wow. And on my left, from the Department of English also, Professor Hugh Culik,


H Hugh Culik 02:46
Happy to be here.


E Edwin DeWindt 02:46
Happy to have you here.


 Hugh Culik 02:48
Oh, Merry Christmas, too.


 Edwin DeWindt 02:49
And on his left, a special guest from Presence Interactive Media, and also at the University of Detroit Mercy, Patrick Parsons.


 Patrick Parsons 03:00
Howdy

 Edwin DeWindt 03:00
Hi. Actually, Patrick's been on the show before

 Hugh Culik 03:03
He has every not only has he been on the show, but he's created the Liberal Arts website, which is a thing of glory

 Claire Crabtree 03:05
and Hugh's current obsession.

 Claire Crabtree 03:13
Well, it's not my obsession.

 Edwin DeWindt 03:15
Would you like to give the address?

H Hugh Culik 03:16
Yes, I think people who want to see something cool should log on to chass.udmercy.edu/ and you will see a thing of glory.

E Edwin DeWindt 03:50
Very impressive. Well, in honor of the day -

E Edwin DeWindt 03:58
oh, can I interrupt

E Edwin DeWindt 03:58
Oh, please go ahead.

C Claire Crabtree 03:59
Patrick Parsons is such a great name, and if I ever write a novel, I might borrow you. (Edwin laughs) The trouble is that you might be sort of like Mr. Collins in *Pride and Prejudice*, because Patrick Parsons sounds like a good name for a pompous clergyman, and you're nothing like that. Maybe I won't do that,

H Hugh Culik 04:21
I can testify to his abstract interest in beer; that were he a year older, it would be, you know, something genuine. He's really no parson at all.

C Claire Crabtree 04:32
He's very unassuming, too, so he's hardly pretentious, and he has reasons to be.

E Edwin DeWindt 04:38
Well, we have a whole set of Christmas questions, in keeping with the season from - would you believe this - Holly Green.

H Hugh Culik 04:47
I had Holly Green in a class of mine, an intro comp class, and I gave her a D, and I passed her on to Claire, and I never heard whatever happened -

H Hugh Culik 04:58
I never had a Holly Gree - (Edwin begins laughing)

H Hugh Culik 05:01
Remember Holly?

C Claire Crabtree 05:02
Oh!

E Edwin DeWindt 05:02
That Holly. (Laughs)

C Claire Crabtree 05:03
Holly Noel Green

H Hugh Culik 05:03
You got her.

C Claire Crabtree 05:03
Holly Noel Carol Green.

H Hugh Culik 05:05
That's right.

C Claire Crabtree 05:07
I remember her Yes, I remember her.


E Edwin DeWindt 05:11
Well, here's a series of questions related to various Christmas customs and their origins. They want you to get 12 out of 17. Okay, this Christmas custom dates back to the early 1600s and was at first confined mainly to Protestant districts because of its connection with Martin Luther,


H Hugh Culik 05:31
oh, you nailed a priest to a church door. I remember that. 95 of them, or something like that.


E Edwin DeWindt 05:32
95 priests -


H Hugh Culik 05:34
That's where the song "95 bottles of priests on the wall" whatever it is. Is this the right question?

E Edwin DeWindt 05:47
It's the right question. It's not quite the right answer, but that's a good answer.


 Hugh Culik 05:51
So what did we do?


 Edwin DeWindt 05:53
There's something we do that dates back to the 1600s.

 Claire Crabtree 05:56
Caroling?


 Edwin DeWindt 05:57
No, not caroling.

 Claire Crabtree 05:59
Yule log.


 Edwin DeWindt 06:00
Well, you're getting closer


 Claire Crabtree 06:02
related to Martin Luther, though. Not the tree and not -


 Edwin DeWindt 06:07
Well -


 Claire Crabtree 06:07
Maybe a tree?


 Claire Crabtree 06:08
Well, it was German, but I thought it was the 17th century.

 Edwin DeWindt 06:08
Mm-hm

 Hugh Culik 06:13
And so he said it was okay.

 Edwin DeWindt 06:14
Yeah. He said it was okay. You could put lights on the tree and put lights on the candles in the tree.

 Hugh Culik 06:21
And wait for the invention of electricity.

 Edwin DeWindt 06:21
And then they would burn down and destroy your house.

 Hugh Culik 06:21
A real slow start to Protestantism, that's for sure. (Edwin laughs)



Claire Crabtree 06:32

Mind you, in Romania, they knock on your door at midnight, and they have a goat.



Edwin DeWindt 06:37

and they take you away. (Laughs)



Claire Crabtree 06:42

Hey, they've had an election. Things are good there, I hope. The rector of the university, In fact, of Bucharest and I met him, or at least saw him speak, heard him speak last year. Anyway, they come to your door with a wooden goat that makes clacking noises. It's so it's a it's so funny, and they have a specific song they sing, and they're not looking for money. It's just a bunch of young kids. They're not looking for money. But it is very funny. The song is cute, and the goat's head clacks, so you get this great, you know, castanet.



Hugh Culik 07:16

This sounds great.



Claire Crabtree 07:17

It's fun, if you like folklore.




Edwin DeWindt 07:19


Yes, that's right.





Claire Crabtree 07:19


which I'll be teaching.


 Edwin DeWindt 07:20
Well, I should mention, yes, that Professor Crabtree is going to become our folklorist. She is teaching -


 Claire Crabtree 07:26
in my spare time for fun and profit.


 Edwin DeWindt 07:28
That's right, that's right. She'll be teaching our courses on folklore in the English Department.

 Claire Crabtree 07:32
Yep

 Edwin DeWindt 07:33
Congratulations.

 Edwin DeWindt 07:34
Maybe it's just me. I always thought that the tree bit was actually much older than the 1600s

 Claire Crabtree 07:34
Thanks.

 Hugh Culik 07:47
I wonder if it was suppressed.

C Claire Crabtree 07:49
It's Druidic

E Edwin DeWindt 07:52
Well, yeah, you've got Druids with mistletoe and that kind of stuff.

E Edwin DeWindt 07:56
I bet they didn't just give you a little bust.

E Edwin DeWindt 07:59
There's something about the importance of trees and decorating trees in the pre Christian period that was probably remained an underground custom in one way or another, and so much of that stuff did. In the early centuries, when Christians first began celebrating Christmas, the practice of gift giving was frowned upon by the church. Why?

C Claire Crabtree 08:27
They were right, but I would never have had a bicycle, you know. (Edwin laughs) or a rocking horse.

E Edwin DeWindt 08:35
Why would the church play the role of the Grinch? What was their problem?

H Hugh Culik 08:41
Would it be revealing your wealth so they taxed people?

C Claire Crabtree 08:46
just religious reasons?

E Edwin DeWindt 08:46
Because of the Roman Empire after Constantine, Christian clergy were exempt from taxation.

H Hugh Culik 08:52
Really?

E Edwin DeWindt 08:52
Yeah, that's why some people have said that the fourth century witnessed the greatest number of vocations to the priesthood in the entire history of the Christian church. "You don't pay taxes". "I want to be a priest!"

H Hugh Culik 09:04
kind of like a non-profit corporation,

C Claire Crabtree 09:07
especially since nobody could really check up on your chastity if you were a guy.

C Claire Crabtree 09:11
Would it be something to do with materialism or - ?

E Edwin DeWindt 09:11
Yes.

C Claire Crabtree 09:15
Well, you're getting close. You're getting close.

C Claire Crabtree 09:19
The three kings were pagans?

E Edwin DeWindt 09:22
Well, all right, see, you're almost there, and I'll accept that. The gift giving thing was a part of the pagan festival of the Saturnalia. People ran around giving each other gifts, and it was felt that you're simply importiing into Christianity this utterly heathen practice,

C Claire Crabtree 09:39
I have to confess, when I first came to Detroit, we used to go to Saks to see Santa, and it was a class act. I mean, this guy had a real beard, a really nice one, well groomed, trimmed. And it really was lovely. So - but I wouldn't buy into that.

E Edwin DeWindt 09:56
No, that's all gone now, though.

C Claire Crabtree 09:58
No, that was nice. Santa has a present for you that maybe we could open on the air, because I think you could explain it. Oh, Santa has a present in sort of a petite size, which - (Edwin begins laughing) Dr DeWindt -

C Claire Crabtree 10:12
cannot get into (laughs) but Dr. DeWindt - Anne will perhaps be able to wear.

E Edwin DeWindt 10:18
Oh, what is this?

C Claire Crabtree 10:19
I bought it at a weirdo fair, and it's the only one they had.

C Claire Crabtree 10:23
It's a t shirt, folks, can you describe it?

E Edwin DeWindt 10:23
Oh, my goodness! (Laughs)

E Edwin DeWindt 10:31
"Serf's Up" S, E, R, F, S, and it is the sower sowing his seed -


E Edwin DeWindt 10:39
from the painting - The Malay.

E Edwin DeWindt 10:40
That's right, the Malay and two little peasant women accompanying - a woman and a boy, and they are on surfboards, and they are coming in on the crest of the wave. It is wonderful!


C Claire Crabtree 10:52
And when I saw "Serf's up" with an E, I just thought, "Oh, this is, this is you".


E Edwin DeWindt 10:58
Yes. Well, Anne will wear it


- C** Claire Crabtree 11:00
Good. I think maybe the woman with the head pieces of Van Eyck or a Vermeer or something -
- E** Edwin DeWindt 11:07
Vermeer, I think, yeah, I think
- C** Claire Crabtree 11:09
She looks sort of nun-like but -
- E** Edwin DeWindt 11:10
Yeah, she's Vermeerish, definately. Well, thank you very much. That is wonderful. I get a kick out of that kind of stuff.
- C** Claire Crabtree 11:20
I don't know much, but I know what Ed likes.
- E** Edwin DeWindt 11:23
(Laughs) Weird things, yes. Okay, Saturnalia, All right, Next question. In 1224, St Francis of Assisi began this tradition in Italy, which today is a part of many Christmas celebrations. What is it?
- H** Hugh Culik 11:44
Putting extra food out for the animals
- E** Edwin DeWindt 11:46
No


 Claire Crabtree 11:47
decorating the tree with angels?


 Edwin DeWindt 11:49
No.


 Claire Crabtree 11:50
or the crèche thing.

 Edwin DeWindt 11:50
That's it. It's the crèche.

 Hugh Culik 11:51
Oh.

 Edwin DeWindt 11:52
the whole nativity scene thing. That's right. He's the one who invented this idea.

 Claire Crabtree 11:57
Who did? I wasn't really listening

 Edwin DeWindt 11:57
Francis of Assisi.

H Hugh Culik 12:00
He invented trout fishing too.


E Edwin DeWindt 12:03
Yes. And as we just ponder the recent addition of all of this to our culture, let's take a break here


S Student announcer 12:10
In this Yule tide season of joy and giving it is important to remember the less fortunate, the destitute, the miserable, the Ask the Professor panelists. They don't ask much from you, a card, a note, an expensive gift. They just need a little Christmas cheer, that's all so please deck their halls, jingle their bells -

M Michael Jayson 12:31
and you can do that by sending questions to Ask The Professor. Our email is ATP@udmercy.edu, Merry Christmas from Ask the Professor. Let's return now to this classic episode of Ask the Professor from Christmas 1996


E Edwin DeWindt 12:50
Oh, we're back. We used to have an anti St Patrick's Day party in my house, and when St Patrick's Day came, we'd always find some Anglo Saxon saint or some someone who wasn't Irish, at least, to celebrate. And the first one we did was st Cuthbert. It was a monastic leader in the seventh century in Anglo Saxon England. And we had this huge cake made from Rainier's, which no longer sells to the public. And it was this poor guy standing on the shore with seals surrounding him, blowing on his feet. Because the legend was that they used to come out of the ocean to blow on his feet to keep his little toes warm. The next year, we did Turibius of Mogrovejo, the Grand Inquisitor of Bolivia. (Laughs)


H Hugh Culik 13:40
I'm encouraged.


 Claire Crabtree 13:41
Oh, great. Well, when did it stop? And when can we start it again?


 Hugh Culik 13:45
Yeah , absolutely.


 Edwin DeWindt 13:49
All right. Nativity scene, that was right. All right, who were Melchior and Balthazar?

 Claire Crabtree 13:54
The Kings.

 Edwin DeWindt 13:55
That's right. Two of them, that's right. Two of the kings.

 Claire Crabtree 13:57
Do we have to know where they're from?

 Claire Crabtree 13:59
No, what was the name of the third one?

 Claire Crabtree 14:00
Caspar.

E Edwin DeWindt 14:01
That's right, Caspar.

C Claire Crabtree 14:02
And one of them was always black - or dark. Was that Caspar?

E Edwin DeWindt 14:07
I think it usually is. Yeah, that was the big tourist attraction - so to speak - in Cologne in the Middle Ages. They claimed that in their church they had the bodies of the three wise men.


H Hugh Culik 14:17
Right. They still do


C Claire Crabtree 14:19
I've been to that church, but -


H Hugh Culik 14:21
Me too. A big domed place.


H Hugh Culik 14:23
Yeah


C Claire Crabtree 14:23
You've been to that church?


 Claire Crabtree 14:23
Did you climb it?


 Hugh Culik 14:25
I don't go up high. I went in the basement.

 Claire Crabtree 14:28
I was seven months pregnant at the time. My son climbed it - Who has sent us really mean questions under a pseudonym

 Edwin DeWindt 14:36
Oh, is that what he's doing?

 Claire Crabtree 14:38
I don't know. It's not these.

 Edwin DeWindt 14:40
No. (The professors laugh)

 Edwin DeWindt 14:45
And our listeners are wondering why we're laughing, because the last three minutes was just edited out. That's right, they brought in the choir again, to sing another Christmas carol. But anyway. Yeah. So there was some theologian in the late 12th century, I think, who invented the idea that, well, the reason there were so many duplicate relics all over the place was because relics had the miraculous ability to reproduce themselves (Laughs)

H Hugh Culik 15:13
Oh, kind of like administrators.

E Edwin DeWindt 15:17
Yeah, kind of like administrators, exactly. Like, when you put all the pieces of the true cross together, you had a cross the size of the World Trade Center.

H Hugh Culik 15:25
I kind of like that.


E Edwin DeWindt 15:28
Recite the first four lines of T'was the Night Before Christmas.

H Hugh Culik 15:35
T'was the Night Before Christmas, and all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse. Just I in my night - "


C Claire Crabtree 15:44
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care, in hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there.

E Edwin DeWindt 15:44
No.


E Edwin DeWindt 15:53
That's it. You've got it. And George Pickering is hurtling yourself against the door.


 Claire Crabtree 15:56
Mama and her kerchief and I in my cap, had just settled down for a long winter's nap.


 Hugh Culik 16:02
When out on the roof I heard such a clatter -


 Claire Crabtree 16:06
I sprang to the sash


 Hugh Culik 16:08
to see what was the matter.


 Claire Crabtree 16:10
Which I always wondered about.


 Patrick Parsons 16:11
What was the matter?

 Edwin DeWindt 16:13
Clatter and matter, yeah.


 Claire Crabtree 16:16
and George is here. Shall we sing something -


 George Pickering 16:23
else? (Laughs)


 Edwin DeWindt 16:25
The only version - The only lines I know are the ones written by Viola da Gamba. There's one that began "Twas The Night Before Christmas and all through the school, not a creature was stirring, except for one fool".

 George Pickering 16:44
And he was the president -

 Edwin DeWindt 16:46
of the university. (Laughs hilariously)

 Claire Crabtree 16:47
did Viola write anything this year?

 Edwin DeWindt 16:47
Yes, but it hasn't been made public.

 Claire Crabtree 16:49
Okay

 Edwin DeWindt 16:49
Yes

G George Pickering 16:50
She's very naughty. That Viola.

E Edwin DeWindt 16:51
Yes. (Laughs) George Pickering has just joined us, the chair of the Religious Studies Department, and this is our Christmas show.

G George Pickering 17:04
Oh, yeah? I'm late for a Christmas show?


E Edwin DeWindt 17:06
That's right. We are being asked questions about Christmas.


H Hugh Culik 17:10
George, There's a great bit of anger directed at your recent electronic performance.


G George Pickering 17:17
Why? What did I do or failed to do?


G George Pickering 17:21
Yeah, and then I wouldn't answer.


P Patrick Parsons 17:21
You started a query or a dialog on religion and science.


 Patrick Parsons 17:23
Yeah, you never posted it.

 Hugh Culik 17:24
You didn't even answer. You didn't even question. Yeah,


 George Pickering 17:30
Yeah. The thing about computers is - other people can use your name.

 Edwin DeWindt 17:39
Oh, yeah

 Claire Crabtree 17:41
if they don't have your password, they could still use your name?


 George Pickering 17:44
Well - sometimes, you know, you let people in and then they do things. In other words, Culik did this to me (Edwin laughs) and now he's trying to make a case out of it. It's not going to work.


 Hugh Culik 17:59
George, That is only partly true. We were sitting beside each other, and I was showing you how to do it, and I asked you -

 George Pickering 18:12
And you pretending to be friendly - (Edwin laughs) and I fell for it.


 **Hugh Culik 18:17**
And you're usually tougher to trick than that.


 **George Pickering 18:19**
Yeah


 **Hugh Culik 18:20**
You were there. Come on.


 **George Pickering 18:22**
I was there.


 **Hugh Culik 18:23**
You were tied up and gagged. (Edwin laughs)


 **Claire Crabtree 18:26**
He was asking for it.

 **Hugh Culik 18:27**
He was, that's what I say.

 **Edwin DeWindt 18:30**
Okay, next question,


 George Pickering 18:33
well, we chewed up that time


 Edwin DeWindt 18:35
In Scandinavia, what is the name of the gnome that places presents under the tree?


 Hugh Culik 18:41
Toxomiki


 Edwin DeWindt 18:42
No


 Claire Crabtree 18:44
Oh, rats


 Edwin DeWindt 18:46
the gnome. What's the name of the gnome?


 George Pickering 18:49
There is a gnome,


 Claire Crabtree 18:50
short name?

 Hugh Culik 18:51
Vernors.

 Hugh Culik 18:52
Vernors. (Laughs)


 Claire Crabtree 18:54
Does it begin with a T?

 Edwin DeWindt 18:58
It begins with a J,


 Claire Crabtree 19:02
and it's something like Jan?

 Edwin DeWindt 19:04
No


 George Pickering 19:05
Jingle


 Edwin DeWindt 19:05
Well, you're getting close. It is Christmasy sounding.


 George Pickering 19:12
It's Christmasy.


 Claire Crabtree 19:15
Jule


 Edwin DeWindt 19:16
Well, that's half of it. Julenisse. J, u, l, e, n, i, s, s, e,


 George Pickering 19:26
Right, got that one


 Edwin DeWindt 19:27
Yeah.


 Hugh Culik 19:28
How are we doing, by the way?


 Edwin DeWindt 19:29
Well, you haven't lost any yet.


 Hugh Culik 19:30
Okay.


 George Pickering 19:31
Really? (Laughs) Where do you hire score keepers like this?


 Edwin DeWindt 19:37
(Laughs) Name the nine reindeer


 George Pickering 19:43
Dancer, Prancer

 Claire Crabtree 19:44
Donner, Blitzen,

 Patrick Parsons 19:46
Comet and Cupid


 Claire Crabtree 19:55
Doc and Grumpy?


 Edwin DeWindt 19:56
You've got two to go


 Dan Maggio 19:58
Rudolph


 Edwin DeWindt 19:58
Rudolph


 Claire Crabtree 20:01
Dancer and Prancer, Donder and Blitzen, Comet and Cupid,


 Hugh Culik 20:07
Dasher


 Edwin DeWindt 20:09
Dasher,


 George Pickering 20:10
Now, dash away, dash away, dash away all.


 Claire Crabtree 20:10
Vixen


 Edwin DeWindt 20:10
That's right. Vixen. You got 'em all.


 Claire Crabtree 20:10
Yeah, I'm just trying to get the rhymes straight.


 George Pickering 20:16
Who can forget Vixen?

 Claire Crabtree 20:19
That's really a fox, right?


 Edwin DeWindt 20:21
Yes, the cunning little vixen


 Hugh Culik 20:23
a female fox,


 Claire Crabtree 20:25
I think so.


 Hugh Culik 20:27
The little vixen.


 Edwin DeWindt 20:28
How long were Christmas celebrations forbidden in England?


 Claire Crabtree 20:32
A couple of centuries?


 George Pickering 20:35
during the Puritan -


 Claire Crabtree 20:36
Cromwell's period

 Edwin DeWindt 20:37
That's right.


 Claire Crabtree 20:37
So 12 years.


 Edwin DeWindt 20:40
11 years


 Claire Crabtree 20:41
11. Yeah.


 Edwin DeWindt 20:42
Yeah. Theaters were closed, everything. Those jolly, merry making Puritans


 George Pickering 20:50
They could breathe a sigh of relief at the restoration.


 Edwin DeWindt 20:52
(Laughs) What are some of the traditional ingredients in plum pudding?


 Hugh Culik 21:03
Plums

 Claire Crabtree 21:03
bread crumbs.


 Edwin DeWindt 21:05
Plums, yes, well,


 George Pickering 21:06
Well, just about any garbage you've got refrigerator, throw it in and you glob it up with plums and honey -


 Claire Crabtree 21:13
and cherries, and you do use bread crumbs in the official recipe. You use bread crumbs


 Hugh Culik 21:18
and milk.


 George Pickering 21:19
You drown it in brandy

 Edwin DeWindt 21:21
and set fire to it.


 Claire Crabtree 21:23
Hard sauce


 George Pickering 21:24
Well, the hard sauce isn't in it.

 Edwin DeWindt 21:27
That's right.


 Claire Crabtree 21:28
No, the hard sauce is on top.


 George Pickering 21:29
Eggs?


 Edwin DeWindt 21:31
Eggs. Otherwise you've got - and sometimes lumps of meat, but not always.


 George Pickering 21:36
Well, it depends what you got in the refrigerator. I think we got that one.


 Edwin DeWindt 21:36
I've never understood what the hard sauce is.


 George Pickering 21:37
The best part. It is the best part.


 Claire Crabtree 21:46
My mother used to make it. It's just butter, really, with confectioner sugar, basically.

 George Pickering 21:53
and it's got brandy in it too, I think.


 Claire Crabtree 21:57
And you have to serve it with a sprig of holly, and you have to flame it at the table. And I do it every year.


 Edwin DeWindt 22:02
Oh, my gosh


 Claire Crabtree 22:03
sometimes made from scratch.


 George Pickering 22:05
Don't you love this "have to" stuff.


 Edwin DeWindt 22:07
I know


 George Pickering 22:07
We send out for KFC.


 Edwin DeWindt 22:07
Well, you see, we don't even do - Anne's parents, my wife's parents, used to do a big Christmas thing. It was Christmas was the big deal. And now that her mother has Alzheimer's and her father is just terminally depressed, nothing happens at Christmas at all. Literally, absolutely nothing.


 Claire Crabtree 22:27
Bologna sandwiches, just like the prisoners


 Edwin DeWindt 22:29
Pretty much. Yeah


 Claire Crabtree 22:30
Is that in Nevada? That's good enough for those guys.

 Edwin DeWindt 22:37
What country is the home of the Christmas tree?


 Claire Crabtree 22:40
Didn't we say Germany?


 Claire Crabtree 22:41
Yeah, Germany.


 George Pickering 22:42
Tannenbaum,


 Edwin DeWindt 22:43
Mm-hm. What game, when introduced to England, was thought to be a Christmas pastime?


 Edwin DeWindt 22:50
Post office,


 Edwin DeWindt 22:51
(Laughs) It probably was, in some families,


 Claire Crabtree 22:58
Is it a movement game or -


 Edwin DeWindt 23:01
No, no, it's a parlor type game


 Claire Crabtree 23:05
throw the Christians into the fire?


 Claire Crabtree 23:10
Dancing around the tree.


 Hugh Culik 23:13
Is it kind of a bigot game?


 Edwin DeWindt 23:17
No, no, it's, uh - Oh, gosh.


 Claire Crabtree 23:22
It's not something to do with singing.


 Edwin DeWindt 23:23
No, no. It's -


 Claire Crabtree 23:25
or dancing around the tree.


 Edwin DeWindt 23:26
Nothing like that


 Claire Crabtree 23:27
Processions?

 George Pickering 23:27
It's a game.

 Hugh Culik 23:29
Well, that can be a game. Didn't you ever play Ring-around-the-rosey?


 Edwin DeWindt 23:33
This is something that you hold in your hand.

 Claire Crabtree 23:35
We work with free association, George


 Hugh Culik 23:37
Rock, paper and scissors.


 Edwin DeWindt 23:38
No. The variety of games that are under this general category.


 George Pickering 23:45
Jacks,


 Edwin DeWindt 23:45
no, no, no. What am I holding?


 George Pickering 23:49
Dice


 Dan Maggio 23:51
Cards?


 Edwin DeWindt 23:52
Cards!

 Hugh Culik 23:53
What?

 Hugh Culik 23:54
Wow, it takes a mathematician to figure those -

 Hugh Culik 23:58
I mean, I simply don't believe that. No, I don't know who made these up.

 Edwin DeWindt 24:05
Well, England. See, it's England. It came to England.

 Claire Crabtree 24:10
Now, when is this date?

E Edwin DeWindt 24:11

It doesn't have a date.

C Claire Crabtree 24:12

Weren't they playing cards in Shakespeare's time?

E Edwin DeWindt 24:15

They were there playing cards in the 15th century in Ramsey because people were being fined for having ale houses in which they let people play cards.

C Claire Crabtree 24:28

Maybe they used sticks and stones before it was introduced.

E Edwin DeWindt 24:35

Who does the voice for the narrator, snowman in the Christmas special on TV, Rudolph, the Red Nosed Reindeer,

H Hugh Culik 24:43


Gene Autry


E Edwin DeWindt 24:44


No


D Dan Maggio 24:44

No, he's a big guy.

 Edwin DeWindt 24:45
Yes, he's dead now. Folk singer.


 Professors 24:46
(In unison) Burl Ives

 George Pickering 24:50
They say in chorus,


 Edwin DeWindt 24:55
How many US towns are named Christmas?


 Hugh Culik 24:59
50


 Edwin DeWindt 25:00
No


 Claire Crabtree 25:01
12,

 Edwin DeWindt 25:02
Nope.


 Dan Maggio 25:02
I figured one per state

 Claire Crabtree 25:03
More than that?

 Dan Maggio 25:04
None.

 Edwin DeWindt 25:05
No, There are some.

 Hugh Culik 25:07
Let's guess some prime numbers. Okay, go ahead.


 Claire Crabtree 25:09
17


 Dan Maggio 25:10
23


 Edwin DeWindt 25:11
No


 Hugh Culik 25:11
19


 Edwin DeWindt 25:11
No


 Claire Crabtree 25:12
You're not telling us more or less, you always give better hints than that.


 Edwin DeWindt 25:15
Well, you're all way up - You're too high,


 Claire Crabtree 25:17
3

 Dan Maggio 25:17
1


 Edwin DeWindt 25:18
Now you're getting there.


 Hugh Culik 25:19
7


 Claire Crabtree 25:19
4


 Hugh Culik 25:19
5, see, it's prime. Do we know Christmas

 Edwin DeWindt 25:26
Arizona, a Christmas Florida, a Christmas Kentucky, a Christmas Mississippi and a Christmas Tennessee?

 Claire Crabtree 25:33
Wonder how many people are named Christmas? There are a few other than Faulkner's Joe Christmas.

 Edwin DeWindt 25:38
I know when I wrote my PhD thesis and published it as a book, there was a Christmas family in the village of Holywell, and I noticed in the footnote that there was no woman named Mary, and not even in that family. So there was never a Mary Christmas.

 Hugh Culik 25:53
What is the fascination with prime numbers? Come on, you're a math person. Why are they so satisfying to

 Claire Crabtree 25:58
to you. Some of us have other outlets.

H Hugh Culik 26:01
They are to other people, prime numbers, yes.

E Edwin DeWindt 26:03
(The end-of-the-show bell is heard) And on that note, we thank Holly Green for her questions. She did not stump the panel, but gosh, they kept us going for a whole show.

C Claire Crabtree 26:15
They made us look fairly smart,

E Edwin DeWindt 26:18
and I like to thank the panel today, and Professor Pickering, Professor Crabtree, Professor Maggio ,our special guest, Patrick Parsons and Professor Culik, who will again join me in wishing you all out there a very merry Christmas. And now this word,

P Production Element 26:34
(Ask the Professor flashback)

M Michael Jayson 27:29
You can email, Ask The Professor at ATP@UDMercy.edu, or visit the Ask the Professor Facebook page.

E Edwin DeWindt 27:42
Ask The Professor is transcribed in the facilities the Smith Media Center on the University of Detroit Mercy real campus. Ask the Professor is produced by Pete Eldred. Technical Director is Michael Jayson, Executive Producer is Vivian Dicks And until next week. It's me, Dewindt. Bye.



Michael Jayson 27:55

Matt Mio and the current panel of Ask the Professor are back next week, so please plan to join us.