

= Road to the North Pole =

" Road to the North Pole " is the seventh episode of the ninth season of the animated comedy series Family Guy . Directed by Greg Colton and co @-@ written by Chris Sheridan and Danny Smith , the episode originally aired on Fox in the United States on December 12 , 2010 . In " Road to the North Pole " , two of the show 's main characters , baby Stewie and anthropomorphic dog Brian , who are voiced by series creator Seth MacFarlane , go on an adventure to the North Pole in an attempt to kill Santa Claus . They eventually discover a dreary , polluting factory full of disease @-@ ridden elves and carnivorous , feral reindeer , along with a sickly , exhausted Santa who begs to be killed . Stewie and Brian take pity on him , however , and decide to fulfill Christmas by delivering gifts to the entire globe , albeit unsuccessfully .

The " Road to " episodes which have aired throughout various seasons of Family Guy were inspired by the Road to ... comedy films starring Bing Crosby , Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour , though this episode was not originally conceived as a " Road to " show . The episode is the second Family Guy Christmas special after the season three episode , " A Very Special Family Guy Freakin ' Christmas " , also written by Danny Smith . It was first announced at the 2010 San Diego Comic @-@ Con International .

Critical responses to the episode were mostly positive ; critics praised its storyline and its numerous cultural references , although it also received criticism from the Parents Television Council . According to Nielsen ratings , it was viewed in 8 @.@ 03 million homes during its original airing in the United States . The episode featured guest performances by Drew Barrymore , H. Jon Benjamin , David Boreanaz , Carrie Fisher , and Karley Scott Collins , along with several recurring guest voice actors for the series . It is narrated by Ron MacFarlane , Seth MacFarlane 's father . It was nominated for 3 Emmy Awards : Outstanding Music Composition for a Series , Outstanding Original Music and Lyrics and Outstanding Sound Mixing for a Comedy or Drama Series (Half @-@ Hour) and Animation . It later won for Outstanding Sound Mixing for a Comedy or Drama Series (Half @-@ Hour) and Animation . The song " Christmastime Is Killing Us " was nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Song Written for Visual Media .

= = Plot = =

Brian takes Stewie to the mall , only to get a rude brush @-@ off from Santa . As a result , Stewie vows to kill Santa for blowing him off and forces Brian to take him to the North Pole . Attempting to trick Stewie , he brings him to a Santa 's Village amusement park . Soon discovering the charade , Stewie threatens to shoot Brian if he does not take him to the real North Pole . Stewie hitches a ride with a trucker and so Brian follows him all the way to Canada . On the way , Stewie accidentally causes a traffic pileup by discharging a flare pistol in the cab of the truck , which catches fire and explodes . Crashing his car in a chain reaction , Brian becomes angry and tells Stewie that Santa does not exist . Stewie becomes frustrated and continues to attempt to hitchhike . The pair then encounter a Canadian who gives them his snowmobile .

Continuing north , they soon run out of gas , but receive help from the Aurora Boreanaz , who instructs them to stay at a nearby cabin . The two survive the night in the cabin and set out on foot the next morning . They finally make it to Santa 's workshop , only to find a dark , gloomy factory in a dreary , polluted , lifeless wasteland , Santa a sickly and somewhat psychopathic old man , the elves horribly inbred and mutated from Santa 's attempt to keep up with the increasing toy demands year after year , and the reindeer carnivorous feral monsters that eat the elves who wandered out into the snow to die of exhaustion . Santa suddenly collapses and is too sick to deliver the presents . Brian and Stewie agree to do it , only to waste time at their first stop and leave , after being discovered by a family , whom they tie up . The reindeer eat each other .

On Christmas morning , everybody wakes up to find no presents under their trees . They turn on the news , which is broadcasting the same story . Brian and Stewie appear on the broadcast and bring the dying Santa out in a wheelchair , explaining that humanity 's greed is killing him and if they don 't shorten their demands to one Christmas present a year , they may have to give up Christmas

altogether . Chastened , everyone agrees and , one year later , Santa has recovered , the workshop is once again a lively , colorful Christmassy cottage and the elves and reindeer are all rejuvenated .

= = Production and development = =

" Road to the North Pole " is the sixth episode of the " Road to " episodes of the series which air through various seasons of the show . It was directed by Family Guy veteran Greg Colton , this being the first episode he has directed since the eighth season episode " Go Stewie , Go . " This is also Colton 's third " Road to " episode , the first being " Road to Germany " and the second being " Road to the Multiverse . " The episode was written by Chris Sheridan and Danny Smith , this being the first Smith wrote since " Partial Terms of Endearment , " and his first " Road to " episode . It included staff writers Alex Carter , Andrew Goldberg and Elaine Ko . It is an hour @-@ long special with three musical numbers . Ron MacFarlane , Seth MacFarlane 's father , served as the episode 's narrator . This is also the first " Road to " episode to be composed by Ron Jones .

Two of the musical numbers , " All I Really Want for Christmas " and " Christmastime is Killing Us " were released as digital downloads on iTunes . " Christmastime is Killing Us " was available on December 3 , 2010 , while " All I Really Want for Christmas " was made available on December 10 , 2010 .

In addition to the regular cast , the episode also guest starred actress Drew Barrymore , voice actor H. Jon Benjamin , actor David Boreanaz , actress Karley Scott Collins , actress Carrie Fisher , actor Ron MacFarlane , father of series creator and executive producer Seth MacFarlane , actor Bruce McGill , voice actor Will Ryan , voice actress Tara Strong and actress Nana Visitor . Recurring guest voice actors John G. Brennan , actor Chris Cox , actor Ralph Garman , writer Chris Sheridan , writer Danny Smith , writer Alec Sulkin , actress Jennifer Tilly and writer John Viener also made minor appearances .

= = Cultural references = =

This episode as well as the entire " Road to " series in Family Guy is a parody of the seven Road to ... comedy films which were released from 1940 to 1962 , starring actors Bing Crosby , Bob Hope and actress Dorothy Lamour . The opening credits show images with Brian and Stewie referencing other Christmas specials such as The Nutcracker , A Christmas Carol , How the Grinch Stole Christmas , Frosty the Snowman and Home Alone . The credits also show Brian and Stewie performing winter activities , such as snowball fights , making snow angels and putting coal in the (Meg 's) Christmas socks instead of gifts . Ron MacFarlane , who narrated part of the episode , mentioned that Kenny Rogers was supposed to be there .

The episode opens with a musical number in which the members of Quahog sing about what they want for Christmas . Peter wishes to have actress and models Jessica Biel and Megan Fox . He also wishes to have lunch with Michael Landon 's ghost and wants twelve kegs of beer . Lois wishes to visit the Spanish coasts , and " Mexico , with two black guys and some blow " . Chris wishes for Jennifer Garner and Meg wishes for a Lexus . The neighbors of Quahog also wish for gifts : Herbert wishes for a drummer boy (there is a picture of singer Nick Jonas on the wall while he wishes for this) , Mayor Adam West wishes for a tinkertoy , Carl wishes for a Blu @-@ ray version of The Wiz and Consuela wishes for more Lemon Pledge . Continuing with the song , Jillian Russell wishes for Easter eggs , Joe wishes for one day when kids don 't stare at him , Bonnie wants platinum @-@ plated silverware , Quagmire wants " Japanese girls of no restraint " to choke him and then whip him and Mort (who is Jewish) says he will sue if they put a Christmas tree in the airport . The song ends with various characters appearing in an advent calendar .

Brian and Stewie go to the mall so they can meet Santa , but Peter is asking Santa for gifts (he asks for a game of Uno , a Magna Doodle , a pet chink (a mix of a chinchilla and a mink) and a Charles in Charge lunchbox .) When the mall Santa leaves for the night and Brian demands that he let Stewie sit in his lap , Santa mentions he will be at Applebee 's . Stewie says that Santa leaving before he got a chance to sit in his lap felt like a bigger betrayal than the betrayal of Gary Busey by

reality ; this takes us to Busey looking himself in the mirror asking his reflection , in the form of a crazed clown , how he is doing .

Brian and Stewie decide to go to the North Pole to kill Santa , but Brian does not want Stewie to get disappointed if Santa is not what everybody thinks he is ; to this Stewie responds that Brian is as negative as Eeyore from Winnie @-@ the @-@ Pooh . To prevent Stewie from going to the North Pole he tells him that Santa is not real ; Stewie questions this , also asking if Elmo , SpongeBob SquarePants and Curious George aren 't real . On their way to the North Pole , Brian and Stewie find themselves in Canada , where they meet a man with a thick Canadian accent ; they also see the Aurora borealis and the Aurora Boreanaz (an aurora with David Boreanaz 's face) .

When they finally get to the North Pole and find it polluted and lifeless , Stewie compares it to Bridgeport , Connecticut ; thus resulting in a cutaway to a Bridgeport resident writing an angry letter to the Family Guy writer staff about Stewie 's comment . When Santa Claus is near death , he shocks Stewie by saying " I 'll be with Allah soon " . When Brian and Stewie decide to deliver the presents for Santa , in their travel the Statue of Liberty can be seen . Unfortunately , they are not able to deliver the presents , and the next morning the residents of Quahog are upset because they have no presents , but Mort says he got eight mediocre gifts .

= = Reception = =

" Road to the North Pole " was broadcast on December 12 , 2010 , as a part of an animated television night on Fox , and was preceded by The Simpsons , and followed by Family Guy creator and executive producer Seth MacFarlane 's second show , American Dad ! . It was watched by 8 @. @ 03 million viewers , according to Nielsen ratings , despite airing simultaneously with the Desperate Housewives on ABC , The Amazing Race and Undercover Boss on CBS and Sunday Night Football on NBC . The episode also acquired a 3 @. @ 9 rating in the 18 ? 49 demographic , beating American Dad ! and The Simpsons in addition to significantly edging out both shows in total viewership . The episode 's ratings increased significantly from the previous week 's episode .

This episode received generally positive response from critics . Todd VanDerWerff of The A.V. Club gave " Road to the North Pole " a positive review , stating that it is " a satisfying episode of Family Guy all around , filled with funny gags and nice moments . " He especially praised the musical segments , and the portrayal of the North Pole , writing that " the way the episode kept piling more and more ridiculous horrors on top of each other kept the whole thing funny . " He rated the episode an " A- " . Jason Hughes of TV Squad also praised the songs and the depiction of Santa 's factory , though he found the delivery of the episode 's message " heavy @-@ handed . " Kate Moon of TV Fanatic gave the episode 3 @. @ 6 out of 5 stars . She said , " I had mixed feelings about this one , despite its clever moments and hopeful ending . While I normally have no problems about Family Guy ? s shocking or offensive themes , I felt bit disconcerted about the direction of this Christmas episode . " She went on to say , " Perhaps it was the way that the series stomped on something as innocent as Santa and his elves and twisted them all around . Or perhaps it was the cannibalistic reindeer . Whatever the specific reason , the irreverent nature of Family Guy seemed just a little too graphic for me this time around . "

The Parents Television Council , a conservative campaigning critic of Seth MacFarlane works , named Family Guy its " Worst TV Show of the Week " for " Road to the North Pole " for the week ending on December 17 , 2010 . It got this rating due to sexual content and excessive violent scenes including the scene in which Stewie beats a man to death with a baseball bat , and the scenes featuring Seth MacFarlane 's father , Ron , while also stating , " Forget naughty or nice . This show was simply nauseating . " Robin Pierson of The TV Critic gave " Road to the North Pole " a 47 out of a possible 100 , said " A little more interesting plot wise than the usual fare but otherwise just as gruesome " . He especially disliked the portrayal of Santa and his elves and the violence .

The episode was also nominated for Outstanding Original Music and Lyrics (for song " Christmastime Is Killing Us " , written by Ron Jones , Seth MacFarlane , and Danny Smith) and Outstanding Sound Mixing for a Comedy or Drama Series (Half @-@ Hour) and Animation . It won for Outstanding Sound Mixing for a Comedy or Drama Series (Half @-@ Hour) and Animation .

The series was successfully nominated in 2009 , but failed to merit an award . Mark Hentemann , executive producer and showrunner of Family Guy said of the nominating process , " We had internal discussions in the writers ' room , and it seemed like we were much more akin to the other primetime comedies than we were to children 's shows in animation . We assumed we would not get anywhere , and so it was a great surprise when we got the nomination . "

" Christmastime Is Killing Us " was nominated for Best Song Written for a Visual Media at the 54th Grammy Awards .