

--2019--



“Hél yoox’watán khukwastí!”

(There will be no speeches!)

Kháaxh’á eetí al’eixhí (a “return dance”) would be held with the words “There will be no speeches!” after the host clan announced their part was over. Not a dance group, but guests who want to say thank you by dancing for their hosts. Also at this time some money would be given back, blankets or bowls so that the hosts isn’t left completely broke. These were always done, unless a riddle(*gáax’u*) had been posed by the host and-then-solved-by the guests, and then and only then was one speech allowed to close the ceremony. Today “one speaker” is the ferry schedule method “so everyone can go home.” Letting anyone who wanted to give thanks was always considered. Doing happy songs throughout after it “tips over to joy” was always permitted but guests didn’t interrupt the hosts’ programs with their own skits, plays, and dances! The *koo.éex’* is totally the hosts’ until the last dollar is gone from the bowl and is announced, THEN it turns over to the guests.

Forty Day Party

The origins of the Forty Day Party (considered by many elders to be a recent trend) remain unclear. There are two opposing theories and one middle position. Most Tlingit elders believe that the Forty Day Party was not originally Tlingit but was a relatively recent innovation imported by the Russians, even though non-Orthodox communities follow the tradition today. Some middle aged and older Tlingit people have commented that, in their youth, only the Orthodox Tlingit held Forty Day Parties; they say the idea spread from there.

In Orthodox tradition the requiem service called *πανικηίδα* (panikhida) is also observed as a memorial service forty days after death; it may be repeated on other dates significant in the life of the deceased. The fortieth day observance parallels, on the individual level, the Feast of Ascension of Christ forty days after Easter. It was the custom of the early Christian Church to celebrate the third, ninth, and fortieth days after death with religious services. In most Orthodox parishes the fortieth day is still observed...

...The opposing opinion states that the Tlingit people have always had a small ceremony or feast observed forty days after death. The middle position holds that some kind of a smaller even (as opposed to the larger memorial a year or more after death) was observed in pre-contact time, but was reinforced and set at forty days under Russian influence. Kan (1987a) favors this position.

...Forty Day Parties are ideally held forty days after death, and the larger memorial held one year after, but latitude exists for both observations.

Still, others will say we had this custom before the arrival of Russian Orthodoxy and we used it to put an end to crying. Crying "is like rain in the next world" and causes it to rain on our loved ones if we continue to cry. By not letting go of a deceased relative, we prohibit them from going on to where they're supposed to go next. With the arrival of Russian Orthodox beliefs, it was easy to compare the two and adapt their beliefs with our own, which is why the 40 day party exists today as part of our grieving process. (Some even act like widows and grieve until the pay-off party!)

Today, these “potlatches” are being or have been limited to being done for “memorials.” The “memorial party” is not the only type of koo.éex’. These were given for a new house dedication (*hít wooshdei yadukích*) to dedicate ceremonial object such as house-posts, hats, a new blanket, or to give a new name or even to adopt someone; on that note, adopted people should not be giving these parties unless permission is given by those who adopted them, and should not in any circumstance be giving names. We are who we are through our mothers, by birth, not by adoption.

Koo.éex’

Koo.eex’ does not mean “Pay-off [party]” or “potlatch”. It is an Invitation to a feast.

By the terms “memorial” or “ceremonial” we refer to the major post-funeral ceremony held approximately one year after death. In English this event is commonly called “potlatch,” a term well established in popular speech as well as anthropological literature, but one for which we do not particularly care, although we also use it at times for clarity. Sometimes the combination “memorial potlatch” is also heard. Probably “party” is the most common English term used in Tlingit communities. Sometimes “pay-off party” is heard. The general Tlingit term is koo.eex’, deriving from the Tlingit verb stem “to call” or “invited”...As noted above, the ideal timing for the koo.éex’ is one year after death, but this is flexible. In actual practice today, and no doubt in the past as well, the ceremonial may be held many years after a person’s death because of the time, effort, and expense of hosting such a memorial. Conversely, some have been held less than a year after death, especially if the surviving elders feel they may not live long enough to fulfill their obligations to the dead. Also, the event may be a combined ceremonial in memory of more than one person, with several elders and their families joining efforts. The preferred time for the ceremonial is late fall or early winter, after the summer foods have been put up and after fall fishing, when people have time to focus on ceremonial life and have food and goods to distribute. Elders often say of the memorial, “*Aan haa wdudliyéx.*” (“This is the one we were created with.”)

Excerpts from: Haa Tuwunáagu Yis – For Healing Our Spirit
Richard and Nora Dauenhauer --Sealaska Heritage Foundation, 1990
(For more on memorials, read this book in its entirety)

A VERSION of a TLINGIT “MEMORIAL” KOO.ÉEX’

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Upon arrival at a *koo.éex*’, it is appropriate to wait to be seated. Seating varies at parties according to how the host wants it set up: By clan, by community, by men or women and especially the “head table” where the clan leaders would sit. Seating is done by a member of the host moiety, not the opposite and sometimes people have seated themselves where the host had someone else in mind so, waiting to be seated needs to be considered on arrival.

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Welcome Speeches

As in the other format, it was, and still is customary, to sometimes call upon a paternal grandfather to “run the party”. A grandchild* is also brought out with the words, “*Haa dachxán saagál teen áwé káasagaxtooleex!*” or “We’re going to stick a spear through our grandchild’s throat!” This means the grandchild will be doing the speaking for the clan.

1) The first speaker is usually someone from the grandfathers’ clan of the deceased. This establishes kin-ship and tells for whom the memorial is taking place. A paternal “grandfather.” At times he could even run the party for the clan-host.

2) Then the host-leader will speak and the “grandchild” will make the announcements and/or introductions henceforth. The grandchild is selected by the host and how he/she is connected by house-group and/or clan to the host clan for each individual party.

4) Local house/clan leaders will give words of welcome to the guests (and opposite clan leaders by name) and clan leaders from clans other than the host clan are not left out for welcoming remarks.

I. Face Painting and “dressing up”

These are the mourning songs. The faces of the host clan are marked with black paint, preferably charcoal at this time, and a child of the clan is called upon to do this for the host clan.

If people are dressed up in *at.óow* of the clan before the songs, then a relative (usually someone from the father’s clan or a child of a former caretaker) is called upon to dress up the host in their regalia (*at.óow*) and if the *at.óow* used is being passed on from a deceased person, it is called *ls’aati át* (“masterless things”), therefore it is not worn until the memorial is held for this person; it can be displayed and brought out to comfort those in mourning but is not worn until officially brought out again; This is called *Ls’aati át toodei nagútx* “Stepping into the Masterless Things”.

When dressing a person in the regalia, the person doing so will always say, “This isn’t me doing this, it’s (name of deceased clan relative) doing this.” Those dressed in the crest hats usually dance when their hat song is done. This IS proper.

At a time like this, a grandchild can ask to wear his paternal grandfathers’ *at.óow*. Being dressed up in the *at.óow* does not give the grandchild the right to claim the crest or the object. Dressing a grandchild up in your *at.óow* “makes the *at.óow* worth more.” A grandchild is anyone whose paternal grandfather was your clan, whether they are one day old or 100 years old. A person can also ask their paternal grandfathers’ clan for *at.óow* to use at this time as well.

III. Gaaw wutaan (muffled drums)

IT IS proper AND acceptable to dance during the mourning songs no matter what anyone else may say about it. There really is no other time to dance to mourning songs than now.-- If this is done then the men dance with sticks while these songs are done and women do the “motion dance” or “yarn dance” wearing *guktlénx* (long yarn tassels worn on the ears) which is called *yoo koonákk*.

Some insist that no more than four songs be done calling this “*gaax tlein*” or “big cry”, and only two songs for others as “*sigoowu gaax*” or “happy cry”. Others do songs from the opposite clan and “tell their history” and do all of their clan’s mourning songs. These are all correct.

The “hat songs” are done at this at a slower pace and at this point the dancing is called *gáax kát nák* or “standing for the cry”. The sticks signify the men who used to stir the ashes during the cremation of the deceased, the *guktlénx* signify the heaviness as the women sway.

If a song from the opposite side is done the clan will call upon an opposite such as their father’s clan or mother’s father’s clan and say, “*Ax daa kanaanék!*” or “Tell my history.” and then the song will be done. A member of the opposite clan is usually called upon to do the drumming (softly, not pounding the drum!).

The clan’s own mourning songs will be completed, even if they have another memorial party pending (for other deaths), as this ritual is to put an end to the sorrow for whom the party is being held in memory for, otherwise the clan continues in mourning. Finishing the song “finishes the mourning” for this person.

II. Response

Ls’aati shaa gaaxí, or the “widow’s cry” is done at this time. Clan present do their songs to “push away the grief from the host”, usually ending with the widow’s clan. Balance is not “song for song” or “speech for speech”, the balance is in the reply. (As the mourning clan does their mourning songs the guests face the host clan dressed in their own crest hats and stand with their hands raised to “push away the grief” from the clan in mourning. They will reciprocate on these songs.)

Chush tóodáx kei duhúkch

This is still the ritual done after all the mourning songs are done by the host clan, chanting “*yaasx’aashú!*” as a stick is raised, dispelling the last of the grief; the mourning period is now over and the black paint can be removed, the sticks put away and the *guktlénx* removed.

V. First Meal

Naming of the *Naakaani yán* is usually done at this time as well; usually two sometimes four or more, or as many as are needed. The *Naa káani* is the “in-law”, usually someone married to a host clan member. He is not a “future leader” as some may have suggested, he is just as the name says, the brother-in-law, and he is responsible for keeping the guests (his own side) quiet** and makes announcements for the host clan (the clan of the spouse), especially when calling out names for distribution. Women can also be used as a *naa káani*. He/She is literally the go-between for the hosts and guests.

While much is made today of “not telling another’s history” and “intellectual property rights” a *naakáani* must know the history of his host and be able to tell it at a moment’s notice if asked. –

Knowing the history of the clan and family trees of those involved helps with the order as well the speakers and how responses will be done.

The first meal is done immediately after the mourning songs and the guest's response, and sometimes this meal is the "favorite" food of the deceased.

Gankas'ix'i (Fire Dish)

This is done as soon as the meal starts. A member of the father's clan of the deceased is usually called upon to "take the food" to the deceased at which time they will name one of their own deceased relatives stating it is their own deceased relative who is actually taking food to the person. Someone who returned from the dead once said that those on the other side still needed to be fed and in order to get food to them it had to be burned.

Bowls or dishes with food are given to the opposite clan and special guests. It used to be only certain ones received this now for some reason an effort is made to make sure everyone receives a fire-dish. At least two communities only have a dish for the deceased that is given to an honored guest, and no other dishes are distributed. This is not out of line with *haa kusteeyi*. A picture of the deceased is usually carried around to show the guests at this time by someone from the guests. Any container given must have something in it.

(Due to religious beliefs, some forego the "fire-dish" due to biblical prohibitions of "passing through the fire", and should not be forced to do if this is their belief.) If that's the case, then the food doesn't have to be burned but can be eaten by those seated around the person given the "fire dish", which is also acceptable.) The sapling trees the men danced with at the beginning would be burned along with the fire dish now.

"Love songs" can be done by either side now. The songs done after mourning songs are referred to as *kindachóon aawanaak*, or "standing upright".

VI. Dry Goods Distribution

At this point all the dry goods are brought out and distributed but blankets are not distributed yet. Towels, trinkets, canned-goods, pop, etc. All give away items. Care is given to hand all items to a guest and to never throw or toss ANY item at ANY time. (Blankets are not given out yet.)

Kaa x'éidei at kadunáa- (Taking Round Objects to the Mouth of Someone)-- A deceased clan member's name is called out like: "(Name of a deceased clan member) *x'éidei!*" meaning "to the mouth of (name of a deceased clan member)" and then the bowl is designated for a guest: "(Name of a guest) *x'éidei du xwáaxooteen*" or "to the mouth of (name of the guest) and his gang!" This is when bowls of fruit are taken to the guests by calling out an individual's name and those seated nearby (not other tables!) share in taking the fruit. This can be done now, or after the money is collected, or at any other break-time before the end of the party. If a bowl is for someone to take home the one calling out the names will just call out, "To the mouth of" and it's understood it's for that person alone. The food someone takes home is called *éenwoo*.

The daughter-in-law is called "*du ya dóok*", or "his face". *Haa ya dóok* is "our daughter-in-law", lit. "our countenance". These are women who are or were married to sons of the host clan. These are usually the ones who are selected to distribute the fire-dishes. These women are the mothers of *haa dachxánx'i sáani* or "our precious grandchildren".

NOTE: It is common to joke with clan relations, "clan brothers and sisters" and tell jokes on one another. Jokes about witchcraft and other such taboo subjects, were (and are!) ideal targets for matrikin at these events, all adding to laughter and joyful activities. The mourning is over, "fun" is the name of the game. This can go on throughout the whole party now too.

(Another thing that used to be done at these memorial parties was what is called *yikteiyí*, which is a show or a skit. An event of the clan would be re-enacted and the guests had to guess what was being portrayed. Masks held by the clan were used at this time too.)

Money collection

Host clan members used to do this, but now spouses of the host clan are called upon to count the money. They are the “secretaries”. (Another meal can be, or is usually served now.) This portion hasn’t changed from the other version. It’s o.k. if a clan uses their own money counters.

- A. *Jínda.aat* first-- clans other than the host clan, or “those who came to give a hand”. Before this time, members of the guest clans will be donating to the host clan members to increase their contributions as a gesture of helping the host clan. Some give \$1.00 or \$2.00 or even larger amounts. Sometimes children of the host will give large amounts of money to back up their father and add to his contribution.
- B. Other clan members-- The host clan members give their contributions.
- C. Immediate family last-- These are the last ones to contribute with the host or the oldest member of the host house group going last.

The person donating announces who donated to him/her and then their own amount and the *naa káani* says the total aloud so everyone can hear what the donation is. This is done until all have finished contributing then a *naa káani* will announce the full amount.

(Note—If the party is for more than one person, it is considered impolite to split up the money bowls, a different bowl for each person. As one elder put it, “We are one clan!” just before he turned the bowls over and mixed the money together. Everyone contributes to make the party a success, not to outdo one family over another).

Killing the Money (and naming and adoptions)

The names of the deceased can be called off such as “(name of the Deceased) *Kaadéi*”, or “[The money is] put over” (named of the deceased)” and can be all the clan names that can be recounted or just the names of whoever the memorial is for. House names and the names of the *at.óow* of the house are also named off. This “killing of the money” disassociates the money from the donator.

This also pays for the public display of the *at.óow* and “make the object worth more”. It is considered improper to put money in envelopes then take it back out. When it’s killed, it’s dead. The words used when killing the money over the names and/or objects are: (Name of person or object) + *kaadéi*, lit. “Over _____.”

The names of the deceased are usually passed on at this time and adoptions can be made too, adopting another Tlingit (of the same moiety, different clan) into your own clan or a non-Tlingit. Clan grandchildren, daughters and sons in-law, are subjects for name-giving too, and sometimes new names are created from events at the party or the times around it. Money used to be held by a flame (such as a candle) to “warm the money” known as *du yáw du dleit’aa*, and then the name is “fit to the face” of the person being named. The money is put on the forehead and the name is said aloud as: “(The name) *á*, “It is (the name)”. This is done three times (some say four) and everyone repeats it after it is said aloud, thereby fitting the name to the person. A guest who is present is designated to receive this money and is “witness” to the name given.

NOTE: You don't have to wait for a *koo.éex'* to give a name to a clan member, all children were given names at birth and clan members should have names without having to wait for a *koo.éex'* to get one however, a name can be "re-inforced" with money behind it later if wanted.

Special Note: Goods given away, trinkets, blankets, towels, paddles, handmade gifts or items, store-bought or and handmade, and other such objects are never "killed" with the money nor is their value "announced aloud" to the guests, which would be like putting price tags on your Christmas presents under the tree. Only the cash that is given out is "killed"; blankets can also be "killed" in this fashion, nothing else, unless someone has some *tin.áa* (copper plates) to give out! Only the money counts as being killed against something (or the blankets).

VII. "Money Dances"

These are part of the dances known as *kindachóon aawanaak*, or "standing upright". Grandchildren especially those who are the same clan as the host clan (the most prominent ones at a party) are usually called upon to dance, or nephews/nieces of the host, or a daughter-in-law, it's up to the host.

After the money is killed and the name giving completed (if any) this is when the "blanket dances" are done, usually in this order. They are done this way normally as the clan has now "paid for the right to display them.":

1. *Gangoosh*— Abalone fin headdress, the headdress made out of abalone shells sometimes called "Bear Ears" (these can be used by any clan and the clans that have them have or had their own song for this dance.) If a clan doesn't have one, they can proceed to the following songs:
2. Hat dances-- Done in the order of the host clan hats present, ending with the hat songs from the host clan.
3. *Yéik ootee* (Spirit Imitation)-- The dance behind the blanket when the dancer makes the eagle down fly out of the headdress at the ending. This is a chance for dancers to show-off their dancing ability! (Sometimes, those adopted will be asked to dance.) Men and woman can do this dance and it is not necessary to stand during these songs. [At some parties those who received names are asked to dance to this and it has been erroneously stated that this seals the name to the person...read on.]

When those dancing behind the blankets are finished their foreheads are wiped with the blanket corner and the blanket given to a guest. Sometimes five or six blankets are held together at one time for the dancer to dance behind and the blankets likewise distributed.

VIII. Money Distribution

(NOTE: It is awkward to give money to local "charities" at the expense of those guests seated at *koo.éex'*; such money giving should be done at home, not at an event like this.)

A general distribution is usually made to the guests first so everybody gets something.

Consistently giving money back to one's spouses and children and "honoring them for their help" amounts to, as another elder said, "Taking money out of one pocket and putting it back in the other." This kind of honoring can be done at home, not at a *koo.éex'*.]

Also, once money is placed in the bowl, it is “dead” and cannot be retrieved, incl. money placed in envelopes. This money is to be killed and give out by the host. Money placed in envelopes for “pick up later” should not be counted towards the total or even brought out. The money is killed, and gone.

Other help is also paid to the opposite clan and can include but is not limited to the following, and not in any certain order:

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Night-watch | 2. Pall-bearers | 3. Grave Diggers | 4. Grave finisher |
| 5. Fire Dish taker | 6. Picture carrier(s) | 7. Cooks | 8. <i>Naa káani yán</i> |
| 9. “Secretaries” | 10. Drummer(s) | 11. Clan children | |

Notice: The usual rule is--, *if you put out money, half what you put out goes to “bills” and the other half for the seated guests. Money in envelopes is unacceptable and shouldn’t be counted.*

If a widow(er) survives, at the memorial for the spouse the host will line up to take certain amounts of money to pay this person, all equal amounts and this usually adds up to quite a payment. All such help is paid and the rest of the blankets can now be distributed.

XII. Ending

When all the money has been completely distributed a *naakáani* will say “*Hooch’ áwé yaanax!*” meaning “That’s all there is!”-- ALL speeches can be stopped by one of the guest clan leaders saying the following: “*Hel yoox’watánx’i kukkwastí!*” or “There will be no speeches!” meaning that the guests will do a return dance which is called “*Kaax’a eeti al’eixí.*” This is done to give some of the gifts back to the host clan (including money) and entertain them with their own songs and skits. A return dance can be done after the other version too.

This is a lively, fun time, thanking the host for their hospitality. Guests (including modern dance groups) never interrupt a party with their own program! EVERY person who was a guest is expected to come back and dance in a return dance. (In fact, this is the only time an “entrance song” is done at memorials as the host clan does not leave the guest seated to come in dancing at their own party; entrance songs are done by the guests at a Return Dance).

The order of a return dance is similar to that of the party itself and can be done immediately after the party and nobody leaves or let people go home and rest and come back for the return dance; usually if they take a break few of the guests return to do the return dance.!

The songs leaders will line up the dance paddles and the guests will return doing their entrance song. Fun times and fun headdresses, masks and skits can also be done. Daggars will come in first, followed by the crest hats. The daughter-in-law dances in front of the crest hats first with her arms open to the person wearing the hat, this again, is “the countenance of the clan.” The last ones to enter are the *shakee.át* dancers, the lively dancers who can show off.

This is the usual order in a return dance:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| 1. Entrance | 2. Inside Song | 3. Gangoosh |
| 4. Love Songs or happy songs | 5. Hat Songs | 6. money collection |
| 7. <i>yéikootee</i> | 8. money to the hosts who are now “guests” | |
| 9. “thank you’s” exchanged. | 10. Exit | --END |

--Guests never left a party before it was finished. It was considered the gravest insult to a host clan to get up and leave and anyone leaving like that never had to be invited again!—

The usual ending is for some people from various clans to thank the host clan for the invitation and what was received. This was (and is) a good time to hear stories, history and more about the person(s) being commemorated and can last several hours. **Jokes**, especially on one's own moiety is in order and a lot of fun. After the guests have a chance to respond should this format be used, it is turned back over to the host to end the program the way they see fit, either with more "thank-you's" to those attending and/or with a song.

If "one speaker is chosen", this is the MAN'S choice and no woman can speak after a man has spoken the last words of thanks unless asked by the clan leaders to do so. This is not Western culture, "this is Tlingit culture." The clan leader, i.e. "the man" has the final word.

NOTE: "One Speaker" syndrome-- At some memorials the host used to pose a riddle (*gáax'oo*). If the guests figured out the riddle, then and only then, were they allowed one speaker and everyone could get up and leave after the one speaker. Today, it is taken as a short-cut to end things quickly—it should not be done to save time as people would like to say thank you and furthermore, people should not be leaving while these "thanks" are being given to the host.

The ending of the party also used to be a good time to hear stories, and history of families when anyone who wanted to could get up and give their thanks to the host (not to themselves!) and about what they received and who had been remembered at the party.

--(*Kuyax du héixwaa* If the party goes past 3am then this ritual was always done, and has to be done before Raven sounds at first light. It's usually the Raven's who start off first, "appeasing" Raven and putting up a *yéik* (spirit) song to ward off, what is said to be the creatures of the night, as those animals are retiring back to their homes and the creatures of the daytime are coming out. They can't mix. After the Ravens will do a *yéik* song then the Wolves (that is, the "opposites") do a response to balance the *yéik* song that was just done, and only then can the party continue.)--

HELPERS: If your own moiety is putting on a *koo.éex'*, there is no need to wait for an invitation, even if not the same clan. You don't invite your own moiety to such an event and you show up to help. This help is called *jínda.aat*. Every effort should be done to "catch up" and participate in any of your clan's parties or those of your own moiety where possible.

At.óow is displayed at a party, clan objects that have been passed down from one to another, not your own vests or something recently made. These *at.óow* can be connected to the mourning clan and used to comfort them, especially when it's objects coming from their fathers or grandfathers and objects that their own ancestors may have once had.

Haa kusteeyí áyá. This is our custom, our culture, the way we are.

(Parties vary from community on length, seating, song arrangements, and dancing. This is only an example of how a memorial may be run, not referencing the other types of *koo.éex'* that may be done.)

It is not rude, impolite, or a violation of Tlingit custom to ask that children not be allowed at such events. Children were not allowed at these in the past and can be expected now and at future parties. Another thing to keep in mind is in some communities the guests bring their own dinnerware: dishes, bowls, forks, knives, spoons, cups. This is traditional and if asked to do so it is not out of line either.

Dogs or "pets" were strictly forbidden! A child of the host clan would sometimes be asked to sit by the doorway to "keep the dogs out," an honorable seat. Children, unless of high rank, were never allowed at parties. Children make noise and interfere with proceedings and respect demanded that such be kept home.

WORDS OR PHRASES YOU MAY HEAR DURING A KOO.ÉEX:

1. **Áwé! or áawé!:** This is done when a person is identified by name or clan.
NOTE: ONLY the men (clan leaders) reply to this and when a clan is addressed it is not for every clan member to respond to, again only the clan leaders. (NOTE: Women only respond if addressed individually or the gender-form of the clan is addressed such as *Dakl'eiw sháa* for the woman of the *Dakl'aweidi* or *Chookan sháa* for the women of the *Chookaneidi*, etc.)
2. **Héiy!:** Same as above
3. **Haa waasa!** This means “Indeed!” A response to a fact stated or supporter what the speaker has said.
4. **Yei á!** “That’s it!” Also supporting what the speaker has said.
5. **Yéi yátee! :** “That’s the way it is.” Agreeing with something said.
6. **Yéikkwatée!:** “That’s the way it will be.” Allowing something to take place.
7. **Gunalchéesh, ho ho!:** This is the emphasis for saying “thank you,” like “thank you very much with much feeling.” A prolonged or drawn out “*gunalcheeeeeeeesh!*” is not proper Tlingit or meaningful; “ho ho” is the emphasis used.
8. **I x'eit wusi.áx I káani yán!:** “Your in-laws” hear you.” One of the leaders may say this and this shows the host you’re paying attention.

(These are said at certain times throughout the event and it may sound like the person is interrupting the speaker however, these are proper responses and etiquette at a koo.éex.

THINGS YOU MAY SEE DURING A KOO.ÉEX

1. A “grandchild” will be called out. This is someone whose grandfather is a member of the host clan. He will do the introductions of those speaking (but he is not running the koo.éex and is often referred to or treated as a *goox* (slave), getting things for his grandfathers. It is improper to introduce one’s self at events like this and tell your history, someone else will tell your history for you.
2. When the mourning songs are done by the host clan the guests will raise a hand towards the hosts. This is to “push away the grief.”
3. When a hand is raised when a *yéik* song is done, a shaman spirit song, this is done with the palm of the hand to ward off the spirit.
4. Fruit bowls. A person’s name is called out to receive a fruit bowl. It can either be designated only to the person or those around the person called: (Persons’s name) *x'eiyeedéi* (to the mouth of) Du (his/her) *xwáa* (“gang”) *xoo* (among) *teen* (with). This is ONLY for those seated around the person called and not for people from other rows or tables to run from row to row or table to table to grab out of the bowl. Some nearby will soon be called. Wait!
5. *Naa káani-* at times this person will ask the guests to be quiet. The hosts never tell their guests to be quiet, only the *naa káani* should do that. *A naa káani* is not a “leader in training”. A man or woman can be used as one. Plural: *naa káani yán*, not “naakaanees”.