



Is 'America's Got Talent' Breakout Star Tim Poe a Fraud?

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NBC's summer talent show "America's Got Talent" looked like it had found a new star this week in country singer Tim Poe, who came to the stage with a heart-tugging story: He's an Afghanistan war veteran who was injured by a rocket-propelled grenade, suffering brain damage and developing a stutter that he can only suppress while singing. But his tale might be too good to be true. Reports are now surfacing that Poe may have fabricated the whole story.

Reality TV blog [Rickey.org first reported](#) that the military records didn't match Poe's story. Poe served with the Minnesota National Guard for nine years (not 14, as he said) as a supply specialist, and they can't find any evidence of the injury he describes. "Sgt. Poe's official military records do not indicate that he was injured by a grenade in combat while serving in Afghanistan in 2009, as he reports," the Minnesota National Guard said in a statement.

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[The Associated Press followed up](#) and found the same thing. "We looked very closely at his record," Minnesota National Guard spokesman Lt. Col. Kevin Olson told the AP. "We did not find something to substantiate what he said." Olson also noted that Poe did not receive the Purple Heart, a honor given to servicemen injured in enemy combat, as he would have if his story were true. And now Poe's ex-wife is piling on, [telling the New York Post](#) she has never heard him stutter: "There were no combat injuries... I think he developed a 'feel sorry for me' stutter."

Poe won over the "Talent" judges and viewers on Monday night with his amazing tale, telling viewers in a taped interview that he suffered a broken back and brain damage while heroically trying to save his fellow troops: "There was a guy who came up with a rocket-propelled grenade. I saw it coming down, and by the time I turned and went to jump on top of my guys, I yelled 'grenade' and the blast had hit me." He then earned a standing ovation with his heartfelt rendition of Garth Brooks' "If Tomorrow Never Comes."

Watch Tim Poe's "America's Got Talent" audition and interview right here:

[Video: [Watch the Rest of Monday's 'Talent' Auditions](#)]

NBC had no comment on the story, but if proven true, these accusations could turn a feel-good story into a serious scandal for the network. At the very least, it sounds as if someone at NBC didn't do their homework before broadcasting Poe's story into millions of homes. Poe got three "yes" votes from the judges and will presumably continue on in the competition; we'll have to wait and see how "Talent" addresses these very serious allegations in the weeks to come.

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I think I may have found evidence of his brain damage... there's gotta be something wrong with anyone who would fake a story like that.

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