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INTELLECTUAL BIOGRAPHY

I am the ultimate product of a Canadian family. I am part Greek, part British, and all Canadian. I am a true multicultural product of the 20th century. This heritage, and the Canadian experience has shaped me into who I am.

The most important influence on me growing up was the interaction of my extended family with each other and how their divergent values made me think and relate to my environment.

I was born in Vancouver in 1997 and spent my early years in North Vancouver with my parents and nearby British grandparents. My father's side of the family moved here almost sixty years ago from Britain. I am legally allowed to work in England due to my Grandmother's English heritage. My grandfather on my father's side was able to track my family line all the way back to Alfred the Great. My father's parents raised me to eat like an English gentleman, work in the family garden, and later, how to swear properly. Their house was full of multi-generation heirlooms.

My mother's side of the family is from Greece but her parents and brother's family now live in Hamilton, Ontario. My family would go to visit them nearly every summer and every second Christmas holiday. Visiting them is like visiting my second home. In my early years, when we went to visit them, I deluded myself into thinking I was going to Greece. Why? Almost all of their friends spoke Greek and the Greek culture was completely dominant.

I began my schooling at St. Catherine's pre-school at the age of four. I had to be independent as my parents both worked; I would have to stay at day care. However, much to my delight, my grandparents would sometimes pick me up and take me to their house just up the road. There I would

help my grandma bake pies and all sorts of British food, walk the dogs, and listen to stories from my grandpa. My grandparents taught me things like how to eat properly and how to ride a bike. My grandfather is an influence as he has been to over 95 countries. Now, one of my hobbies is traveling the world. I love exploring new and different places. It truly surprises me how different other parts of the world are. I have now been to 24 countries.

When Kindergarten came around, I was shy and quiet. I went to my neighborhood school Highlands Elementary. Early on I liked to keep to myself. In the first few years I had made some of my closest and oldest friendships; friendships I still have to this day. One of my friends enjoyed going camping and hiking and his German and Austrian roots were also big influences on me.

After school, I attended Highlands Kids Club, an on-site daycare. I enjoyed my time at Kids Club. As a teenager, I would later go back to Kids Club to volunteer with Halloween events, organize field trips, and help with the kids.

During my later years at Highlands I ceased enjoying my time there. I only had two trusted friends. I felt isolated from the rest of my grade. I was struggling academically. Due to my low grades and struggle to focus in school; my parents arranged for me to have a Psych Ed Test. The doctor told me I had learning differences in mathematics and reading comprehension. This frustrated me as I saw it as an embarrassment and felt inferior. As my learning differences started to become apparent, I was a troublesome student. I would often be sent to the principal's office. I would always admit that I was wrong. Upon hearing the news that my parents were planning on sending me to a private school over town, I began to really feel out of place as a new school meant that I had to start over.

Grade seven was my first year at Fraser Academy. It was a school for children with learning differences. For the first few months I wanted more than ever to go back to Highlands as Fraser Academy felt so different. Despite going to a school designed for students who learn differently, I would keep My learning differences to myself and very rarely talk about them. As time went on I made quite a

few friends in my grade and generally got along with everyone. Fraser Academy has roughly 200 children from grade two to twelve. I began to appreciate the small population as it made for a less hostile social environment. Fraser Academy helped me confront and improve on my learning struggles. I became far more proficient in reading, writing and mathematics. I began to feel confident about my grades and overall performance in school. I won my first academic award in grade nine for academic improvement. In grade ten I would later win this award a second time along with a mathematics award. The awards helped me conquer my doubts about my academic abilities. I also started to take part in my school's track and field, cross country and tennis clubs.

By grade eleven I obtained my first job as a line cook at Red Robin. I loved it there; I made new friends and became far more independent. I was proud of the fact that I worked through high school and made my own money. I would later become interested in the art of cooking and make it a hobby of my own.

By grade twelve, I applied to seven universities and was accepted to all of them. It was also around this time that I earned my driver's license on the first try. This accomplishment made me really proud as I dedicated myself to earning my license on the first try and proved that I could accomplish anything I wanted as long as I worked for it.

I went to the University of Victoria as I felt it was a good distance from home. However, due to Fraser Academy's small class sizes, I was not prepared for the large class sizes of the University of Victoria. Despite my drive to be independent, I struggled to focus and study in school as I had not really considered if university was right for me. I would later view the system as poor as it was inflexible for students such as myself due to standardized testing.

As far as my worldviews go, I am generally an idealist. I do not need a safe space when it comes to debate. There is no idea that I am afraid to argue. I like to think of arguing as my playground. I tend to think what ought to be; not what is. Politically I am more right wing than left. However, I have

limited respect for extremism. I believe in moderation. When it comes to justice, I believe in the natural law.

I later came to Capilano University after two years of attempting to fit at the University of Victoria. My interest is in Liberal Studies. I hope to be able to hone my skills in critical thinking, research, and be able to be able to create something new by crossing boundaries in order to structure an academic plan that allows me to fit into an undergraduate program that I enjoy.

I grew up with a variety of influences. I have overcome academic challenges and social stigma. I have maintained a flexible and worldly view. My goal is to continue down this path, improving as I go.