

<i>ABC Assignment: Cross Cultural Chart</i>	<b>Autobiography Jordy Voss Male, 22, US <u>Exclusive</u></b>	<b><u>Similarities</u></b>	<b>Biography B Female, 21, Ecuador <u>Exclusive</u></b>
Cultural Traditions	*Many widely celebrated holidays have religious backgrounds, but are now secular	*Celebrates Christmas, Halloween, birthdays, and graduations	*Celebrates quinceañeras and confirmación *Many widely celebrated holidays are religious
Education	*Attended public schools *Was able to choose topics to study in high school	*Schools were close to residences *Parents had a choice in where their kids could attend school *Currently attending college	*Attended highly acclaimed private naval schools *Experienced a foreign exchange in the US during high school
Ethnic Influences	*Native English speaker *Largely Northwestern European-American *Individualistic cultural identity	*Has European ancestry *Speaks Indo-European languages *Born and raised in post-colonial Americas	*Native Spanish speaker *Mestiza (mixed European and Indigenous American) *Collectivist cultural identity
Family	*Large mixed family	*Biological parents are still married	*Small nuclear family
Personal Accomplishments	*Literal interpersonal accomplishments	*Considers external success to be an accomplishment	*Existential intrapersonal accomplishments
Personal Disappointments	*Specific events can be recalled easily as disappointments	*School-related disappointments	*Specific events do not stand out as disappointing
Religious Traditions	*Most family members still attend church regularly *LDS background	*Christian-based religious background *Considers themselves to believe in God, but not religious *Religion is important to community	*Family does not attend church regularly *Catholic background
Socioeconomic Status	*Father is entrepreneur *Finances have remained stable	*Currently middle class *Father is the main financial provider of the family	*Family started in poverty *Father is retired military officer

Jordy Voss

Dr. Dustin Drake

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### ABC Assignment

#### 1. C - Cross Cultural Analysis

##### 1.1 Cultural Traditions

Although B and I celebrate similar holidays in our cultures, there is a division of importance placed on these events. B's culture in Ecuador places a large emphasis on religiosity, especially in ceremonious holidays or celebrations like Holy Week (Semana Santa) or Confirmation (Conformación). While many of my home traditions can be traced back to either Pagan or Christian ceremonies, this importance is largely erased, with commercialized versions of these traditions taking hold as replacements. This may be attributed to a combination of high economic development and liberalization that often leads to a more secular, religiously diverse, and economically free market society.

In B's case, Ecuador is far less developed than the United States. While events like Halloween and birthday celebrations show similarities to the US and a process of Americanization, the homogeneity of Ecuador's religious make-up offers less secular reformation of cultural celebrations. Therefore, cultural significance of traditional Catholic celebrations is tied directly to the Ecuadorian calendar year.

These differences highlight the importance of religion in cultural traditions. Although the US is a majority Christian nation, the diversity and secularity lends to a culture that is less religiously expressive in comparison to cultures like Ecuador. Even living in the most religiously

homogeneous state, Utah has a level of secularity in celebrations less pervasive than many other religiously homogeneous cultures.

### 1.2 Education

B and I shared the largest differences in our educational upbringing. Whereas I attended typical public schools in suburban neighborhoods, B enrolled in private naval schools with the highest national scores. Although B comes from a less economically developed country, her quality of education was probably higher than most students in the US attending public schools, including myself. Although I have always considered US students that have attended private K-12 schools more privileged than myself, the reality of better educational opportunities in less-developed countries had not occurred to me until my interview with B. This offers a new scope into educational privilege and quality I had not encountered before. However, both B and I are attending a public university in our respective home countries, where I may have more academic opportunities than she might due to the high collegiate standards found in the US.

### 1.3 Ethnic Influences

Although B and I were both born and raised in the post-colonial Americas, our ethnicities differ in genetic admixture. However, our ethnic identities do not deviate from the majority found in our respective regions. B's ethnic identity as mestiza is similar to the majority of people in Ecuador, whereas my ethnic identity fits within the three largest ancestries found in Utah (English, German, and Scandinavian). Therefore, we both experience a privilege of 'fitting in' with the majority of the people around us. However, B's identity seems to be of higher importance to her than mine is to me. This could be for a variety of reasons, but my hypothesis is as follows: the often individualistic culture common in others sharing my ethnic and racial identity, along with holding the statistical majority and majority of power, has led to a less united

view of a collective identity. Therefore, there is often less 'pride' in being of British, German, Scandinavian, and other European ancestries.

#### 1.4 Family

B has a moderately different family structure than I do. Her parents have only been married once, to each other, and B has one full brother. In comparison, my father has been married previously, and I have four half siblings. B has a stronger sense of normalcy in her family's structure when compared to other people sharing her cultural background. I believe that my personal experiences in having a non-traditional family has helped me to better understand those in similar situations. Opposingly, B is much more likely to see families like hers represented in real-life scenarios and media.

#### 1.5 Personal Accomplishments and Disappointments

When listing my personal accomplishments and disappointments, my items were more likely to be quantifiable, interpersonal, and excessive. These events are compatible with individualistic societies, as they focus on uniqueness and differentiation. Comparatively, B deliberately gave a small sample of figurative events. To contrast, these events were more compatible with collectivist societies, as B provided her reasoning as being counter cultural and revolutionary. Her answers provided a perspective on gender, especially in a more masculine society found in Ecuador. I did not have to consider my gender when contemplating my accomplishments, providing a possible privilege I had not considered before. These differences have given me an insight into what I consider success and why, as I was very surprised by B's answers.

#### 1.6 Religious Tradition

Although B and I come from different Christian denominational backgrounds, religion is the topic in which we shared the most similarities. We both live in homogeneous religious societies and have family members who are more religious while believing in a more non-denominational idea of 'God' ourselves. Therefore, I had the least amount of new insight during this specific section.

### 1.7 Socioeconomic Status

B and I both find our families in our respective countries' definition of middle class. However, B's family experienced a larger shift in SES when compared to my family's history. Although my father struggled financially after his divorce to his first wife, he probably would have never been considered anything other than middle class (though he may have been at the lower end of the 'middle class spectrum' at that time). So, I take B's experience as another perspective on what middle class means. She provided more insight into the comforts and discomforts found in the varying degrees of average SES.

### 1.8 Conclusion

To conclude, if more layers were to be added to our respective identities (sexual orientation, gender vs. gender identity, subcultures, nationality, etc.), B and I may have found more instances of marginalization and privilege within each other's experiences. However, when stripped back to the basics of privilege and identity, I find much more likeness when compared to B than originally thought. Although my identity is also similar to most that surround me on a daily basis, I have those layers that contribute to complex and intersectional experiences. As a future educator, this approach to self identity is an approach to discovering others' experiences, both as complex and intersectional.