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ABC Assignment

1. A - Cultural Autobiography

1.1 Cultural Traditions

To put in the simplest language possible, my cultural identity can be summed up as White European-American. I use that specific phrase to avoid the complexities of individualism due to the fact that in American society, it seems that racial/ethnic identity is the most significant identifier of persons. As a White European-American, the cultural celebrations and traditions that I adhere to are federally recognized or largely commercialized versions of old Christian and Pagan holidays: Christmas, Halloween, Easter, New Years, etc. Although the significance of these holidays were once contextualized as highly religious and ceremonious, my family and I observe them in a more casual format with religious observance being purely supplemental. Generally, holidays are not observed by my family nor I with much significance or importance.

1.2 Education

For both my primary and secondary education, I attended public schools. For K-5th and 8th-11th grade, I enrolled in schools based on my local school district boundaries. For 6th and 7th grade, I was admitted to an Accelerated Learning Program for Students (ALPS) in schools outside of my boundaries before moving to a different county and school district without ALPS. In total, I attended four elementary schools, three junior high/middle schools, and one high school. I graduated from high school in April of 2016, one year and one month ahead of my

predetermined graduation date. Although school choice was largely available to me, I regularly attended schools based on proximity or boundaries when not enrolled in ALPS.

Most schools I attended were in good condition, with only one elementary school requiring constant repairs, resulting in students using substitute school buildings during construction. All schools that I attended had computers, libraries, and counselors available for student use. However the more rural a school that I enrolled in was, the less widely available these resources were. Learning materials were kept up-to-date, with textbooks typically no older than five years old.

1.3 Ethnic Influences

Both of my parents are ethnically Northwestern European. My mother is predominantly British and Scandinavian and my father is predominantly German and Scandinavian. Most of their ancestors emigrated from Europe to settle near the Mississippi River or the Rocky Mountains, either to join religious movements or for better work opportunities. I share a common ancestry with other White Americans in the various places I've lived in Wyoming and Utah, and am typically ethnically similar to the majority of neighbors, coworkers, and peers.

Generally speaking, ethnic identification does not seem to be of much importance between White Americans in the areas I've grown up in. Instead, ancestry is a highly researched but private matter, particularly in my own family. When identifying my ethnicity, I will either use the general statement of "Northwestern European-American" or the more specific "British, Scandinavian, and German-American". However, because my recent ancestors may have assimilated quickly to the typical White American culture after immigrating, ethnic identification does not seem to be as defining of my culture compared to the racial identifier of "White American".

1.4 Family

I am the only child of my parents, with two older half-brothers and two older half-sisters from my father's previous marriage. My youngest sibling is 14 years older than me and I was essentially raised as an only child for the majority of my upbringing. My mother was 35 and my father was 40 at the time of my birth. Both of my sisters are married with children (seven "niblings" total), with my oldest niece born when I was three years old. My paternal grandfather and grandmother were married until their deaths in 2010 and 2021 respectively. My maternal grandparents divorced before I was born and are both widowed after losing their second spouses. My father's side of the family is large and homogenous, whereas my mother's is small and diverse (ethnically and religiously).

1.5 Personal Accomplishments and Disappointments

Some of my most significant personal accomplishments include having the fastest 100m backstroke time on my high school swim team, graduating early from high school, becoming the most requested salesperson at my place of work, receiving my Associates degree from Utah Valley University, and receiving my Teaching English as a Foreign Language Certificate from the University of Toronto. My personal disappointments include dropping from honors classes to "regular" classes in high school, failing a course in college, going from a salaried position to a minimum wage job, and becoming unemployed to go to college full-time.

1.6 Religious Tradition

My immediate family is largely religious, with most being members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) that attend church meetings weekly. My recent ancestors were predominantly LDS as well, making it a multi-generational religious practice. Although I

do not identify myself as a member of the LDS church, I do identify with it for cultural purposes as the faith shaped the majority of my upbringing.

1.7 Socioeconomic Status

I would define the socioeconomic status of my family as middle class. My father has been the family's main financial provider for the entirety of my upbringing and has continued to do so. He has most recently been an entrepreneur, holding various managerial and sales positions beforehand. In the beginning of my parents' marriage, my family resided in lower middle class suburban neighborhoods. Eventually, my father built up his personal wealth through his cabinetry business and investments in residential properties. Each subsequent move my family made brought us to higher income neighborhoods until we eventually lived in a neighborhood made of upper middle class residents.