The bicultural world of daughters of Greek immigrants: Acculturation and psychological adjustment

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The bicultural world of daughters of Greek immigrants: Acculturation and psychological adjustment

Abstract
The acculturation and psychological adjustment of daughters of Greek immigrants were examined. Six Greek-American females of Greek immigrant parents between the ages of twenty-five and forty were interviewed. Results indicate a sense of being different and a moderately restricted childhood. Mother's parenting style was very involved and father's parenting style differed across respondents. A "good little Greek girl" was someone who did not embarrass the family, obeyed the parents, and did not date. Meeting parental expectations regarding education was common. All identified themselves as bicultural, both Greek and American, though more strongly American. Feeling comfortable with self within the two cultures was strong and growing up in a bicultural family has had a positive effect. Results also indicate a sense of family being more important than independence, a sense of being who they truly are in the family, and a sense of parents being stricter with daughters than with sons.

Keywords
Education, Guidance and Counseling, Women's Studies

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THE BICULTURAL WORLD OF DAUGHTERS OF GREEK IMMIGRANTS: 
ACCULTURATION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ADJUSTMENT

BY

SOPHIA A. DONGAS

B.A., University of New Hampshire, 1998

THESIS

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in
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ABSTRACT

by

Sophia A. Dongas

University of New Hampshire, September, 2007

The acculturation and psychological adjustment of daughters of Greek immigrants were examined. Six Greek-American females of Greek immigrant parents between the ages of twenty-five and forty were interviewed. Results indicate a sense of being different and a moderately restricted childhood. Mother's parenting style was very involved and father's parenting style differed across respondents. A "good little Greek girl" was someone who did not embarrass the family, obeyed the parents, and did not date. Meeting parental expectations regarding education was common. All identified themselves as bicultural, both Greek and American, though more strongly American. Feeling comfortable with self within the two cultures was strong and growing up in a bicultural family has had a positive effect. Results also indicate a sense of family being more important than independence, a sense of being who they truly are in the family, and a sense of parents being stricter with daughters than with sons.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

Introduction

The United States is a nation of immigrants. Since the Declaration of Independence, but especially since the mid-nineteenth century, the United States has received an enormous number of immigrants from all over the world. According to the US Census Bureau (1999), the United States has received approximately 65,000,000 immigrants since the mid-nineteenth century. This transfer of population has produced perhaps the most ethnically diverse country in the world. People from every nation now live in the United States. Greeks, like other immigrants, have settled in the United States since the 1890s, when American legislation on immigration encouraged a large influx of immigrants. In all, an estimated 800,000 Greeks have moved to the United States. About two-thirds of these arrivals made America their permanent home (Levinson & Ember, 1997).

Greek immigration can be divided into five distinct periods (Levinson & Ember, 1997). More than 500,000 Greeks migrated to the United States during the "great wave" (1890-1924), which ended when congressional legislation severely restricted immigration. The "closed-door period" (1925-1945) lasted through the end of World War II; only some 30,000 Greeks migrated to the United States during that time. Many were brides of immigrants already settled in America. The third period, "postwar" migration (1946-1965), began after congressional restrictions on immigration eased.
Some 75,000 Greeks arrived in the United States during the two decades following World War II. The "new wave" (1966-1979) occurred when immigration laws were changed to allow easier entrance for the relatives of persons already in the United States. About 160,000 Greeks arrived under the new legislation. The current phase, which began in 1980, is a period of declining immigration. During the 1980s, approximately 2,500 Greeks annually migrated to America. During the last decade, that figure dropped to 1,500 (Levinson & Ember, 1997). This decline could be due to the fact that Greece became a member of the European Union in the early 1980s, which in turn made Greece’s economy stronger and jobs more available. Thus the motivation to leave the country may not be as great as it was when jobs were scarce.

**Rationale**

Since immigration has been a large part of American history, studying acculturation could benefit both immigrant families and the United States as a country. Past research suggests that acculturative stressors can affect the psychological adjustment of immigrants to the host country. Lang, Munoz, Bernal and Sorensen (1982) found that well-adjusted Hispanic immigrants had better paying jobs, a better education, more years lived in the United States, and higher levels of acculturation than poorly adjusted Hispanics.

Short and Porro-Salinas (1996) found that the more acculturated immigrants were, the less likely they were to become depressed or use alcohol. They also found that perceived social support, support-seeking coping, and problem-focused coping decreased the likelihood of depression and alcohol use, whereas avoidance coping increased the likelihood of negative psychological adjustment. Ritsner, Modai and Ponizovsky (2000)
similarly found that immigrants who perceived social support as readily available were less distressed than those who did not. In addition, their results showed that material related stressors were most problematic for newcomers, followed by cultural stressors.

The literature clearly shows that immigration produces psychological stress that can be exhibited in many ways. It is the researcher’s hope that by studying the bicultural world of daughters of Greek immigrants, one will better understand the influences of acculturation on one’s life and values. Studying their experiences could provide community and school counselors with the information required to work successfully with individuals who have bicultural backgrounds. The current study could also help counselors become more culturally sensitive to the unique aspects of Greek families.

**Implications for Counselors**

If counselors aspire to work effectively with Greek families, they first need to be aware that the Greek Orthodox church is a tremendous support system for them, as is the immediate family (Athens, Janilus, & Janilus, 1996). They should also be aware that learning the English language could be especially difficult for Greek immigrants because this requires the application of a new alphabet. In addition, Greeks may need help adjusting to the fast pace of American life, which is very different from the easy-going Mediterranean way of living. Their skin color, however, may lessen the prejudice they are exposed to in the new country, since Greeks primarily appear Caucasian. Thus their physical attributes do not identify them as foreigners.

If counselors understand the unique aspects of certain cultures and the stressors that facilitate or inhibit adaptation to the new culture, immigrant families will benefit
If counselors understand the unique aspects of certain cultures and the stressors that facilitate or inhibit adaptation to the new culture, immigrant families will benefit profusely. Counselors will be able to better aid immigrants in overcoming many obstacles that they are faced with as new members of a new society. They would also know not to use ‘American norms’ when observing adaptations that are deemed acceptable in the native culture. They could also develop support groups, orientations, and English classes for newcomers that aim to make the immigrant transition smoother.

Counselors could involve family therapy as well. As is often the case, children of immigrant parents feel torn between the values of their parents, and those they are exposed to in school and in their social interactions with other Americans. Researchers studying the acculturation of Greek values in the United States have found that these values decline across generations (Georgas, Barry, Shaw, Christakopoulou, & Mylonas, 1996; Kourvetaris, 1990). Counselors can thus be particularly helpful to families when there is a rift between expectations of the parents and expectations of the host society. They could play a pivotal role in easing the tension among family members by sensitively addressing the issues that are of utmost importance to them.

Studying the acculturation process of immigrant families could also help the host country. When immigrant families are able to receive help from professionals who understand their acculturation issues and culture, they can become more productive workers. This in turn could improve the national economy and cultural diversity could be viewed more positively.
Research Questions

(1) What is the experience of daughters who are raised by Greek immigrant parents in the United States?

(2) Are there inherent similarities and differences between the experiences of daughters of Greek immigrants?

(3) What are the strengths and weaknesses of being brought up in a bicultural Greek family?

Definition of Terms

The focus of the current study was to look at the experiences of first generation Greek-American daughters of Greek immigrants in relation to their bicultural upbringing. First generation Greek-American daughters of Greek immigrants were studied in an effort to better understand the dynamics and influences of acculturation on the bicultural experience. Acculturation refers to the changes that groups and individuals undergo when they come into contact with a different culture (Williams & Berry, 1991). Bicultural refers to the simultaneous exposure to two distinctly different cultures.

Level of acculturation was measured by using the Greek-American Acculturation Scale. This scale was used only as a reference to identify factors that may impact one’s views and values. The experiences of first generation Greek-American daughters were studied through semi-structured interviews, which consist of general open-ended questions.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The process of ethnic change taking place in multiethnic societies such as Canada and the United States has been the focus of considerable research. Research with immigrants, sojourners, and refugees has flourished over the past two decades. However, despite the rapidly increasing literature on acculturation, the integration and synthesis of this literature with psychological adjustment have been largely neglected. The focus of this literature review is to explore recent research that has examined acculturation and adaptation and relate it to the topic of particular interest. Specifically, the current research looks at the relationship between level of acculturation and depression among daughters of Greek immigrants. Additionally, the individual experiences of Greek immigrant daughters are explored in an effort to better understand the dynamics of acculturation.

Acculturation and Adaptation

A major contribution to the study of psychological acculturation and the prediction of acculturative stress is found in Berry’s conceptual analysis of acculturation attitudes (Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989), also referred to as acculturation strategies (Berry, 1997). Berry has argued that there are four acculturation attitudes or strategies: integration, separation, assimilation, and marginalization. More specifically, individuals who value both cultural maintenance and inter-group relations are seen to
endorse an integrationist approach. Those who cherish cultural maintenance but do not value inter-group relations are believed to adopt a separatist position. By contrast, those who value inter-group relations but are relatively unconcerned with cultural maintenance may be classified as assimilationist. Finally, those individuals who value neither cultural maintenance nor inter-group relations are said to be marginalized (Berry, 1994).

Berry and his colleagues have combined theory and research on acculturation attitudes and acculturative stress in their studies of immigrants. The process of acculturation has been largely interpreted within a stress and coping framework, with emphasis on the negative psychological and psychosomatic consequences of cross-cultural contact and change (Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999). The level of acculturative stress and the adaptation problems subsequently experienced are thought to be influenced by a number of factors (acculturative stressors) that operate both on personal and societal levels. These include personality and cognitive factors such as self-esteem and cognitive style, personal variables such as sex and ethnicity, and social and political factors such as the degree of cultural pluralism existing in the wider society (Berry, 1990; Berry, 1997).

Attitudes towards acculturation are particularly significant predictors of acculturative stress. Since these attitudes influence levels of acculturative stress, they too are acculturative stressors. Comparative research has demonstrated that marginalization and separation are associated with high levels of acculturative stress. Integration is associated with a low level of stress, and assimilation is linked with an intermediate stress level (Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987). The psychological adjustment of immigrants

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is thus related to acculturation attitudes in that these could make immigrant experiences in the host country more pleasant or adverse, depending on the stress they produce.

Considerations for Acculturation Research

The Greek family is a central cultural institution. Family loyalty is extremely important in Greek culture, as is male dominance. In the traditional Greek family, the husband is responsible for controlling the wife and the parental role is one of authority. Parental discipline is very firm, especially by American standards, and great emphasis is placed on proper behavior of the children. Girls are usually treated differently than boys. Parents are much more lenient with the males in the family and fewer restrictions are put on them. As a general rule, sons are granted more independence, while daughters are much more restricted. In addition, gender roles are clearly defined in the Greek family. Women are expected to be good housewives and men to be good providers. Even today, when most women work outside of the home, house chores are considered to be a "woman's duty" (Moskos, 1989). Equality between the sexes is thus less common in the Greek family than in the American family.

All this said, it is important to realize that ethnic groups or individuals preserve, to varying degrees, their heritage's culture and language while adapting to mainstream society. This is evident in a study done by Georgas, Berry, Shaw, Christakopoulou and Mylonas (1996). They were interested in the acculturation of Greek family values, and found that significant value change occurred as a result of acculturation in numerous host societies. They also found that Greek family values changed in varying degrees depending on the country of settlement. There was a greater retention of Greek family values among immigrants in countries that adopt an integrationist mode of acculturation.
(Canada) than in countries that emphasize an assimilationist mode of acculturation (European countries). The country of settlement should thus be considered when doing acculturation research. Since the current study looks at daughters of Greek immigrants who settled in the United States only, one must note that there could be differences between Greek-American daughters’ experiences in the United States and Greek-American daughters’ experiences in other nations.

Ethnic identification in Greeks (and perhaps in most cultural groups) is weakened between generations (Kourvetaris, 1990). As one moves from the first generation (immigrants) to second, third, and subsequent generations one can observe the gradual change in ethnic identity. There is a continual decline of Greek traditions and language. Keeping this in mind, it is important that the participants used in a given study belong to the same generation, unless comparisons are being made between generations. The current study looks at the psychological adjustment of first generation Greek-American daughters of Greek immigrants in the United States.

Rotenberg, Kutsay and Venger (2000) studied the level of distress experienced by male and female immigrants who had migrated from the former Soviet Union to Israel. In general, they found that the women experienced higher levels of distress than the men. Ritsner, Ponizovsky and Ginath (1999) also found substantial gender differences in the overall level of psychological distress among immigrants, with greater distress reported by females than by males. In addition, they found that gender differences in rates of distress tend to disappear with age. For most distress symptoms, this age was defined as between forty and sixty years. If this is accurate across cultures,
it is essential that men and women be equally represented in acculturation research, and that their age be rather homogeneous. Taking gender and age into consideration will minimize the effects of any extraneous variables on the results of the study. In the current study, the age of the first generation Greek-American daughters ranges between 25 and 40 years. In addition, the study only includes daughters of Greek immigrants, since girls and boys are often treated differently in the Greek culture.

Another consideration in carrying out acculturation research is the length of immigration. One might think that the acculturation process may differ depending on the number of years an immigrant has lived in the host country. For this reason, the length of stay from the time of settlement should be considered. For the purpose of this study, the length of immigration for participants’ parents ranged between twenty-five and forty years. The daughters will have lived in the United States their whole life. It is hoped that, by controlling for the length of time lived in the United States, the hypothesized relationship between acculturation level and depression can be better evaluated.

New Greece versus Greek Americanism

A particularly interesting article written by Athens, Janilus and Janilus (1996) has some relevance for the proposed study. In it, the authors describe two forms of adaptation to American culture that Greek immigrants and their offspring can conform to: New Greece and Greek Americanism. Advocates of New Greece maintain Greek traditions and customs, preserve the Greek language in the home and church, and prefer dating and marrying other Greeks. Proponents of Greek Americanism, on the other hand, favor integration into US society.
According to these authors, Greek Americanism is the only viable mode of adaptation to the United States for people of Greek descent (Athens et al., 1996). The authors abandon the idea of creating a secluded Greek community known as New Greece because the copying of Greek culture is nearly impossible when living in a different country. Instead, they advocate for the blending together of Greek and American cultures in a manner that produces a unique culture (Athens et al., 1996).

In sum, Athens et al. (1996) succeed in getting their point across to the reader. The article they produced has particular relevance for the proposed study. Integration (Greek Americanism) is thought to produce a cultural group that is far more adaptive than separation (New Greece). Keeping this in mind during the proposed study will aid in possibly discerning the sources of acculturative stress associated with immigration. Thus, it is not only the host country’s influence on the acculturation process, but also the immigrants’ outlook on the course of this process that makes the psychological adjustment of immigrants and their families possible.

The Athens et al. (1996) article discusses the Greek Orthodox Church and its role in maintaining the growth and well-being of the Greek-American community. Greek churches have helped Greeks preserve their culture in the United States, by allowing the Greek community to have a meeting place for cultural and social activities. Coffee hour, which many churches throughout America have after the liturgy, allows Greek-Americans to conveniently meet with each other after church and socialize. This helps to preserve a cultural bond. In a sense, the Greek Orthodox Church provides immigrants and others of Greek descent with a kind of support system that many cultures
do not have in the United States. The church could thus possibly buffer the negative effects of acculturative stress and make the process of acculturation smoother.

**Acculturation Studies with Hispanics**

Though acculturation studies with Greek immigrants have been fairly limited, many studies have been done with Hispanic populations. Lang et al. (1982) studied the quality of life and psychological well-being of Hispanic adults (aged 25-75 years) residing in a bicultural/bilingual Latino community of San Francisco. Latinos of 18 national origins were represented. Input from the Latino community was used to construct a definition of psychological adjustment and facilitated the development of a culturally sensitive scale of measurement.

A telephone survey of 270 randomly selected Hispanics examined sample demographics, acculturation, quality of life components, psychological well-being and depression levels. Initial screening questions were asked regarding each respondent’s age and ethnic identity. The Global Acculturation Scale, which was especially designed for this study, was used to obtain differential levels of acculturation. Four sub-scores were used in calculating the global acculturation score: generational level, years of education in the United States, percent of life lived in the United States, and language dominance/bilinguality. The Quality of Life Scale was used to measure quality of life, while the Affect Balance Scale was used to measure psychological well-being. Depression was assessed by using the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale, and psychological adjustment was measured by using the Index of Psychological Adjustment (Lang et al., 1982).
Overall, the study was nicely designed. The researchers considered many
dimensions of adaptation when choosing the numerous measures used in the study. One
important limitation of the study, however, is that some of the measures have not been
tested for internal reliability. A second limitation is that the investigators included
participants regardless of their generational status. This could be problematic, since
different generations may respond differently to various acculturation issues.
Nonetheless, the results of the study were quite informative. The best adjusted Latinos,
that is, those who were most satisfied with their lives and were subjectively the happiest,
were bicultural, although oriented more toward the Latino culture than the Anglo culture.
The least adjusted individuals were found to be either monocultural Latino or
monocultural United States mainstream. Also, the well-adjusted Latinos when compared
to the least well-adjusted Latinos had better paying jobs, a better education, more years
residing in the United States, and higher levels of acculturation (Lang et al., 1982).

These findings support the thoughts of Athens et al. (1996), who believed that
Greeks needed to integrate both Greek and American culture in order to have a smoother
acculturation process in the United States. Hispanics, too, seem to benefit from
integrating the culture of their country of origin with American culture. In addition, this
study of Hispanic adults was helpful in that it produced the idea of creating culturally
sensitive scales for measuring results. The current research also uses a culturally
sensitive scale to measure the acculturation of first generation Greek-American
daughters.

Acculturation, coping, and psychological adjustment of Central American
immigrants were studied by Short and Porro-Salinas (1996). The study consisted of 108

13
native Salvadorians (aged 18-50 years) who immigrated to the United States in the past five years. The participants were recruited from English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, community services that served recent Salvadorian immigrants, and Spanish-language church services. In addition, door-to-door recruitment took place in residential areas and places of business where Salvadorians were present.

Short and Porro-Salinas (1996) looked at certain variables that they thought were predictors of depressive symptoms, alcohol use, and life satisfaction. These variables were degree of acculturation, life stress, perceived social support, and coping behaviors. The Cultural Life Style Inventory, Hispanic Stress Inventory, Social Support Appraisals Scale, and the Coping Strategy Indicator were used correspondingly as the measures of choice. Pearson correlations and multiple regressions were used to analyze the collected data.

Short and Porro-Salinas (1996) found that acculturation was negatively related to depression and alcohol use, and positively related to life satisfaction. Life stress was negatively related to life satisfaction. Perceived social support and support-seeking coping were negatively related to alcohol use. Problem-focused coping was negatively related to depression and alcohol use. Finally, avoidance coping was positively related to depression (Short & Porro-Salinas, 1996).

Three types of coping strategies were identified and assessed in the study. These were based on participant reactions to recent stressful events and included problem-solving coping, support-seeking coping, and avoidance coping (Short & Porro-Salinas, 1996). The findings of this research illustrate the importance of coping strategies for the psychological adjustment of Salvadorian immigrants (and perhaps all
immigrants). Thus, the type of coping strategy that is used by immigrants when dealing with acculturative stress could predict psychological adjustment or distress. Coping strategies should be looked at during the execution of all acculturation studies for this reason.

Hovey (2000b) examined the relationship among acculturative stress, depression, and suicidal ideation among Mexican immigrants. A sample of 114 Mexican immigrants (aged 17-77 years) were included in the study. Variables that predict depression and suicidal ideation were also examined. These variables included family functioning, family intactness, expectations for the future, social support, religiosity, education, income, and control and choice in the decision to migrate. Whereas most studies in the past have looked at the relationship between level of acculturation and psychological adjustment, Hovey (2000b) went one step further by identifying sources of acculturative stress. The individual interviews in the current research are critical in identifying such sources.

Acculturative stress was found to significantly predict depression and suicidal ideation. Family support, social support, religiosity, agreement with the decision to migrate, and expectations for the future were also significant predictors of depression and suicidal ideation. Specifically, the strongest predictor of depression was acculturative stress, while social support was the second strongest predictor. On the other hand, expectations for the future was the strongest predictor of suicide ideation. Agreement with the decision to migrate, perceived influence of religion, acculturative stress, and social support were also significant predictors of suicidal ideation (Hovey, 2000b).
Hovey (2000a) also researched acculturative stress, depression and suicidal ideation among Central American immigrants. The overall findings suggested that Central American immigrants who experience elevated levels of acculturative stress may be at risk for experiencing heightened levels of depression and suicidal ideation. Although there is no general consensus regarding the exact relationship between acculturative stress and psychological adjustment, Hovey (2000a) attempted to obtain results that were accurate and informative in several ways.

Hovey (2000a) used seven measures in order to obtain as much information as possible from the sampled immigrants. The statistics used (Pearson correlations, analyses of variance, and a multiple regression analysis) for the data analysis were appropriate, given the design of the study and the goals of the researcher. Hovey (2000a) also stated the limitations of his study and did not neglect to state that his results may not be generalizable to other immigrants. In this manner, he was very thorough. The proposed study will not look at the relationship between acculturative stress and suicidal ideation. Nevertheless, Hovey’s (2000a; Hovey, 2000b) results in both studies provide researchers with the awareness that certain variables may put immigrants at risk for life-threatening behaviors.

One could assume that the acculturation process becomes even more complicated when the experiences of visible immigrants are looked at and compared to other immigrant populations. The term “visible immigrant” refers to an immigrant of color, usually originating from the countries of Asia, Africa and South America. The following statements illustrate some of their thoughts and feelings: “You can teach us as many languages as you like…it will not make us feel equal. We carry our passport on our
"People may not taunt, but they look, they point, they comment . . . when the voices say ‘you’re different,’ it is hard to insist that I am a Canadian.” (Sam, 1992, p. 22)

As Sam (1992) states, the difficulties such immigrants have in becoming a part of western societies is not a simple question of differences in culture. The immigrant’s visibility cannot be overlooked. External features of these immigrants are not easily erased by the adoption of western cultural values and norms, excellent proficiency in the host language, or the acquisition of the host country’s citizenship. These individuals face discrimination and racism almost daily, which hinders their acculturation process and psychological adjustment (Sam, 1992).

The proposed study will not include physical features as an acculturative stressor, because Greeks do not physically exhibit signs of being foreign in the United States. Although they do tend to have slightly darker skin than most Americans, due to their Mediterranean roots, they are primarily categorized as Caucasians. Nonetheless, physical features should not be overlooked, especially when studying immigrants of color.

Liebkind and Jasinskaja-Lahti (2000) researched the influence of experiences of discrimination on psychological stress. Specifically, 1146 immigrants from Finland representing seven immigrant groups (Russians, Ingrian/Finnish returnees, Estonians, Somalis, Arabs, Vietnamese and Turks) answered a questionnaire based on traditional acculturation research. The results indicated that discrimination experiences in various realms of life were highly predictive of the psychological well-being of all immigrants. In short, the more discrimination these immigrants perceived, the higher their level of
psychological stress. In addition, irrespective of how long the immigrants had stayed in Finland, the experiences of discrimination varied between the different immigrant groups. Immigrants of Arab, Somali, and Turkish origin had experienced much more discrimination than immigrants of Russian, Estonian, Ingrian/Finnish returning migrant, or Vietnamese origin. However, group differences in psychological stress did not always correspond to group differences in perceived discrimination. This was evident in the immigrants of Somali origin. Although these individuals experienced much more discrimination in comparison to other groups, they reported much less psychological stress (Liebkind & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000). Given these results, it is imperative that the ‘visibility’ of various immigrant populations be considered when studying acculturation.

Conclusion

Research involving the acculturation process is without a doubt complicated and time consuming. Many considerations need to be made before embarking on an investigation of acculturation levels and their relationship to the psychological adjustment of immigrants and their families. The literature review illustrates this clearly. However, this should not inhibit researchers from studying this topic, for the implications are great.

Acculturation studies with Greek immigrants have been limited. However, by reviewing research that has been conducted with other immigrant groups, one is able to obtain a sense of the importance of acculturative stress on psychological adjustment. The previous studies discussed in the literature review provide a good base from which the current researcher can develop and test her own hypotheses.

The current qualitative research looks at level of acculturation and its relationship to the psychological adjustment among a sample of six daughters of Greek immigrants in
the United States. Level of acculturation was assessed by using an acculturation scale that was designed specifically for Greeks. Furthermore, personal interviews enabled the researcher to look at acculturation on an individual and familial basis. The results of the study create a small knowledge base for those interested in exploring the subject further. The researcher is not aware of any other studies of this kind that have focused on daughters of Greek immigrants. In this respect, the current study is innovative. It is the hope of the investigator that the results of the study will aid Greek-Americans (and possibly other individuals with bicultural backgrounds) in coping effectively with the issues surrounding acculturation. It is also hoped that the results may be applied in the community and school setting to help newcomers and their children become well-adjusted individuals.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Design

The current study was designed to examine the experiences of Greek-American daughters in the United States. Specifically, daughters who were raised in bicultural Greek families were examined in order to assess the role of culture in their lives. The experiences of Greek-American daughters are described through the use of an interview consisting of open-ended questions. Level of acculturation was measured by using the Greek-American Acculturation Scale. This scale was used in a supplemental manner to identify factors that may impact one’s views and values.

The design of the study is qualitative. Six case studies were used in an effort to provide a holistic picture of acculturation and its varying impact on individuals. The case studies consisted of first generation Greek-American daughters of Greek immigrant parents. They were asked twelve open-ended questions pertaining to the way they were raised as children and adolescents, and ways in which they identify themselves in the bicultural environment in which they live today.

Participants

The sample was comprised of daughters of Greek immigrants who were born in the United States. The daughter participants were between the ages of 25 and 40 and had lived in the United States their whole life. The use of only daughter participants reduced
the complications that could arise from gender differences within the culture. Six first generation Greek-American daughters participated in the study, including the researcher herself. The Greek-American daughters were recruited from personal contacts within the Greek community. Potential participants were called at home and asked to participate in research that investigates the bicultural world of daughters of Greek immigrants. The participants are acquaintances of the researcher through a Greek Orthodox Church in a northern New England city. The city includes approximately 12,000 Greeks. These acquaintances had not discussed their heritage with the researcher in the past, and were therefore chosen to participate in the study for this reason.

Participants were asked to read and sign an informed consent form (Appendix B). The Greek-American Acculturation Scale followed (Appendix C). Once the Greek-American Acculturation Scale was completed, the interview took place (Appendix D). A small gift was given to those who participated in the study. The researcher herself also completed the inventories and interviewed herself, via audiotape, prior to meeting with the other first generation Greek-American daughters. Six case studies will be discussed and analyzed in the following research.

**Instrumentation**

Greek-American Acculturation Scale

The level of acculturation was measured by using the Greek-American Acculturation Scale (Harris & Verven, 1996). The Greek-American Acculturation Scale (Appendix B) is designed to be used with individuals of Greek descent. It is a culturally sensitive form of measurement. It consists of 22 statements that describe identification
with the Greek culture. Participants are asked to rate to what extent they identify with the statements. Responses are scored on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), with higher total scores indicating a greater identification with the Greek culture and thus a lower level of acculturation. The Greek-American Acculturation Scale was used in the proposed study to provide supplemental information to the researcher regarding cultural identification. The possible range of scores on this instrument is from 22 to 100.

Although cross-validation with various samples is needed, the preliminary evidence suggests that the Greek-American Acculturation Scale has sufficient validity and reliability to be used by researchers as an accurate measure of Greek-American acculturation (Skinner, 2001). The split-half reliability of the Greek-American Acculturation Scale is .94 (Skinner, 2001). As a result, the items in the scale measure acculturation in a consistently reliable manner.

Interview

Each participant was asked to participate in an hour long semi-structured interview that consisted of twelve open-ended questions. Daughters of Greek immigrants were interviewed and asked to describe their experiences as a child growing up in a bicultural Greek family and its effects on their adult life (Appendix D). The twelve questions asked by the researcher were presented in the following order:

1. How did you feel as a child being raised in a Greek family in the United States?
2. Was there ever a time in your childhood when you felt different from other children? If so, explain.
3. How would you describe your mother’s parenting style as a child?
(4) How would you describe your father's parenting style as a child?

(5) What was your parents' definition of a "good little Greek girl"?

(6) Do you feel like you have met your parents' expectations regarding your career, your significant other, etc.?

(7) Would you identify yourself as more Greek or more American? Explain.

(8) Do you ever feel torn between the two cultures, not knowing where you belong exactly? Explain.

(9) How has growing up in a bicultural family added to who you are?

(10) In a traditional Greek family, family is valued more than independence. Would you say that this was true in your family? If so, how has this affected your life?

(11) Do you feel like you can be who you truly are in your family, without strong parental judgment?

(12) How would you say daughters and sons differ in the way they are raised in the Greek family?

The researcher did not engage in conversation with the participants, but intervened for clarification, reflection, or elaboration purposes only. The researcher was limited to the following short statements/questions so as not to bias the subjects' responses:

- Tell me more.
- How so?
- What do you mean by that?
- Can you explain further?
- So what you are saying is . . .
- In other words . . .
Procedures

The researcher called ten potential participants at home to recruit participation in the study. Five out of the ten potential participants agreed to partake in the study. The completion of the instruments, as well as the interviews, took place in each participant’s home on different days of one particular week (Monday through Saturday). The participants were between the ages of twenty-five and forty and live in northern New England.

The researcher first asked the participant to read and sign the informed consent form (Appendix A). The participant was also asked to print her name, address, and telephone number in the designated areas. Verbal permission for audiotaping the participant was obtained at this time, and any questions regarding the level of participant involvement in the study were answered.

The Greek-American Acculturation Scale (Appendix C) followed. After this was completed, the researcher interviewed the participant. The participant was asked the twelve open-ended questions on Appendix D. Each interview was limited to one hour. The timing of the interview depended largely on the individual’s availability on that given day. This allowed the individual a certain level of comfort, being that she was talking about her bicultural experiences in her own home and on her own time. It is the hope of the researcher that this in turn provided a more relaxed environment for the participant. Finally, a debriefing statement (Appendix E) was given to all participants who successfully completed the study. Referrals were provided in the debriefing statement, in the event that a participant needed them.
Analyses

Three research questions were of particular interest to the researcher and were the following:

(1) What is the experience of daughters who are raised by Greek immigrant parents in the United States?

(2) Are there inherent similarities and differences between the experiences of daughters of Greek immigrants?

(3) What are the strengths and weaknesses of being brought up in a bicultural Greek family?

The research was comprised of six case studies and was thus a qualititative study. The researcher, through transcription and content analysis of the interviews, assessed commonalities and differences between the six participants and their experiences growing up in a bicultural world as daughters of Greek immigrants. Once the interviews were completed and transcribed, the researcher read the transcribed material repeatedly and discovered themes as identified in Appendix E. Each question had a number of themes.

The researcher and an independent rater subsequently read the transcribed material and rated on a scale of 1 to 3 (1 = minimum, 2 = moderate, 3 = strong) the themes per question. The independent rater was a graduate of the University of New Hampshire and was also a first generation Greek-American female. The independent rater was asked by the researcher to rate each theme based on the 3-point scale. Most themes were rated similarly by both the researcher and the independent rater. There were, however, some discrepancies among the two raters.
The Greek-American Acculturation Scale identified level of acculturation as it pertained to the experiences of the participants as drawn from the twelve questions asked by the researcher during the interview process. The instrument functioned as a means to extract specific information from each participant, and thus supplemented the study with specific answers regarding cultural identification. The results were presented in the form of tables and mean scores.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Six interviews were conducted by the researcher, including interviewing herself. The participants ranged between the ages of twenty-five and forty. The researcher used random letters to disguise each participant’s identity. Ko is twenty-nine years old. She is the oldest of two sisters and is married to a Greek-American. Gi is forty years old. She is the oldest of two and has a younger brother. She is not married. Da is forty years old. She is the oldest of three and has two younger brothers. She is married to a non-Greek. Du is thirty-four years old. She is the youngest of three and has two older brothers. She is married to a non-Greek. Dh is thirty-one years old. She is the youngest of two and has an older brother. She is married to a Greek from Greece. Do is the oldest of two sisters and is not married.

Content Analysis

Several themes emerged from content analysis of the questions that each participant was asked during the one hour long semi-structured interview. Seven themes arose from the first question, “How did you feel as a child being raised in a Greek family in the United States?” They included the following:

- Sense of community among the Greeks
- Sense of alienation from non-Greeks
- Sense of being a little adult
- Sense of being different
- Sense of pride
- Sense of embarrassment
- Desire to belong to majority
Six themes arose from the second question, “Was there ever a time in your childhood when you felt different from other children? If so, explain.” They included the following:

- Sense of feeling different from non-Greeks
- Sense of belonging with other Greeks
- Sense of isolation/being an outcast
- Everything revolved around family
- Restrictive childhood
- Feeling of having more obligations/expectations

Nine themes arose from the third question, “How would you describe your mother’s parenting style as a child?” They included the following:

- Strict
- Authoritative
- Very involved
- Sensitive/understanding/nurturing
- Yelled a lot
- Expectation for perfection
- Disciplinarian
- Controlling
- Overprotective

Nine themes arose from the fourth question, “How would you describe your father’s parenting style as a child?” They included the following:

- Strict
- Authoritative
- Yelled a lot
- Feared dad
- Disciplinarian
- Expectation for perfection
- Sensitive/understanding
- Overprotective
- Easy-going/more lenient

Eleven themes arose from the fifth question, “What was your parents’ definition of a “good little Greek girl”?” They included the following:
• Someone who obeyed
• Knew where daughter was at all times and with whom
• Helped mom with the household duties
• Excellent student
• Looked meticulous
• Spoke only when spoken to
• Did not embarrass the family
• No dating
• Went everywhere parents went
• Got married and has children
• Is happy all the time

Six themes arose from the sixth question, “Do you feel like you have met your
parents’ expectations regarding your career, your significant other, etc.?” They included
the following:

• Met expectations regarding career
• Met expectations regarding significant other
• Met expectations regarding education
• Did not meet expectations regarding career
• Did not meet expectations regarding significant other
• Did not meet expectations regarding education

Four themes arose from the seventh question, “Would you identify yourself as
more Greek or more American? Explain.” They included the following:

• Identify more as Greek
• Identify more as American
• Identify self as both
• When in Greece, feel more American; when in America, feel more Greek

Four themes arose from the eighth question, “Do you ever feel torn between the
two cultures, not knowing where you belong exactly? Explain.” They included the
following:

• Feels torn between the two cultures
• Never feels torn between the two cultures
• Comfortable with self within the two cultures
• Does not know where self belongs within the two cultures
Fourteen themes arose from the ninth question, “How has growing up in a bicultural family added to who you are?” They included the following:

- Positive effect
- Teaches you to work hard
- Helps you become a better person
- Adds stress to life because you become a perfectionist
- Strong sense of self
- Family-oriented
- Become more independent
- More culturally sensitive/better understanding of people and cultures
- More open-minded
- More worldly
- Great sense of humor
- Loyal to friends and family
- More generous and warm towards others
- More well-rounded as a person

Six themes arose from the tenth question, “In a traditional Greek family, family is valued more than independence. Would you say that this was true in your family? If so, how has this affected your life?” They included the following:

- Family is more important than independence
- Independence comes later
- Independence is not encouraged
- Everything revolves around the family
- The family bond is much greater than the desire to be independent
- Strong emphasis on family has held me back in some ways

Three themes arose from the eleventh question, “Do you feel like you can be who you truly are in the family, without strong parental judgment?” They included the following:

- I can be who I truly am in my family
- I cannot be who I truly am in my family
- I can be who I am, but often get judged for it

Eight themes arose from the twelfth question, “How would you say daughters and sons differ in the way they are raised in the Greek family?” They included the following:
• More strict with daughters
• Expectations for daughters are much greater than for sons
• Sons are at liberty to do as they please
• Standards are the same for both
• Girls should be at home with mom
• Girls are expected to be perfect
• Girls are judged more by their actions
• Boys are held in higher regard than girls

**Theme Analysis**

Theme analysis used a three-point Likert scale (1 = minimum, 2 = moderate, 3 = strong) to rank participants' answers to each of the twelve questions. The researcher, along with an independent rater, independently coded the themes evident in responses of each participant on each of the twelve questions based on this three point scale. The researcher and the independent rater agreed on most of the ratings, with most discrepancies occurring by one point. A summary of rankings for each theme in each question per participant is illustrated below. The first number illustrates the rating of the researcher, while the second number illustrates the rating of the independent rater. Mean rankings are also reported, which is an average of all rater rankings across the six participants.
Table 1

Q: How did you feel as a child being raised in a Greek family in the United States?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Ko</th>
<th>Gi</th>
<th>Da</th>
<th>Du</th>
<th>Dh</th>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Mean Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sense community among Greeks</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,3</td>
<td>1.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of alienation from non-Greeks</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>1.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of being a little adult</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of being different</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of pride</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of embarrassment</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to belong to majority</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ko felt a sense of being a little adult as a child and different. She also reported a sense of community among the Greeks, though she did not feel alienated from non-Greeks, or embarrassed by her ethnicity, or a desire to belong to the majority.

By contrast, Gi felt a sense of alienation from non-Greeks, a sense of embarrassment, and a desire to belong to the majority. She also recalled feeling very different from other kids. She did not feel a sense of community among the Greeks, nor did she feel a sense of being a little adult or a sense of pride.

Da felt somewhat alienated from her peers and felt different. She also felt a sense of embarrassment and a desire to belong to the majority. She did not feel a sense of community among the Greeks, nor did she have a sense of being a little adult or a sense of pride.

Du felt a sense of community among the Greeks and a sense of pride. She also had a sense of being different. She did not have a sense of alienation from non-Greeks, a sense of embarrassment, or a desire to belong to the majority.

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Dh felt a great sense of community among the Greeks. She also sensed that she was different from other kids and sometimes felt like a little adult. She did not feel a sense of alienation from non-Greeks, nor did she feel a sense of embarrassment or a desire to belong to the majority.

Do felt very different from her peers. She also had a sense of embarrassment, and somewhat of a sense of alienation from non-Greeks. She did not have a sense of being a little adult, nor did she feel a sense of pride, or a desire to belong to the majority.

Clearly, a sense of being different was strong across all respondents ($x = 2.92$), but this did not uniformly result in a sense of community with other Greeks or with alienation from non-Greeks.

Table 2

Q: Was there ever a time in your childhood when you felt different from other children?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Ko</th>
<th>Gi</th>
<th>Da</th>
<th>Du</th>
<th>Dh</th>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Mean Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sense of feeling different from non-Greeks</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of belonging with other Greeks</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of isolation/being an outcast</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everything revolved around family</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted childhood</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling of having more obligations/expectations</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ko had a sense of feeling different from non-Greeks, felt somewhat isolated, and felt she had a restrictive childhood. There is a bit of a discrepancy among the raters.
regarding whether everything revolved around the family, and whether Ko felt that she had more obligations/expectations. While the researcher rated both these themes as high, the independent rater did not.

Gi had a strong sense of being different and a strong sense of isolation/being an outcast. She did not have a sense of belonging with other Greeks, nor did everything revolve around the family, nor did she have a feeling of having more obligations/expectations.

Da had a strong sense of feeling different from non-Greeks, and felt she had a restrictive childhood. She did not have a sense of belonging with other Greeks, or a feeling of having more obligations/expectations. She also did not have a sense of isolation/being an outcast, nor did everything revolve around the family.

Du had a sense of feeling different from non-Greeks and a sense of belonging with other Greeks. She also felt that everything revolved around the family, that she had a restrictive childhood, and that she had more obligations/expectations. She did not have a sense of isolation/being an outcast.

Dh had a sense of feeling different from non-Greeks as well as a sense of belonging with other Greeks. She did not feel a sense of isolation, or that everything revolved around the family. She also did not feel she had a restrictive childhood, or that she had more obligations/expectations.

Do had a sense of feeling different from non-Greeks and a sense of isolation/being outcast. She did not feel a sense of belonging with other Greeks, or a feeling of having more obligations/expectations. There is a bit of a discrepancy among the raters regarding whether everything revolved around the family, and whether Do felt that she
had a restrictive childhood. While the researcher rated both these themes as high, the independent rater did not.

Clearly, a sense of being different was again strong across all respondents ($x = 2.75$), but this did not uniformly result in a sense of belonging with other Greeks or with sense of isolation/being an outcast among non-Greeks. A moderately restricted childhood ($x = 2.08$) was the norm among these respondents.

Table 3

**Q: How would you describe your mother’s parenting style as a child?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Ko</th>
<th>Gi</th>
<th>Da</th>
<th>Du</th>
<th>Dh</th>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Mean Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strict</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very involved</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitive/understanding/nurturing</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yelled a lot</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectation for perfection</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplinarian</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overprotective</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ko reported that her mother was strict, authoritative, and the disciplinarian of the family. She somewhat felt that her mother yelled a lot. She did not feel that her mother was very sensitive, understanding or nurturing. She also did not feel that her mother had a high expectation for perfection, or that she was controlling and overprotective.

Gi felt that her mother was strict, authoritative, and very involved. She also reported that her mother was the disciplinarian of the family, was controlling and overprotective. She did not feel that her mother was sensitive, understanding and nurturing.
Da also felt that her mother was very involved. However, Da also felt that her mother was very sensitive, understanding, and nurturing. She did not feel that her mother was strict and authoritative, nor did she feel that she yelled a lot, was controlling or overprotective.

Du felt that her mother was strict, authoritative, and very involved. Du also felt that her mother yelled a lot, was the disciplinarian, was controlling and overprotective. She did not feel that her mother was sensitive, understanding or nurturing.

Dh felt that her mother was strict, authoritative, and very involved. She also reported that she was sensitive, understanding, and nurturing. She felt her mother yelled a lot, had an expectation for perfection, was the disciplinarian, was controlling and overprotective.

Do felt that her mother was strict, authoritative, and very involved. She reported that her mother yelled a lot, that she had an expectation for perfection, was the disciplinarian, was controlling, and was overprotective. She also felt that her mother was somewhat sensitive, understanding, and nurturing.

Clearly, perceptions of mother’s parenting style as very involved (x = 2.75), strict (x = 2.67), disciplinarian (x = 2.58) and authoritative (x = 2.50) were very strong across all respondents. Mothers were viewed as powerful influences in the home. The American gender role of mothers as sensitive, understanding and nurturing was less characteristic in their responses (x = 1.83).
Table 4

Q: How would you describe your father’s parenting style as a child?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Ko</th>
<th>Gi</th>
<th>Da</th>
<th>Du</th>
<th>Dh</th>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Mean Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strict</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yelled a lot</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>1.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feared dad</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplinarian</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectation for perfection</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitive/understanding</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overprotective</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy-going/more lenient</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ko reported that her father was strict, but at the same time sensitive and understanding. She did not feel that he was authoritative, that he yelled a lot, or that he had an expectation for perfection. Ko also did not fear her dad. She did not report that he was the disciplinarian or that he was easy-going.

Gi reported that her father was sensitive and understanding, along with being easy-going and more lenient. Gi did not feel that her father was strict, authoritative, or that he was the disciplinarian. She also did not feel that he yelled a lot, that she feared dad, that he had an expectation for perfection, or that he was overprotective.

Da also reported that her father was sensitive and understanding. She also felt that he was overprotective, but easy-going and more lenient. Da did not feel that her father was strict and authoritative, nor did she feel that he yelled a lot. She also did not feel that she feared dad, nor did she feel that dad was the disciplinarian, or that he had an expectation for perfection.

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Du felt that her father was sensitive and understanding. She also felt that he was overprotective, but at the same time, easy-going and more lenient. Du did not feel that her father was strict, that she feared dad, or that he had an expectation for perfection. She also did not feel that he was authoritative, that he yelled a lot, or that he was the disciplinarian.

Dh felt that her father was strict, authoritative, and yelled a lot. She also felt that she feared dad, that he was the disciplinarian, and that he had an expectation for perfection. Dh did not feel that her father was sensitive and understanding. She also did not feel that he was overprotective, nor did she feel that he was easy-going and lenient.

Do felt that her father was strict, authoritative, and the disciplinarian. She also felt that she feared dad. Do felt that her father was somewhat easy-going and lenient. She did not feel that her father was sensitive and understanding. There is a bit of a discrepancy among the raters regarding whether Do felt that her father yelled a lot, and whether he had an expectation for perfection. While the researcher rated both these themes as high, the independent rater did not.

Perceptions of father’s parenting style differed markedly across all respondents. Several respondents viewed their father as sensitive/understanding and/or easy-going, while others viewed him as strict and overprotective. Overall, mean scores suggest that fathers were viewed as less dominant in parenting than were mothers.
Table 5

Q: What was your parents’ definition of a “good little Greek girl”? 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Ko</th>
<th>Gi</th>
<th>Da</th>
<th>Du</th>
<th>Dh</th>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Mean Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Someone who obeyed</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,32</td>
<td>2,75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knew where daughter was at all times and with whom</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped mom with the household duties</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent student</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looked meticulous</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spoke only when spoken to</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not embarrass the family</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went everywhere parents went</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gets married and has children</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>2,17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is happy all the time</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ko felt that her parents’ definition of a “good little Greek girl” was someone who obeyed, someone who told her parents where she was and with whom. She also felt that it meant being an excellent student and someone who did not embarrass the family. In addition, a “good little Greek girl” did not date, and went everywhere her parents went. Ko did not feel that a “good little Greek girl” needed to look meticulous, or that she needed to speak only when spoken to. She also did not feel strongly that a “good little Greek girl” had to get married and have children, or that she had to be happy all the time.

Gi felt that her parents’ definition of a “good little Greek girl” was someone who obeyed and told her parents where she was and with whom. She also felt that it was someone who did not embarrass the family, someone who did not date, but who married and had children. Gi did not feel that a “good little Greek girl” had to help mom with the household duties, be an excellent student, or needed to speak only when spoken to. She
also did not feel that “a good little Greek girl” had to go everywhere her parents went, or had to be happy all the time.

Da felt that her parents’ definition of a “good little Greek girl” was someone who told her parents where she was and with whom, and who looked meticulous. A “good little Greek girl” did not embarrass the family, did not date, but got married and had children. Da did not feel that a “good little Greek girl” had to help mom with the household duties, had to be an excellent student, or had to go everywhere the parents went. She also did not feel that a “good little Greek girl” had to speak only when spoken to, or had to be happy all the time.

Du felt that a “good little Greek girl” was someone who obeyed, told her parents where she was and with whom, and helped mom with the household duties. She also felt that it meant being an excellent student, looking meticulous, not embarrassing the family, not dating, and going everywhere the parents went. Du felt that a “good little Greek girl” was somewhat happy all the time. There was a bit of a discrepancy regarding whether a “good little Greek girl” was someone who spoke only when spoken to, and whether it was someone who got married and had children. While the researcher rated both themes as high, the independent rater did not.

Dh felt that a “good little Greek girl” was someone who obeyed, who told her parents where she was and with whom, who helped mom with the household duties, and who was an excellent student. She also felt that it was someone who looked meticulous, who spoke only when spoken to, who did not embarrass the family, and who did not date. Dh felt that a “good little Greek girl” was somewhat happy all the time. She did not feel
that a “good little Greek girl” was someone who went everywhere the parents went, or got married and had children.

Do felt that a “good little Greek girl” was someone who obeyed, who was an excellent student, who looked meticulous, and who spoke only when spoken to. She also felt that it was someone who did not embarrass the family, and was happy all the time. Do felt that a “good little Greek girl” went everywhere the parents went, but did not feel that it was someone who helped mom with the household duties. There is a bit of a discrepancy among the raters regarding whether a “good little Greek girl” was someone who told her parents where she was and with whom, whether she was someone who did not date, and whether she was someone who got married and had children. While the researcher rated all three of these themes as high, the independent rater did not.

Clearly, a “good little Greek girl” across all respondents was someone who did not embarrass the family (x = 2.75), who obeyed parents (x = 2.75), and who did not date (x = 2.75). This did not uniformly result in someone who spoke only when spoken to (x = 1.83) or who is happy all the time (x = 1.75).
Table 6

Q: Do you feel like you have met your parents’ expectations regarding your career, your significant other, etc.?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Ko</th>
<th>Gi</th>
<th>Da</th>
<th>Du</th>
<th>Dh</th>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Mean Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Met expectations regarding career</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met expectations regarding significant other</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met expectations regarding education</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not meet expectations regarding career</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not meet expectations regarding significant other</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not meet expectations regarding education</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ko felt like she met her parents’ expectations regarding her career, her significant other, and her education.

Gi felt like she met her parents’ expectations regarding her career and education, but did not meet parental expectations regarding her significant other, because she is not married.

Da felt like she met her parents’ expectations regarding her career, her significant other, and her education.

Du felt like she did not meet her parents’ expectations regarding her career, because she is not a lawyer. She also did not meet parental expectations regarding her significant other, because he is not Greek. Du somewhat met parental expectations regarding education, because although she went to college, she did not earn her law degree.
Dh felt like she met her parents’ expectations regarding her significant other. She also felt that she somewhat met parental expectations regarding her career and education.

Do felt like she met her parents’ expectations regarding her education. She did not meet parental expectations regarding her career, because she has decided to pursue interests that are not related to her current degree. She also has not met parental expectations regarding her significant other, because she is not married.

Meeting parental expectations regarding education was commonly perceived (x = 2.50), with career and relationships more variable across these respondents.

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Ko</th>
<th>Gi</th>
<th>Da</th>
<th>Du</th>
<th>Dh</th>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Mean Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify more as Greek</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>1.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify more as American</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify self as both</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When in Greece, feel more American; when in America, feel more Greek</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ko identified more as an American, but she also somewhat identified herself as both Greek and American. She also felt that when she is in Greece, she feels more American and when she is in America, she feels more Greek.

Gi identified more as an American, but she also somewhat identified herself as both Greek and American.

Da identified more as an American, but she also identified herself as both Greek and American.
Du identified more as an American, but she also identified herself as both Greek and American.

Dh identified more as a Greek, but she also somewhat identified herself as both Greek and American.

Do identified as both a Greek and an American, but she also somewhat identified more as a Greek. She also felt that when she is in Greece, she feels more American and when she is in America, she feels more Greek.

Clearly, all respondents identify themselves as bicultural, both Greek and American (x = 2.42), though more strongly American (x = 2.33 vs. x = 1.58).

Table 8

Q: Do you ever feel torn between the two cultures, not knowing where you belong exactly?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Ko</th>
<th>Gi</th>
<th>Da</th>
<th>Du</th>
<th>Dh</th>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Mean Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feels torn between the two cultures</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never feels torn between the two cultures</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable with self within the two cultures</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>2.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not know where self belongs within the two cultures</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ko reported that she never feels torn between the two cultures. She also felt that she is comfortable with herself within the two cultures.

Gi felt that she is somewhat torn between the two cultures. She also felt that she is comfortable with herself within the two cultures.

Da never feels torn between the two cultures. She also is comfortable with herself within the two cultures.
Du does feel torn between the two cultures, though she also is somewhat comfortable with herself within the two cultures.

Dh feels torn between the two cultures. She also is comfortable with herself within the two cultures.

Do feels torn between the two cultures. She also is comfortable with herself within the two cultures.

Clearly, feeling comfortable with self within the two cultures was strong across all respondents (\(x = 2.58\)), though there was a moderate degree of tension revealed in that bicultural identity (\(x = 2.00\)).

Table 9

Q: How has growing up in a bicultural family added to who you are?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Ko</th>
<th>Gi</th>
<th>Da</th>
<th>Du</th>
<th>Dh</th>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive effect</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaches you to work hard</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps you become a better person</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adds stress to life because become a perfectionist</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong sense of self</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family oriented</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Become more independent</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More culturally sensitive/better understanding of people and cultures</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>1,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More open-minded</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>1,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More worldly</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great sense of humor</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyal to friends and family</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More generous and warm toward others</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More well-rounded as a person</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ko felt that growing up in a bicultural family had a positive effect on her. She felt that it taught her to work hard and helped her become a better person. She also felt that it helped her have a strong sense of self, be family-oriented, become more independent and be more well-rounded. There is discrepancy among the raters regarding whether growing up in a bicultural family helped Ko become more worldly, and whether it helped her be loyal to friends and family. While the researcher rated both these themes as high, the independent rater did not.

Gi felt that growing up in a bicultural family had a positive effect on her. She felt that it helped her become a better person, have a strong sense of self, be family-oriented, and be more culturally sensitive. She also felt that it made her more open-minded and worldly, gave her a great sense of humor, helped her be loyal to friends and family, helped her be more generous and warm towards others, and helped her become a more well-rounded person. Gi also felt that it somewhat taught her to work hard.

Da felt that growing up in a bicultural family had a positive effect on her. She felt that it helped her become a better person, have a strong sense of self, helped her become more independent, and become more culturally sensitive. Da also felt that it made her more open-minded, more worldly and more well-rounded. There is discrepancy among the raters regarding whether growing up in a bicultural family helped Da become more family-oriented, and whether it helped her be loyal to friends and family. While the researcher rated both these themes as high, the independent rater did not.

Du felt that growing up in a bicultural family had a positive effect on her. She felt that it helped her become a better person, be family-oriented, be more culturally sensitive, be loyal to friends and family, and be more well-rounded. Du also felt that it somewhat
helped her have a strong sense of self. There is discrepancy among the raters regarding whether growing up in a bicultural family helped Du become more open-minded, and whether it helped her become more worldly. While the researcher rated both these themes as high, the independent rater did not.

Dh felt that growing up in a bicultural family had a positive effect on her. She felt that it taught her to work hard, helped her become a better person, helped her be family-oriented, be loyal to friends and family, and more well-rounded. Dh also somewhat felt that it helped her become more independent. She also felt that growing up in a bicultural family added stress to her life because it helped make her become a perfectionist. There is discrepancy among the raters regarding whether growing up in a bicultural family helped Dh become more culturally sensitive, and whether it helped her become more open-minded. While the researcher did not rate both these themes as high, the independent rater did.

Do felt that growing up in a bicultural family had a positive effect on her. She felt that it helped her become a better person, helped her have a strong sense of self, and helped her be more family-oriented. Do also felt that it helped her be more culturally sensitive, be more open-minded, be more worldly, have a great sense of humor and be more well-rounded.

Clearly, growing up in a bicultural family has had a uniformly positive effect across all respondents (x = 3.00). All reported that it has helped them become a better person (x = 2.83) and more well-rounded (x = 2.67). They also concurred that it embodied a strong sense of self (x = 2.33), cultural sensitivity (x = 2.50) and open-mindedness (x = 2.33). Family and friends were perceived as moderately important.
Growing up in a bicultural family, however, did not uniformly add stress to their life from becoming a perfectionist, or being more independent, or having a great sense of humor, or being more generous and warm towards others.

Table 10

Q: In a traditional Greek family, family is valued more than independence. Would you say that this was true in your family? If so, how has this affected your life?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Ko</th>
<th>Gi</th>
<th>Da</th>
<th>Du</th>
<th>Dh</th>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family is more important than independence</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence comes later</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence is not encouraged</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everything revolves around the family</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The family bond is much greater than the desire to be independent</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong emphasis on family has held me back in some ways</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ko felt that family is more important than independence, that everything revolves around family, and that the family bond is much greater than the desire to be independent. Ko did not feel that the strong emphasis on family has held her back.

There is discrepancy among the raters regarding whether Ko felt that independence comes later. While the researcher rated this theme as high, the independent rater did not.

Gi felt that family is more important than independence, that independence is not encouraged, and that everything revolves around the family. She also felt that the family bond is much greater than the desire to be independent, and that the strong emphasis on family has held her back in some ways. Gi somewhat felt that independence comes later.
Da felt that family is somewhat more important than independence, and somewhat felt that independence comes later. Da did not feel, though, that independence is not encouraged or that everything revolves around family. She also did not feel that the family bond is much greater than the desire to be independent, and that the strong emphasis on family has held her back.

Du felt that family is more important than independence, that independence is not encouraged, and that everything revolves around family. There is discrepancy among the raters regarding whether Du felt that independence comes later, and whether the family bond is much greater than the desire to be independent. While the researcher did not rate both these themes as high, the independent rater did.

Dh felt that family is more important than independence, that independence comes later, and that everything revolves around family. She did not feel that the strong emphasis on family has held her back. There is discrepancy among the raters regarding whether Dh felt that the family bond is much greater than the desire to be independent. While the researcher did not rate this theme as high, the independent rater did.

Do felt that the family is more important than independence, that independence is not encouraged, and that everything revolves around family. She also felt that the family bond is much greater than the desire to be independent, and that the strong emphasis on family has held her back in some ways. There is discrepancy among the raters regarding whether Do felt that independence comes later. While the researcher did not rate this theme as high, the independent rater did.

Clearly, a sense of family being more important than independence was strong across all respondents ($x = 2.83$) and that life revolves around the family ($x = 2.58$). The
family bond appears to be primary early in life \((x = 2.17)\), with independence coming later \((x = 2.17)\). However, this strong sense of family did not uniformly result in a sense of the strong emphasis on family holding respondents back in some ways \((x = 1.75)\).

Table 11

Q: Do you feel like you can be who you truly are in the family, without strong parental judgment?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Ko</th>
<th>Gi</th>
<th>Da</th>
<th>Du</th>
<th>Dh</th>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can be who I truly am in my family</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I cannot be who I truly am in my family</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,3</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can be who I am, but often get judged for it</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ko felt that she can be who she truly is in her family without strong parental judgment.

Gi felt that she somewhat can be who she truly is in her family. She felt that she can be who she is, but often gets judged for it.

Da felt that she can be who she truly is in her family without strong parental judgment.

Du felt that she can be who she truly is in her family. She felt that she can be who she is, but often gets judged for it.

Dh felt that she can be who she truly is in her family. She also somewhat felt that she can be who she is, but often gets judged for it.

Do felt that she can be who she is in her family, but often gets judged for it.

There is a bit of a discrepancy among the raters regarding whether Do can be who she
truly is in her family. The independent rater rated her highly on not being able to be who she truly is in her family, while the researcher did not.

Clearly, a sense of being who they truly are in the family was strong for most respondents ($x = 2.58$), but many of them felt judged by their parents as a result ($x = 2.00$).

Table 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Ko</th>
<th>Gi</th>
<th>Da</th>
<th>Du</th>
<th>Dh</th>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Mean Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More strict with daughters</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations for daughters are much greater than for sons</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sons are at liberty to do as they please</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards are the same for both</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls should be at home with mom</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls are expected to be perfect</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls are judged more by their actions</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys are held in higher regard than girls</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ko (with no brothers) felt that the expectations for daughters are much greater than for sons, that sons are at liberty to do as they please, and that girls should be at home with mom. There is discrepancy among the raters regarding whether Ko felt that parents are more strict with daughters, whether girls are expected to be perfect, and whether girls are more judged by their actions. The researcher rated Ko highly on these three themes, while the independent rater did not.

Gi (with one younger brother) felt that parents are more strict with daughters, that the expectations for daughters are much greater than for sons, and that sons are at liberty
to do as they please. She also felt that parents expect the girls to be home with mom, that
girls are judged more by their actions, and that boys are held in higher regard than girls.

Da (with two younger brothers) felt that parents are more strict with daughters, and that the expectations for daughters are much greater than for sons. She also felt that sons are at liberty to do as they please, and that girls are judged more by their actions. There is discrepancy among the raters regarding whether Da felt that girls are expected to be perfect. The researcher rated Da highly on this theme, while the independent rater did not.

Du (with two older brothers) felt that parents are more strict with daughters, that the expectations for daughters are much greater than for sons, and that sons are at liberty to do as they please. Du also felt that parents expect the girls to be home with mom, that girls are expected to be perfect and are judged more by their actions, and that boys are held in higher regard than girls.

Dh (with one older brother) felt that parents are more strict with daughters, and that girls are expected to be at home with mom.

Do (with no brothers) felt that parents are more strict with daughters, that the expectations for daughters are much greater than for sons, and that sons are at liberty to do as they please. Do also felt that girls are expected to be perfect, and are judged more by their actions. Do somewhat felt that parents expect the girls to be at home with mom.

Clearly, a sense of parents being more strict with their daughters was strong across all respondents (x = 2.75). Boys are given more liberties (x = 2.67) and expectations for daughters are much greater than for sons (x = 2.67). Of interest is that boys did not appear to be held in higher regard than girls among this sample (x = 1.75).
Greek-American Acculturation Scale

The following scores illustrate the level of acculturation for each participant. Higher scores indicate greater identification with the Greek culture, and therefore, lower level of acculturation. The potential range of scores on this instrument is 89; among this sample the range was 22.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ko</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gi</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Da</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Du</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dh</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dh had a score of 94, which was the highest of all six scores. She had the greatest identification with the Greek culture, and therefore, the lowest level of acculturation. Ko and Do followed with scores of 88 and 84 correspondingly. Du and Da had almost the same level of acculturation, with scores of 79 and 78 correspondingly. Gi identified the least with the Greek culture, and therefore, had the highest level of acculturation. She had an overall score of 73. Although there are no known norms or means from prior research that help to place these numbers in context of level of acculturation, it is clear that all scores fall above the median score of 66 for the scale, thus suggesting a stronger identification with Greek than with American cultures.
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

We are a nation of immigrants. As such, it is in our best interest to understand the multicultural world in which we live. We can no longer ignore the distinct differences that exist between cultures. It is the hope of the researcher that the current study will help individuals understand the complexities underlying the bicultural world of first generation Greek-American daughters of Greek immigrants living in the United States.

These six case studies function as a platform, so that one can begin to understand what it is like to be raised in one familial culture, but expected to function in the host culture, namely, the American culture. The six interviews that were analyzed had many commonalities, as well as some differences between them. One must keep in mind that any culture encompasses a plethora of individuals, each with their own unique experiences.

Three research questions were asked prior to the collection of participant data. These questions were the following:

(1) What is the experience of daughters who are raised by Greek immigrant parents in the United States?

(2) Are there inherent similarities and differences between the experiences of daughters of Greek immigrants?
(3) What are the strengths and weaknesses of being brought up in a bicultural Greek family?

Experiences of Daughters Raised by Greek Immigrant Parents

Ko is 29 years old and is the oldest of two sisters. She is married to a Greek-American, and her level of acculturation was a score of 88, which was the second highest among the six participants, illustrating a strong identification with the Greek culture. Ko reported feeling like a little adult and of being different from non-Greeks. She had a restrictive childhood and felt that her mother was strict, authoritative, and the disciplinarian of the family. Ko felt that her father was also strict, but was additionally sensitive and understanding.

She identified with the enormous pressure to be a “good little Greek girl,” and felt that she had met all parental expectations regarding her career, significant other, and education. Ko self-identified herself as more American than Greek, but also reported that when she is in Greece, she feels more American and when she is in America, she feels more Greek. Interestingly, her high score on the Greek-American Acculturation Scale identified her as being more Greek than American.

She felt that she was comfortable within both cultures and that she never felt torn between the two cultures. The interviewee’s responses here seem to contradict one another. Family was in fact more important than independence, and everything revolved around the family as a result. She also felt that she could be who she truly is in her family, without strong parental judgment. Overall, it appears that Ko did what was expected of her in her family and did not appear to rebel against her bicultural upbringing at any time.
Gi is forty years old and the oldest of two. She has a younger brother. She is not married and her level of acculturation was a score of 73, which was the lowest of the six participants, illustrating a lower identification with the Greek culture. Gi reported feeling different from non-Greeks, so much so that she felt alienated from them. She felt embarrassed by her Greek culture and felt a desire to belong to the majority. This data coincides with her low score on the Greek-American Acculturation Scale.

Gi felt that her mother was strict, authoritative, very involved, controlling, and the disciplinarian of the family. She felt that her father, on the other hand, was sensitive, understanding and more easy-going. Gi identified with the enormous pressure of being a “good little Greek girl,” and felt that she met parental expectations regarding her career and education, but did not meet parental expectations regarding her significant other because she is not married.

She identified herself as more American, which coincides with her level of acculturation score. She also reported that she felt comfortable with herself within the two cultures. Gi felt that her family valued family more than independence, and that this strong emphasis on family has held her back in some ways. She reported that she can be who she truly is, but often gets judged for it, especially by her mother. Overall, it appears that Gi identified herself much more with being American, and has rebelled against her Greek upbringing throughout the years, challenging the Greek norms.

Da is forty years old and the oldest of three. She has two younger brothers. She is married to a non-Greek, and her level of acculturation was a score of 78, which was the second lowest of the six participants, illustrating a lower identification with the Greek
culture. Da reported feeling different from non-Greeks and having a desire to belong to the majority. She also reported having a restrictive childhood.

Da felt that her mother was very involved, sensitive, and understanding. She felt that her father was overprotective, but also sensitive and understanding and more easy-going. She described him as the “good time dad.” Da identified with the pressure of being a “good little Greek girl,” but was not defined by it. She appeared to feel comfortable with who she was and did not allow Greek expectations to define who she was. She felt that she met all parental expectations regarding her career, her significant other, and her education.

Da identified herself as more American, but also as both Greek and American. Interestingly, her level of acculturation score (78) did not indicate a strong identification with the Greek culture. She reported that she felt comfortable with herself within the two cultures, and that she never felt torn between the cultures. Da felt that independence was almost as important as family. Out of all the participant data, Da was the only interviewee who did not feel that everything revolves around the family. Perhaps this is why she felt that independence was almost as important as family. Da reported that she can be who she truly is in her family, without strong parental judgment. Overall, it appears that Da identified herself as both Greek and American, and has not allowed her Greek heritage to define who she is or hold her back in any way.

Du is 34 years old and the youngest of three. She has two older brothers. She is married to a non-Greek, and her level of acculturation was a score of 79, which was the mean score between the six participants, illustrating an average identification with the Greek culture among this sample. Du reported feeling different from non-
Greeks, but felt a sense of pride and a sense of community among the Greeks. She also felt that she had a restrictive childhood.

Du felt that her mother was strict, authoritative, very involved, controlling, overprotective, and the disciplinarian of the family. She felt that her father was overprotective, but also sensitive and understanding and easy-going. Du identified with the tremendous pressure of being a “good little Greek girl,” and often found the expectations for perfection quite overwhelming. She felt that she did not meet parental expectations regarding her career, her significant other, or her education.

Du identified herself as more American, but also as Greek and American. She reported that she felt torn between the two cultures. Her score on the Greek-American Acculturation Scale seems to coincide with the data from her interview. Du reported that everything revolves around the family and that independence is not encouraged, largely because her mother is very controlling. She felt that she can be who she truly is in her family, but is often judged for it. Overall, it appears that Du still struggles with maintaining her independence because her mother is unable to maintain proper boundaries within her new nuclear family, namely, her husband and her baby daughter.

Dh is 31 years old and the youngest of two. She has one older brother. She is married to a Greek from Greece and her level of acculturation was a score of 94, which was the highest among the six participants, indicating the highest identification with the Greek culture. Dh is the only participant who married a Greek from Greece. Her strong identification with the Greek culture is indicative of who she chose to marry.
Dh reported feeling different from non-Greeks and felt a sense of community among the Greeks. She felt that her mother was strict, authoritative, very involved, controlling, overprotective, had an expectation for perfection, and was the disciplinarian of the family. She also felt that her mother was sensitive, understanding, and nurturing. Dh felt that her father was strict, authoritative, yelled a lot, had an expectation for perfection, was the disciplinarian of the family, and she feared him. Dh identified with the tremendous pressure of being a “good little Greek girl,” and often found the expectation for perfection quite overwhelming. She felt that she met parental expectations regarding her career, her significant other, and her education.

Dh felt that she was more Greek than American. This interview data coincides with her high score on the Greek-American Acculturation Scale. She reported that she felt torn between the two cultures, but that she felt comfortable with herself within the two cultures. Dh felt that everything revolves around the family and that independence comes later. She felt that she can be who she truly is, but sometimes gets judged for it. Overall, it appears that Dh was content with her bicultural upbringing, and she did not appear to rebel against the often overwhelming expectations of her Greek family.

Do is 31 years old and the oldest of two sisters. She is not married, and her level of acculturation was a score of 84, which was the third highest among the six participants, indicating moderate identification with the Greek culture. She felt different from non-Greeks and a sense of embarrassment. She also felt a sense of isolation.

Do felt that her mother was strict, authoritative, very involved, controlling, overprotective, yelled a lot, had an expectation for perfection, and was the disciplinarian
of the family. She felt that her father was strict, authoritative, the disciplinarian of the family, and she feared him. She often felt overwhelmed by the tremendous pressure to be a “good little Greek girl,” and often felt stifled by these demands. Do felt that she met parental expectations regarding her education, but did not meet parental expectations regarding her career and significant other. She is not married.

Do identified herself as both Greek and American. She felt that when she is in Greece, she feels more American, and when she is in America, she feels more Greek. She felt torn between the two cultures, but was comfortable with herself within the two cultures. She felt that everything revolved around the family, that independence was not encouraged, and that this has held her back in some ways. She reported that she can be who she truly is, but often gets judged for it. Overall, it appears that Do struggles between familial and cultural expectations, and her desire to be independent. She seems to feel stifled by the tremendous pressures of her Greek family.

Ethnic groups or individuals preserve, to varying degrees, their heritage’s culture and language while adapting to mainstream society. Georgas, Berry, Shaw, Christakopoulou, and Mylonas (1996) were interested in the acculturation of Greek family values, and found that significant value change occurred as a result of acculturation in numerous host societies. There was a greater retention of Greek family values among immigrants in countries that adopt an integrationist mode of acculturation (Canada) than in countries that emphasize an assimilationist mode of acculturation (European countries). Although the current study did not compare experiences of daughters of Greek immigrants from various countries, it was apparent that most of the participants, with the exception of Da, had parents that retained the traditional Greek
family values. The United States is most similar to Canada, which is a country that adopts an integrationist mode of acculturation. As such, the current study coincided with the findings of Georgas, Berry, Shaw, Christakopoulou, and Mylonas (1996).

All six participants were daughters of Greek immigrants. Kourvetaris (1990) found that ethnic identification in Greeks (and perhaps in most cultural groups) is weakened between generations. As one moves from first generation (immigrants) to second, third, and subsequent generations one can observe the gradual change in ethnic identity. There is a continual decline of Greek traditions and language. Interestingly, the current study illustrated that even individuals from the same generation, namely, the daughters of Greek immigrants, differ in level of acculturation and perceived ethnic identification. One can hypothesize that the children of daughters of Greek immigrants will most likely have less of an ethnic identification with the Greek culture. Ethnic identification in children of first generation Greek-Americans could be studied in the future to test Kourvetaris' hypothesis.

Athens et al. (1996) described two forms of adaptation to American culture that Greek immigrants and their offspring can conform to: New Greece and Greek Americanism. Advocates of New Greece maintain Greek traditions and customs, preserve the Greek language in the home and church, and prefer dating and marrying other Greeks. Proponents of Greek Americanism, on the other hand, favor integration into US society. Integration (Greek Americanism) is thought to produce a cultural group that is far more adaptive than separation (New Greece). Although this hypothesis could be true, the current study did not indicate that the participants with a higher identification with the Greek culture adapted any less to American culture than those that identified
themselves as more American. Further research is needed in order to obtain more conclusive results.

Athens et al. (1996) also discussed the Greek Orthodox Church and its role in maintaining the growth and well-being of the Greek-American community. In a sense, the Greek Orthodox Church provides immigrants and others of Greek descent with a kind of support system that many cultures do not have in the United States. The church could thus possibly buffer the negative effects of acculturative stress and make the process of acculturation smoother. The current case studies illustrated the importance of church and Greek school. Most participants felt a sense of belonging to the Greek community. Although they felt distinctly different from non-Greeks, one could argue that the support system provided by the church and the festivities associated with it may have helped the participants cope with the acculturation process more smoothly.

**Commonalities and Differences between Daughters of Greek Immigrants**

There were many commonalities and differences between the participants. All of the interviewees recalled feeling different from others at some point in their childhood. While some felt isolated or outcast as a result, others did not. While some felt proud of being Greek, others felt embarrassed. While some had a desire to belong to the majority culture, others felt a positive sense of community among fellow Greeks.

Sam (1992) studied the acculturation process and psychological adjustment of visible immigrants. The term “visible immigrant” refers to an immigrant of color, usually originating from the countries of Asia, Africa, and South America. Sam (1992) found that visible immigrants faced discrimination and racism almost daily, which hinder their acculturation process and psychological adjustment.

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Interestingly, although Greeks are not considered “visible immigrants,” all of the participants in the study felt different from others. In fact, some felt isolated and outcast as a result. One can imagine how a child of immigrant parents who physically exhibits signs of being foreign feels on a daily basis. Discrimination based on physical appearance permeates every aspect of a visible immigrant or child of a visible immigrant’s life. One cannot hide his/her skin color or dark features. Greeks, on the other hand, are primarily categorized as Caucasians.

There were many similarities and a few differences among the participants regarding the recollection of their mother’s parenting style. Most of the interviewees felt that mom was strict, authoritative, very involved, and the disciplinarian of the household. While some felt that their mother was controlling and overprotective, others did not. While some described their mother as sensitive, understanding, and nurturing, others did not recall her being that way.

In the traditional Greek family, the husband is responsible for controlling the wife and the parental role is one of authority. Parental discipline is very firm, especially by American standards, and great emphasis is placed on proper behavior of the children (Moskos, 1989). The results of the current study clearly illustrate the authoritative parenting style of the mother. The hypothesis that Greek mothers are stricter than American mothers and expect more from their daughters can be further explored in future research. The relationship between the authoritative parenting style of a Greek mother and the acculturation and psychological adjustment of her children can also be researched in more depth. The researcher’s hypothesis is that daughters of Greek immigrants have a difficult time adjusting to American norms as a result.
There were many differences among the participants regarding the recollection of their father's parenting style. Some felt that dad was authoritative, while others viewed him as sensitive and understanding. Some felt they feared their father, while others described him as easy-going and more lenient. Some felt that he was overprotective or the disciplinarian, while others did not feel that way. Again, most participants felt that their father's parenting style was authoritative. The researcher's hypothesis is that daughters of Greek immigrants live a more sheltered adolescence as a result. Additionally, their strict upbringing could affect their acculturation and psychological adjustment throughout all stages of their personal development.

There were general "rules" that were common among all participants as they described the definition of a "good little Greek girl." A "good little Greek girl" is someone who obeys, tells her parents wherever she is going, and is usually with her mother. She did not embarrass the family by causing other Greeks to talk about her. She also did not date. Some participants felt that a "good little Greek girl" also needed to be an excellent student and look meticulous at all times. Obedience seems to be a common theme in the research literature. Moskos (1989) emphasized the importance placed on proper behavior of the children, and this coincides with the findings of the current research.

Some participants felt that they met all parental expectations regarding their career, their significant other, and their education. Others felt they somewhat disappointed their parents with their choice of career, not living up to the high standards of their parents. Others also felt that they did not meet parental expectations regarding their significant other, or lack thereof. Future research could investigate the relationship
between high parental expectations and self-esteem. The researcher hypothesizes that many children of Greek immigrants, who place immense demands on them, often feel like they are never good enough or perfect enough for their parents.

Most of the participants identified themselves as more American than Greek. All of them identified themselves as both at some level. Some felt that when they are in Greece, they feel more American, while when they are in America, they feel more Greek. Some felt torn between the two cultures, while others did not. All interviewees felt that they were comfortable with themselves within the two cultures. Future research could focus on the psychological effects of individuals that feel torn between two cultures. The researcher’s hypothesis is that these individuals feel a sense of displacement that often leads to nostalgia of the country in which they are not currently living.

All of the participants felt that growing up in a bicultural Greek family had a positive effect on who they are as individuals. All felt that it has helped them become better people, many of them feeling that they have a better understanding of people and their cultures as a result. All participants felt that they are more well-rounded as a person, as a result of being exposed to two cultures simultaneously. Most interviewees also felt that they know who they are and where they come from. This fact has helped them develop a strong sense of self. The researcher’s hypothesis is that individuals of bicultural backgrounds are less likely to feel “lost” in terms of who they are because of their strong cultural heritage.

All participants felt that in a traditional Greek family, family is more important than independence. Most felt that everything revolves around the family. Some felt that the strong emphasis on family has held them back in some way, often because
independence is not encouraged. Most interviewees felt that they can be who they are in their family, but some often get judged for it. Moskos (1989) also stated that the Greek family is a central cultural institution. Future research could investigate whether this tremendous focus on family fosters a sort of codependence among the family members and its possible effects on the individual as a separate entity.

Finally, there is a general consensus that boys are treated much differently than girls in the Greek culture, which is often a very patriarchal society. All agree that the parents are more strict with their daughters, and that the expectations for daughters, for the most part, are much greater than those for sons. Most also thought that sons are at liberty to do as they please, and that girls are judged more by their actions. No participant felt that the standards are the same for both girls and boys. Additionally, some even felt that boys are held in higher regard than girls. Future research could investigate the effects of being overly strict with the girls and overly lenient with the boys. The researcher hypothesizes that the girls become more self-reliant, while the boys have more difficulty living on their own.

In summary, there are patterns and trends that are revealed from the overall profile of responses from the six participants. All six of the participants felt different from non-Greeks. All of them felt that their mother was very involved and that she was the disciplinarian of the family. All interviewees reported their father’s parenting style differently. There was no standard parenting style for fathers across all participants. All six respondents reported a number of expectations regarding being a “good little Greek girl.” They all differed on whether they met the expectations of their parents. All identified themselves as both Greek and American. All are relatively comfortable with
themselves within the two cultures. Growing up in a bicultural family was a positive experience for all of them. In fact, this bicultural upbringing has contributed to them being more understanding of others, and having a strong sense of self. All participants felt that family is more important than independence. They reported being able to be who they truly are, but some get judged for it as a result. Finally, there is an overwhelming difference in the way daughters and sons are raised in the Greek family. Parents are much stricter with the daughters, while sons are often at liberty to do as they please. The hypothesis is that the positive outcomes of growing up in a bicultural Greek family outweigh any negative experiences.

**Strengths and Weaknesses of Growing up in a Bicultural Greek Family**

There are strengths and weaknesses of growing up in a bicultural Greek family. The family bond permeates every aspect of a Greek individual’s life (Moskos, 1989). The individual thus never feels alone in the world because the Greek family is always a support system (Moskos, 1989). The religious component is also strong, which is described in detail in the literature (Athens et al., 1996). The church plays a significant role in the development of the Greek-American. Christian holidays such as Easter, along with Greek school and Sunday school at the Greek Orthodox Church, all contribute to the sense of community which is so pertinent in the northern New England city in which the study took place. The hypothesis is that cultural sensitivity arises as a direct result of feeling different from the majority host culture. Another hypothesis is that feeling different from the majority culture contributes to the development of a strong sense of self, which could be derived from knowing one’s roots and heritage.
The weaknesses pertain to the inability to sometimes function as an individual entity, irrespective of the family. The hypothesis is that independence is often sacrificed at the expense of the family as a whole, and the tremendous expectations of being a “good little Greek girl” often supersedes the individual’s desires to function in the world without a care of what others may think of them, particularly Greeks. The researcher hypothesizes that this can sometimes be a very stressful way of life, particularly if the individual lives in a community of Greeks.

Overall, growing up in a bicultural Greek family produces a strong individual who is able to advocate for herself, since she had to do it for her parents growing up when they did not speak English. If one can balance the family piece with some level of independence, the two often differing cultures, namely the American and the Greek cultures, can coincide harmoniously within one individual.

Limitations of the Study

As with most case studies, it is difficult to generalize findings. While the beauty of case studies allows the researcher to obtain a detailed glimpse of one’s life, generalizing the findings may be limited for a number of reasons. First, the population sampled was from one distinct geographic area in northern New England. The fact that there are a lot of Greeks in this particular area allows the formation of a close-knit Greek community. This can have both positive and negative consequences. Positive, because there is a wonderful sense of community among most Greeks. The researcher wonders if the participants were selected in an area where there were not many Greeks, would the pressures on the daughters be the same?
Second, the study looked at individuals within a certain age group. The participants were between the ages of 25 and 40. The experiences of other Greek-American daughters may be different, especially if the researcher was to examine different age groups and generations. One must always take into account the generation that one comes from, as it pertains to the influences it may have on the individual and the subgroup at large.

Third, case studies are often highly subjective, since they encompass phenomenological experiences as the participants perceive them. One must always keep in mind that the data in case studies, are often opinions of the individuals themselves. In fact, siblings from the very same family may experience differences in the recollection of their experiences, due to the fact that perceptions differ between individuals. Fourth, the sample size was quite small. It would be interesting to have a larger sample size in future research with this population.

Fifth, there are limitations of the ratings. Although the researcher and the independent rater agreed on most of the ratings per theme, there were discrepancies among ratings. This could affect the findings of the study, since the ratings served as the primary data for the content analysis of the research.

Finally, the study serves as a platform from which researchers can generate a number of hypotheses. One hypothesis might be that the level of acculturation may directly impact the psychological adjustment of the individual to the major culture. Another hypothesis might be that daughters and sons adjust differently to the American culture as a direct result of the cultural constraints placed on the daughters. Such hypotheses could lead researchers to a greater understanding of acculturation and its
impact on the psychological well-being of individuals who are raised in a bicultural environment.

**Implications for Counselors**

The implications of this study for counselors could be valuable. Counselors can begin to understand the complexities of living in a bicultural world, along with differences between the Greek and American cultures. Counselors, through their knowledge and better understanding of the Greek culture, especially as it pertains to females, can better aid Greek-American clients in counseling.

The study clearly illustrates that there are distinct perceived differences regarding how sons and daughters are raised. The research also creates a lens from which counselors can familiarize themselves with the cultural expectations of the Greek daughter and her role in the bicultural Greek family. Additionally, knowing the traditional parenting styles of the Greek family could benefit counselors by allowing them to incorporate the parents in counseling, so that they do not feel threatened by the presence of a professional.

A dominant culture counselor working with a bicultural Greek-American client needs to be informed about the Greek culture in which the individual grew up. Since the Greek family permeates every aspect of one’s life, family therapy may be a better form of therapy than individual therapy. Issues within the family need to be addressed so that change can be more permanent, especially when dealing with bicultural Greek-American children and adolescents. Working with the Greek immigrant parents is essential. Listening to parental concerns and establishing rapport with them is important for the
therapeutic process to be successful. Extended family such as grandparents may also need to be part of the therapeutic process, since they often live in the same home.

Since the church plays a major role in a Greek individual’s life, the dominant culture counselor may need to consult with the family’s priest in order to better aid the traditional Greek family. The priest can provide information about cultural expectations and offer the counselor some insight. Furthermore, religion cannot be overlooked when assessing a Greek-American client’s choices and values.

The dominant culture counselor must also be aware of the differences in parental treatment of males and females. When developing an alliance with males and females, the overall difference in expectations for boys and girls cannot be overlooked. Knowing that girls generally have more expectations and fewer liberties within the family, the therapist can better assist the bicultural Greek-American client. The counselor may focus more on the often burdensome expectations placed on the female client, whereas the focus on the male client may be different.

It is important for the counselor to begin therapy without judgment of the traditional Greek culture. The counselor’s assumptions and views must not impede the therapeutic process with a bicultural Greek-American client. Change will probably be gradual and the client should not be challenged about the views that his/her culture holds. Acceptance and a nonjudgmental stance on the therapist’s part will make therapy more productive.

Knowing the underlying assumptions in the culture can serve to better guide individuals in the path for personal growth. It is the hope of the researcher that as counselors become more culturally sensitive to the Greek culture, Greek-American
clients will be able to find a balance between their Greek upbringing and their American way of life, especially as that pertains to family versus independence, the two of which are often conflicting.
REFERENCES


Hovey, J. D. (2000a). Acculturative stress, depression, and suicidal ideation among Central American immigrants. Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior, 30(2), 125-139.


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APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL LETTER

University of New Hampshire
Research Conduct and Compliance Services, Office of Sponsored Research
Service Building, 51 College Road, Durham, NH 03824-3585
Fax: 603-862-3564

17-May-2007

Dongas, Sophia
Education, Morrill Hall
633 Auburn Street
Manchester, NH 03103

IRB #: 3990
Study: The Bicultural World of First-Generation Greek-American Daughters of Greek Immigrants
Approval Date: 15-May-2007

The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research (IRB) has reviewed and approved the protocol for your study as Expedited as described in Title 45, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 46, Subsection 110.

Approval is granted to conduct your study as described in your protocol for one year from the approval date above. At the end of the approval period, you will be asked to submit a report with regard to the involvement of human subjects in this study. If your study is still active, you may request an extension of IRB approval.

Researchers who conduct studies involving human subjects have responsibilities as outlined in the attached document, Responsibilities of Directors of Research Studies Involving Human Subjects. (This document is also available at http://www.unh.edu/osr/compliance/irb.html.) Please read this document carefully before commencing your work involving human subjects.

If you have questions or concerns about your study or this approval, please feel free to contact me at 603-862-2003 or Julie.simpson@unh.edu. Please refer to the IRB # above in all correspondence related to this study. The IRB wishes you success with your research.

For the IRB,

Julie F. Simpson
Manager

cc: File
Falvey, Janet
APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to investigate the experiences of Greek-American daughters who have grown up in a bicultural environment in the United States.

Description: The study involves completing the Greek-American Acculturation Scale and partaking in an interview consisting of open-ended questions. The duration of participation will be approximately one hour.

Other Points: The researcher is a first generation Greek-American. She is very interested in the bicultural world of Greek-American daughters. Results of the study may benefit Greek families by providing them with appropriate resources.

1. I understand that the use of human participants in this project has been approved by the UNH Institutional Review Board for the protection of Human Subjects in Research.

2. I understand the scope, aims, and purposes of this research project and the procedures to be followed and the expected duration of my participation. The interview will be audiotaped once verbal permission is obtained and the tapes will be erased at the conclusion of the study to maintain the confidentiality of the participants. Anticipated risks include becoming aware of issues within the family and/or acculturation issues in general that may initiate negative feelings.

3. I have received a description of any potential benefits that may be accrued from this research and understand how they may affect me or others.

4. I understand that the confidentiality of all data and records associated with my participation in this research, including my identity, will be fully maintained.

5. I understand that my consent to participate in this research is entirely voluntary, and that my refusal to participate will involve no prejudice, penalty or loss of benefits.

6. I further understand that if I consent to participate, I may discontinue my participation at any time without prejudice, penalty, or loss of benefits.
7. I confirm that no coercion of any kind was used in seeking my participation in this research project.

8. I understand that if I have any questions pertaining to the research I can call Sophia at (603) 591-2623 and be given the opportunity to discuss them in confidence. If I have questions pertaining to my rights as a research participant I can call the Office of Sponsored Research at (603) 862-2003 and be given the opportunity to discuss them.

9. I understand that any information gained about me as a result of my participation will be provided to me at the conclusion of my involvement in this research project.

10. I certify that I have read and fully understand the purpose of this research project and its potential benefits for me as stated above.

I, ___________________________ CONSENT/AGREE to participate.

I, ___________________________ REFUSE/DO NOT AGREE to participate.

__________________________________________________________
Signature of Participant

__________________________________________________________
Name in Print

__________________________________________________________
Address

__________________________________________________________
City State

__________________________________________________________
Zip Code

__________________________________________________________
Telephone Number
APPENDIX C

GREEK-AMERICAN ACCULTURATION SCALE

Please indicate below on a scale of 1-5 (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, or 5 = strongly agree).

1. I would not date someone who is not Greek.
   1  2  3  4  5

2. It is important that the person I marry knows how to speak Greek.
   1  2  3  4  5

3. It is better to marry a poor Greek than a rich non-Greek.
   1  2  3  4  5

4. Greek-Americans should be married in the Greek Church.
   1  2  3  4  5

5. I have conversations in Greek with my family members.
   1  2  3  4  5

6. I have conversations in Greek with my friends.
   1  2  3  4  5

7. Given the choice, I would rather speak Greek than English.
   1  2  3  4  5

8. I can have a conversation in Greek about anything.
   1  2  3  4  5
9. Greek School was an important part of my childhood development.

10. My parents insisted that I learn how to speak Greek when I was growing up.

11. I enjoy being Greek.

12. I am lucky to have been born Greek.

13. When I meet Greeks for the first time, it is important to find out if they speak Greek.

14. It bothers me that some Greek-Americans do not know how to speak Greek.

15. My best friends are Greek.

16. I feel more comfortable around Greeks than around non-Greeks.

17. I listen to Greek music.

18. I read Greek newspapers.
19. I watch Greek television.
   1  2  3  4  5

20. I like to eat most traditional Greek foods.
   1  2  3  4  5

21. I know how to cook Greek foods.
   1  2  3  4  5

22. I want my children to be raised Greek.
   1  2  3  4  5
APPENDIX D

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

I am interested in your experience as a child growing up in a bicultural Greek family. I would like you to talk about the pros and cons of being raised Greek in the United States and about the feelings you have regarding your experiences. I will be asking you twelve questions during the course of this hour. Please answer the questions as honestly and thoroughly as possible.

(1) How did you feel as a child being raised in a Greek family in the United States?

(2) Was there ever a time in your childhood when you felt different from other children? If so, explain.

(3) How would you describe your mother’s parenting style as a child?

(4) How would you describe your father’s parenting style as a child?

(5) What was your parent’s definition of a “good little Greek girl?”

(6) Do you feel like you have met your parents’ expectations regarding your career, your significant other, etc.?

(7) Would you identify yourself a more Greek or more American? Explain.

(8) Do you ever feel torn between the two cultures, not knowing where you belong exactly? Explain.

(9) How has growing up in a bicultural family added to who you are?

(10) In a traditional Greek family, family is valued more than independence. Would you say that this was true in your family? If so, how has this affected your life?

(11) Do you feel like you can be who you truly are in your family, without strong parental judgment?

(12) How would you say daughters and sons differ in the way they are raised in the Greek family?
APPENDIX E

DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

The instruments and interview you have just completed were designed to examine the bicultural world of first generation Greek-American daughters of Greek immigrants living in the United States. It is the hope of the researcher that there will be a better understanding of the psychological impact of growing up in a bicultural environment, namely, the American host culture and the Greek ethnic culture. The results of the study may help individuals who are Greek-American better understand themselves as products of the two cultures.

Copies of the results of the study will be mailed to each participant once the study is completed. I can be reached at (603) 591-2623 if you have any further questions regarding your participation in the study. Additionally, the following list of counseling agencies are referrals, should you decide to pursue the further exploration of issues that may have come up during the interview process:

James J. Foster and Associates
540 Chestnut Street Suite 102
Manchester, NH
(603) 668-7744

Bedford Counseling Associates
1228 Elm Street Suite 201
Manchester, NH
(603) 623-1916

Manchester Psychological Associates
30 Canton Street Suite 13
Manchester, NH
(603) 625-1670
APPENDIX F

THEMES

Please rate the following themes for each question on a scale of 1 to 3
(1 = minimum, 2 = moderate, 3 = strong).

(1) How did you feel as a child being raised in a Greek family in the
United States?

   Sense of community among the Greeks
   1  2  3

   Sense of alienation from non-Greeks
   1  2  3

   Sense of being a little adult
   1  2  3

   Sense of being different
   1  2  3

   Sense of pride
   1  2  3

   Sense of embarrassment
   1  2  3

   Desire to belong to majority
   1  2  3
(2) Was there ever a time in your childhood when you felt different from other children? If so, explain.

Sense of feeling different from non-Greeks
1  2  3

Sense of isolation/being an outcast
1  2  3

Everything revolved around family
1  2  3

Restrictive childhood
1  2  3

Feeling of having more obligations/expectations
1  2  3

(3) How would you describe your mother’s parenting style as a child?

Strict
1  2  3

Authoritative
1  2  3

Very involved
1  2  3

Sensitive/understanding/nurturing
1  2  3
Yelled a lot
1  2  3

Expectation for perfection
1  2  3

Disciplinarian
1  2  3

Controlling
1  2  3

Overprotective
1  2  3

(4) How would you describe your father’s parenting style as a child?

Strict
1  2  3

Authoritative
1  2  3

Yelled a lot
1  2  3

Feared dad
1  2  3

Disciplinarian
1  2  3
Appendix F (continued)

Expectation for perfection
1  2  3

Sensitive/understanding
1  2  3

Overprotective
1  2  3

Easy-going/more lenient
1  2  3

(5) What was your parents’ definition of a “good little Greek girl”?

Someone who obeyed
1  2  3

Knew where daughter was at all times and with whom
1  2  3

Helped mom with the household duties
1  2  3

Excellent student
1  2  3

Looked meticulous
1  2  3

Spoke only when spoken to
1  2  3
Did not embarrass the family
1  2  3

No dating
1  2  3

Went everywhere parents went
1  2  3

Gets married and has children
1  2  3

Is happy all the time
1  2  3

(6) Do you feel like you have met your parents' expectations regarding your career, your significant other, etc.?

Met expectations regarding career
1  2  3

Met expectations regarding significant other
1  2  3

Met expectations regarding education
1  2  3

Did not meet expectations regarding career
1  2  3

Did not meet expectations regarding significant other
1  2  3

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Appendix F (continued)

Did not meet expectations regarding education
1  2  3

(7) Would you identify yourself as more Greek or more American? Explain.

Identify more as Greek
1  2  3

Identify more as American
1  2  3

Identify self as both
1  2  3

When in Greece, feel more American; when in America, feel more Greek
1  2  3

(8) Do you ever feel torn between the two cultures, not knowing where you belong exactly? Explain.

Feels torn between the two cultures
1  2  3

Never feels torn between the two cultures
1  2  3

Comfortable with self within the two cultures
1  2  3

Does not know where self belongs within the two cultures
1  2  3
(9) How has growing up in a bicultural family added to who you are?

Positive effect
1  2  3

Teaches you to work hard
1  2  3

Helps you become a better person
1  2  3

Adds stress to life because become a perfectionist
1  2  3

Strong sense of self
1  2  3

Family-oriented
1  2  3

Become more independent
1  2  3

More culturally sensitive/better understanding of people and cultures
1  2  3

More open-minded
1  2  3

More worldly
1  2  3
Great sense of humor
1 2 3

Loyal to friends and family
1 2 3

More generous and warm towards others
1 2 3

More well-rounded as a person
1 2 3

(10) In a traditional Greek family, family is valued more than independence. Would you say that this was true in your family? If so, how has this affected your life?

Family is more important than independence
1 2 3

Independence comes later
1 2 3

Independence is not encouraged
1 2 3

Everything revolves around the family
1 2 3

The family bond is much greater than the desire to be independent
1 2 3

Strong emphasis on family has held me back in some ways
1 2 3
(11) Do you feel like you can be who you truly are in your family, without strong parental judgment?

I can be who I truly am in my family
1 2 3

I cannot be who I truly am in my family
1 2 3

I can be who I am, but often get judged for it
1 2 3

(12) How would you say daughters and sons differ in the way they are raised in the Greek family?

More strict with daughters
1 2 3

Expectations for daughters are much greater than for sons
1 2 3

Sons are at liberty do as they please
1 2 3

Standards are the same for both
1 2 3

Girls should be at home with mom
1 2 3

Girls are expected to be perfect
1 2 3
Girls are judged more by their actions

Boys are held in higher regard than girls
Interview of Ko

(1) How did you feel as a child being raised in a Greek family in the United States?

Well, I don’t really think I thought any differently of it. I didn’t know any better. So I had a happy childhood. My parents were good to me. I liked being Greek, and as I’ve gotten older, I continued to like being Greek and all the cultural things that I am exposed to. A negative thing that I was Greek was just that I was maybe a little bit different from everybody else. I could speak another language, my parents weren’t born here, and my parents didn’t listen to the same kind of music. So that was a little, it was different, but I didn’t think anything bad of it. I thought it was a good thing.

Can you tell me a little bit more about that?

So it was different because I had to explain a lot of things to my parents, whereas other kids didn’t. My parents didn’t understand everything in English then. They’re better now, but I was a translator for them. So I guess that there were a lot of things that I had to do that my friends didn’t, but like I said, for me it was normal. I didn’t think anything of it. It was just my parents didn’t speak English and they didn’t know what it was like to be American, so I had to do all these other things that most friends didn’t know or didn’t have to or weren’t familiar with. So if anything, I would have to say that it made me a stronger person because I’m more independent. I can speak for myself, I didn’t have to rely on my parents for anything, they almost relied on me to get around than vice versa, and it definitely made me stronger as I got older because I was self-sufficient. So I would have to say it was a positive thing, and I never looked at it as a negative thing. It was different, definitely different overall.

(2) Was there ever a time in your childhood when you felt different from other children? If so, explain.

Ok, well we all celebrate Christmas the same, but Easter, for example, wasn’t always the same time, so I always had a different Easter. It was either a week apart or a month apart or every four years it was the same. We always went to midnight mass for Easter and we had eggs for Easter, so those were different things, but again it wasn’t like a bad thing, it was just something added that I got to do in life. Like oh, well this is what I’m going to do and that was how I knew life and that’s how it was and that was right. What they did was what they did but we were Greek and this is what we did. And then I had to go to Greek school. So I would go to school all day like my friends did, but I had to go to a different school afterwards to learn another language that my parents spoke and learn
about cultures and not a lot of kids that spoke another language like Spanish or French had to go their school, but we had Greek school. So that was something different that we had to deal with.

How did you feel about that?

I didn’t think it was cool. I mean it was definitely a drag, like oh I have to go to Greek school for like two hours and I hated speaking Greek because I didn’t feel comfortable speaking Greek. Although now looking back, I think that it was a great thing and I would want my kids to go through it, and I know they probably won’t want to go through it because it’s a hassle and “why do I have to go?”, and so on and so forth, and “I don’t always do well”, and “why do I have to do this?” When you’re a kid, you don’t want to do what your parents tell you, so it’s just an added burden. But obviously it’s helped me to become who I am today, and I can speak another language and I can go to my country that my parents grew up in and I can communicate with my relatives. If I didn’t go to Greek school, or my parents didn’t speak Greek to me and just tried to adapt to the American way, I would have lost all that, which wouldn’t have been a huge deal growing up, but I think now as an adult and starting my family, it’s a huge deal. You know, my background, my roots, you never want to forget that.

So definitely holidays were a big thing, the culture, even just the thought process, “well we’re Greek we don’t that”. A big thing when I was growing up was my friends would always have sleepovers and I wasn’t allowed to have sleepovers because the Greeks don’t do that. So there are a lot of things that the Greeks didn’t do or “we don’t do that because we’re Greek and they do that because they’re not Greek” and so on and so forth, and it just became to be a standard. Like that was the excuse. “Well you’re Greek and they’re not so that’s why you’re not going to do that” and you know school was very important and you know “you don’t need to be dating, your school is more important.” Or you help your parents out at work, my parents’ had a restaurant so that was a big part of my life. My parents owned a restaurant which is a very common thing for Greek families. So I had to help them out after my schoolwork was done, before hanging out with friends.

How did you feel about the sleepover thing?

Well it was definitely upsetting because all my friends could do it and I couldn’t, but I never really pushed it. I was definitely...I would get upset, but I would never challenge the rules or like fight back. I just, I wasn’t allowed to do it. I would pout and that would be it. But I don’t think that it would’ve made me a better person if I had been allowed to go to sleepovers, but it was obviously something that when you’re growing up and other kids can do it and you can’t, you feel left out. So in college, I had sleepovers all the time so it really didn’t matter you know? And even now, friends will come visit and they’ll sleep over so it’s not really a big thing. It was just that my parents weren’t Americanized.
at that point. They definitely have gotten better. They couldn’t appreciate it, but they
didn’t really understand it, or it was more of a “what are people going to say if you sleep
over somebody else’s house or if you sleep over my house,” that kind of stuff.

What do you mean by that, can you expand on that a little? What are people going to
say?

Well not my parents, but most Greek parents are always concerned about what other
Greeks are going to say about their kids. It was almost like a status in the community.
You know, you don’t want your child to be talked about or put down or “look what so
and so is doing”. It was a respect thing, and they came from a country where the parent
respected the child the child respected the parent and so son and so forth, and so you
didn’t do things that would cause people to talk about you. So anything that wasn’t
typical Greek would stir chaos and cause people to talk, so parents don’t want that. So
that was a big thing that I had to deal with, you know, “why is so and so with her? What
are the other Greeks going to say if you do that or if you do this?” You know, sleeping
over for example. I can’t really think of anything else off the top of my head, sleepovers
are definitely a big thing.

(3) How would you describe your mother’s parenting style as a child?

Well she definitely disciplined us, but I can’t say that we were beaten as children. I
mean that definitely wasn’t a form of punishment that they used. If anything, we would
get yelled at. And I guess that a Greek thing is to not be grounded. I mean, I was never
grounded. I didn’t really know what grounding was. I think you just got yelled at by
your parents and the fear of God that I think was probably put into you. I think that for
me, I didn’t want to upset my parents. I didn’t want them yelling at me, so I tried not to
do anything wrong, and when I did, I knew it was something wrong because they would
be yelling at me. So I definitely, it stuck in my head that I did something wrong and that
I wouldn’t do it again, and so, so that I didn’t have mom and dad yell at me again. I
mean it was mostly mom because dad wasn’t always around, so Mom was definitely the
disciplinarian. But I don’t really remember having a childhood where my mom yelled at
me every single day. You know, I was a quiet kid. I was the oldest. I did whatever I was
supposed to do, whatever was right. I didn’t really veer from the path. I started getting a
little bit feistier in high school because I was growing up, but again I don’t think that was
anything out of the norm for any typical teenager at that age being Greek or non-Greek.
It was just like your typical teenager fighting back. Up until then, I loved my Mom I
would help her clean. I always wanted to make her proud and I never really did anything
to challenge her, to make her mad at me. Of course she yelled at me for stuff, “you didn’t
clean up after yourself” or “why did you do this?” Stupid stuff, typical things around the
house, but nothing that was significant that scarred me in life like as far as being hit or
anything. There weren’t huge fights.
When you say you learned not to do something again and you didn’t challenge the parents, can you give me an example of something they didn’t like or an event to expand on what you were just talking about that they weren’t happy with and then next time around you knew not to do it?

I don’t think there was ever one thing again specifically that stuck out, but I don’t know, maybe pick up after yourself. There wasn’t anything specifically I can think of that they said “don’t ever do that again,” that like scarred me and I changed and I never did that again because they told me not to do it again. Again, I can’t think of it off the top of my head. There might have been possibly something, but I think just growing up, kid stuff, like whatever parents discipline. I tried not to do things that were bad. I always woke up, I went to school everyday, I never put up a fight about what to wear or what I was going to have for lunch. I came home and I didn’t give my mom a hard time about doing things. I did my homework and I went to bed and that was pretty much it.

(4) How would you describe your father’s parenting style as a child?

Dad wasn’t really the disciplinarian only because he wasn’t around a lot because he worked at the restaurant. He did have a side when he did discipline. I would say it happened later on in life. He would yell, and I would cry – I was a very sensitive child – like if you yell at me I would just cry and that’s how I was. I wouldn’t fight back and yell at them. I would just cry and it would make me upset. My father was very emotional, so he would see that it would upset me, and he got upset then. He would turn around and start crying and come back to me and try to calm me down and apologize and just try to make me understand why he was upset, and why I shouldn’t do what I was doing. And again, I think that was later in high school. I don’t remember anything specifically in elementary school and junior high. Dad would be aggressive and yell, and it would upset me, but then because he was so sensitive too, he didn’t want to upset us because well we were just kids, and so he always wanted the better for us and he didn’t want to be upsetting us. So he would turn around and come back to me and hug and kiss me, and explain to me why he yelled at me. He just wants the best for us, and he doesn’t want to upset us, but he just wanted to make his point clear. But he would always come back and it wasn’t like he would leave off on cold terms. With mom, because we dealt with mom more day to day, she would yell at us and would not come back and ask for apologies. With mom, it was like mom yelled and that was it. There was no negotiating afterwards. With dad, there was like more of a negotiating, like “look I didn’t mean to yell at you, it’s okay”. Again, it has to do with the fact that I think mom was with us all the time, so she had to be the way that she was and dad was only there for a little bit because he worked. He was the main bread winner for the family and that’s how it had to be.
When you say negotiating, what do you mean by that?

When he would yell at me, he would then come back and say “I’m not mad at you, I’m not yelling at you to hurt you, I’m yelling at you because I care about you and I don’t want you to do anything and I love you and we’re here to protect you. We only want the best for you.” So it was just, he had to say what he had to say as a parent, which I’m sure I’m going to say one day. He also wanted to make me realize that he wasn’t saying these things to hurt me and to not let me have fun, but because he was protecting me and he cared about me. He wanted me to make sure that I understood that he wasn’t out to get me and not to have fun. It was just because he genuinely cared and he was trying to guide me in the right direction so that I wouldn’t end up in a bad crowd or do the wrong thing or not focus on school.

And when you say that he was a bit more aggressive, how do you explain that, what do you mean by that?

Well, mom would raise her voice, but dad would definitely get more fired up. But dad didn’t always get fired up. I can maybe think of one or two times that he really got upset at me and got steamed up and got really red in the face and really started screaming at me. But for the most part, mom yelled, whereas dad was more aggressive — louder — as a yeller, but then he would feel bad. He would come back and apologize.

(5) What was your parents’ definition of a “good little Greek girl”?

I went to school and I did my homework. I didn’t have sleepovers because that wasn’t a Greek thing. I wasn’t really allowed to date because school was important and that’s what your focus is. You have the rest of your life to be married or find a boy. You need to focus on school first. That was a big thing. I think that’s important with any parent, but I think more so with our parents because they come from a background where they had an elementary school education and were kind of forced to either stop where that’s all they had, and were forced to make something of themselves and become successful. And leave their country and go to a country that’s foreign to hopefully make more money and a better life for themselves and their future families. So you know, doing the right thing, like going everywhere that my parents went. If they went to church, I went to church. If they went to a wedding, I went to a wedding. Everything was very together. Not to argue back, be with my Mom. Like you don’t veer from you know, wherever your mom’s going to be you’re going to be. You’re doing your homework, you’re doing well in school, you’re not associating with a bad crowd or doing things that you know are wrong. So I think a “good little Greek girl” is the same thing that any other parent would want for their child to be. You know, lead a good life and not go down a bad path and hang out with kids that are smokers or starting fires or drinking or doing drugs. Don’t do anything that’s bad, that you know is wrong.
Appendix G (continued)

(6) Do you feel like you have met your parents' expectations regarding your career, your significant other, etc.?

Absolutely. I know my parents are very proud of me because every time they see me you just see the glow in their eye. I know that they hear a lot of things about me from other people in the community, not necessarily Greeks, but non-Greeks that say "oh your daughter's so wonderful". I think as a parent you've done your job right when other people that aren't being put up to it, like only my best friends go to my parents and tell them how great I am - like that doesn't happen. It's not like my friends are going up to my parents, it's other people that I associate with in the community or other Greeks, or how I handle myself in situations when they're not there. People will go back to them and tell them how great I was, or what a good person, or how kind I was, or what a sweetheart, or so on and so forth. I think that speaks volumes. And then just knowing that I graduated college with a Master's degree. They worked hard for their whole lives and school was the most important thing. I finished high school. I finished college, not only with a Bachelor's degree but with a Master's degree, which they helped me out with and then I got a successful career.

And then I ended up marrying somebody who was Greek, which wasn't a necessity, like it wasn't something that they drilled. What they told me was that, "we're going to give you one wedding, so you better make sure you marry the person that you want to be with. And if you decided to get divorced or so on and so forth and remarry, then that's totally up to you, but we stand behind you and support you for one wedding, whoever that may be." So I think it definitely helps having somebody who's Greek because it makes it easier for the families - both families. My parents can speak to his family and my family knows that his upbringing is the same cultural-wise. And the beliefs are the same. All the Greeks pretty much have the same belief systems or theories on life and so on and so forth, and the hardships. And just to be able to speak Greek to my husband. They don't have to feel like they can't explain themselves to him, and they can speak Greek or they can speak English. And then knowing that we got married in a Greek church and after that we're going to have kids that are going to hopefully speak Greek and go to Greek school. And we're going to baptize them Greek. So I think that definitely is a plus in my parents' eyes, but again, it doesn't necessarily mean that if I didn't marry somebody who was Greek, they wouldn't approve. It was just as long as I was happy and I did the right thing that they would support me. But it was important for me to marry somebody who was Greek because I feel like my Greek background is pretty strong and if I didn't have anybody that could share that or understand that then I would feel like I would be missing a component of life.

So it sounds like there was a comfort level there?

Yeah, absolutely.
So would you say you’re more Greek or American?

I guess I would have to say I’m more American. I speak English more than I speak Greek, although I do use Greek. I live in America, so it’s more the way of life here. I’m more Americanized, so I would have to say that I’m more American…with a Greek flair.

Do you ever feel torn between the two cultures, not knowing where you belong exactly? Explain.

I don’t think I’m ever torn. Again, I think having an American background is like the basics, like the foundation, and then I’ve built on that foundation having Greek vs. some people are just, I hate to say, just American. But I feel like having another ethnicity just makes you a more well-rounded person. I mean you see things, you appreciate more things, you can relate to more things vs. being brought up purely an American and not knowing ever about other worlds or other cultures. I don’t think you can live life the same way. It’s different. I’ve been to Greece. I’ve been to Greek school. I associate with people that are Greek. I talk with people or can relate to people that have the same beliefs that I do. I have an appreciation for Europe, or how things are done in Europe because I’m Greek and I’ve been there, and I’ve seen how things are. And even though I’m Greek, if I go to a different country, I can appreciate their culture because I know that our culture does x, y, and z.

I can’t say that the American culture has like a certain belief system if you will, cause the American culture is more of a mix of everyone. Sure there are people that are strictly American, but I don’t think that “oh, you’re American so that means you are x, y, and z”. vs. with a Greek person you can say, “well, your parents’ probably owned a restaurant, or you’re going to marry a Greek” or “you’ve been to Greece.” There’s certain characteristics of your life that are different than American. I don’t think I’ve ever felt like “oh gosh, you know I’m Greek, and I’m living in America, and I’m so confused, and I don’t know if I should be Greek or if I should be American.” I love being both. I think it’s a great mix. I know both languages. Obviously I was born and raised here, but I love knowing that I can go to Greece and that I have family there. It almost is like a whole different world, but I love my life that I have here. So I’ve never felt confused.

If anything, I’ve felt more fortunate because I’ve had something that other people will never have. I tell all my friends that they’re Greek by association and sometimes people love that, that they know a Greek friend and they can appreciate the lamb, or they can come over, or they’ve been to a Greek wedding, or they come over to the families and they’re eating. So it’s never been a confusion. It’s been an advantage. It’s been a plus. It’s been a benefit. I think that they worked well together. I think they complemented each other. It was never one was “oh I wish I was just American, I wish I was never Greek.” I never thought that. Even when my parents wouldn’t let me do
certain things like the sleepovers, it still wasn’t like “oh I wish I wasn’t Greek.” I don’t think I ever said that. I was always everything. It was just my parents were strict and that’s how it was. And I knew other Greek parents that were like that too, so there was almost some sort of comfort knowing that it wasn’t just me. It was my friends too, so alright fine, I won’t say anything.

(9) How has growing up in a bicultural family added to who you are?

Like I said before, I had to do a lot for my parents, as far as translating for them because they weren’t born and raised here. They were born and semi-raised in Greece and moved here at a rather young age. I think having had to help them out made me a stronger person as an adult. I’m more independent. I’m more confident. I’m more sure. I’m more knowing. I think I’m, I don’t want to say smarter, but I’m more informed, and I had to be because I really didn’t have a choice. It’s not like some kids, who could turn to their parents and have their parents fill out all their paperwork for them. I had to always fill out all my paperwork and/or ask my teacher to help me to do things, or ask them to explain things. My parents were always there supporting me financially and emotionally, but they couldn’t support me in the language or explaining things to me because they couldn’t do that for themselves. So that was something that I think I definitely have taken from, and later in college, when I was doing all my financial aid forms. I would do all of that. I knew what it took and what it entailed. Other friends had no idea. They were just totally lost and had no clue, or just clueless. Almost ignorant, I want to say, because their parents did everything for them and their parents were educated, which is great, but they never learned anything for themselves. So I think, if I’m not veering off the question, that that made me definitely stronger. And not to say that if my parents did know how to read and write that I wouldn’t have learned that. Even if they had known the language, I think they would have taught me the value of speaking up and being independent and asking questions, which has definitely come in handy later on in life.

When you say independent, how so?

I didn’t rely on my parents to get information for me. I researched colleges and I had to do a lot of research on my own. It’s not like my parents didn’t help me because they didn’t want to. It was because they didn’t know. But they would do everything they could outside of translating things for me or finding things out for me. Like if I needed to get a ride to go accomplish something for school, then they would do everything in their power that they could to help me get what I needed done. Like if I had to write a check out, then I would write out the check, but they would supply the money. If I needed to go to the library to do a research paper, then they would drive me to the library and would sit there and wait for me. They couldn’t help me pull books out of the library because they had no clue how to do it, but they would support me and be there with me. And I would have to go ask the librarian, “Well this is what I need to do, how do I do it?” So my
parents were definitely there supporting me along the way and helping me as much as they could to do whatever I need to do, knowing that they couldn’t give me the 100%. They brought me there. They gave me the money. They supported me and tried to help me out as much as they could. And then whatever they couldn’t do, I had to find out myself, and it definitely made me a stronger person. And that’s how I think I’m more independent. I didn’t rely on my parents. I was more independent than other kids in doing things and I think I was able to apply that in other aspects of my life.

I don’t know if this is transferable, but I have no problem jumping in the car and driving to New York myself. I’m independent. I don’t need somebody to drive me around. I have no problem jumping in the car and following a set of directions because I can read and I’m educated and I feel safe and confident that I know where to go. I don’t get anxious or apprehensive because I don’t feel like I was sheltered. I feel that because of my parents not being able to support me with everything, I had to experience things, like talking to people and learning things. So jumping in a car and driving four states away doesn’t phase me.

So I just think that everything in my upbringing has contributed to me being the person that I am and made me stronger not just in one thing. So that’s what I consider myself to be - independent. I don’t rely on my parents. Being a child and doing that was tough because nobody else could do that and nobody else could relate. But being an adult, or even a freshman in college, knowing what I knew, I mean, even when we were living in college and we had phone bills to pay, people had no clue about bills or anything. And not that I really did either, but it was like “ok, I’m going to get a bill, if something doesn’t make sense, I’m going to call them”, or “I have to pay them by a certain time”. It was very methodical and structured. I knew that even if I didn’t know, I had to call someone, or that I had to do something about it, vs. overreact and think oh my God it’s the end of the world. You know, which I think is what a lot of young adult freshmen do because they’ve been spoon fed their whole lives, or they’ve been given everything for whatever reason. I don’t feel like I was like that. I feel like I was more prepared for the real world. So I might not have had your typical childhood, but I think that it definitely helped me in the long run. I was definitely more responsible.

(10) In a traditional Greek family, family is valued more than independence. Would you say that this was true in your family? If so, how has this affected your life?

Yeah, family always does come first. No matter what, family is family. Friends come and go, but your family’s always going to be there for you. I would definitely have to agree with that because my parents have been there for me for everything. And friends for me have come and gone in college, in high school, in life. But I know that no matter if I get mad at my parents or if something happens - because I think that sometimes with your family you can treat them a certain way, which sometimes we take for granted - but you know that they’re always going to be there. And it’s okay but it’s not okay, but your
family is going to be there for you. They’ll love you no matter what you do, no matter how good or how bad, and that’s something that I think is priceless. But I think that’s what definitely makes Greek families or Greek people different, if you will, because family is so important and everything revolves around the family. So it’s such a strong part of their culture that I think that other cultures/ethnicities realize that and can say that from knowing people that are Greek. You know, it’s always like all the family gets together, it’s a typical thing. So family is everything. If you don’t have your family then you don’t have anything to fall back on. They’re always going to be there through thick and thin. Your family will always be there for you and you need to be there for them. So you’d agree with that statement that family is valued more than kind of doing your own thing?

Yes, because even though you get married and you have your own life, it doesn’t mean that you’re not a part of that family anymore. You now have a new family, but you still have your own family, and you just somehow make it work. Which isn’t always an easy thing, but our culture is strongly structured around the fact that your family is like your foundation, like your life, and that’s what’s important. If you have your family, then you have everything. If you don’t have your family, then what do you look forward to? Do you appreciate the neighbor next door or the stranger that you don’t know and be happy for them? Or are you happy for your own family, like your own blood and roots, who have been there for you and supported you. You have a special bond, a special connection. You would do anything for your family. You always do whatever it takes. I mean even if it’s not in your schedule for that day and something happens for your family, or your mom needs you to fill out a form, you do it because you know that if you need something your parents would do it for you. And in my situation, my parents needed me to help them fill out paperwork, translate something. In return, if I needed money, they could give it to me because that was something they could supply me with. And so it was almost like they were helping me financially and I’m helping in translation, like on life.

How has this affected your life as far as valuing family more?

Well I think it definitely has made a huge impact, because I know what my immediate family was like. My mom, my dad, my sister and I were very close, and we’re still very close. I think that that’s how it should be to have a good relationship, to have that open communication. And so going forward, having been recently married, I now have a husband who is my new family, and I have in-laws who are my new family, and I need to incorporate them into my life. When I have my own children, then I want to be able to take what my parents have taught me, but also add my own personal flair on parenting, or what I feel my parents didn’t contribute. I’m going to be able to help my kids out more than my parents helped me, but I’m not going to do everything for them. My parents were there financially and were supportive, but they couldn’t explain things, or
understand, or help me with projects. But I am going to be able to help my kids out with projects and help them with their homework. I’m also going to be there to help them financially and support them. I’m also going to teach them wrong from right, but not do everything for them.

So I’m still going to carry over what my parents taught me, but not 100%. Like I still want them to learn what I learned, even though I can speak the language and I’m self-sufficient, unlike what my parents were. So I think that just having been raised like that, my family is really important to me. I want to have children and I want my parents to be a part of their lives, just like I had my grandparents. I want to be able to celebrate the holidays with my family and I look forward to seeing my family because, again, I wouldn’t be here if it wasn’t for them. They played a huge impact on my life and I can’t imagine breaking away, and becoming married, and having my own family, and leaving, and being separate. It’s just that now the family’s expanded. So it’s bigger and more people to cater to, but still the same values which I hope to continue.

So when you said that you’re not going to do everything for your kids, what did you mean by that?

Well, my parents couldn’t do everything for me. They couldn’t get me the applications for colleges, or they couldn’t help me fill out the application because they couldn’t read it or they didn’t know how to call up places to do that. So, I’m not going to get all my kids college apps or do all their homework for them, but I’m going to be there for them as a guide and probe them to say, “okay, well how do you think you could get that?” And obviously if they’re struggling, I’m not going to just let them not do what they need to do. I’ll help them, but I’m not going to get them all the information and spoon feed them. I will make them realize that they have responsibility. If I’m a millionaire, I’m still going to make my child get a job, or play a sport to teach them responsibility, or to teach them respect and appreciation and to work hard. Even though you have a lot of money, being handed something is not as respected as working hard for it. Like working hard for your grades or working hard for your money, and then in turn taking that and getting a great career because you worked hard for it, or getting a brand new car because you worked hard for that money. So I’ll be able to help my children out more as a guide or a mentor than I would be spoon feeding them. So that’s where I think the difference was. I think I struggled a little bit more because I really didn’t have a guide, I had to figure it out myself, which was fine. Again, it made me a stronger person and I grew as a person. But I’ll be able to help my children out better by keeping them probing and guessing and thinking about how to get to step B, vs. getting them to step B myself. I mean at 12, I wouldn’t expect them to do something a 25 year old would be expected to do. But at different stages, have them be aware of what certain expectations are of life or what you should know or what you should be exposed to.
(11) Do you feel like you can be who you truly are in your family, without strong parental judgment?

I'm not fake around my family. My family knows who I am. My character is very strong and my parents know that I'm stubborn. If they tell me something to this day, because as I grew up, my parents would tell me what to do more when I was younger; but now that I'm an adult, if I'm determined to do something, my parents know that I will do it. Or if I feel strongly about something, my parents know that I feel strongly about something. So I don't ever feel like "oh, I can't say that around my parents because then they'll think that I'm mean or too aggressive or I'm not smart enough." My parents know who I am. I'm a straight-shooter. I'm not fake. I don't like to put on a front to make my parents happy, or to hide the true person that I am. My feelings are very true and genuine. I act the same way in front of my family as I do in front of my friends, with the exception that with friends I'm entertaining a little bit and so not like with my parents. And I'll speak Greek to my parents, which I don't do that with friends. And I'm hanging around entertaining or socializing, vs. with your parents you're talking about more personal stuff. So there may be a little bit of a difference there, but my parents wouldn't see qualities in me that my friends don't and vice versa. I'm the same person. There's no hiding who I am. I think I'm very consistent.

(12) How would you say daughters and sons differ in the way they are raised in the Greek family?

Well, I'm the oldest of two and we're sisters. So I don't have a brother, but I know other families that had boys, or my cousins. Girls are supposed to be like a little, not housewives, but little, at home with mom. Girls should be cleaning and cooking, or the girl should clean up or wash dishes – not that I ever did laundry, my mom always did our laundry – but I would always wash dishes. I don't think I ever really helped cook. I always helped put stuff away, but the girls definitely did the more domestic things, like the mother did, and that's what we were supposed to do. The boys didn't have to do that because they were boys and boys were different. Boys didn't have as strict rules as the girls because they were boys and not as much would happen to them. Obviously a girl is more vulnerable than a guy is. Everybody knows that. But especially in the Greek culture, girls weren't allowed to date. Girls were supposed to be at home with the moms and they shouldn't be out gallivanting at night. If they boys did it, that's okay, because they're boys. The girls were supposed to be respectable females and not veer out of that.

So it sounds like you find that there are distinct differences?

Absolutely. The boys and the girls I think were raised differently, even within the family. Well not in my family because I don't have a brother, so I can't really say that my brother was raised differently than I was. But from what I've heard, from what I've seen, I guess, the boys were always more free. They weren't as expected to be domestic
like the girls were. You know like a “good Greek girl” cooks and cleans and does all that stuff, and so on and so forth. She is a good woman and the guys are just the guys. They don’t have any expectations.

_So the roles are pretty defined._

_Yup._

_More defined than other cultures would you say?_

I can’t say more defined than other cultures because I can’t say that I know other cultures well enough to know. But I think a little stricter than the American culture that we live in. I think to some extent, the American culture has similarities as far as the boys are, to be a little bit more relaxed than the girl, but I don’t think it’s as defined or strict as the Greek culture. I think that in the American culture the girls are allowed to hang out more with the opposite sex at a younger age or go out more, and are not expected to stay at home and cook and clean with mom, because maybe they’re playing sports. Or maybe they’re, whatever, hanging out with friends and the friends have brothers or whatever. So there’s more I think socializing between the two sexes than with the Greek culture. The Greek girl is supposed to be at homes with the mom. Always at home.

_**Interview of Gi**_

(1) _How did you feel as a child being raised in a Greek family in the United States?_

As a child it was a little hard because we grew up in a neighborhood where everyone was like a waspy American, so I really didn’t like it at all. We had to go to Greek school. At the time it was kind of really out there, you know, like if anyone saw My Big Fat Greek Wedding, where if people didn’t think we were weird enough, people saw my grandmother on the roof. So it was kind of like that, but as a child I really didn’t want to be Gi, I wanted to be like Ashley or Kathy or something like that.

_So tell me a little about the neighborhood and how you felt._

I felt like an outcast because we were Greek and we had to go to Greek school, and there were certain things that we did that Americans didn’t do. I’d love to go to my friend’s house and eat like American chop suey. Cause we’d have like pita everyday. So things like that I guess when you’re younger, you just feel you’re not with the majority, so you feel more or less like an outcast. You know? I was like “how come I can’t go to CCD? Why do I have to go to Greek school?” Things like that.
Any other examples?

Just the whole speaking Greek thing. Like if I had to speak Greek, I’d like have to say it under my breath, like cough, because I didn’t want the American kids to hear. It was definitely not very cultural when I grew up in the 70’s. It was pretty much like the Irish, French, mostly American.

So it sounds like what you’re saying is you definitely felt different.

Yes.

And that was negative would you say? Positive?

Feeling different was negative definitely.

Negative?

Right, cause you know you want to belong, you want to be with the popular crowd. The norm.

(2) Was there ever a time in your childhood when you felt different from other children? If so, explain.

Well of course Easter was always after. Everyone else would be having Easter dinner and we were like three weeks late for Easter. Well the good thing is that the chocolates were cheaper, because it was three weeks after. So that made you feel weird. And I’m pretty much speaking of the time when I was an adolescent, you know, in middle school/high school. So Easter was always at a different time. We’d go to church on that Friday for long hours. The entire week was Holy Week, which I find is great now. But at the time I really, when you’re a kid, it’s not the norm if it wasn’t what people did. You want to belong. You don’t want to stick out when you’re younger.

(3) How would you describe your mother’s parenting style as a child?

My mother was pretty strict. Sleepovers were kind of out of the question. Sleepovers with other girls? Americans? She was a little more lenient with other Greeks, but I really didn’t have any Greek friends. My Greek friends were my cousins. So of course I could stay over there. But as far as American friends, there was no way. I couldn’t stay out past a certain time, so it was very strict and just not lenient at all. Strict.

So authoritative would you say?

Very disciplined. Yes, very authoritative.
So who was the disciplinarian in the family?

My mother.

She was around more, is that why?

No, that’s just her personality. My grandmother raised us. My parents had to work. So as far as discipline, my mother was more strict. My dad would give in to us, where my mother was very strict. They didn’t understand the whole American culture thing. I mean “what’s this sleepovers at someone’s house? You have your own house to sleep in.” You know, the clothes I couldn’t buy, the clothes I wanted. To a point I could, but it was pretty much “no don’t wear that shirt. You know your hair is like this and like that...”

So it sounds like there was quite a bit of influence from them, as far as everything. Appearances, who you associate with... So would you describe mom as controlling?

I think Greeks are. A lot of Greek mothers are controlling anyway. I think its part of a Greek characteristic. Yeah, definitely controlling.

How would you describe your father’s parenting style as a child?

He was a lot more easy-going. He listened. He spoke English. My mother did not. You know, we got along better because he was more Americanized. My dad was here earlier than she was. He understood more, so he was more - not that he didn’t discipline - but more open to the American culture and knowing what we wanted to do.

How old did he come here?

My dad was in his 20’s. I don’t know exactly. My mom was 30-something. So it made a big difference. Plus he embraced the American culture. He learned how to speak English. He would go to certain functions. He had friends that were American. My mother didn’t really just embrace it at all. She worked with Greek women in the mills, so she never learned English, never got to understand the American culture.

So it sounds like your dad was more lenient, whereas mom was more strict.

Right.
(5) What was your parents' definition of a "good little Greek girl"?

Didn't date until we were out of college. You went to college, of course. Became a teacher or something. Got married right after college or thereafter. And had a few kids.

To a Greek? Or non Greek?

To a Greek. You know after you reach the age of 30, as long as the person's breathing they get much more lenient. It changes. By the time you're in your mid 30's, please for God sakes give you one now! So marriage, kids, church, which you know, church is good to go to, which I do. That type of thing. You don't go on a date to the clubs drinking all the time, stay out until 2 a.m., you know, still not married by the time you hit 30 so...

Are there any other things that you can think of that would define a "good little Greek girl"?

I would say that would sum it up. Definitely listening to the parents.

(6) Do you feel like you have met your parents' expectations regarding your career, significant other, etc?

Oh no. I've never been married. I'm not a teacher. I have absolutely no kids. The answer is no, but they still love me, you know. As far as career, I own my own business and my dad helped out. My Mother thought that was really good too because it was successful. Now I'm working at another business. So as career goes, yes. Family and marriage, absolutely not. We still get along regardless.

So family and marriage not so much, career definitely?

Yes.

(7) Would you identify yourself as more Greek or more American? Explain.

I'd like to think its Greek, but I would have to say more American. And I think it comes from the fact that I really didn't want to be Greek when I was a kid. So I pretty much distanced myself as I got older from the Greek culture as far as dances, music, and mingling. I just wanted to not be Greek. So when I went to college, none of my friends were Greek. I had very limited Greek friends. Like I said, my cousins are the only friends I had that were Greek. So more American.
Appendix G (continued)

When you say you’d like to say you were more Greek, what do you mean by that?

Well, I love to speak Greek. Now I really regret not embracing the culture more because now it’s really kind of neat. You know, now that there are so many more cultures... I’m more mature and I can understand that speaking Greek is a really great thing. Being Greek is great. But I sort of, like I said, I distanced myself all those years. So as far as like the music, I like American. All my friends are American. I mean, my dog actually... no I’m kidding.

So you definitely find yourself as more American than Greek.

Right.

It sounds like you have a bit of regret as far as not embracing the Greek culture so much. Would you say that’s accurate?

Yeah, I do. I do.

How so?

Well, I wish I spoke Greek a little better. I could have worked on that. Going to more of the Greek community functions and so forth, and know more Greek people, because the more Greek people I meet now, I think they’re great. And it’s really fun to speak Greek to them. I take pride in speaking Greek.

So it sounds like there’s been a definite shift in your views about being a child and being Greek and how you view it now being Greek?

Yes, definitely.

What do you think has contributed to that?

Well, I think I’m more mature now. I really don’t care what people think. And also, there’s just so much culture out there. You know, like I’m really trying to learn Spanish now. It’s really neat. And along the way, I’ve met more and more Greeks. I’ve found that they’re wonderful people. They’re great. There’s so much culture there that the Americans can lack, we do lack, you know?

Can you tell me more about that?

Well, as far as like what I was saying about Easter. What do they do? They go out, and I’m not cutting anyone down because I am American myself, but they go out to eat. They don’t make a big deal out of Easter. I mean now I like going to church during Holy
Week, building up to it. The food. Also, the Glendi that they have at the church. So many people go and they think it’s such a cultural experience. The dances when you go there. You really dance. And just speaking Greek too is like great you know. Greek people are great.

(8) Do you ever feel torn between the two cultures, not knowing where you belong exactly? Explain.

No, not really.

*Can you speak more about that?*

Well, I said not really, but sometimes I do. I’ll say I’m Greek and a lot of people from Greece will say you’re an American, you know, and the Americans are like, well you’re just a Greek anyways. So either way, I do because of that, but for the most part, no. I mean, I know what I am. Greek aside, I love speaking Greek, but I was born here. Rightly, I am an American.

So it sounds like you’re saying in Greece you’re not Greek enough?

Right.

*And in America you’re not American enough?*

Right.

*How does that feel?*

I don’t know, I try not to think of it in a negative way. I kind of think, oh, I know what I am. And sometimes I turn it around on people and say, “You don’t speak Greek, I’m Greek”. It’s great to be Greek to the Americans and then with the Greeks I’ll say “I wasn’t born in Greece, so the amount of Greek I know is really good. So do you speak English the way I speak Greek?” So that’s how I handle it.

*So you’re secure about who you are?*

Sure. Sure.

(9) How has growing up in a bicultural family added to who you are?

Well first of all, growing up in a bicultural family, I think you’re more of a diverse person, because you’re Greek and there’s the Greek culture, and then you’re born in America and there’s the American culture. So first of all, I think you’re more diversified.
Secondly, great sense of humor, because Greeks are funny, their humor, and you can tell the Americans a story and they think it’s funny. I can’t really think of anything...

*So personality wise you’re saying...*

Personality wise, yeah.

*How would you describe your personality as a result of being Greek?*

Well, I think Greeks are pretty loyal, and I’m loyal to my friends and so forth. Trustworthy, you know, so as far as that goes, I think that comes from being Greek, I would say. Generous, Greeks are generous. And also a sense of pride too, you know, about who you are. When you ever go to someone’s house, you know, you bring something. The Greek culture is like that. You always want to seem nice and warm around people. Very warm.

*It sounds like what you’re saying is that it’s made you a better person in a lot of ways? Would that be accurate?*

Yeah, yeah.

(10) In a traditional Greek family, family is valued more than independence. Would you say that this was true in your family?

Yes. Family because they’ll say also, and that may just be my cousins and uncles and everything, they’ll say that “a friend is a friend, but family is family”, you know? And you can go and be independent, but you have to come back to your family. And I feel that way too, because they took care of us growing up, so we should take care of them because they deserve it. They’re getting older, so yeah, I think so. I agree with that also, that family is more important than independence. So I stayed here, and we were brought up that way.

*And so definitely true in your family, and if so, how has this affected your life? You did mention that you decided to stay locally.*

Right.

*So would you say that was a definite impact, of value in family?*

Like I had wanted to move. A lot of my friends moved to California when they were in their early 20’s after college, and I did want to go, but I didn’t because I knew my family was here. So it impacted it in that way, but sometimes it impacted me in a very positive way, because you always know you have your family to fall back on or to help,
you know? And you’re not alone. Other ways too, like some decisions that I’ve made. I wasn’t going to open a business further, because it would be an hour away, like for example Boston. I think it’s just more important to just stay with your family and be closer.

So it definitely impacted where you decided to open your business, definitely impacted not moving away to California.

Right. I wanted to move to California. I definitely did. But I didn’t, so it definitely impacted that.

Would you say that was your decision? Or a family decision?

I think a little of both. You know, I think I was feeling guilty, but I think also maybe they made me feel guilty. Not guilty in a negative way, just I guess I felt guilty, because people can’t make you feel what you’re not feeling.

So you felt guilty?

Yup right, right. Like my bags aren’t packed for that guilt trip but they were.

Any other ways that you can think of you valuing family more than independence has impacted your life?

Not really. I think that’s about it, because I am still independent.

And you’re the oldest of?

Two.

So you’re the oldest and you have a younger brother?

Yes.

How many years apart are you?

Four.
(11) Do you feel like you can be who you truly are in your family, without strong parental judgment?

Umm, yes. You can?

I can. There’s strong parental judgment, but you know I can be who I am though. Well, a few things my mother looks down on that I do, like if I tell her I’m going to some club to listen to a band she says, “at your age?” or “you better not drink”. And I’m thinking, do you know how old I am? I mean, I’m going to go out. A few minor things, cause I guess she’s still very much Greek and in the Greek state of mind, for lack of a better term.

Even though she’s been here for so long?

Even though she’s been here for so long, yes. And my dad, around him I can. Around her she’s still kind of like, “what kind of shoes are those you’re wearing?” You know a lot of times if I wear something she disagrees with. She’s very blatant about it, there’s no subtleness. She’ll just say “those shoes are ugly, take them off.” Not only that, but “what are you wearing those shoes for?!” “Where did you get those shoes?!” “Where did you get that shirt at?!”, “What t-shirt is that?!”

How do you feel at that time?

Sometimes it makes me feel bad still, even at this age. But then I just listen to her. If the shoes are something that are ugly I’ll, I’ll look again, right?

It sounds like your mom is definitely vocal about her dislikes. How is Dad?

Oh, he’s a lot different. As long as I’m happy, or whatever. He doesn’t say much.

So would you say he’s not as judgmental?

Absolutely not. No.

So more accepting?

More accepting. Yes. And I think a lot of men are like that too. More of my aunts are more judgmental than the uncles that I have in the Greek community so...
(12) How would you say daughters and sons differ in how they are raised in the Greek family?

Firstly, my family wasn’t much different. Because my brother is four years younger, with me it was always, “you’re the oldest”, not “you’re a girl”. “You’re much older, you should set an example.” But I know with my cousins and so forth, and a lot of my close relatives, boys can do whatever they want. Daughters are raised with more of a higher standard. No, not a higher standard, but more of a stricter standard.

*Can you say more about that?*

Well, girls I think get judged more. They have to do housework, but the boys don’t have to. They’re always, “well he’s a boy”. You’ll hear that a lot from the Greeks. They’ll say, “Well he’s a boy, that’s different.” It’s always different for a boy. They can stay out till all hours, but if you’re a girl and you stay out, you know, my aunts would be like “what are you doing staying out with the boys till that hour?!”. And I was like 30 years old. We’re not talking when you’re 18. I just think there’s more leniencies towards boys.

*They’re favored in a lot of the Greek community?*

Yeah. My friend’s mother will tell stories of how some Greek man came in and she, my friend’s mother, has two girls and a boy. And this Greek man said “Well thank God you have the boy.” And you know, she was pretty offended because she was an American, or French-Canadian-American. It’s probably been 40 years and she still brings that story up!

*Sounds like it’s impacted her a lot.*

It has because then she thinks that a lot of the Greek community is like that so... What did he mean by that? Unfortunately, it is. I think he meant that girls are okay, but you have a boy. Boys are definitely held in a higher regard than girls.

*In terms of what would you say?*

In terms I would say just everything because they’re boys. I don’t know if it’s a pride thing with Greeks...

*So they think that they can do no wrong?*

Yeah. Like I said, not in my family. It was different because of the age difference. It was four years, so I was the oldest one. But with a lot of the Greeks that I’ve come across and associated with, I’ve seen that a lot.
How was it in your family?

My family, like I said, it was more like “you’re the oldest.” I always got that instead of “you’re a girl.”

So were they stricter with you? Or did they treat you equally?

Pretty much the same. My mother yelled at me, but she yelled at my brother too. Or you know, my grandmother, whenever you know, it was the same. It wasn’t like “well he’s a boy”, and I really didn’t have to do much work around the house either because we had my grandmother. And she insisted on doing everything. So I didn’t see it, but when I would stay with my cousins in Mass. - I’d spend three weeks over the summer there - I got a lot of it there, so...

How’d that make you feel being female?

Well, it made me angry. I can remember, even then, thinking it wasn’t fair. Why do they think this way? You know, it kind of affects you in a way, like why would they think that just because I’m a female. I just didn’t think it was fair at all.

Can you give me an example of spending time down there and anything that sticks out in your mind?

It wasn’t really my cousins. It was more like their friends or the other people, because there was a huge Greek community there. And I would just see other people saying - I can’t remember the person’s name it was so long ago - but that the daughter had to go home and do something, but the boy could stay at this picnic all night because he was a boy. You know, it’s such a double standard.

When you said it made you angry, do you think it’s affected how you’ve developed personally?

No, I don’t think so. It was early on, and like I said, I kind of disconnected from that Greek culture anyways. I didn’t see it first-hand with my family. When I say family, I mean even my cousins in Boston, and then, like the people being new, it was just so weird. And people, even people around here, I’ve seen it. But no, I don’t think it has affected me at all.

So you would say, in general, they are treated differently for the most part?

Yes.
Interview of Da

(1) How did you feel as a child being raised in a Greek family in the United States?

Well, at the time when I was a child, unlike today, there wasn’t a lot of cultural diversity. Today, you have many different cultural Hispanics in the country and in the area, as well as people from all parts of Asia and Africa. When I was growing up, we had French, Greek, Italian, Irish and Americans, and so for me, my experience was that even though I was born in this country, especially in the early 70’s, I felt like I was different. I ate different food. I spoke two languages, and that was unlike the majority of the people. Unlike today, as I mentioned earlier, there’s a lot more diversity today.

So it sounds like you’re saying that you felt different?

Yes, that I was different.

And how would you describe that difference? Would you label it a positive? A negative? Both?

Well, when I was younger, it was a negative because you didn’t want to be different. You didn’t want to eat different foods. You didn’t want to speak another language. You didn’t want to go to a different church.

So when you say as a child it was negative, what do you mean by that?

I just tried to hide the fact that I was Greek.

How could you hide that?

I wouldn’t talk about it. And people didn’t ask back then. Today, it’s a little different.

(2) Was there ever a time in your childhood when you felt different from other children? If so, explain.

Well, it was just kind of funny examples. I mean, my parents coming from another country where little kids didn’t grow up playing in sandboxes. Kids in the neighborhood had sandboxes. My mother considered it dirt. So I didn’t play in sandboxes. I would go, I remember, going to a friend’s house and being so excited cause her mother made spaghetti O’s. I thought that was the greatest food on the planet. I come home, I’m in first grade. I come home and say to my mother, “Mother, why can’t we have spaghetti O’s?” Linda’s mother serves spaghetti O’s and other kids’ mothers
have spaghetti O’s.” And my mother said, “But I make everything from scratch. That comes out of a can. You eat better than spaghetti O’s.” And it was hard to understand because, you know, everybody else’s mothers made spaghetti O’s except for mine.

Which now you see as a positive thing?

Now I’m like thank God!

But back then you wanted to fit in?

Well, you know, especially when you’re in first grade, you want to fit in. You want your mother to serve your friends spaghetti O’s when they come to the house, not mousaka, kiftethes…

Any other examples where you felt different?

Let’s see, I mentioned food. I think food was the biggest one that I noticed, and my parents were more conservative and more strict. More protective. But in today’s society, it’s normal, because parents are more protective, cause of all of the things going on so… yeah, that’s it. I mean, when I was young, and then more protective.

Protective and more strict. How so, in comparison to some of the other kids?

Well, you may ask this later on down in some of the other questions, but I couldn’t date and I had friends who had boyfriends at 14, 15 years old. But I never did. Some poor young man would have been… (laughing). No, that wasn’t gonna happen. Just very strict in that way.

So dating was a definite no no?

Dating was a no no. But other things were different. They weren’t bad. They were good. You know, we always had wine on the table. If I had a glass of wine at 16 years old, that wasn’t evil in our family. So you could have a glass of wine with the family, but for my friends, alcohol was taboo. So when you treat alcohol as taboo, it’s abused, and when it’s part of your culture, you don’t abuse it.

(3) How would you describe your mother’s parenting style as a child?

As a child, I’m going to go with younger. Not teenage years, but younger years. Just very comforting, very nurturing. Everything was positive, and the one fault that I can say about most Greek parents is that they just want to have their children just so. Just them wearing the right clothes to church, having the right manners, walking straight up, just, but that’s not just Greek parents. I think it’s many different kinds of parents because
now that I'm older, you meet people. You see all kinds of personalities, but in general, my mother was very nurturing and educational. She taught me to read. She came from Greece and she took English classes and she learned to read... I mean granted, she had like an 8th grade reading level, but when you're in 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th grade, you know, she's teaching me how to read in English. And I knew how to read before I went to kindergarten because my mother used to read to me. And back in the day, that was unheard of, especially from a woman who immigrated at age 25 into the country. She read to us every night, in Greek and in English and spent a lot of time with us. Singing with us and reading with us. She was very nurturing. That's what I remember of my mother when we were young.

_Sounds like they were very positive memories._

Yes, all positive.

_As an adolescent?_

Oh, yeah. My mother started to work.

_So she wasn't working while you were a child?_

Not until I was like 11...10 years old. Cause she worked, but her sister had come from Greece, so my aunt would watch us during the day, while my mother worked. And then my aunt would go to work second shift. Because that's what family did. They came and they, you took care of each other. So my aunt until she went off and got married and had her own family, was living with us, so it was like shared. So either we had, you know, my mother at home, or my aunt at home.

_It sounds like you had a female figure that was part of the family?_

Yes, until I was about 9 years old, then my mother didn't work for a few years and then she went back to work when I was like 12.

_So you were never left unattended without a female in the house it sounds like?_

Yes, until I was 12. And that's when you grow up in a Greek family. Today, children are coddled. Back then, at 12, I came home from school and I watched my two younger brothers until my mother got home.

_So you're the oldest of three kids?_

Three kids. I have two younger brothers.
So your mother’s parenting style as an adolescent, did it change much from when you were a child?

No, it didn’t change much. Now this is about my mother’s parenting style, right? It didn’t change much, except she worked during the day. She was busy. So my responsibility was “Jenny, you know I’m working for us. When you come home from school, make sure your brothers are home from school…” I was the responsible adolescent.

How did you feel about that being so young?

I didn’t know any different. So I took it on, because that’s what’s expected. So I took it on. We didn’t have a lot of choices. I mean, I guess you do, but my personality is, I took it on.

(4) How would you describe your father’s parenting style as a child?

My father was “the good time dad”. Every time we were with dad, it was a good time. We broke every rule. My father worked a lot when I was young, as an adolescent. My dad worked out of town two hours away. So he would leave Monday morning and come back Friday evenings. And we only saw him when he got home. Saturdays and Sundays, he was with us all day. And we’d go to the beach. We’d go to the museums. We’d go to the circuses. We’d go to the museum aquarium. I mean he took us everywhere. He was a member of a little private club called the Periklis Club. During the day it was quiet, so we would just go in there and shoot pool all day, while he hung out. You know, he was just…we were with him just about all the time.

So even though he wasn’t available during the week because he was working, he made sure that he was around all weekend...

Saturday, Saturday during the day. Saturdays and Sundays during the day. So that was quality time with dad.

Yes. And my mother typically, Sunday, she would join us at the beach if we went. But typically on Saturdays, that was my mother’s day to…no kids, and she would clean the house – I don’t know what she did. I’m assuming she cleaned the house. We were gone all day. He would take us, we would go. Canobie Lake in the summer time. I mean, we were gone all the time.

So he was more of the fun parent? And Mom was more what?

Yup, and she was the disciplinarian.
So she was the disciplinarian. Did dad discipline ever? Or was that just mom’s job?

My father never disciplined. He had children older and so I think by the time he had children – and when I say older, he married at 44. So when I came around, he was 46. But when he was in his early 50’s, mid 50s, he was just so happy to have three healthy children. It was like, you would have to really do something terribly wrong to have him discipline.

Such as what, can you recall?

I, nothing. He never disciplined us, never. Never until we were teenagers. And that’s when you get, teenagers get rambunctious, you know...

Can you give me an example where you actually saw him disciplining?

When I was a teenager? Yes, when a boy called the house, he ripped the phone out of the wall. That’s what I call discipline! Without a phone, he won’t be calling anymore!

So it sounds like he stopped it on the spot.

Oh yeah! And I laugh about it today, because I’ll talk about it to people at work who have teenage children and I say, “You know, your daughter can’t complain. Can you imagine a boy calling the house and their father wanting to rip the phone out of the wall? Then you can complain.”

You laugh about it now, but how did you feel at the time?

Oh, you’re upset. You’re a teenager. Listen, when you’re a teenager, everything bothers you. Your parents saying, “Good morning. How are you?” bothers you because you have an attitude. Teenagers, in general, are just difficult. And I’m not saying 13, I’m saying 14, 15, 16...It took me until about 17 years old. I started coming out of it. But then my father also let his guard down, because he was protective. I was his only daughter. He didn’t want me to get in trouble, get in trouble with the boys. He just was really protective of me.

What do you mean by protective? How so?

Like everywhere I went, he wanted to know where I was going. I would tell him. I found out years later, when I would tell him I was going to a certain party – see I was always up front with my parents and with my father especially. My father was pretty cool. He’d say, “Listen. I know you’re going to a party,” say I’m 16, 17 years old, “I know you’re going to a party. I know there’s going to be drinking there. There’s
probably going to be drugs there.” My father was not oblivious to the world. He’d say, “If you had too much to drink and you can’t drive, you call me and I’ll come pick you up.” Those words were enough for me to say, “I never want my father to come pick me up.” So I never got drunk when I was driving my car because the last thing I want to do is call him. Even though he was like, “It’s okay, call me”, lastly. That’s like the overprotectiveness. I know he didn’t do that for my brothers. My brothers came and went as they wanted. I also had curfews at a younger age. Like at 16, I had to be home at like 11 o’clock or 11:30, or what have you. But I had to be home. And if I didn’t get home at 11:30, I would lose the privileges of the car. And that’s, you know, you follow the rules. But then, when I was like 17, a senior in high school, I never broke the rules. So I got 100% reward and it was like, you know, at that point I was trusted. So I had to get through that point. Where my brothers, they never had to go through that. Plus, I was the first one too, so I broke them in. I broke them in.

(5) What was your parents’ definition of a “good little Greek girl”?

Well, I don’t really know my father’s definition because he never spoke like that. My father always was like proud, whatever I wanted to know about or...if I wanted to be a mechanic, he would have been happy. My mother, “good little Greek girl”, probably the way I presented myself in public. If I wore a dress to the picnics or church functions, or stuff like that.

So did you find that that’s what was expected? Say more about the whole wearing a dress vs. what?

Jeans. It really was expected when I was younger. But you know, after a while, because we would go places and all the other girls, all the other 16 year olds, were all dressed up in a certain way. And I was athletic, and I was also progressive at the time for our culture. I was dressing as all the American kids in fashion. So my mother wasn’t picking my skirt for me and my blouses for me and so...yeah. So my mother would’ve liked that when we went to functions. All the little Greek girls were dressed a certain way and I would show up and I would be different.

How would they be dressed vs. you?

They would be dressed in like dresses when they needed to. When you were at a picnic, you gotta be comfortable. They would be dressed like they were going to a club, in my opinion. And its 90 degrees, and it’s Sunday afternoon. I didn’t see a use for that.
So would you wear the dress or would you not?

No. No, I never did. That’s the problem. That was the problem. But now she’s cool with that, you know, but going through the time, and so everyone’s taunting your children cause a lot of Greek parents are like “oh, look at my girls” “oh, look at my sons”, and I would say to my mother, “you know what mom? They can dress all they want. The proof is in the pudding for the years to come.” And that’s what it is.

So it sounds like there’s a lot of competition amongst Greeks?

I didn’t, the other girls were all competitive. I think that’s why I don’t have a hundred percent Greek friends. I have Greek friends but they’re guys. They’re all guys. That was a very, I’m a very, I’m not a – I was a tom boy. I played basketball and I did all that kind of stuff.

So it sounds like you identified more with the non-Greek friends?

Back then yes, or Greek guys. Greek guys didn’t care about you know, wearing a sundress to a picnic. I could show up in my shorts and hang out...

So it sounds like you were more down to earth in comparison to the other Greek girls?

Yes. I’m very down to earth, right. I wouldn’t wear all the jewelry my mother would wear. She’d go to Greece and she’d buy me things, she’d be like “why don’t you wear that necklace?” And I’d be like, “I don’t wanna wear a necklace.” I don’t wear 20 bracelets on my arm. You know, it’s just not my style. I have it, and I wear things sparingly.

So besides the dress, any other expectations regarding a “good little Greek girl”?

Well, yeah, I think also my mother would like to see me get married sooner. So that wasn’t the only thing.

Sooner meaning what?

Like sooner like once I got out of college. But that was the last thing on my mind.

So how old were you when you did get married?

Thirty.
Why do you think that your mom would've wanted you to get married sooner?

Oh, it's because everyone was getting married. It's just because it's what's expected. You get married, and it's not just a Greek mother. A lot of people, they just want you to get married, they want you to have kids. They want to live through you, but sometimes you just gotta do what you want to do.

So it sounds like you're very independent, would that be accurate?

Yes, I do whatever I want. I do what I want, no matter what people think you should be like or how you should act. It's my life, so I have to be happy. I see too many unhappy people.

(6) Do you feel like you have met your parents' expectations regarding your career, your significant other, etc.?

Yes, in both. I think in my career, I think they're pleased. I have managed to maintain my career, constantly growing, moving up, not only just going to college, you know. You can go to college, you can not go to college, it's what you do with it, it's what you do with your life. And I think they're pleased that they don't have to worry, they don't have to hand me money. And they're pleased about that. As far as my significant other, they love my husband. He makes me laugh, and he loves my parents, and he loves my family, and he's a good person. And I'm happy, therefore they're happy.

And he is non-Greek correct?

He is non-Greek.

So they're happy regardless?

Regardless.

(7) Would you identify yourself as more Greek or more American? Explain.

I am more American. I was born in this country. I'm an American. My cultural background is Greek, and somebody can't take that away. It runs in my veins. I love it. I love that I speak another language, that I can read, that I can understand other languages and cultures. However, I am an American. I'm born here. I love this country. It's given me all my opportunities. It's given me my life. I don't know what it would've been like elsewhere. However, my personal opinion is...where you're born and where you feel touched is where you are.
My mother, she's an American citizen, but she's Greek. She lived her life in Greece. She lived that way. That's her thing. Well, for half her life, because she's 60, but she's still Greek to me. For me, because of my environment, what I'm open to culturally, business-wise, my life, I'm an American. But I'm an American of Greek heritage and that is something you don't forget. And you don't neglect it, because I'm very proud of it. I even mentioned it today.

Today, I was talking to some guy from Chicago at work. Chicago has a fantastic Greek town. I just love it there. And we were talking, and I said, "Oh, I've eaten at this restaurant and this restaurant and this restaurant". He goes, "Oh you like Greek town", and I said, "love it". Now, he didn't know that I speak Greek at all, because when you meet me, especially when I'm in the office, you don't know I'm bilingual. We started speaking, and we started speaking it together, and I said, "yeah, my husband always likes to call people over, "My wife she's Greek!" and then they'll ask me "do you speak Greek?" and I'll start speaking Greek and the guy was like "you speak Greek?" And I was like "yeah, I'm fluent" and he was just like "really?" because that is still unusual. I'm born in this country, lived all my life here, educated here. I never went to Greek school, and I can still speak it, and read it, and I write terribly, but I write. I don't need to write for my job, but I can read it, which is a little more important. But yeah, I speak it, so it's cool.

It sounds like what you just described is you definitely feel more American. However, it sounds like you're definitely pretty Greek too. So would it be both?

You know, it would probably be split pretty down the middle. Because I can't pick one or the other. But, you know, I'm an American. So if I had to pick a flag, that's what I'd pick. But you know, culturally, it's a melting pot, so every American comes from somewhere. Some of them are six generations out, so they're clueless who they are, but for me, I have 100% Greek parents and I relish in that.

(8) Do you ever feel torn between the two cultures, not knowing where you belong exactly? Explain.

No, never. I just, there's no explanation. I'm never torn. I'm who I am and I'm just never torn. I never feel I need to be something more over the other. I'm very comfortable in my skin, very comfortable in everything.

So it sounds like you've drawn from both cultures and kind of combined those into who you are?

Yes.
(9) How has growing up in a bicultural family added to who you are?

Well, I think it has um...any person that grows up in a bicultural family has a benefit. You speak two languages, you get exposed to great food, and it makes you more open-minded. It gives you the ability to understand that people are different, and a lot of people just don’t know what’s going on in front of their nose. I mean, when you’re bicultural, you can understand things. You understand, especially if you’ve traveled to other countries. And you need to experience that. You can’t just be bicultural and just be in your own little world. You need to be exposed to the culture. Go to the countries, see how people live, understand it. And I think that that all builds you up to grow.

I mean, for me, in my job, I deal with people all over the world. And nothing thrills people that come in for training like from Asia, Europe, South America, and when they’re sitting in a meeting, and we go around the table, and we talk, and they find out you speak another language and you’re American. They love me even more because here’s an American who speaks another language and she’s in our business, which is, this is fantastic. Most Americans speak one language, or it’s just conversational, because they learned it in school. I speak it, I feel it, I relate it and I understand cultures. Because that’s kind of a cultural family, and there’s differences and it’s aided me immensely. I can’t even say. I have a counterpart. He’s German, and he’s also born in this country. So his parents immigrated from Germany and people just love it with “do you know that Eric speaks German?” and “you speak Greek?” Who else speaks languages in this company?” And there’s not too many of us, but now we have a French president, and he’s married to a woman from Spain. He loves it. And he thinks I’m like European compared to Americans. So he’s like “well you’re not Greek, you’re European.”

So it sounds like there’s a positive connotation associated with the fact that you’re bicultural, through your work anyways.

Yes, it’s all positive. Especially when you, when you deal in international business, absolutely.

Any other ways that it’s added to who you are, besides career wise?

Just personally. You know, I just, I just I feel umm, and this is going to come off the wrong way, but I feel that I umm, I feel far more educated. And I don’t mean educated via my degree, but educated via the fact that speaking two languages, knowing two cultures, being able to relate to a variety of societies, as well as growing up and just learning about my culture. Because we all came from some place, and the ancient world and the known pre-society was built and started in Greece. And so of course I took a lot more interest in knowing our history, Greek history, and all that’s done is just help me to understand things. You know, kick people’s ass in trivial pursuit...but umm, it just ahh, you know it’s good. And the funny thing is, like when I was in Brazil, I don’t speak
Portuguese, but a lot of the words were similar. And they’d be talking around me, and I’d say, “oh yeah”, or “blah, blah, blah” and they’d say, “are you sure you don’t speak Portuguese?” I go, “no, you said this word and this word and it’s kind of like the Greek word of this and so I picked it up,” and he was just like sure, sure.

So it sounds like it’s helped you navigate through life?

Yes.

(10) In a traditional Greek family, family is valued more than independence. Would you say that this was true in your family? If so, how has this affected your life?

Family is valued very highly. However, I think my parents wanted us to be able to take care of ourselves than worry about us.

So would you say they were similar to a traditional family?

No. No, they were not traditional. They were just nontraditional. I mean, there’s a lot of expectation to help your parents. You know, my mother’s English isn’t perfect. However, in general, my family was nontraditional. I could go to school dances. I could do things other Greek girls couldn’t do. And the expectations weren’t that I lived next door to my parents. I mean, they wanted me to be close, but they didn’t expect me to be next door. And my father was very nontraditional. He never said he wanted me to find a Greek boy, where a lot of Greek girls had to marry Greek guys. My father was like “stay away from Greek guys.”

So it sounds like they were very nontraditional.

Very nontraditional.

So would you say that your family values independence more than family then?

No, they valued family. Like our family, family always comes first. But they weren’t looking to…my parents worked. They’d say, you needed to do some things on your own.

So it was probably equal?

Yeah, they valued things equally. They didn’t want us to be like living at home mooching off them all our lives that’s for sure.
How has this affected your life as a result?

Well, I’m very independent. I can take care of any difficulty or road block that comes in the way, no problem. I think about it. I work it out. Get it done. Don’t need to involve them. And family is important, so I still covet family. I enjoy family gatherings. I think that having good relationships with your family is important, and you know, I would do things for my family. If someone was in need, I would help them out. I’m putting my life with my husband first. He’s my family. My parents, they’re very important to me, but so is my life with my husband.

It sounds like the way you’re saying it that maybe it’s not like that with other marriages?

You know what? I just think sometimes Greek parents get too involved in their kids lives and I don’t think they should. They should let their kids live and that’s how they grow. That’s how you learn and it’s how you move on. And that’s what I think. I have some Greek friends that went away to college and they never came back because their parents smothered the hell out of them. And you can’t have that.

So it sounds like you’re very close with your family, and you obviously, your priority is your husband, but at the same time you’re able to balance both.

I mean, I’m very close with my mother. My mother is my friend. I could tell her anything. We talk about everything. My father, too. We talk about anything. Except for politics, it gets a little ugly. But in general, we’re not afraid to say anything to one another. I never have to apologize for who I am.

(11) Do you feel like you can be who you truly are in your family, without strong parental judgment?

Yeah, absolutely. 100%. I just think that I’m fortunate that I’m just not judged by my family. And a lot of people are. A lot of the Greek mothers are like, I mean, when I was single, I was single all throughout my 20’s, and it was like “what’s wrong with my son? Why don’t you marry my son?” “I don’t want to marry your son Mrs. so and so.” “But you’re friends”. Or the other Mrs. so and so, “what about my son?” And the mothers were very aggressive. “Da, you’re still single?” “Yeah, yeah”, “oh, well how about going out with my son?” I said “that’s ok, I know your son, I’m all set” because there was nothing there. You can’t marry someone just because they’re Greek, because you just can’t. Some of them, you know what they’d say? You marry the person of the family, you marry the family. In a traditional Greek family, when you marry, you marry the family.
How do you feel about that? Marrying the family?

I don’t think you should marry the family. I think sometimes family needs to know their place. And my family doesn’t get involved. And it’s nice. But there are some family members that are just, just sometimes, and it’s getting less and less, but there’s a lot of very overbearing parents. I know more mothers than fathers. But then there are some fathers too that are just very opinionated, and things have to be a certain way or, I don’t know. But I wasn’t interested. Like a mother has to go out of her way to say come date my son. I’m thinking, like there’s a reason your son’s single. But that’s my way, and my way’s not traditional so…there are a lot of Greek girls out there looking to find a Greek guy, and I see them today. I’ll be honest, they don’t look extremely happy. I think they’re happy because that’s what they know. But are they happy, you know. Like my husband makes me laugh 24/7, seven years later, you know? It’s unbelievable. Constantly.

So it’s not just the appearance of being happy, you’re truly happy.

Yeah, and a lot of people are not. They just don’t look happy to me.

(12) How would you say daughters and sons differ in the way they are raised in the Greek family?

Well, the expectation for a daughter is ten-fold. The expectation for a daughter to, the daughter should always know better. The sons can be total goofballs. They don’t have to take any responsibility for anything because they’re sons. Unless, and you know what, I want to take that back, because I have a friend who’s an eldest son, and he’s the responsible one. And his sister would be the baby. He’s the oldest, so I think that has to do with the fact that I’m the oldest that all the responsibility falls on me. But the other thing is they’re very protective. Like I said, my brothers had no curfew. I had rules. They didn’t worry about my brothers getting pregnant. They weren’t worried about them with really anything. You know, and my father was 24/7 on guard with me. And so you know, they say that, in Greek society, when I was growing up, what they would say is “you’re judged by the values of your daughter”. So if your son goes out and fools around with 20 girls, does whatever, it doesn’t matter, it’s your son. If your daughter crosses the line once, and they’re like oh my God the house has been spoiled. And that’s this Greek mentality thing. And that’s where the lines are different.
Appendix G (continued)

Sounds like there's a lot of pressure on daughters.

Yes, and it's how you take it upon yourself. Like for me, I was like "I'm moving on". But I had Greek friends in high school. I don't have them today, they had so much - they couldn't go to a school dance - so I'd say, "Mom, I'm going to a dance with Joanna and Cara", "what's wrong with Estia, what's wrong Kathy?" "They can't go. Their fathers won't let them out."

So you noticed the differences.

Big difference, but I could go.

Do you think in your family it's a direct result of you being a daughter? Or the oldest? Or both?

I think for me, I want to say both. Because if I was the baby daughter, probably not. If I was a daughter that came after another sister, probably not. But I'm the oldest, so I was the one that took the initiative. I was the most outgoing. They just automatically let me keep going. I was the most outgoing. And it still happens. My brother can drop off his daughter every single day for my mother to watch her. Yet I show up once a week, because I live 20 minutes out of town, "can you read this for me Da?" He's there every single day.

Why do you think that is, because you're the daughter?

No, because they think I'm responsible and that he can't be bothered. He doesn't give them the time of day or pay attention to their needs. And I do. And some of it is personality. I'm more nurturing.

Interview of Du

(1) How did you feel as a child being raised in a Greek family in the United States?

Well, being that I was so rounded by Greeks, my family mostly, I didn't know different. So I enjoyed it. It was my childhood. We hung out mostly with my aunts and uncles and their families. My neighbors who are all Greek, so to be in a Greek environment, I didn't know different.

So pretty much all your neighbors were Greek?

Yup, I grew up in a Greek little community. A nice little old lady next door that was Greek took care of us. Then when we moved up the street, all my neighbors were Greek, so it seemed normal.

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How about when you went off to school?

That was a little harder because Greek was our first language, so to learn English was a little harder for us. And then not to have the same background as everybody was a little hard because, you know, they had peanut butter and jelly and we had pita. So it was a little different, so to see the way they were brought up was different. I thought we were brought up better, you know, because we had a better environment, better lifestyle, obviously better culture...

Can you say more about that? What do you mean by better?

Well, where we grew up, it wasn’t a wonderful neighborhood. We enjoyed it just because we felt safe because they were all Greek people. A lot of them came from broken homes, where they didn’t really spend time with their families. So for us to go over there was like, “where’s your mom? Where’s your dad? What do you mean they’re not making dinner?” So it was more like let’s just go to my house because my parents weren’t comfortable with us going to other people’s houses unless they knew them or if they were Greek. So we spent a lot more time with Greeks growing up, and if we were hanging out with non-Greeks, they would be at our house so our mom could keep an eye on them...and feed them because obviously everybody was starving.

So it sounds like your mom liked to keep kind of a tight rope as far as who your contacts were...

Yeah, you know, I don’t blame her as a child, especially when you don’t know them, and if you don’t know them, you can’t trust them. And I mean I agree with that because I don’t want to send my child over to somebody’s house I don’t know. We’re not comfortable going anywhere that we don’t know them personally, you know, very well. I would never let my daughter go anywhere, you know, so I could understand that. Even next door neighbors, like people I’ve lived next to till I was 15, I never went in their house.

Did the other children wonder why you didn’t?

Some did. Yeah, I remember we had (well my best friend at the time), we were in like 5th grade. We looked exactly alike, but she came from a broken family. Her mom, who wasn’t the best role model, she had a sleepover, and I was over until the lights weren’t on. Then I’d have to come home. Even though she lived right across the street, I had to come home and now all the other girls could sleep over and they were all like “why won’t your mom let you sleep over?” And my mom was like “No.” Because my mom never went in that house. She didn’t know how clean they were. She didn’t trust anybody, obviously. And sleepovers for non-Greeks weren’t really allowed. I mean, I slept over my cousins’ house all the time, but it was a no no for non-Greeks.
So it sounds like there were some distinct differences between the way you were raised and other children that weren’t Greek. Would you say it was mostly in a positive or negative way?

I felt it was positive. I mean, we have strong ethics, strong morals. I thought we had a great childhood. My parents worked hard to provide anything (well they weren’t so easy to buy stuff), but you know, they provided what they could for us. They worked two jobs each just to make sure that we didn’t go without, you know, to give us an American lifestyle, which obviously it was a Greek lifestyle Americanized. I mean, I never thought we went without so I thought we had a great childhood.

When you say Greek lifestyle Americanized what do you mean by that?

Well, everything was Greek style because, if you think about it now, you’re just like “what do you mean?” Like childhood stories, they were like “you never heard this one? You never heard green eggs and ham or Cinderella?” And I’m like, you know, “I know ancient Greek stories or stories they made up”, so you know, when I went to school they were all like “how’d you never hear of that nursery rhyme?” and I was like “how would I?” All I had ever heard, all I knew were Greek rhymes, you know? So it was funny. I didn’t know any different until I heard somebody else, and they would be like “huh?” So that was a little tough but...

(2) Was there ever a time in your childhood when you felt different from other children? If so, explain.

You mentioned food, peanut butter and jelly vs. pita, you mentioned nursery rhymes, you mentioned being unable to go in other non-Greek neighbors' homes, and sleepovers. Any other differences that you can think of?

You know what I think is a little bit funny is all my American friends had friends growing up that were people like their neighbors. Like this neighbor was my best friend my entire life because I’ve known them my entire life. I didn’t know there was a difference between family and friends. Like my cousins were my best friends because we spent all our time together, and then it was just like “oh, you can have friends outside of the family? I didn’t know that.” So that was different, but obviously that made us closer and tighter, you know, and they can’t get away from you. Whereas friends can move away, but family, no matter what they do, you can never get rid of them.

Is that Greek families or families in general?

Greek families. I have noticed that our family is a little different. Like my mom and I have a different relationship, obviously. Mother/daughter relationships are different anyways, but like my husband now, hardly talks to his mother. He doesn’t feel a void. If
I don’t talk to my mother, I’m just, I don’t feel right. And if I’m even mad at her, like beyond mad, it’s a day, and then I call her. Because I can’t take it, or she’ll call me. And you know, I don’t want to characterize them, but really, some non-Greeks can cut their families out and not think twice. Some people are like “I have a cousin I haven’t talked to in years” and I’m like, “what do you mean? Like how have you not talked to your cousin in years?” And they literally live in the same town. I mean, I can understand some cousins in Greece, because if they move and get new numbers, and we don’t get them, but you hear about them through other family members, you know. They’d just be like “oh it’s my cousin”, well why don’t you talk to them, why don’t we hang out, you know? And I still find that odd.

It sounds like it seems really odd, given how close it sounds Greek families are.

So that’s something negative about it. I mean, it’s also negative that even though I’m an adult, my mom needs to be a part of everything. She needs to run everything. You know, until I got married, she’d had a good hand in it. But as soon as I moved, she couldn’t control it, and I think that also was like something you need to break. In American families, as soon as you turn 18, you’re done. Out in their own hen-house, you know? Whereas I’m 30-something and she still thinks she can rule my hen-house.

Can you give me an example of that?

Living with her, I was 24. I went out and purchased a bed set. You know, I’m an adult, I want a bigger bed. I’d slept in a twin my entire life and so I was like I’m going to go buy a bed set. So I went out and bought a queen, or a double bed set, a beautiful bed set. She wasn’t with me when I picked it out, so because of control freak issues, she wanted me to return it and I was like “no, I like it”. Being that it cost me a pretty penny, and her being manipulating like she is, she offered to buy me a new set, as long as she was there with me when I picked it out. She wanted to pay for it, but as long as she had an opinion on it. So I returned it, obviously, because my bed set cost quite a bit. So I returned it, and she bought me a better bed set. It cost her probably twice what I paid, just so she would have a hand in it. Control freak.

You mentioned something about feeling guilty when you don’t talk to her for over a day, would you say that’s classic “Greek guilt”?

Yes and no. I know my husband will go a couple days without talking to his family and he’s fine. I can’t. But then in the same sense, my best friend is the same way. She’ll talk to her mother every day. So it’s not just obviously my culture, and she grew up with the two parent family, very close knit, but she’s not Greek. But we were almost the same.
So you’re saying that it’s probably a mother/daughter thing vs. a cultural thing?

Right, because I think it has to do with how close you were growing up with them. And being the only girl makes a difference, but then again, my best friend was the only girl also.

So you’re the youngest girl of three and you have two older brothers.

Right, which in the same sense is like, your mom makes a girl and it’s like “whoa another slave!” My mother’s always like, I had a daughter so she could help me clean and cook and do this. I was just like, basically a slave.

(3) How would you describe your mother’s parenting style as a child?

Heavy handed. It was my way or no way. She was the disciplinarian. Like, my dad was feared, but she was the disciplinarian. Like “oh, when your father gets home” but my father would come home and be like “what’d you do?” and we’d be like “nothing” and he’d be like “okay”. She would be like wait till he gets home, he’s going to give you the belt, okay give what? Hang it up? Because really, he never took the belt off to hit us. He never raised a hand to us. Even when he was mad, he never raised a hand. He did yell once, but never raised a hand to us. She’d threaten the belt, so it was more threat than action. And she, on the other hand, if he wasn’t home, just took out the shoe and hit us. It wasn’t the belt, it was the wooden shoes. Say she wasn’t happy with um, say we had a guest, and I didn’t move fast enough to pick up the glass, I would be dead after. I mean not physically dead, but it was the look. You knew you were in trouble after. If I pulled out my ponytails because I hated them, if I dirtied my dress for church, if my grades weren’t what she wanted, if I embarrassed her somehow being me, yeah.

It sounds like it’s a difficult way of being as a child, would you say that’s accurate?

I wouldn’t say yes or no. That part was hard, but then again, my friends got grounded. So I would be like, fine, spank me. Then I can go out and play. So to me it was better to be spanked and get it over with, than to be grounded and have to dwell. I didn’t like that. I got grounded once and I would’ve rather gotten hit than be grounded. Cause I could just get it over with and then go back out and play. But as you adapt to that, really, she would just get that look and you’d jump. Seriously, she would just get this look and we would be like what do you need. Like seriously she would just give me one look, which she still does, and I’m 30-something and she still gives me that look, and I jump. I’m hoping to get that look into my daughter, but really just one look and they move, like they know. She’d just give me one little look at something and I’d get up and move it.
You mentioned earlier about feeling like a slave.

I mean, I did feel like that. I have two brothers who, I mean they did pull their weight later, but really it was like “why do I have to do it? Why can’t they?” Which I think I broke my mom in because they did later. Well, it was always, you need to get up early to help me cook for the holiday. So, why can’t they? So we would all clean our rooms and then it was help my mom. So one would take the dishes out, one would rinse, and one would wipe them down. One would do the same with the silverware and the napkins. So they were active participants because I complained enough about it.

So you verbalized what it sounds like were injustices in the household...

I remember having dinner, and my older brother who was much bigger than me, and my middle brother and I were about the same size, and he would finish his plate — we used to call him a human garbage disposal, still is. And she’d be like, “give him the rest of your food”, “but I’m eating it, like why would I give it to him, I’m hungry?!?” “Because he’s bigger” “and that’s why he’s bigger, you keep giving him my food.” But the bad thing was like, oh there’s not enough, give it to your brother, but I wanted it. So that part, it was very old school. You feed the man first, then the kids, then yourself.

(4) How would you describe your father’s parenting style as a child?

I have very fond memories of him. When we were little, one used to work day shift, one worked night shift, so there would always be one of them home. They used to swap, but he could do no wrong in my eyes. You know, because I was his favorite. I was named after his mother and he had told me he would have had 12 boys to get one girl. So to me, that was always like “(sigh) my dad”. He was my protector whenever my brothers were mean. I’d be like “Dad!”, and he’d run up. Whenever anybody picked on me, it was always “I’m telling my Daddy.”

So he defended you it sounds like.

Yes, he was my defender, my protector, my king, in a sense. You know, he never hit us. He never had to discipline us. Like, he yelled once I think at my oldest brother, but he wouldn’t have to. Just the fear of him would do it. Even though there was nothing fearful about him. He also wasn’t like a big chatter box. Like my mom could talk for hours and talk your ear off pretty much. He was kind of just one word, one answer kind of guy, which was the funniest thing in the world. He would give you like just this grunt, and you knew, you had a conversation with him just by him grunting.
I remember just before he passed, I was just sitting on the couch like looking at him and I wanted to say so much. But I’m like, how do I say goodbye, how do I say everything I needed to say to him, and he’s looking at me and he goes, “[grunt]”. And it was like he knew what it was that I wanted to say, and he got it, without me even having to say it. He was very in tune, and he was very in tune with people too.

He came off like this mean gruff guy, but he was so sweet and so sensitive. He’d be like “you need to go over and see your friend”. One of my friends was going through a difficult time and he was like you need to go see her. You need to be there for her. She needs you. It’s just like weird. Most parents would think there was something wrong with them, stay away, and he was like you need to go be with her. He was so sensitive. A lot of people don’t see that. They always like he’s so mean, so gruff, you know.

My brothers, they knew a different side of him. Like he was a little bit, like not harsher, but he was different. He was so soft with me and they didn’t have that because I would be like “oh did you know Dad did this” and they would be like “how do you have that memory?” and I would be like “how do you not?” I think it was just because I was his only girl. Daddy’s little girl, you know. I used to hide behind his legs too. We’d go to see people and all you’d see would be little pig tails hanging out. So, very fond memories. But he was also very old school.

We went to Greece together when I was six, just me and him. Thinking about it now, like my poor dad, he goes to Greece with a girl, and he had to dress us because my mom wasn’t around, so there were no pig tails, no dresses, but I had to pack them. I didn’t have a choice no matter what. I remember we had gone to this little island and he bought me a purse because we were in this taxi and I left this purse my mom got me. My mom had gotten me this beautiful purse and I left it in the cab. I was so upset and he was so cute, he was like “don’t worry, don’t worry, we won’t tell her. She’ll forget. We’ll just say we gave it to somebody up here.” He went out and bought me a little purse. It was like a little leather purse and I still have it. It’s at my mom’s house, but I still have it, 25 years later. He was just so thoughtful, but people didn’t see it, which is good for me because it’s mine, it’s all mine, and I don’t have to share that memory with anybody else. I don’t have to share that side of my dad.

So it sounds like dad was more fun and more emotionally available to you.

I don’t know if that was so. Neither of them really, I think, but I also don’t think that I was very sharing with my emotions. You don’t show emotions in the Greek household. You know, they don’t want to see it. You’re supposed to be shut off. I mean, I did have my crying moments in my closet but...the only time I saw my dad cry was when his mom passed and then obviously when he got sick, but he was a different person at that point, and my mom very rarely cried. I used to get mad. When I would get in fights with her, I would cry. And that would make me so mad to cry. So it was almost
like a sign of weakness, and Greek women aren’t weak. And still now, I get so mad, I have to leave the room so I won’t cry. Then usually my husband finds me crying somewhere. You don’t show your weaknesses to others. It’s something you definitely take from them. I mean, the most I saw her cry was obviously when he passed.

So what would happen as a child when you did cry?

“What are you crying for?!?” But really, I remember when you got hurt, you didn’t cry. If I did cry, it would be in my closet. Or in the bed, or in the shower, somewhere they didn’t see you.

(6) What was your parents’ definition of a “good little Greek girl”?

Listening to what they said, doing what they said, never talking back, never talking out in public, just kind of um...you know, not being loud and playing. You just kind of sit with your mom and watch and learn how to cook and clean and do everything perfectly. Learn the Greek dances because you Greek dance at every wedding. Every function you have to be up for dancing. But really just obeying them. So being a yes child. Children should be seen and not heard. Well babies, you could hear them, but as soon as they got to that age where you make sense, no more out in public.

So that’s strictly out in public?

Yes, not so much in the home because they want to know everything that’s going on. Children need to be that way in public because it reflects on them. If they’re quiet, then they’re doing a good job raising them. If they’re loud, talking, than obviously they don’t listen, they’re bad kids. They’re going to get into trouble, bad seeds...

Sounds like there’s a lot of competition among the Greek parents?

Yes, and then they try to instill it in the kids. Oh, this one has a better house than you. This one did better in school than you. And you know, when I think about it now, back in the schools, a little competition is healthy but it was like, did you see? Did you see how she did in school? Did you see her pita? She makes baklava. Do you make pita? Do you make baklava? You know, and she listed them all in these lists, and it’s like, well really, I don’t care. I’m not in competition with her, regardless what you think. They put me in a road race, absolutely I’m in competition with her, but I could care less what she does at home. She makes a better pita than me. I’m never going to eat her pita. She’s never going to eat mine. Who cares? And now as an adult, they still try to do it. Did you see her house? Did you see their wedding? Did you like their wedding? Did you like the dress? I don’t know if I like the dress. It’s like that with all Greek women. It’s like I don’t care. I’m never going to see them other than there, you know. I’m never
going to her house. I'm never having dinner there, so I don't care. If she likes it then
good for her. And I don't know if that's my mentality, being more Americanized,
because I really don't and I don't want to seem like I don't care but really I don't.

Greek parents don't encourage Greek girls to play sports. I was very good in
basketball, but mom said no, you're not playing. I want you to stop now. I want you to
do better in school. Books, books, books, books. They all focus on books, books, books.
And I always wondered about that, you know, you need to be smart, smart. There are
people that did well in college. How are they doing now? They're in jail. So you know,
there's the deception that if you do better in school then you're going to get farther, and
it's not true.

So doing really well in school, looking perfect or as perfect as you can look, acting
perfect, anything else?

Another thing is about money. It doesn’t matter how you get it, as long as you
have a lot of it. And I don't know if that's something that I broke out of, because don't
get me wrong, sometimes life is easier if you have a little bit more money. But I am not
going to sell myself to get it. And I don't mean prostitution. I would rather work hard,
make an honest living, and that money is what I've earned. I'd feel better about myself,
than to have a lot of money and get it in a way that sells my soul.

I was dating a boy who was everything my parents wanted in a Greek husband for
me. He had a good job, but then he was also making his money with a little bit of help
from an illegal substance. And you know, now he does very well for himself, but it's not
all legal. I'm a firm believer that laws were put there for a reason, and you need to obey
them. They were put there for our safety. But my parents' view was "look how well he's
doing". I don't care, he may be doing well, but I'm not going to sell my soul, my beliefs
because he does well. He may have more money, a bigger house, a better car, but there is
nothing that we do that could put me in jail and away from daughter. He could lose
everything he has and that's not something I'm gonna chance. I had to step away from
that, you know. And I don't want to be pompous, but really I needed to be me. A lot of
Greek kids don't follow the law. They think they're above it, but a lot of them do. And I
guess I became Americanized, but that's because I just had to do everything by the book.
I didn't have a good conscious with it, you know. We smoked pot together and I became
a different person. I didn't like the person I became, you know, when I wanted to be
back to my prudish self. I'd rather be prudish and poor than high and rich.

You know, they instill these morals in you, and then they toss them away as soon
as they find somebody who's appropriate for you who's Greek. It's their rules when they
make them. But then again, my dad loved my husband. He looks Greek, so I think that
helped, but instantly my dad liked him. My husband has a dry humor, which my dad had
a huge dry humor, and instantly liked him. My mom a little bit took to warm up to him,
but liked him. You know, because he was tall, dark, and handsome. He was everything that you could want in a man for me. He was so perfect. He's tall. He's dark. He's handsome. He's intelligent. He's a smartass. He's got a really dry humor, which I loved. I would have liked him to speak Greek, just so when we talk to our daughter, she’ll understand us both, but I don’t care. He’s perfect. My brothers love him, and I think they love him more than they could’ve liked the Greek boy I dated.

(6) Do you feel like you have met your parents’ expectations regarding your career, your significant other, etc.?

Nah, I think my mom still wanted me to be a lawyer, because she doesn’t understand what I do now. And God knows she can’t pronounce it. But she loves my husband, loves him. And I think he’s perfect for me, you know, he makes me a better person. I think my mom will always have that regret that he’s not Greek, just because I remember her saying “his parents aren’t Greek, who am I going to talk to?” I said, “I’m not marrying for you to have a conversation with somebody, I’m marrying for me. I have to live with him. You don’t. I’m not going to marry a Greek guy just so you can talk to his mother every other week.” She’s happy with him, but I think she always feels like she doesn’t have that person like my aunt and her son’s mother-in-law. They have this little bond. But really, do you need it? Like it matters more if they’re happy.

So it sounds like she wanted you to marry Greek for her own reasons?

Yes, it was more for that reason. But she embraces my husband at this point. Initially, I think it was probably hard for them. I mean, they liked him, but I think they always wanted me to marry Greek. But, you know, the fact that he converted to Greek Orthodox and accepted our culture and wanted to be part of our culture, you know, and wants to raise our children Greek Orthodox was a huge step. And what a commitment for him. And now we’re trying to convert the rest of the family.

(7) Would you identify yourself as more Greek or more American? Explain.

I don’t think there’s a difference between them with me. I’m Greek, 100% Greek, love being Greek. I love everything about our culture, well, almost everything about our culture, but I’m an American. Born an American. America runs through my blood - red, white, and blue. I’m proud to be part of this country, but I am an American who’s Greek. And I can’t say you know...Greek’s not my country, it’s what I am. America’s my country, so to separate them, or to put one above the other, I can’t. Because I’m an American, but I’m Greek. So it’s pretty equal in my heart. But then again, which one would I fight for? I’d fight for America. This is where I was born. This is where I grew up. This is what my children are going to be.
Do you ever feel torn between the two cultures, not knowing where you belong exactly? Explain.

Sometimes. Sometimes, you know, I embrace that Greek culture because it’s what I know. And I don’t know enough about other cultures to fully embrace them. Sometimes I feel like I’m stuck between the two, but I know more about our culture. The Greek culture, you know, we’re baptized in the Greek culture. But in the same sense, I’m like “why can’t we do it small, why can’t it be this?” And you know, I would love to do some things small, just American, the way non-Greeks do it. Like my daughter’s baptism, you know, people were just like “oh, are you going to just have it in your backyard?” No, it’s not five people. It’s 150 people. So when people hear it, it’s like an American wedding. When my friends got married, they were like “oh, I had a huge wedding”, “how many people did you have?” “Oh, 150”. That’s not a wedding. I had 100 people at my bridal shower, which was great, too, because I got to see all these people which I love. It’s one way to see all these people you haven’t seen in so long, you know, but you don’t want to interact with them every day. But you want to see them, see how they’re doing. It’s just a nice way to touch base with everyone. It’s people that I love, that I get to see on special occasions. I mean I don’t have the energy, or the time really, to make an effort to go see them. So it’s nice to get together on those occasions, you know, to see how they’re doing. Just like, “Wow, I heard you got married and had a kid. Wow, you know, how are they doing in school?” You know, it’s wonderful to see them growing and becoming families, when you’re like, “I used to push you around the school yard”, you know?

So it’s a definite yes, as far as being torn between the two cultures.

Yes, I use a lot of the Greek traditions, but I also put in a touch of non-Greek. But then some of them are the Greek culture, or American culture. And like the pita on New Year’s, I love that. I think that’s a wonderful tradition. It’s so Greek. Like my other friends were like, “oh, we have Chinese food.” “What do you mean you had Chinese food, you have to have pita!” I do enjoy the events that happen in the culture, but do I enjoy it because of the event? Or do I enjoy it because I’m with these people that I love so much.

As a Greek, you get invited to a thousand weddings, a thousand baby showers, a thousand baptisms. And in the other cultures, you don’t have to go to every wedding, or shower, or baptism. You know, I feel guilty if I can’t make it to something. There’s not one wedding that I’ve declined, except when my dad passed. And other than that, I’ve never really declined one. And my husband’s like, do we have to go to another one? Why do we have to go to all these? I’m like, what do you mean, we have to go! I wish I could get that out of me, so I could be like, oh yeah, we decline, we’re not going.
How has growing up in a bicultural family added to who you are?

I think it definitely molds you into a more rounded person. You’re so unique in your sense, you know. One of my favorite things about growing up was being able to talk about people while they were next to you. Non-Greeks you know? I do miss that. I wish my husband would speak Greek because, you know, I want to tell him something, but I think he’s going deaf, because sometimes I have to say it loud. But, you know, it was nice. We’d have our little traditions and then try and instill them into other people. Like with Easter, I’d go to my friends’ house and be like oh is this what you guys do? And then they’d come to my house and be like this is what you do?! Is that a dog?! You know, and I love that part of our culture. So meshing them together definitely makes you a different person. You know, it makes you more interesting. I think I’m more interesting because of how I grew up.

You know, my professor used to tell me he wants to write a book about my life. And I’m like, why? I’m boring. He was like no you’re not. I think my mom alone. I mean, people want to meet my mom just based on what I tell them. Rounded because you have both. You have this culture and then you have what it’s like to live without culture, you know, not to be so tied to something. So you get a little bit of both. All that moral strictness at home, and then you go to school and you get a little bit of leeway. You go off to college and you get a lot more leeway. Then you come back, and they break you back in.

In a traditional Greek family, family is valued more than independence. Would you say that this was true in your family? If so, how has this affected your life.

Oh yeah, it’s all about the family and you know it’s funny. My mom was telling me something and she goes, you can’t tell your husband because this is just between us. I was like, he’s my husband. It goes to him before it goes to you now. She was always raised like it stays in the family, and like she’s my mother, but he’s my nucleus now. She’s always been the center, and controlling everything too. Now that she doesn’t, I think it’s so hard for her, which is kind of funny if you think about it. I mean, the family comes above everything, which I also feel like when my dad got sick. We all just kind of sucked in and all leaned on each other. I leaned on my husband. He was in the nucleus at that point. So it was all of us surrounding my father with love. Anybody that tried to come in, it was kind of like “get out”. This is us. When he passed, we kind of just like bonded together. We just kind of like were one person. All of us, just using each other to lean on. We did everything together. “Ok let’s go to the funeral home. Ok lets go pick out flowers”. All of us just got into one car. Everything we did together. And when he died, we all just kind of pitched in and took care of things. We all just banded together and were like one.
You know, I don’t see that as much with other cultures. They’re just like oh I’m going to my dad’s birthday party. “You’re not throwing it? It’s your dad?” There’s you know different views, different cultures. And I would say the same thing with other cultured families. I would say like the Italian family, strict Irish Catholic, they all band together and protect their unit. Like they may squabble, but when it comes to anybody else trying to hurt the unit or hurt the family, no. You know like I’d fight with my brother, but if anybody else were to say something to me, they’re dead. Like my neighbor one time. I was young. I was probably like 13 or 14, and I was a smartass because I was raised that way. And my brother would say like, “You’re a bitch”. Well, my neighbor called me a bitch, and my brother tossed him out of the house like, “you don’t ever talk to my sister like that. You don’t ever come back to the house again”. And I was like, “you just called me that five minutes ago”. “But I could call you that, no one else could.”

It kind of expands out sometimes. Like there was the three of us growing up and then my cousins. There was like 10 of us. If someone threatened one of us, it was like they threatened the house. We’re all very protective. We’ll fight amongst ourselves, but no one came into this nuclear family. Hard to break through, and if you did, they would kind of swoop around you. I think it’s great, and I think we’re more bound because we’re all the same kind. But in any good strong family. I don’t think it has to be just because of your culture. I don’t think you have to be Greek to be part of a strong family. You know, we have some Irish Catholic friends that are the same way. Like they are all just very strong, very welded together, and no one can break through. But if you do break through, you’re not getting out.

So as far as independence, what do you have to say about that? I know you mentioned mom, and it being hard for her now that you’re married and you’re main confidant is your husband.

Oh, she does not like that. I don’t think they have that in the Greek family. Greek girls. I don’t think a lot of Greek guys do either. I definitely do think there are a few that just break out. They’re not going to have control, you know. I’m old enough. A lot of them don’t. A lot of them are in their 40’s and still mom, mom, and you know, I broke out and I’m a little bit of the black sheep. I was like no. I’m old enough. I have a job. I pay my own way. We’re done you controlling me, you know? So I don’t think a lot of them do. They’re married, but still, everything’s run by mom. There’s some things, you know, like if I’m planning an event, I’d like to run it by my mom just because she has more experience in that. But really, it’s mine. I have it, but I broke early, you know. I cut the cord a long time ago.
(11) Do you feel like you can be who you truly are in your family, without strong parental judgment?

In my family, yeah. I am who I am in this family. And they all know it. I’m my mom, in a sense. Not that I want to be. I remember my sister-in-law went to tell me I am the nucleus of this family; that without me, they would fall apart. I never thought that. I always thought my mom was the nucleus, and they were like no, “when your mom fell apart, you were the one that held us together”. And I was like, “really?” And then like “when your dad got sick, you were the one that stepped up and took it all over.” You know, I did take in all the appointments. I explained the medicine. I made the decisions. My dad gave me power of attorney over his medical condition. So I took on a lot of the responsibility. And I shouldn’t have had to, being the youngest. But really, my oldest brother had all the responsibility growing up. He came here with them. He read the papers to them. He explained everything to them. When they bought the house, my oldest brother was the one signing with them, explaining what the papers said. And you know, for a child, he stepped up early, but then I stepped up later. So you know, it was like 50/50. He lost his childhood, you know, but then again, I had to be the adult out of all the elders in a time of crisis. And you know, does that make me feel perfectly? No, because I have to be the one that’s cold, makes all the decisions, you know? You know, I was the one to make the medical decisions. I needed to know whether I’m keeping him on life support or not. You know, are we taking him home? Is he going to stay in the hospital? That’s my decision. Not yours, mine.

My brothers, even though they’re strong men, they were basket cases. They gave me that responsibility. I wasn’t happy with it, but in the same sense, I wasn’t going to let my mother have it, because at that point my mother was already irrational. You know, and I had that conversation with my dad. At first, he was like “do everything you can to save me”. And I was like, “alright, you want everything we can possibly do to save you”. And then his last couple weeks, when the doctors gave us about 2 weeks, my mom was like, “don’t tell him”. And I was like, “yeah, anyways”. You know, and I told him because at that point, I’m not hiding anything from him. It’s him. And she laughed, you know. I don’t know what she had to go do, but I was at the hospital just me and my dad, and he was like, “Listen, don’t fight anymore. I’m tired. I can’t do it anymore. I don’t want to.” And I was like, “well you need to sign these papers”. So I told him what they were, but I signed them because obviously I had to. I explained everything to him and he was fine. He didn’t want to fight any more. He was tired. He just didn’t have it anymore, you know. He was ready to go.

So it sounds like you became pretty independent within the family.

So you know, right then and there, I am the nucleus. And I never thought of it. When she said you are the nucleus. You hold us together. I was like, oh my God I am. Sometimes I’m angered by it. They took that away from me, that I was the power of
attorney, that I was the one that had to make all those decisions. I wanted to be the 
youngest. I wanted to grieve. I was the youngest. I was his baby. I was his, you know, 
little girl. And I had to become the adult, but I wanted to grieve like a little girl. You 
know, I lost my daddy, but I became the adult and grieved and fell over his grave. I 
tripped at his funeral, I couldn’t see through my own tears and I tripped, and I fell into 
my brother’s arms. Thank God he was there but...I think it helped keep me together 
throughout the whole thing. I think it helped me from being a basket case, you know. I 
didn’t know how I was going to get through it, but it was like “alright, we have this to do, 
this to arrange. We don’t have time for that so.”

*It sounds to me that you’re able to be who you are, even during the loss of your father. You were able to say, “Okay mom, we’re not doing it that way, we’re doing it this way, because we’re all in agreement vs. just what you like.”*

Yeah.

*So it sounds like you’re pretty comfortable with who you are. Would you say that’s accurate?*

I am very comfortable with who I am. Not always with my body, but I’m very 
comfortable in who I am. You know, I know who I am. I know what I am.

*Would you be able to describe yourself as a strong female as a result?*

Yes, I think she made me a strong female. Well, my mom was the controller in 
the family, and in the same sense, I think I need to be the same way. I need to be in 
control at all times, which doesn’t help when your husband is the same way. I also 
learned now, being married to someone who is just as much a control freak as I am, that 
one of us has to let go of the control. And I do, I mean he does too, and when it comes to 
things I know better, he lets me have it. Like, I’ll put things together because he knows 
he can’t, like my mom used to fix things in our house because my dad wasn’t there. I 
was obviously better at fixing stuff, you know. He would work 18 or 20 hour days, so 
she had to fix stuff. But it made me a strong woman, you know, where I can be on my 
own. I don’t need someone to be with me at all times. A lot of my friends were like “oh, 
you went to the mall yourself?” and I’m like “yeah, he has to work. I have things to do. 
I’m not going to wait for him so I can do it.” You know, I go to weddings by myself. I 
don’t need to cling to him, and I think I got that from my mom.

Even though they don’t want you to be that Greek girl with independence, they 
make you independent without them even trying. You know, if you think about it, they 
made you into that little Greek girl who obeys, but they also made you into that Greek 
girl who stands on her own two feet. It’s like you have to do everything this way, this 
way, this way, but then again, they want you to do it by yourself. They want you to do

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better in school, so they send you to a college away. Okay, you need to learn to cook for your husband, you know, you’re learning how to cook for yourself. You know, you need to learn how to balance home and a job. Well, you know, it’s all about me. Like my dad taught me how to change tires. He taught me how to change oil. He showed me where all my fuses were. I needed to know my car inside and out before you’re all alone and before I let you take. And with my oldest brother, he was the same way. How do you change a tire, you don’t know? Then you don’t take the car. Because you’re not going to be that girl that gets stranded. And I could change a tire in 7 minutes, so that’s what they made me. Well this toaster’s not working. Well, let’s take it apart and see if it works. That’s my dad. So they try to make you a girl, but then they give you all of these things that don’t make you a girly girl.

(12) How would you say daughters and sons differ in the way they are raised in the Greek family?

Well, they’re different definitely. You know, they’re the kings of the family. My brother, who’s married, will come over to my mom’s house and he sits in this chair, you know, it’s just like one of the lone chairs, and she’s like “you’re like a king when you come to this house”. You sit in your chair all perched up and your mom waits on you hand and foot. Funny, because that’s exactly how they are brought up. Everything’s for the boys for the boys for the boys, you know. Make sure they have all the food. Make sure their clothes are clean first. Let them get in the shower first, which I was in disagreement, because I take the longest. Put me in there first. Because logically, it was everything is the boys first and then you. It was that if we have enough, then it’s for you. It pissed me off from my mom, because my mom was all about the boys first and my dad. I think he was like, whichever one gets it first. But then it was also, let’s take care of her because she’s the little girl. And my brothers were the same way. They weren’t all about them. They were all about me. It was all about me, except from my mom. It was all about them. And now I look back on it and I wonder if it was a competition between me and her? Because she was the female and because she’s the mom, and the mom should always have all of the attention. But obviously, I was daddy’s little girl. My brothers were very protective of me. I could do no wrong to them, obviously, until I did something really wrong. They were really protective. It was great having them, and I would never trade either of them for a girl.

So it sounds like there are definite differences in how they’re raised and you didn’t like it at times...

No, it was like, you need to come in and clean, but he can go out and play for hours. I was like, “I wanna play kick ball. I’m just as good as he is.”
How do you think that helped out?

I can cook. But then again, so can he.

Interview of Dh

(1) How did you feel as a child being raised in a Greek family in the United States?

Well, as a child, I was very much a part of the Greek community, so I felt like I had a big community that I belonged to. I was very proud to be Greek, and I enjoyed all the Greek activities that we took part in - Sunday school, Greek school, picnics. So, I was very proud, and I think probably a little bit older is when I started to probably feel that it was something different than everybody else experienced.

Like at what age would you say?

I don't know what age, but probably elementary school, late elementary school. School is probably when I started to feel like, you know, well people do things differently than we do.

So how did that feel, knowing that there were some distinct differences?

Umm, well certainly I think that one big difference is your parents not speaking English very well. That's a big difference, because as a child, you're often translating for your parents, and your parents aren't chaperoning field trips like other peoples parents are. So I can't say that it made me feel bad, because I don't remember feeling bad about it, but I remember recognizing the difference. I remember realizing that there was something different about us.

(2) Was there ever a time in your childhood when you felt different from other children? If so, explain.

I guess it would have to be more so in school. Greek kids, in my experience growing up, kind of tended to congregate together in school. I don't know, I think that the first time that I didn't have a Greek person in my class in school was in second grade - oh no, even in second grade I had somebody that was Greek in my class. I guess 4th grade is when I had the first time that there was never a Greek in my class at school. I think I was okay with other kids too, because in my neighborhood I had playmates who weren't Greek. So it's not like I was isolated from everybody. It just plays such a big part of your life. Like Easter, and just things that we do. I was doing stuff with my family, visiting people on name days. I think that when you talk about that with your friends when you're that age, they don't get what you mean.
So you talked about being in 4th grade and not having a Greek person in your class. How was that for you? Can you remember how you were feeling at the time?

Well, I don’t think it made such a huge impact on me, because at the same time I was also going to Greek school, so I always had Greek people around me. You know, I think I’m lying. I think that in 4th grade, I did have somebody in my class that was Greek. So I think that all through elementary school, I didn’t have any classes where there wasn’t somebody who was Greek in them.

So it sounds like what you’re saying is, while you did feel different at times, you always had kind of like that Greek support system, so you never really felt isolated.

Right, and while I recognized the difference between me and other kids, it wasn’t like a prohibited difference, where I felt like I couldn’t connect with them, you know? I made friends in the classes and in my neighborhood with non-Greeks.

(3) How would you describe your mother’s parenting style as a child?

Well, I would have to say that both of my parents were very strict. There were definitely rules about things that you were not supposed to do, and consequences if you did do those things. My mom was definitely the milder of the two parents, more understanding of things, more sensitive. My mom was very involved. She was a very involved parent. My parents worked different shifts. My dad worked day shift and my mom worked night shift, so she could be there with us during the day, or be there with us when we came home from school. So I’d say she was strict, but definitely a sensitive mom too. I mean, I think that I understand difficulties for her too, being here, not speaking the language, and trying to raise two children. So I understand that that plays a role in their strictness, and a little bit of their fear about their children growing up here too.

Can you say more about that? That fear of growing up in a foreign country so to speak.

Well, I mean, I can’t. My parents never talked about fear or anxiety or anything like that. But as an adult, looking back on it, I can’t imagine that they didn’t feel that. And you know having a child of my own now, it is an unbelievable responsibility. It can be frustrating and difficult when you do speak the language here, and you know where to go for everything. Never mind my parents, who had very limited English vocabulary. You know, getting by, getting their kids to the doctor’s, getting themselves to work, getting us to school, you know, I think that just the parental fears that everyone has are just intensified when you’re an immigrant in a country. And we didn’t have a lot of extended family growing up here. We didn’t have grandparents here. We didn’t have
aunts and uncles here. My mom had some cousins, but you know, they have their own little nuclear families, and they weren’t really connected. So my parents didn’t have a lot of outside support raising us. So I think that added to their fear and anxiety too.

You mentioned that there are certain things you don’t do, or else there are consequences. You also mentioned strictness. What were the expectations?

Grades, grades were number one. Do your homework before you can watch television. No cable. No cable for the longest time. But grades were a huge factor. I mean, bring home a B+ and it’s the end of the world. You know, behavioral things. Fighting was bad, between siblings especially.

And you’re the youngest of two and you have an older brother?

That’s right.

No fighting, anything else?

No dating.

What would the consequences be?

Yelling more from my mom. I wouldn’t say that there was any punishment where we were deprived of anything, but you knew people were mad.

(4) How would you describe your father’s parenting style as a child?

Strict. Very, very strict and rigid. I would have to say that he probably would be way more upset when we did something we weren’t supposed to do, like bring home bad grades, or not listening, you know, not coming home when we were supposed to. Of course he passed away when I had just turned 14, so I’m talking about the years prior to that. I don’t know, just strict. That’s what comes to mind when I think of him, just very, very strict. You know, very authoritative. My rules and that’s it.

So what would happen if you came home late or you didn’t abide by the rules?

Dad would yell, probably more so, and he would be scarier. And you know, the occasional spanking when we were younger.
**Appendix G (continued)**

*So he was more strict. Would you say that you feared him more?*

Oh yes. I guess so, when he talked, I listened. I mean, I listened to my mom too, but it was a different response I guess, different fear. Not to say that he was always like that. But when we're talking about discipline, I think a lot of that stemmed from, he was very smart growing up and really wanted to go to college growing up. He didn't have that opportunity, and we did growing up here. And it was frustrating to him, because I think that he thought if we didn't have perfect grades, or do everything perfect, that we were blowing our chances for something. I think that that's where the anger came from.

As a child, you don't think about these things, but as an adult, you remember pieces of conversations and pieces of things you hear from your uncles and from your aunts and from your grandparents and from my mom. And so, you know, I have a context with which to think about it from now, and I understand. With being a mom, but also just being an adult, and reflecting on that.

As an adult, I have met so many different kinds of people than you. People just have so many unique experiences, and you get to appreciate that we're here. You know, we were given the opportunity to be in the United States, where things are much easier. There are opportunities more so than there are in other countries. And our parents took a risk coming here, a big risk. I mean, you gotta say, their kids wouldn't have to live the same life they lived there. They could do something better here. And so, you know, for my dad, education was very, very important, because he didn't have a choice.

*So it sounds like what you're saying is that, although he was really strict, you can understand, given how badly he wanted to go to school, why he expected so much of you?*

Yes. Yes.

(5) What was your parents' definition of a "good little Greek girl"?

See, when we're talking about parents, we're talking about prior to age 14, cause after that it was just my mom. Well, I think somebody who listened to them and who wasn't out with my friends alone for hours at a time. You know, I was some place where they knew what I was doing. It wasn't like I would just go off somewhere, or I would wander off somewhere. They always knew where I was. So, they definitely wanted that. And somebody who would listen, somebody who would help with cleaning up at home. That was something that was a girl thing. I think the main thing for my parents was somebody who listened to them. To be good.

*What does "be good" mean?*

Well, something that they're happy with, I guess.
In terms of certain specifics... a “good little Greek girl" should do what?

As far as community is concerned and presentation, a “good little Greek girl” should be involved in Greek school, the church obviously, which the two go hand in hand always. Presentation, you have to look meticulous. You’re not going to wear dirty shoes. You’re not going to go out without your hair combed. You are going to look very presentable. Neat, clean, you know, speak when spoken to. So, I guess perfection. But I don’t know if these things are just normal to me now. So I think that it’s not a bad thing to want to be neat, but it’s hard for a child to understand that and to keep themselves neat. Especially when they want to be playing...You know, don’t embarrass your family. Certainly that’s one thing. Don’t do anything that would embarrass your family. Don’t be doing drugs. Don’t be drinking. Don’t be going out with boys and be staying out late.

What would be the parental fear there, as far as embarrassment is concerned?

Well, two things. One, you’re their child and they don’t want you to be doing that. And two, they don’t want people talking about you. Greek people talking about you. I think that they don’t want people talking negatively about their children, so they don’t want you to be doing anything that would bring that on. So you’re not doing something like that. So other Greeks don’t know your business and start talking about it, you know? And news tends to spread fast in the Greek community.

(6) Do you feel like you have met your parents’ expectations regarding your career, your significant other, etc.?

I think I have, because I only have my mother now, and I know that she knows that I’m happy. I have a wonderful, amazing husband, and an amazing little boy, and so that is wonderful. And as far as school and career, I feel like I could be doing a different career. I feel like there’s something bigger out there for me, so I’m not where I want to be with that, in terms of what they taught me to want, and what they expected from me. But I don’t feel that pressure anymore.

The pressure of what?

The pressure of if I don’t do things a certain way, I’m a failure, you know? You know, I don’t feel that as strongly anymore.

Do you think that’s related to the fact that you have a family now?

It’s that, and it’s just maturity now. You know, I’ve been through college. I’ve been working for a long time. I’ve been married for almost five years, and I have a son. So yeah, all of those play a big role. And it’s just experiences. You meet so many people and learn so many things about so many different people. And travel different places,
and just sample different ways of life. I think all of that plays a role in how you see things. And me, having been a psychology and philosophy major in school, you know, makes me very introspective. In those courses, you inevitably analyze your childhood, so I’ve already thought a lot about my childhood. And I have a different understanding of it now than I did a long time ago. I think that that puts your mind at a different place. It’s understanding. The more you learn, the more you understand.

So you said you feel that your mom’s definitely happy with your choice in your significant other, and that you’re happy with your new family. You mentioned that you could maybe be doing something else with your career. How does mom feel about that?

Well, I think my mom is happy when I’m happy. Like when she sees that I’m stressed out about something, or you know, unhappy about my work load, or anything related to work, you know, she wants me to be happy. So, I think that has maybe changed a little bit too, now that I am an adult. Because she knows that I can find my way in the world, you know, that I’ve established myself out there. So, I think that she’s happy that I’m a stable person with my work. I think she’s very happy about that, and it’s a good job. And I think that her satisfaction with that has to do with my happiness.

So it sounds like what you’re saying is that you’ve met your parental expectations in both areas?

I think so, because I think I turned out to be a good person. I think that ultimately, that’s the goal that my parents had for us, you know. And I have stability in my life, and what I think is a good head on my shoulders. I think that if my father was still alive, that would make him very happy too. You know, to know that I have that.

(8) Would you identify yourself as more Greek or more American? Explain.

Greek. Definitely Greek, because I am so proud to be Greek, as most Greeks are. It’s just something you feel, like just proud of your heritage, proud of your culture. We have so many things that we do, you know. I love the food. I make the food. We eat it all the time. I love the music. I love everything. Well, you know, I love being Greek. I do. I love being Greek. I love when people ask me if I can speak Greek. I like now that I have an unusual name. Growing up, not so much, because it gets miss-pronounced, and because it’s different from anybody else’s. I guess it’s something I should have talked about earlier, having a different sounding name too. You know, that definitely makes you aware of your difference as a child too from American kids. Especially your first day in class, when the teacher calls your name. And people don’t even bother with your last name because it’s so long.
So definitely more Greek in every aspect?

I have to say that where I work, there’s non-Greeks. And at work, where you spend so much time, and in the town I live in, there’s not a whole lot of Greeks. There’s no Greeks that live near me, so I do spend a lot of time with non-Greeks. I have a lot of friends who are non-Greeks as well, but I myself, love to identify with Greekness, in addition to embracing American stuff too. I mean, there’s a certain culture here too, having grown up here.

Now if you were to speak percentage wise as far as being Greek and American, how much Greek would you be and how much American?

 Probably 80% Greek and 20% American because, and I don’t know, maybe I want to even say 25% American instead, because my son isn’t growing up in a Greek community. You know, so it’s not the same for him growing up as it was for me, because, as a parent, I don’t have just Greek friends. Most of my friends in Massachusetts are non-Greeks anyways. My son goes to daycare, where there’s not Greek children, so that inevitably plays a role for me. And the activities that I am a part of - there’s day care and then there’s soccer. So it’s not just the Greek Church, and you know, he’s not Greek school age yet, so it won’t ever just be that.

He will be going?

Oh, he will be going, definitely. That’s a definite, but that’s not the only thing he’s going to be involved in, which is different from my experience.

It sounds like that’s important to you though? That there’s that level of diversity, would you say that’s accurate?

Yeah, absolutely, because that’s not what it’s like to grow up now, you know? He has different opportunities than I had as a child. He will have different opportunities, so it’s important to, you know, be competitive with his peers even at this age. He needs to do a variety of things, be exposed to a variety of things, to make him well rounded.

8. Do you ever feel torn between the two cultures, not knowing where you belong exactly? Explain.

You know, I do. I do, and that’s something that I think about pretty frequently, because I obviously don’t consider myself like American, American. At home, we speak Greek. With my husband, I speak Greek. I don’t speak English most of the time, so that makes a big difference, you know, in your experience. I speak Greek to my son as well, and I think that, you know, it’s not like Greek, Greek, because I don’t consider myself to be a perfect Greek speaker. I’m fluent, but not as somebody who lives in Greece, so it’s
not that level of Greek. Whereas my English is, you know, what I consider my primary
ing language, my more fluent language, which is I guess kind of odd, since I consider myself
more Greek. And then to have English be my more primary language, but it’s a cultural
thing that you associate with, I guess. It’s kind of like an identity thing more so than the
languages.

So yeah, I do feel torn, because a lot of the people you work with in Boston are
generation after generation American influence. They cannot relate to like an immigrant
experience. They can’t understand the language difference, you know? If somebody
hasn’t learned a foreign language, they either think it’s cool, or they think it’s odd, or
don’t think anything of it. But for me, it’s like, Greek is second nature. It’s not like
I sit there and think about what I’m going to say in Greek. I don’t translate in my head
and then say it. I just say it, whereas people who learn a language later in life kind of
translate it first and then say it. But when you grow up speaking it it’s different. So, I
think the language thing, you know, definitely makes you feel that, that difference from
other people, and being torn. So we’re not totally American, obviously, because we like
to have this infused in our life. But on the other hand, you know, there’s a lot of
American things, what I think are American, like football and other sports. My husband
is a huge, huge, huge sports fanatic, especially football. I love it. Love it, love it, love it.
I think that that’s just something like an American type of thing that people like to do.

*It sounds like you’re saying at times you feel torn, would you say that’s accurate?*

Yeah.

*Could you explain how? In what way do you feel torn?*

Feeling I guess different, really different. And I don’t mean different in a
negative way, just feeling different.

*But would you say that you ever feel torn between the two cultures, not knowing where
you belong exactly?*

Well yeah, because I think the language thing for me plays a role about not
knowing where you belong exactly, because I don’t always speak English. I don’t always
speak Greek. You know, it’s a mixture of Gr-English. So yeah, I do feel torn, and I wish
that there was a bigger Greek community where I live, or that I was more of a part of the
communities that exist a little bit further from me. Just to get to know people, because
you know, I love to do Greek things, like Greek dancing and picnics and church. So
yeah, part of me is always like looking for something Greek, or is very excited when I
meet a Greek person, or go someplace that’s Greek, like a store that is owned by Greeks
or something like that. So yeah, sometimes that’s not knowing how you fit in. Certainly
my name is a big divider. There’s no way it could be confused as being a cultural name.

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And appearance wise, people know that you are not just typical American, that your ancestry is something other than what’s typically American, like those of Irish or British descent.

So you’re saying your appearance is more ethnic to non-Greeks?

Right. I think especially when I’m meeting them for the first time, they know by my first name that it’s an unusual name, or by appearance...

So in most instances you feel more Greek, but in some instances you can identify with the American culture, like sports, and football being a very American sport.

And I mean going to school here, going to a university here, you know, obviously you identify very much with the typical college life as well. So you feel kind of a part of that...

So if you were to describe yourself, as far as level of comfort with who you are in the mixture of the two cultures, would you say you’re at a point in your life where you’re comfortable?

I would say I’m comfortable. Definitely, because I feel sometimes that I don’t belong in either extreme of the cultures. I feel like that’s who I am at this point. I don’t need to belong in this one or in this one.

When you say extremes, what do you mean by that?

Like very, very Americanized. Not going to church, not doing the Greek holidays, just getting enveloped in day to day life. Or going to Greece every year, or going to church all the time, you know, keeping in touch with all the Greek community I grew up with. I mean for me, that’s one thing that’s really changed, because I don’t live now with the Greek community that I grew up with, so I don’t keep in touch with all the people that I knew growing up. For no reason other than distance.

(9) How has growing up in a bicultural family added to who you are?

Well, it shapes you in every single way, growing up in a bicultural family. You’re influenced by your parents’ work ethic, being immigrants, coming here, working hard. You know, they don’t want to fail. They don’t want to be without a job. They want to provide for their families. So you see your role models are very, very hard working people, who work ridiculous hours, and still manage to keep a super clean house, food on the table, and everything done. You know, so I think that has influenced me positively. Because I view those things now as good things, you know, like hard work, clean home, organization. So I think those are good things.
Sure they add stress to your life because they make you a perfectionist. They make you want to be a perfectionist. So it does add stress to your life, and maybe at times it’s unreasonable to be able to accomplish all that, but it’s present. You see it since childhood, and so it affects you. And I think that working hard is not a bad thing... There can certainly be an extreme where there’s negative consequences, like being obsessive and compulsive about the cleaning, and about being perfect at everything. And then working hard and feeling like if you’re not working to the bone, that you’re not working hard enough. I think that that can be very, very stressful, and detrimental to people, but I think that the influence on me in particular has been, for the most part, a very positive influence.

*Do you think it’s helped you be a better person?*

I think so, because growing up, my parents were very open-minded people and very nice people. So I think that all the things I just mentioned, and in addition to that, just being by nature, good, hard working people. Yeah, that certainly influences you to be a better person.

*So what you’re saying is it’s definitely added to who you are, mostly in a positive way...*

Yeah, I think so.

*And you’re saying that it permeates all of who you are?*

Definitely, and I think that it permeates who you are because there is that strong family bond, in the Greek family mostly.

(10) In a traditional Greek family, family is valued more than independence. Would you say that this was true in your family? If so, how has this affected your life?

Yes, I would say that that’s true. I think independence comes much later, when you’re older. They expect that from you, as a child growing up in your nuclear family until the late teen years - all of childhood and early years in college - family is very important. They want to be involved. They want to know what you’re doing. And I think that’s a good thing. I think that prevents a lot of kids from getting into a lot of trouble, when family is so involved. I think that independence, they expect from you later, after they’ve had time to nurture you as part of the family. I think that in my family, yeah, independence is encouraged, because they want you to be able to stand on your own two feet. There’s a point when they don’t want to worry about you. You know, they want to know that they’ve taught you what you need to know to start going out there. I think that a big thing for a lot of Greek families, as well as probably for many families, is when the child goes off to college. My brother went off to college before I did, so it was me and my mother for two years. It was very difficult when I left for
college for both of us, because suddenly she was alone. But she wanted me to obviously go and get an education, and then I left because I’d never lived on my own, having been only 18 years old. Thank God I had not lived on my own before I was 18, and you know, you get a little bit shocked at first, because you’re so used to like your warm, lovie dovie family, cozy family. But my mom was a support network for me when I was in school as well.

Would you say that it was more of a transition for you, being Greek in a very tight family vs. other kids going away to college?

I think that it may have been a little bit more of a transition because, you know, being in the tight family that I was in, I didn’t go to a lot of parties in high school. I didn’t go on like trips away, and I didn’t play sports in high school. So I didn’t do a lot of those things. A lot of the other kids that I went to school with, in my experience, had done that, had been part of sports teams that traveled, or extended field trips, or trips with their friends in high school. So yeah, I think that that transition may have been a little bit more difficult for me because I didn’t have those same experiences. Would I have benefited from doing a little bit more of that? I think definitely I would’ve if I’d done organized activities. So that would’ve probably made the transition a little bit easier...

Would you describe your family as a traditional Greek family?

I would.

It sounds like independence was definitely valued later, and that it was also pretty strong, as family was, because they expected you to kind of stand on your own two feet. Has that helped shape who you are, as far as family is concerned?

Absolutely, because my son and my husband are number one for me for everything. I am obsessive about my son, about my adoration for him. And my husband is just the sweetest person. So I think that I’ve been very fortunate to have a wonderful little family of my own. I’ve been lucky to have found a wonderful person to start a family with, and I have my wonderful brother and his little family. So we’re all very much focused on the children now. So I think that the strong family ties, yeah, they influenced me in a very positive way and permeate everything. I have just this love for my family, just this instinctual thing of wanting what’s best for them. The later independence, I think that, yeah, I see myself not wanting to be apart from my son at this very young age. I don’t know what that will be like in later years with him, but I hate to be apart from him.
So do you see yourself doing a lot of the things that your parents had done with you?

Well, he’s very young, so I don’t know yet. I think that I probably will want a little more independence at a younger age, because I read so much about parenting and parenting styles that have been studied, so I try to change what I would do, because I want to maximize what I can offer to him. Whereas my parents didn’t study parenting styles, not to mention being in a foreign country. They were of the mentality of, you know, they raised kids. They were raised in a culture where there was a lot of extended family around them, and they learned by association how to raise children, and what their idea of raising children is. With me growing up here, maybe this is something that is more Americanized for me, I like to read things about what pediatricians or child psychologists have to say about parenting techniques and discipline techniques, and things you should do for your child to foster some independence.

So I think that some things I will do differently with him, but I feel very strongly. I care a lot for my child, so that has carried through, you know. I know that there are parents who feel disconnected sometimes from their kids. It’s just a huge job to raise a child, and it’s exhausting, and it can be very, very difficult at times. I know that people can want to take a break from it and things happen. So you know, I’m grateful that that was never acceptable in my family. My parents’ number one rule was for the kids. I think that that has definitely influenced me in a positive way.

(11) Do you feel like you can be who you truly are in your family, without strong parental judgment?

Yup, I do. I’m sure that there is some parental judgment. There are things that parents would do differently. They’re older. They’ve experienced different things. But I feel like I can be who I am at this point.

Was there a time that you felt that you couldn’t?

Probably, I want to say in like high school and college, early college. It was probably like trying to find yourself, you know, going through insecurities, and not having a good sense of who you are. I think it’s tough to talk to parents. I think it was tough for me to talk to my parents, my mother about everything. I mean, I talked to her about everything, but there are certain things that you realize that they don’t understand at some point. Like my preoccupation with being attractive. Well, probably not so much in college, but definitely in high school, you know. Also, it’s hard to explain clicks. You know, it’s hard to describe being aware of clicks. I think that probably that insecurity wasn’t there for them, you know, wanting to be part of things or feeling outside of certain groups and things like that. So I think that probably there were things that I didn’t talk so much about. That was something more about going to peers about, who could relate more.
It seems you're pretty comfortable with who you are at this point. So that parental judgment does not seem to be as much of an issue. Where do you think that parental judgment comes from?

I think it comes from a positive place, you know? It's there because they want you to do better, you know? So I think that's where their judgment comes from.

(12) How would you say daughters and sons differ in the way they are raised in the Greek family?

I think different things are expected, you know, like in terms of what you do around the house certainly. You're expected to help with the cleaning and learn chores. I think in terms of dating, it's looked upon differently with daughters and sons. I don't think that the enforcement of the dating rule would be so strict for sons vs. daughters. I think that they are held to the same standards for school, and you know, values, not doing things to embarrass your family. But in terms of like major differences, you're a girl, so they're a little more protective of you. They see the girls as more vulnerable, and I think that's where the protectiveness comes from. Now as far as chores, I think that that could change. I think that that is not reasonable. I think that people need to help clean up after themselves, and that a woman's role in the Greek family is not just to take care of all the housework and the husband and the family and work and be sane.

It sounds like what you're saying is daughters and sons are definitely treated differently in many ways, as far as chores and dating, not so strict with the boys. Would you say there are more differences or commonalities between raising boys and girls?

Well, I think there is probably more commonality, because the basic values are there. However, there is more leniency with the boys, like it's kind of that attitude of boys will be boys. They are thought of probably as more independent. They think of them as being more independent at an earlier age. Or they expect that they should be more independent at an earlier age than their daughters. Now in my family, I think that there are more similarities in my family. I think that in general, there are more similarities in how they raise the kids. It's just that those things that they differ on are kind of big things. You know, in terms of socializing and in terms of independence. I think those are very big things, even if those are just a couple.

Say more about the socializing thing if you could.

Well, I think it's more acceptable for boys to go to parties, or for them to be out with their friends longer, later, you know. Perception wise, I think that at a younger age, they are viewed as independent, even if that may not be the case. That's my inside view of the matter.
Interview of Do

(1) How did you feel as a child being raised in a Greek family in the United States?

Well, growing up as a child, I understood by probably around the age of five that I was definitely different than the other kids. Up until then, we spoke Greek in the home. We ate Greek food, listened to Greek music, got told Greek fairy tales, pretty much associated with Greek extended family and friends. So I didn’t really know any different. The first language I learned was actually Greek. I didn’t learn English until I started watching Sesame Street and I enrolled in kindergarten, so that was actually my first experience dealing with non-Greeks. So it was around that time, I realized that I was definitely different from most other kids, be it packing Greek food for lunch, or having my mom visit me across the street, where I went from kindergarten to 3rd grade, to give me a kiss during recess, or to give me an extra snack that she may have forgotten to pack, or just to kind of keep her eye on me, when she wasn’t working with my dad, who had his own business at the time.

So I guess I started to feel a little strange. I think a lot of that has to do with, by around that time, I started interacting with other kids within the neighborhood, who were non-Greek. Whenever, as kids do, we would fight, they would be a little harsh, as far as my being Greek, and call me a Greek Geek, and made fun of my mom, who would every day wake up and air our sheets out on the porch. Most of my American friends thought that was really weird. Or when I got lice for the first time in elementary school, my mom insisted in having all my friends, Greek and non-Greek, have her inspect their heads, because she was afraid we might get lice again. So she sat everyone individually on the porch and used a lice comb to inspect their head and make sure that they didn’t have lice before they could play with us. So that was a bit humiliating as a child. But that’s how it was. Mom pretty much took control of everything. Needless to say, I guess as a child, you know, up until the age of five, I definitely didn’t know I was any different. Once I became school aged, I definitely felt that I was different and, sometimes, it wasn’t a good different. Because I just felt like I didn’t belong with the rest of the kids. Not to mention that I had dark hair, which most little Greek kids had. I guess I wasn’t the traditional blonde hair, blue-eyed girl, you know, like Barbie, the ideal, all-American beauty.

(2) Was there ever a time in your childhood when you felt different from other children? If so, explain.

Well, I touched on that in the first question, but I would have to say the differences, like I said, were pretty distinct. I can recall actually that Easter usually was like a month later. Only every four years our Greek Orthodox Easter falls with what we as Greeks call “American Easter”, so I always felt like well, “why can’t we celebrate Easter with everybody else? Why do we have to be so different?” Not to mention it is Greek tradition to cook a nice lamb for Easter. I can recall my mom having gone to the...
local farm to get a fresh butchered lamb all in tact, including the head. I remember her bringing it back and having her put the lamb down in the cellar for the blood to drain, upside down. And I remember having two of my American friends that lived down the street at the time come over, and I don’t know, I think I had to go get my basketball or something from downstairs. They came along with me, and when they saw the lamb hanging from the cellar ceiling with its blood dripping all in tact and its head halfway off, as you can imagine for any child, that might look a little weird. I can definitely remember feeling really self-conscious about it, because obviously most non-Greek homes didn’t have lambs hanging from their ceilings. I can remember that friend going around telling everybody how gross it was, that we had dead animals hanging from the ceiling and everything, and it didn’t make things any better. I would get made fun of and sort of felt outcasted, I guess, from the rest of the kids, who didn’t have such animals in their cellar. Dead, needless to say. Also, every Easter we have a whole lamb with its head on a big barbie in our back yard, turning it round and round for of course every neighbor in downtown Manchester, where we lived and grew up, to see. So, as you can imagine, the traditions were definitely different.

Looking at it now, I’m very proud. I embrace my culture and I thank God that I’m a diverse individual and bicultural, being able to speak another language and to be associated with all the wonderful things that the Greek culture is known for, both past and present. And I love being Greek. However, as a child, it was a bit tormenting, I would have to say, being taunted and made fun of. And I can remember as kids, fighting. And a Canadian French family getting involved in the fight, and my mom, not being shy one bit, chimed in on the fight as well. I remember the mom of the child saying not so nice things, basically saying, “You stupid fucking Greek, go back to where you came from”. So needless to say, I obviously remember that to this day. It stuck with me. At the time, I felt that at times my parents weren’t accepted as immigrants. I think that comment speaks a thousand words, when you have some non-Greek telling your mom to “go back to where she fucking came from”. It’s not an easy thing to deal with as a child. It made me quite mad, and I didn’t know what to think of it at the time. Now a days, those experiences have made me culturally sensitive, and aware of what other cultures, immigrants, new immigrants go through. You know, leaving their homeland and coming to a country such as the United States, where there are a lot of cultures, and it’s very hard to fit in initially.

(3) How would you describe your mother’s parenting style as a child?

As a child, my mom was a very anxious mom. So anxious, in fact, that looking back now, it seems very strange, and I don’t think she really trusted the non-Greek culture very much. Because a lot of Greeks say that non-Greeks pretty much are foreigners, foreigners to the Greeks actually. So growing up as a child, I could, you know, always remember my mom or my grandmother, who lived with us for like 15 years, saying “well they’re not like us. We do it this way, because we’re Greek and
they’re foreigners. They’re non-Greek, and therefore, we don’t understand them very well, but this is how we do it.” An example of my mom’s anxious style of parenting is being real non trusting of non-Greeks. I can remember almost every day, starting from kindergarten, when she would pack my lunch, saying “now make sure you don’t switch your lunch with anybody else at school because there could be poison in it”. And at the time, as a child, 5 or 6 years old, I mean, what are you gonna think? Definitely you’re not going to be switching your lunch with anybody, like kids often do, because you don’t want to get poisoned. So, I guess she was really anxious, and therefore overprotective.

At times, I can describe her as very smothering to this day, suffocating in fact. Hard to please, constantly screaming, to the point that she kind of scared me at times. That was her way of disciplining, screaming. So if I fell down and scraped my knee or something, I would get screamed at for it. “You should have known better. What were you doing?” It was her way I guess of showing concern, but instead of being you know, “honey, let me look at that”, she first would yell at me. Like that makes the situation any better. But then she would be affectionate and motherly, you know, all that stuff you associate with moms. So on the one hand, she was very warm and loving and affectionate, and on the other hand, boy when she was displeased, you could definitely see it. I mean, she wouldn’t even have to say much. One look and you know mom’s not happy.

Anything less than an “A” would be unacceptable. I can just remember other kids getting $10.00 for every “A” they got, and I always got straight “A’s” all my life. I would always say, “How come I don’t get any money like the rest of the kids?” the non-Greeks meaning. And you know, I could remember my mom saying, “That’s your job, to do well in school!”. So it was obviously what was expected to get that parental approval. Never of course, for doing so well in school did I really get any positive reinforcement, to me anyways, which left me, I guess, wanting to seek approval throughout my whole life. Years later in my mid 20’s, my Greek friends whose moms were friends with my mom would say, you know, your mom was so proud that you always excelled in school. I guess it would have been nice to hear it from her as a child, rather than telling other people.

So needless to say, I guess in summation, she was definitely very anxious, very overprotective, sheltered us a lot, like most Greeks. We weren’t really allowed to sleep over anywhere, definitely no parties. In high school, it was just school, school, school, and nothing else. Greek dances on the weekend at the church, or Greek dances at a restaurant with a live Greek band with the parents. I wasn’t even allowed to sleep over Greek kids’ homes. That’s how strict both my mom and dad were. So school was obviously the main focus. I think partly because they came to this country for a better life and left everything they knew, for a better opportunity for themselves and their children. And I think that they didn’t want us to have a tough life. They wanted us to be educated and have white collar jobs, desk jobs as my mom would say, where it wasn’t
Appendix G (continued)

physically taxing on one’s body, like factory work was. At the time, when she came here, she worked in the textile mills, which wasn't so pleasant. And she would describe how awful the conditions in the factory were, and that alone right there told me that I definitely didn’t want to be doing that when I grew up so...

4) How would you describe your father’s parenting style as a child?

As a child, my dad was very impatient, because I was always such a perfectionist, so I tested his temper every time I would take a little longer to do my Greek homework. Like every Greek child, we went to Greek school and, you know, my dad could help me out on that subject, being Greek. Whereas American school, I couldn’t really receive much help when they barley could speak English. I saw him as very impatient, and in fact, very quick to swear and kind of fall off the deep end. It took a lot to get him really mad, to the point where he whipped out the belt to keep us in line. I can only remember a couple times that he did that, but he did threaten to take out the belt a lot more often than he did. I can recall my sister and I hiding underneath the dining room table, so he couldn’t find us. When dad got that mad it was pretty scary. Pretty scary cause he had such a temper that he could hit quite, quite a bit. But like I said, that happened like a couple times, so we feared dad pretty much. So whenever we weren’t behaving the way mom wanted us to behave, or whenever Grandma was watching us while mom and dad went and cleaned restaurants at night, if I was acting out or not listening, Grandma would always say, “Wait till your dad gets home. Wait till your dad gets home”. And mom, of course, would do the same when she was home. For the most part, my dad was definitely more laid back than mom, but when he got mad, boy, pretty scary. Pretty scary. So, we definitely didn’t want to make dad mad.

I guess with fear came respect in their opinion, so that went hand in hand. Both parenting styles were very authoritative for sure. Children should be seen and not heard. We were expected to act appropriately, and they were both definitely hard to please. A lot was expected, and if we weren’t acting accordingly, boy they would both tell us. I’m the eldest of two sisters, actually, so I found myself, as the oldest, getting into even more trouble. As the oldest “I should know better”. So I’d have to say that out of the two of us, I was the one that would get blamed for most things because I was the oldest and I should know better.

5) What was your parents’ definition of a “good little Greek girl”?

A “good little Greek girl” looked perfect at all times. Talked perfect at all times. Acted perfect at all times. Perfect equals ultimate perfection. Looking perfect meant dressing like a girl, basically. Nice dress when we went to church, completely clean. Boy, if I got something dirty, whether I was playing outside on the grass, or we had somewhere to go and I was drinking something and it got spilled on me, whoa. Mom would pretty much flip out. I’d go running into my bedroom and lock the door because I

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was scared how she would react. She’s pretty OCD. So, looking perfect, you know, hair perfectly combed, always smiling, no stains on the clothes, no food around the lips, like kids do sometimes when they’re kids. Pretty much miniature perfect adults. I mentioned speaking perfectly, meaning, if you’re spoken to you speak. If you’re not spoken to, you don’t speak. So you behave very appropriately. Please and thank you. A lot of values that were instilled in me helped me out a lot, as far as being polite and being respectful, especially to my elders. The elders in the Greek culture are respected a lot, whether you agree with them or not. You’re just respectful period. No ifs ands or butts about that.

So needless to say, a “good little Greek girl” acts perfectly around adults, doesn’t fight with anyone, doesn’t cry, doesn’t get angry, is just happy all the time, I guess. A good little Greek girl as far as acting, again, I mentioned no fighting, especially with the sister. Oh gosh, if we fought they’d constantly say, “it doesn’t happen in our family because we all love each other, and blood is thicker than water, and sisters should be closer than close can be, because family always comes first.” As far as acting, obviously...anger, not acceptable, and then crying is not acceptable either. So neither of those two emotions were dealt with very well. I guess, minimizing how the child feels, or “suck it up, things could be worse”, stuff like that.

(6) Do you feel like you have met your parents’ expectations regarding your career, your significant other, etc.?

Educationally, I would have to say yes. Career wise, no. Because I am not currently employed by an agency that is counseling related. I have pretty much been burnt out with the whole counseling thing, and I’ve decided I want to go to law school and apply this coming fall. And you know, being the good Greek parents that they are, they pretty much paid for my whole undergraduate and Master’s degrees. You know, even though as immigrants, finances were always tight. Education always came first, and they were kind enough to pay for all of my schooling. I think that part of it is that they’re afraid that I may need, you know, some spending money here and there in law school. Or maybe will have other needs, like need a little help with my rent. They’re kind of burnt out with helping my sister and me with school. We both have Master’s degrees, so as you can imagine, as immigrant parents or as any parents period, paying for all that for two kids isn’t cheap. So they would much rather have me just stick with counseling and, you know, find a good Greek boy, and get married, and have Greek babies and that’s that. In fact, my dad not too long ago, when I decided that I wanted to go to law school said to me, “You’re educated enough for a girl”, and of course that made me real angry. And oh boy, we don’t get angry, good little Greek girls don’t get angry in the family. Of course if I was a boy, things would probably be different, because their main role in the family is to be a provider.
So, whereas I think most parents would be more than happy to see their kids wanting to continue their education and do something different if they want to do so, and love school... I think my parents are kind of more concerned with them having to shell out more money, than with my happiness career wise and everything else. As far as significant other, mom isn’t like your traditional Greek mom, in the sense that straight after four years of college you need to be married. That’s not my mom. She’s always said, “Take your time and find someone that truly loves you and who you truly love”, and wasn’t really one of those desperate Greek moms who were in a hurry to marry their daughters. But at the same time, I’m 31 now, and she’s like “Alright, when you gonna meet somebody, alright, when you gonna meet somebody, alright, when you gonna meet somebody” and that, that “Greek guilt” we call it in our culture, you know, when one doesn’t meet mom’s and dad’s expectations, or do as they say for that matter. We do tend to feel guilty as children, disappointing them. Definitely has been instilled in me, as far as you know, not being married and wanting to continue with school, not settling in a stable career for years and years to come. So I’d have to say no in each area. No career wise, because I want to go on for more schooling and take a different career path, and no for my significant other, because there is not significant other, Greek or non-Greek. And mom obviously... now having hit 30, you know, being 31, like I said, I think she’s ready to have me and my sister start having kids, and we’re nowhere near that point, either of us. So I’d have to say no on both.

(7) Would you identify yourself as more Greek or more American? Explain.

Well, when I’m in Greece, I feel more American. When I’m in America, I feel more Greek. I think because the Greek culture permeates every aspect of a Greek person’s life. It’s very strong. It’s a very strong culture. Unlike other non-Greek cultures, even immigrant non-Greek cultures, you know, Greeks tend to go to Greece almost every summer to visit family back home, especially when grandma and grandpa are still alive. They go to Greek school and they do Greek activities at the church. They go to Sunday school and they go to functions at the church, which is a main center of socialization, if you will, for all the Greeks, to kind of get together and hang out with each other. Coffee hour after church every Sunday, you know? Weddings, which everybody is invited to, or baptisms, which everyone is invited to. There is a real strong sense of community, and so it permeates my whole life growing up obviously Greek, and even later on. A lot of my childhood friends tended to be Greek, because I was a good little Greek girl and did all the Greek things, and didn’t really rebel as a teenager. As the oldest, I kind of did what my parents were doing.

Obviously I didn’t have a choice in the matter, because high school parties were OUT. The only person I really could go out with was my cousin and my other Greek best friend/cousin. I mean, we call each other cousins. We’ve known each other since I was three and living upstairs from her parents’ house. So, because the Greek culture permeates every aspect of who I am, I’d have to say that most of the time here in
America, even though I haven’t been to Greece in about 5 years – and that’s the longest it’s ever been – you know, I feel more Greek. I mean I live upstairs from mom and dad and I see them every day. We speak Greek all the time in the family. With my sister, I speak English. But with the parents, they won’t respond unless you’re speaking Greek to them. So if you wanted to actually communicate with them, you have no choice but to actually answer them in Greek. So I think I definitely feel more Greek, although I’m going towards equal, Greek and American as time goes by.

I listen to American music, as well as Greek music, although I used to enjoy Greek music more... Being surrounded by my mom and dad, who are both big music lovers and love to Greek dance and all of that. I love Greek food. Love, love, love Greek food. Most of my friends, other than my college friends, are Greek. I love going to Greece when I can and am financially able to. If I could, I’d go every year, if I had the finances. Ideally, I’d love to marry a Greek-American, only because they can understand my culture, which is such a strong culture, and I won’t have to explain that, which is so distinctly different from non-Greek typical American culture. You kind of get sick of explaining after a while, if you’ve done it your whole life. You know, like “why do you do this” or “why do you do this” or “why do this” or “what’s this about”? I just don’t want to have to do explaining, you know. I want someone who mutually understands me, or we understand each other, and also loves to do the Greek thing every now and then. Not to mention I want to raise my kids speaking Greek. They will be going to Greek school and Sunday school and everything that I had to do, and torture them as well.

So definitely I’d say, if I was to say percentage wise I am (sigh) probably 50/50. But sometimes 60/40 considering, you know, how I want to raise my children when I have a family, God willing. So, needless to say, you know, I’m both. As far as culturally, I’m Greek, I’d have to say. Being born and raised in America, which in my opinion, is the most wonderful country, the best country in the world. I wouldn’t ever want to live in Greece because we did for two years and I realized that America’s the place to be. I had learned being there...as American children, we take things for granted, and we expect a lot, as far as material things are concerned and all of that. But at the same time, I mean, the opportunities in America are like nothing anywhere else, including Greece, and I just love this country so much. So you know, like I said, when I’m in Greece I’m American, cause I obviously don’t fit in with the Greeks over there. I was born in America, raised in America, went through the American public school system, was educated in an American university, so I can’t identify with them either. And when I’m here, sometimes I’m really Greek for a lot of people, so I don’t exactly fit in here either at times. More so now, I fit in, but you know, at times I had felt that I didn’t quite fit in, because I was so distinctly different from the non-Greeks.
(8) Do you ever feel torn between the two cultures, not knowing where you belong exactly?

That’s a definite. Torn between two cultures because you know I’m very proud of my Greek heritage and I’m very proud of the Greeks. The Greeks established democracy, were the beginning of Western civilization. They invented philosophy and the arts, architecture, art history, theater. You name it, I mean, they’ve done it. So I’m very proud, as far as my background is concerned, and I definitely love how it’s enriched my life and made me a very well balanced person. But I definitely do feel torn because like I said, in Greece I feel more American, so I don’t belong there. And here sometimes, I feel too Greek. So yeah, definitely sometimes I do feel torn. Too Greek meaning I tend to be really spontaneous, don’t like to make a lot of plans. If I feel like it, I’ll go. I’m not the type of person to make plans like a month in advance to get together with friends. You know, definitely a procrastinator, which I guess some people are, but it’s definitely a Greek trait. Or running late for class or for work at times. We’re just more relaxed about everyday living. We like to enjoy the good life, I guess, not constantly getting up in the morning, going to work, and not coming back until 8 or 9 at night. You know, which I mean, eventually is going to take a toll on your body because it’s not very healthy when all you do is work, work, work. Psychologically anyways. And sometimes I find that you know, Greeks being Mediterranean, we’re a bit feisty at times, a bit outspoken, a bit opinionated, which I guess to the outsider may seem like a typical know-it-all. But you know, we’re not afraid to voice our opinions, and there’s nothing wrong with that, because we’re comfortable with who we are. I guess sometimes that can be taken as being abrasive at times, or like I said, a know-it-all. So in that respect, like I’m not your typical, you know, American person that doesn’t really have many opinions about such things as religion or politics or doesn’t like to discuss it because they’re like you know, there might be a bit of a disagreement.

Greeks aren’t afraid of disagreements. In fact, they kind of thrive on it. They love to debate and love to argue at times, and you know, really kind of let things out. Let their thoughts out and express their opinions, and I don’t see anything wrong with that. In fact, I find it very interesting. For non-Greeks sometimes, you know we’re a bit too passionate. I can recall family gatherings, with like 20 people at my house. My non-Greek friends would come over and I mean everybody, all the family members, would be like laughing, and you know talking really loud. One person trying to talk over someone else, so that they can be heard, and you know, my non-Greek friends would be like “why are they constantly fighting”? And I’d say, “they’re not fighting, they just talk loud.” I said, “If they were fighting, trust me, you would know.” Pretty much being like “The house would be shaking”. That’s how loud they would get, and you could tell, you know, by their facial expressions they weren’t happy. You know, we’re very happy go lucky, bubbly, entertaining people to be around, and oftentimes people find us very funny because we’re not afraid to express emotion, be it feistiness, or opinions, or what have you so...Again, an answer to that question, sometimes torn, but I’ve definitely learned to
deal with it better these days and embrace both of the wonderful cultures that I consider myself to be. Both Greek and American.

(9) How has growing up in a bicultural family added to who you are?

You know, like I said, it's enriched my life so immensely because I'm able to speak two languages. I know what religion I am, although there was a time in college when I doubted my religion. I think it's normal when you're trying to find yourself to wonder, you know, why is my religion the religion to be, and trying to explore different religions and all of that. I know who I am and a lot of people do not. I think a lot of it is because they don't even know what their cultural background is sometimes. Sure, everybody's American, but we all come from somewhere. That's the thing, you know?

Sometimes I feel that people feel lost, and I don't ever feel that because I know where I come from. I'm comfortable, at this point, with my upbringing and my heritage, and I embrace all of it. I think it makes me a much happier person because as Greeks you know, we try not to take things too seriously. We like to have a good time, and food and dancing is a big part of that. Every other week, there's some Greek holiday to celebrate, so it's really fun in that respect. It's taught me to not take life too seriously and be able to laugh at yourself, and really not be rigid. A lot of the times in our American society, we tend to be because "this is how it is" and "this is the final dead line" and you know, "you're late for work again and you're fired". I mean, it's just very rigid. We go as Americans on vacation, God, everything's scheduled, you know? When I'm on vacation, I just relax. And that's that Greek side of me. I'm comfortable doing absolutely nothing when I'm able to do absolutely nothing, and just enjoy people that are in my presence and have a great time.

I can also identify with other individuals much better than someone who, A, doesn't speak another language, or B, isn't a child of immigrant parents, because I think I've become more culturally sensitive to other people's cultures or religions, etc. I've been through it myself, so I guess I have this innate sensitivity as a result, to understand other people slightly better than most people, I think. So I guess in summation, I love who I've become at age 31, and a lot of that has to do with all the differences, as painful as they could have been as a child. I can look back and laugh at it now and really understand other people's struggles, because I myself have experienced that.

(10) In a traditional Greek family, family is valued more than independence. Would you say that this was true in your family? If so, how has this affected your life?

In my family, family is the be all and end all of everything. You really don't need friends, because family is family, and that's all you need to survive in life. That being said, fighting was unacceptable because you're supposed to get along with your sister, and you're supposed to always listen to your parents, and say yes to them. And forget
independence, especially as a female. Very strict, so your independence, at least before the age of 22, is restricted. When you’re done college as an undergraduate, even if you’re far away from home at the time, mom still calls you know, 3 to 4 times a day, and expects you to answer the phone all the time. And you know, “How dare you not answer the phone when your mother calls?” And again, you know that Greek guilt thing, especially with my mom. I think she tends to be more of a smothering mom, who really gets really anxious when she doesn’t talk to us quite a few times a day to this day. My sister is 28 and I’m 31, which looking at it, I think is really adorable now, but sometimes it could get me to lose my patience. I just want her to let me be, let me be my own person and be independent, and kind of do my own thing so… so family is the be all and end all of everything. I definitely agree that we’re a traditional Greek family where that is true. Whereas the American family tends to value independence more, you know? Mom made our beds. Mom cooked and cleaned. In fact, I was very different from a lot of the Greek girls, who you know, needed to know how to make Greek food or what have you. I think because nothing was ever good enough for my mom. As far as making our bed, it wasn’t made right. Or cleaning up, or washing a dish, it wasn’t cleaned right. She kind of took control of everything, which in turn made us even less independent.

Whereas a lot of kids under the age of like 12 in an American family, they’re doing their own laundry. Both mom and dad are working, and they’re expected to make their own sandwiches. I mean to this day, my mom often makes me lunch. When I’m working far away for the day or whatever, she’s like, “you want me to pack anything for you?” and she still does my laundry. I mean, I have no washer or dryer up here, so she takes it upon herself to take the clothes from the hamper, which is in the hallway between the upstairs and downstairs, and do it for me. And she doesn’t work, so I guess that’s how she occupies her time. That’s what good Greek moms do. They try to make their children’s lives easier. So basically, her life centers around the kids, even though we’re in our 20’s and 30’s now. She does everything to keep the family running. She’s the manager of the household, finances and all. Whereas dad has been known to be more of the provider his whole life. His job was pretty much earning money and my mom was to distribute that money as frugally as possible, because life’s very expensive and yatta yatta yatta. So how has this affected my life, as far as family vs. independence? I would definitely, definitely, put my family first. I couldn’t fathom, you know, living very far away from them, although I’ve come to terms with going to law school as far as New York, or even California, if I have to. I know I’ll always have to and need to go back home, because we’re such a tight family.

It’s almost unheard of, having one child live in Florida, the other one living in say, Washington state, while mom and dad are living in the Northeast. That just doesn’t happen in the Greek family. In fact, if you don’t live in the same town, that’s considered abnormal. They kind of want you right there. So as far as affecting my life, it definitely has kept me from certain things. As far as how family vs. independence has affected my life, I’d have to say that I’ve struggled with it a lot, because I’m an independent
individual by nature, and growing up in a very close knit traditional family and being a
daughter, you know, daughters need to be close with mom especially. I struggle even
with law school. There was a time where I wouldn’t even apply to anywhere with more
than a two hour radius from my home, but you know, now I’ve come to grips with just
because I go to school far away, doesn’t mean that I don’t love my family. And if I get
into law school and I want to go to California, I’m comfortable with that now. It’s taken
me several years to get that, because that Greek guilt, boy, not very easy to deal with.
You feel a lot of remorse for even thinking that you would want to go to school to further
your education somewhere that’s too far away from mom and dad.

So I think it stifled me in my 20’s, because I didn’t feel like the world was
completely mine, given the distance constraints and the inability to kind of do my own
thing. Now I think turning 30 last year, I realized that while it’s great to be very family
oriented, I need to spread my wings and do what I want to do and put myself first for
once. So that’s where I’m at. As far as raising my family in the future, and how it will
continue to affect my life, I think a good balance of both family and independence,
although those two can be conflicting at times, is essential. Because one extreme vs. the
other – family vs. independence, either extreme, I think, isn’t healthy. You know, the
ancient Greeks used to say, everything in moderation, and I believe to this day it’s true.
Everything in moderation. Any extreme isn’t healthy, so definitely, family will be
number one in my immediate nuclear family, when I get married and have kids. But at
the same time, I don’t want my kids to feel like they can’t do what they want, as far as
career or college choices, or any of that. Because I feel that limiting your kids potential
and limiting what they want to do based on them having to go far away, is really selfish
on the parents part. I’m a firm believer in giving them wings and allowing them to fly,
one they turn 18, to become who they truly are and fulfill their dreams, and do what they
want to do, without regrets, or without doubt, or anything like that. Needless to say, I
think a healthy balance of both is the perfect way to be. If there is perfection for that
matter, because nothing is perfect, right?

(11) Do you feel like you can be who you truly are in your family, without strong
parental judgment?

To this day, I constantly feel judged by both mom and dad. Nothing is ever good
enough. Everything could be more perfect. I think that’s why I’ve been so neurotic my
whole life, but majoring in counseling has definitely helped me with my neuroses.
Understanding that wanting to constantly be perfect is going to make you a very unhappy
person, so I’ve come to grips with the fact that there’s no utopia, and nothing is perfect.
If my parents are going to judge me for every little thing that isn’t up to par to their
standards, then so be it. All I can do is pretty much do the best that I can do in my daily
life and in general, and hope that it’s good enough. I’m at a point in my life where I’m
done pleasing and done living my life for my family, or the Greek community at large,
which can often be very gossipy, and you know, very hurtful, because they’re highly
competitive amongst themselves. So I guess that’s what makes Greeks want to be so
successful, is the competition amongst the Greeks themselves. So I’m at a point in my
life where I’m ready to live my life for me and be a little selfish, and that’s okay. And if
selfish means going to law school that’s 4, 5, or 6 hours away, that’s fine, because my life
is my life, and I need to do what I feel is right.

(12) How would you say daughters and sons differ in the way they are raised in the
Greek family?

I, myself, don’t have any brothers, and I thank God for that, just hearing stories
from other people. Most of the Greek families that I know that have sons, they’re very
strict with the daughters, just like my parents were with my sister and I. And the boys
pretty much do whatever they want. The expectations are nothing to that of a Greek girl,
who should be an excellent student, be the perfect cook, be the perfect housekeeper, keep
her man pleased at all times. In fact, if her man is unhappy, I’ve heard Greek mothers
say “well what did you do wrong?” assuming always that the wife or the girlfriend is the
one to blame because they’re not keeping their man happy.

So, needless to say, it’s a very patriarchal society, and being a female myself, that
doesn’t always sit well with me. But what are you going to do, those “perfection
expectations” serve to do you a lot of good later on in life, because you’re sort of good at
everything that life entails. So even if you’re not in a rush to get married, like myself,
I’m pretty self-sufficient. I can be on my own and be independent. Whereas a lot of the
boys have a hard time living on their own, and therefore still live with mom at age 27, 28,
or what have you. They weren’t taught how to clean, or cook, or take care of themselves,
or what have you. In the end, that does them some harm I think, because they learn to
depend on the woman or their future wife for everything, and I’m a firm believer in
independence. I’m very American in that way. Ultimately, I don’t think the parents do
the sons any good by spoiling them, in terms of boys can do no wrong in the family, and
they can be let loose and run wild, so to speak, and date, and do everything you know a
Greek girl can’t do. So, needless to say, there are distinct differences, I’d have to say,
more so than the typical American family.