

“If I’m around Dutch people or around anything that is even slightly Dutch I feel very very Dutch and the other times I am mostly Canadian”

A Narrative Account of Offline and Online Identities of Dutch-Canadian Emerging Adults

Jasmin Keijzer

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1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing this thesis has been a journey on its own. It was motivated by multiple areas of interest in both my academic as well as my personal life. The first one relates to how narratives voice our experiences and present paths that we have taken and paths that we want to pursue. I have always loved listening to stories from my grandparents, parents or friends and I believe that, through story-telling, you learn so much more about a person than what first meets the eye. Second, my interest into migration stems from my experiences growing up with parents from different nationalities as my mother is Canadian and my father Dutch. My own experiences in finding out who I am in Canada and the Netherlands have therefore played an essential role in writing this thesis. During childhood I mostly positioned myself as Dutch while my Canadianness remained more in the background. It was not until I actually lived in Canada for a study-abroad that I started to identify myself as Canadian. So what am I now? Half Dutch half Canadian? Dutch-Canadian? Dutch or Canadian?

Identities are so much in flux that it is hard to figure out where we belong or what we identify with. During childhood we are influenced by our parents, school, the area we live in, media, the friends that we pick and so on. Identities seem to change over time and this change is something that I have always found particularly interesting, especially in relation to migration. Not surprisingly, I decided to write about identity formation among emerging adults as I was curious to find out if other Dutch-Canadians had similar experiences to that of my own.

With the wrapping up of this thesis I want to thank all of those that have helped contribute to its final form. First of all, I need to acknowledge the incredible contribution made by the people that I interviewed and their enthusiasm with the topic. Without them, none of the following pages would have been written. I hope to have been faithful to their thoughts, experiences and feelings. Thank you Dr. Abderrahman El Aissati, for providing me with insightful comments, constructive criticism and motivation throughout the entire process. A special thanks also goes out to Dr. Koen Leurs, for sharing his knowledge and expertise, making himself available for consultation, and encouraging me to cross the boundaries of different academic disciplines. Appreciation also goes out to Thom Aalmoes and Derk van der Pol who carefully read and commented on numerous revisions of this thesis and helped me maintain focus. Last, I want to acknowledge my family and friends' support during my entire studies, in both Canada and the Netherlands. I especially want to thank my parents who have always encouraged me to pursue my dreams across borders. They have provided me with a sense of worldliness that I am incredibly grateful for.

2 ABSTRACT

With this thesis I provide an empirical account of the way Dutch-Canadian emerging adults (EA) between the age of 19 and 26 perceive their Dutchness in relation to their identities in Canadian contexts. This is done by looking at their use of offline and online spaces as sources for identity formation. I build this thesis upon concepts of migration, identity, belonging, and social networking sites (SNS) and by exploring the interrelationship of these four concepts. Through the analysis of nine interviews three themes related to informants' offline identification emerged: narratives of authenticity, narratives of self-exploration and narratives of negotiation. The additional use of virtual ethnography resulted in another theme that focuses on social ties and connectivity, and informants' representation on SNS. Looking at how Dutch-Canadian EA narrate their experiences I aim to provide more insight into the complexities of identity as a narrative construction as well as looking at the role of online spaces in the process of identity construction. With these findings I contribute to the fields of cultural, migration and internet studies while also shedding some light on European migrants as this is a topic that not often reaches public debate. Even though the usage of the terms Dutch and Canadian implies homogeneity, this thesis shows that the Dutch, as well as Canadians are hybrid, dynamic and diverse. As such, I use the label Dutch-Canadian for conceptual purposes only as I am aware that this usage might not coincide with the self-identification of the informants involved in this research as some also call themselves Canadian, Dutch, Dutch-Canadian, or otherwise. In order to honour at least one of their favoured self-identifications while maintaining conceptual consistency, I have therefore decided to use the term Dutch-Canadian throughout this research.

Key words: culture; anthropology; identity; migration; belonging; emerging adulthood; social networking sites; media; narratives; virtual ethnography;

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3 INTRODUCTION

“As teenagers we always have struggles with identity and commitment. Or like an identity crisis. Who am I and who am I supposed to be? But because I felt like I was transplanted from one place to the next I really didn’t know where I belonged so that was hard” (Appendix F, Marieke¹).

In the short excerpt quoted above, a young Dutch-Canadian woman named Marieke points out one of the many questions faced by emerging adults (EA): who am I and where do I belong? The term EA captures the transitional period between a person’s late teens to their mid to late twenties. During emerging adulthood, people try to become independent from their parents, question things around them, explore who they are and what they want to become while also experiencing feelings of inbetweenness and instability that are associated with these constant changes (Arnett, 2007). Although questions like that of Marieke affect many people while growing up they seem to be very common among migrant youth, especially when looking at issues of diaspora, nationalism and dislocation (Anthias, 2002). When talking about her second relocation Marieke later on refers to herself as a “tripod” indicating that she feels connected to three different places: The Netherlands, Alberta and Ontario (Appendix F). Narratives, such as the one from Marieke demonstrate how there seems to be a constant quest to find out who we are and where we belong, and this is something that I have experience firsthand. The topic of this thesis lies close to my heart because I am part of Dutch-Canadian EA. My maternal grandparents migrated from the Netherlands to Canada in the fifties where they started a family and gave birth to my mom. In her late 20s my mom fell in love with my dad and they decided to settle down in the Netherlands where they gave birth to me. We then moved back to British Columbia for a few years but quickly moved back to the Netherlands as there were more opportunities there for us as a family. The Netherlands then became my permanent home while I only visited Canada every few years in order to visit family and friends. Constantly going back and forth

¹ All names used in this thesis are pseudonyms, either chosen by informants or myself.

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between the Netherlands and Canada raised the question where my home really is and where I belong.

The increase of cultural globalization and mobility seems to have profound implications for identity formation during emerging adulthood as concepts of citizenship and national identity no longer equate attachments or loyalty to one particular nation state (Huntington, 2004). The search for identity and belonging thus seems to go hand in hand with the concept of globalization. On the one hand, globalization contributes to homogeneity, universality and unity as technologies have made it possible to bring people from different places together through, for example, the use of internet. On the other hand, globalization also contributes to heterogeneity, differentiation, and diversity as people from different backgrounds come into contact and realize their differences (Bornman, 2003). The term glocalization is often used to describe the homogenic and heterogenic effects of globalization on different people depending on the global or local contexts that they are in (Roudometof, 2005).

With the opening up of both global and local technologies and media, online spaces such as Facebook and Instagram bring people from all over the world together. The access of new types of media in contemporary society is interesting to study in relation to how migrant generations construct and maintain ties to places across borders. Nedelcu (2012) underlines the importance of online media amongst various migrant generations as it often functions as a platform for self-expression and can give migrants the capacity to build and maintain transnational social ties with friends, families and communities across national borders. For example, our Facebook Wall gives us the chance to present a self-image that we can share with the outside world. It acts like a message board on which we post pictures, share links, send people notes and show people what sort of pages we like and what groups we belong to. By having and sharing cultural affiliations, users construct their own identity online which might be different from their offline identity.

So far the majority of research into migration issues focuses on what happens to identity when people migrate from one country to the other (Anthias, 2012). Research often questions whether migrant groups integrate and identify with the country of migration or with the homeland. The timing of my thesis coincides with the continuous debates about the current migrant 'crisis' in Europe. Up until now research in the field of culture and migration studies tends to focus on the Other, often non-European migrants, while putting emphasis on marginality and inequality (Dong, 2012). However, limited research puts focus on European migrants. By focusing on European migrants who have migrated from one western country to another I hope to shift the focus in both the public debate and academic field by shedding some light on how Dutch-Canadian migrants in Canada shape, adapt, or create identities.

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Altogether I find it interesting to find out how Dutch-Canadians articulate themselves offline and online in relation to migration, identity, belonging and online media. I believe that these concepts influence one another greatly. Therefore, the central focus of my thesis is to investigate how Dutch-Canadian EA between the age of 19 and 26 develop identities in relation to migration and settlement processes. I will do this by interviewing them about their experiences in relation to the Netherlands and Canada and by studying their online behaviour on social networking sites (SNS). Thus, this thesis addresses the following research question:

- *How do Dutch-Canadian EA mobilize Dutchness in relation to their identities in Canadian contexts and how do they shape, negotiate and narrate these identities online and offline?*

This research question is supported by the following sub questions:

- *To what extent do Dutch-Canadian EA articulate identities that retain their Dutch roots while also including a feeling of belongingness with Canada?*
- *How do Dutch-Canadian EA shape their identities on SNS and how are these SNS used in relation to migration, belonging and identity?*
- *What are the main themes that emerge from the data retrieved in this research and how do these themes contribute to our understanding of migration, identity, belonging and online media?*

As a whole, I aim to provide an empirical account of the ways in which Dutch-Canadian EA narrate their identities both online and offline. In order to do so, I employ a series of qualitative in-depth interviews with Dutch-Canadian EA and a virtual ethnography of their digital practices. The results are analyzed in order to describe and explore the themes that emerge from both methods. Thus, the purpose of this research is to better understand the role of identity as modern-day EA try to develop certain identities by adapting to life in Canada while also retaining some sort of attachment to what has been left behind. By analyzing migrant communities in Canada I hope to understand the degree of integration of migrant communities and to uncover how certain themes can be related to research on migration, identity, belonging and online media.

In order to provide more insights in the lives of Dutch-Canadian EA this introduction is followed by my first chapter in which I describe the context and relevance of this topic. In the second chapter I have merged theories of migration, identity, and online media and SNS into a theoretical

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framework. The third chapter describes how the data has been collected and what kind of methods were used. In chapter four I present the findings of my thesis by focusing on the themes that emerged from the data. This is followed by a discussion in which I critically reflect on my thesis by discussing its limitations. My thesis ends with a forward-looking conclusion on migration, identity, belonging, and media that summarize the key elements of this research and identifies areas for further research.

4 CONTEXT

According to the 2006 Statistics Canada Census, the Dutch population in Canada is one of the few ethnic minority groups that surpass the 1-million mark (Statistics Canada, 2010; Chui, Tran & Maheux 2007). In 2006, of the 31,612,897 Canadians, 1,035,965 were said to come from Dutch descent (Chui et al., 2007). Dutch migration to Canada started when Dutch settlers made their way to the West of Canada between 1890 and 1914 (Ganzevoort, 2015). This was followed by a second period of migration from 1923-1930 that was halted by the Great Depression. An estimated 25,000 Dutch or Dutch-American migrants entered Canada between the period of 1890 and 1930 (Klatter-Folmer & Kroon, 1997). From then onwards there has been a continuing influx of Dutch migrants with the migratory peak being after World War II when over 170,000 migrants moved to Canada (Klatter-Folmer & Kroon, 1997). After World War II the economy and job market in the Netherlands was at an all time low. In order to reduce the population and stimulate economic growth, the government decided to support migration by giving governmental grants (Klatter-Folmer & Kroon, 1997). As a whole, most Dutch migrants settled in the urban areas of the western provinces and nearly half settled in Ontario (Schryer, 1998). Within these areas the linguistic landscape is characterized by visible landmarks such as Dutch surnames, Dutch stores, Dutch societies, Dutch churches and Dutch retirement homes. Although many Dutch landmarks still exist, Schryer (1998) states that “Dutch immigrants have [...] been claimed to give up their ethnic identity, including language, faster than any other migrant group, so that the second or third generation generally does not speak Dutch any more” (p. 1). It is therefore interesting to see how Dutch-Canadian EA of different generations deal with their Dutch roots while in Canada.

5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to contextualize how my informants negotiate, narrate, and construct identity online and offline I will start with an overview of the relevant approaches on migration, identity, belonging, and media and SNS. This is an important starting point as increased globalization and the rise of new technologies have changed our understanding of identity and migration and how people define themselves.

5.1 MIGRATION

Broadly speaking, migration could refer to all types of human movement ranging from cities to villages, from one village to another and even from neighbourhood to neighbourhood. This definition is close to that of Anthias (2012) who identifies migration “with movements of people across nation-state and territorial borders with issues of ethnicity, and cultural and social dislocation, being prominent concerns” (p. 1). The movement of one country to another is often done for different reasons. While some people migrate to escape war and conflict, others migrate for economic or personal reasons. The latter are often referred to as “elite migrants” as they move from one affluent, often first-world country, to another (Dong, 2012). Until now, most of the research on migration focuses on how marginalized migrants adapt to their new environment and the degree of assimilation and integration that they demonstrate (Alba & Nee, 1997). The focus often lies on marginalized groups who are portrayed to have problems integrating into their host countries. However, little research has been obtained about elite migrants, and how they contribute to globalization by bringing diverse cultural and linguistic features to new countries. More recently, researchers are starting to realize that countries might actually benefit from having migrants with different cultural backgrounds as it can attribute to a country’s cultural diversity (Segal, Berry & Poortinga, 1999). Migration also raises questions on where we belong. It often makes people reassess their identity as processes such as adaptation and integration influence the way people identify themselves. Levitt (as cited in Vertovec, 2003) points out that migrants “self-consciously reflect upon their identities” by “making values of two worlds fit” (p. 655) in order to enhance the understanding of who they are and how they are affiliated with different cultures.

5.2 WHAT IS IDENTIFICATION?

Identity seems to embody a multitude of concepts that are open to different interpretations. While outdated theories have suggested that identity is singular and fixed, others believe in multiple

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identities that are negotiated in interaction, overlap, intersect and can change depending on what context a person is in (Josselson & Harway, 2012). I support the latter as I believe that identities are fluid and multiple in nature, meaning that they are constantly in the process of change (Hall, 1990). Another interpretation on identity is that of Bhabha (1990). Bhabha uses the term “third space” by linking identity to hybridity. He believes that when two or more cultures come into contact they merge together and evolve into new cultural forms and identities.

Although differences of opinion still exist, there appears to be some agreement that identity can be linked to individuals’ explicit or implicit answers to the question: “Who are you?” (McAdams, 2008). At first glance this question might sound simple but the answers usually mask various complexities. First of all, the self can often be referred to as an autobiographical author who continuously shapes and reshapes their own life story. This internalized and evolving story is often referred to as narrative identity as it provides the self with an encompassing story about one’s past, present and imagined future (McAdams, 2008). Identity narratives therefore often focus on questions such as “Who am I?”, “How did I come to be?” and “Where is my life heading?”. Habermas and Bluck (2000) note that this sort of reasoning does not happen until adolescence. McAdams adds to this that:

“Adolescents and emerging adults author a narrative sense of the self by telling stories about their experiences to other people, monitoring the feedback they receive from the tellings, editing their stories in light of the feedback, gaining new experiences and telling stories about those, and on and on, as selves create stories that, in turn, create new selves” (n.d.).

This indicates that identity formation in adolescence entails the exploration and negotiation of old and new roles, norms, values, goals and perceptions through the construction of a person’s individual life story (Erikson, 1995). People seem to have some sort of agency when it comes to telling life stories as they can decide for themselves which stories to tell or not to tell. In contrast to agency, however, it must also be noted that stories are only partly of our own making as people often perform certain roles based on already existing scripts. It is therefore important to note that “who you think you are” is not necessarily the same as “who you act as being” (McAdams, n.d.). Accordingly, the self comes into being by performing various embodied characteristics on an imaginary stage (Butler, 1988). These performative acts are usually related to social categories of gender, race, ethnicity and/or class. By answering questions about who we are we are unknowingly abiding by these available narrative scripts.

5.3 BELONGING

It is interesting to study how EA interact in relation to migration and transnational identification and this can further be studied through the concept of belonging. Although we might not always be aware of it, the spaces that we inhabit form an important role in constructing our identities and sense of belonging (Blunt and Dowling, 2006). Traditionally, home has often been defined as a fixed place, as being “at home” meant “being stationary, centered, bounded, fitted, engaged and grounded” (Garrett, 2011, p. 46). Nowadays, however, the conceptualization of home becomes more problematic due to migration. This is mainly because home is hard to define as people have different connotations with the term. So how, then, do we define home and how do we know where we belong?

According to Gilroy (1993) where we come from and what we identify with can be described by using the terms “roots” and “routes”. Roots refers to how individuals identify themselves with a shared community or heritage group that constitutes of common historical experiences and shared frames of reference. Routes, however, recognizes that cultural identification is shaped by active encounters. This means that identities are often fluid and flexible as they change over time depending on the context that the individual is in. Yeoh, Willis and Fakhri (2003) argue that “identities, behaviour and values are not limited by location [...] instead they construct and utilize flexible personal and national identities” (p. 213). I find it important to note that rooted identity is rather essentialist as it implies that being raised somewhere automatically links oneself to a certain place. Essentialist theorists even state that “natural identity” can only come from “full belonging, the warm sensation that people understand not merely what you say but what you mean [and this] can only come when you are among your own people in your native land” (Ignatieff, 1993, p. 7). This statement is different from constructionist theorists who claim that identities are formed and reformed through our interactions in the outside world. I partially agree with the constructionist approach as it shows us that identity often transcends national boundaries as traditional categories of nations, ethnicity, and language do not always apply. However, I also believe that both roots and routes influence each other and give us a more accurate perception of identity as migration has shown us that identity often transcends national boundaries as traditional categories of nations, ethnicity and language do not always apply. Moore (1994) encourages the focus on routes by saying that:

“we need to talk not about roots but about routes: trajectories, paths, interactions, links. The root itself is not a bad, false or wrong story. It is, rather, a narrowly true narrative in the midst of a broader and more tangled truth, or richer story... The metaphor for human culture should be more the mangrove than the tree” (p. 21).

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When building upon the framework of roots and routes, we could therefore say that the notion of home could have multiple meanings and cannot necessarily be pre-defined as it depends on how groups or individuals construct their own meaning of home in new, or unknown contexts (Sigmon, WhitComb & Snyder, 2002). From this, it can be concluded that home is not always tied to our place of birth but also to our creation of memories and ties. Hall (1990) refers to this conceptualization of identity as a matter of both “becoming” and “being” as it captures experiences of the past, present and future surpassing location, time, history and culture.

According to Loader (2006), the question “Who am I?” (p. 25) is hard to separate from the question “Where do I belong?” (p. 25) meaning that our identities are closely linked to place. Yuval-Davis (2003) underlines this notion as “belonging is multiplex and multi-layered, continuous and shifting, dynamic and attached” (p. 141). In that sense, belonging can be conceptualized at various scales as individuals’ sense of belonging varies considerably; it can concern our own house, our street, our neighbourhood, our municipality and even our national homeland. But what factors contribute to our sense of belonging? And how is this linked to the concept of home? Antonsich (2002) describes four important factors that contribute to the feelings of belongingness; auto-biographical, relational, cultural, and legal.

Firstly, auto-biographical factors describe a person’s past experiences, networks and history by focusing on memories and emotions that have linked a person to a certain place. Examples can be found when looking at feelings that are associated with childhood memories, a person’s place of birth or their ancestral country. Therefore, it can be said that in order to feel at home in a certain place one must have certain attachments to the place in order to make it their home.

Secondly, relational factors describe the interpersonal and social relations that an individual has with a given place and how they contribute to our sense of belonging. For example, family, friends and loved ones hugely affect our sense of belonging. These relations often constitute the self as they give us a feeling of stability and comfort. Bourdieu uses the term social capital to describe social networks as a resource that gives individuals a sense of belongingness to a group (1998). Of course, not all relationships provide us with a sense of belonging. Baumeister and Leary (1995) assert that in order to feel a sense of belonging, relationships have to be long-lasting, positive and stable. In that sense, occasional everyday encounters do not necessarily provide us with feelings of belongingness as they do not always generate a deep sense of connectedness.

Thirdly, cultural factors play a major role when it comes to belonging. Among these factors language can be seen as one of the most important factors that help us feel at home (Buonfino & Thomson, 2007). When people speak a common language it invokes a sense of community in which people not only understand each other but also know what meaning their words convey. In this sense,

language can be seen as an element that contributes to a person's sense of belongingness as it captures the essence of feeling at home. Besides language other cultural factors such as traditions, habits, religion and food also contribute to a sense of belongingness. For example, some of my informants actively celebrated Kingsday², got together with other Dutch people when the national soccer team had to play, or made oliebollen³ on New Year's Eve.

Fourthly, legal factors such as citizenship and resident permits also produce security for migrants as it provides them with certain rights and benefits that open up new opportunities such as getting a job. Not surprisingly, there appears to be a link between an individual's legal status and their sense of belongingness (Nelson & Hiemstra, 2008). The traditional conception of citizenship is formed upon the idea that individuals belong to only one nation-state and so migrants might feel left out when they are not provided with equal access to social, civil and political rights (Gustafson, 2002). For example, Tamara mentioned that Dutch-Canadian dual citizenship is not possible in Canada (Appendix F). In Tamara's case, not having a Canadian passport meant that she had to make certain sacrifices when it came to jobs that required Canadian passports. However, having a Dutch passport does have meaning for Tamara as it ties her down to the Netherlands. Bourdieu (1998) calls this symbolic capital and describes this as "... any property (any form of capital whether physical, economic, cultural or social) when it is perceived by social agents endowed with categories of perception which cause them to know it and to recognize it, to give it value" (p. 47). Altogether, the combination of the five factors mentioned above can contribute to the feeling of belongingness and a sense of home among migrants.

5.4 ONLINE IDENTITIES AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

In this section I will describe how the earlier discussed concepts of identity and belonging are closely intertwined with online media and SNS. According to Pfister and Soliz (2011) SNS are used by people on the internet who not only use it to gather information but also to share their opinions, feelings and experiences with a wider audience. This online space can be seen as a deterritorialized space in the sense that people who live geographically dispersed can connect with each other through these online platforms (Mahler, 2001). SNS can therefore be defined as spaces that stimulate, and nourish identity formation and provide individuals with the tools to perform certain identities online.

According to Haythornthwaite (2002) the internet provides users with the opportunity to strengthen weak ties and to connect to a broader set of contacts. Moreover, Dekker and Engbersen (2012) argue that "through the open structure offered by social media, users can selectively create

² A national holiday in the Netherlands, held on 27 April, to celebrate the birth of King Willem-Alexander.

³ A Dutch deep-fried delicacy that is consumed around New Years eve.

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communities based on interest rather than prior acquaintance” (p. 6). This sort of freedom gives users the power and potential to not only connect and reconnect with (un)acquainted people but also to connect and reconnect with their own feelings, biographies, and identities. Nedelcu (2012) underlines the importance of SNS amongst various migrant generations as it can function as a platform for self-expression and give them the capacity to build and maintain transnational social ties with friends, families and communities across national borders. Take for example Facebook, where individuals show cultural identifications through their profile pages, posted pictures, and status updates or by joining Facebook groups linked to their country of origin. By having and sharing cultural affiliations, users are constructing their own identity online which might be different from their offline identity.

Research shows that media can reinforce certain cultural identities and communities. Macri (2011) supports this by stating that forms of new media play important roles in shaping maintaining, reflecting and performing identities. Shuter argues that minority or marginalized groups find more diverse ways to strengthen their cultural identity than majority groups (2012). Croucher and Cronn-Mills (2011) found that French-Muslims in France used SNS in order to strengthen their Muslim identities. Moreover, Grasmuck, Martin and Shanyang (2009) discovered that Latinos, Vietnamese, Americans, and Native Americans create Facebook profiles and narratives that actively voice their cultural roots online. These examples show us how migrants position themselves online and how minority or marginalized users can find empowerment through SNS. It seems as if identity formation is made possible because of the aspatial nature of these online communities. Without the limitations of a particular area or space, diasporas are able to stay in touch with their roots while strengthening their own identities.

6 METHODOLOGY

In the following chapter I explain why the selected data methods were chosen and how they were used. Studying identity formation and all its complexities calls for an approach that is flexible and focuses on the understanding of the different facets of identity. I have therefore decided to use qualitative methods in order to understand the process through which Dutch-Canadian EA deal with issues of identity, belonging and migration. Qualitative methods offer an effective way of data collection as they are very suitable to capture, understand and describe the behaviours and experiences of this chosen research group (Boeije, 2005). By adopting a qualitative research methodology, I will be able to generate a holistic but explanatory description of the phenomena of online and offline identity formation among Dutch-Canadian EA. As this research is mainly exploratory I will, thus, avoid hypothesizing a relationship between migration, media and identity a priori. Instead, I will identify new themes that emerged from the interviews and virtual ethnography while keeping in mind pre-existing models.

6.1 DATA & DATA COLLECTION

6.1.1 The Researcher as an Insider

Working with a collection of data that has been obtained through interviews and virtual ethnography raises questions about the relationship between the researcher and the informants. I believe that my own background has played an important role in the data that I collected. I am part of Dutch-Canadian EA and have often struggled with the question of where I belong. This personal struggle has ignited my interest in the field of identity and migration. Of course my personal familiarity with the topic poses several advantages and disadvantages. Among the advantages is the fact that my background can enhance my understanding of Dutch-Canadian experiences and can provide a sense of trust with the informants. My informants' were incredibly interested in my background and often asked me where I was from, which places I visited in Canada and how often I went back. However, a disadvantage might be that my background could create some sort of bias regarding the outcome of this thesis. I find it important to be aware of the influences that I, as a researcher, might take with me while writing this thesis. This sort of reflexivity will hopefully provide me with new impressions and interpretations that I would not have been able to get by merely observing informants (Harding, 1991). Although I am aware that I was only partially able to grasp the lives of the people I talked to I do hope that my interpretations of the data do all my informants justice.

6.1.2 Data

My data builds upon interviews and observations of nine Dutch-Canadians. Before collecting the data, I tried to set up criteria for selecting the informants. As I had no idea what to expect I decided not to be too demanding as I wanted to find as many informants as possible in order to set up a reliable research. As a result, criteria for selecting the informants were as followed. First, I decided to focus on the age group of about 18-26 as this was an age group that was accessible to me and would target a more contemporary migration flow from the Netherlands to Canada. Moreover, this age group is generally known for the alterations and growth of their self-awareness as they try to find out who they are in relation to the physical, cognitive and social changes that occur in their lives (Erikson, 1995). Second, I looked for people who had Dutch roots meaning that at least one of their (grand)parents grew up in the Netherlands. This criterion was mainly set in order to ensure some sort of affiliation with the Netherlands however big or small. The third and final criterion was that the informants lived in Canada for the majority of their life. This criterion was set in order to ensure that the informants had some experiences with life in Canada and had knowledge of the values and social norms of Canadian society.

As a whole the informants consist of second and third generation Dutch-Canadians. There seems to be a degree of uncertainty around the terminology and definition of generations so I find it important to first explain these different definitions. Vasta (1994) argues that second generation focuses on EA that are born in the host country and have foreign-born, first-generation, parents. However, she adds that this definition can be extended to include foreign-born people that have migrated to the host country in their early childhood. Yi (2009), refers to this not as second generation, but categorizes this as a 1.5 generation. Skrbis and Poynting (2007) identify another way of looking at generation through a more subjective lens meaning that the term generation is based on how individuals categorize themselves as, for example, Dutch, Canadian, Dutch-Canadian, or Canadian-Dutch. Up until now the concept of generations has been studied intensively although most research focuses only on the second generation. Skrbis and Poynting (2007) identify two important reasons why this might be the case. Firstly, many believe that the second generation plays a key role in connecting the host with the home country, and the old with the new. Secondly, researchers (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001) believe that studying second-generation EA might provide us with a better understanding of the effects of immigration and how they live their lives.

While a variety of definitions of the term generation have been suggested, I will refer to my informants as merely Dutch-Canadian. Of course, it is important to note that the mere usage of terms such as Dutch-Canadian might suggest an essentialist view. However, I believe that identities and generations are not based on simple dichotomies such as “here” or “there” and “Dutch” or

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“Canadian”. I do realize that identities are never singular static entities but are hybrid, fluid and multiple entities that are in constant flux. Nevertheless, it must be noted that I use this term for conceptual purposes only as I am aware that this usage might not coincide with the self-identification of the informants involved in this research as some call themselves Canadian or Dutch as well. In order to honour at least one of their favoured self-identifications while maintaining conceptual consistency, I decided to use the term Dutch-Canadian throughout this research.

Few individuals were excluded from this research on the basis of age as I was specifically looking for Dutch-Canadian EA. Other individuals decided not to partake in the research as they did not feel comfortable showing their social media activity to a stranger. Upon contact, the informants were guaranteed anonymity and were given the option to choose a pseudonym in order to protect their privacy. Informants who did not choose a pseudonym themselves were given one. Prior to data collection, the informants received an explanation of the project and were given the possibility to fill in a consent form if they decided to partake in the research (Appendix B). Several reminder messages were sent to those who did not respond after seven days. After obtaining the consent form from informants, an interview date and time was set up. Those who did not fill in the consent form were asked for their approval at the beginning of their interview. A general overview of the informants' background can be found in table 1 below.

Table 1: Overview Informants

Name	Gender	Age	Nationality Parent(s)	Country of Birth	Country of Residence	Occupation	Duration Interview in Minutes
Yvette	Female	23	British, Dutch-Canadian	Canada	The Netherlands (for studies)	Student	29
Jay	Male	22	Dutch-Canadian, Dutch-German	Canada	Canada	Data Analyst	21
Nathalie	Female	26	Dutch	Canada	Canada	Teacher	31
Marieke	Female	24	Dutch	The Netherlands	Canada	Recently graduated	43
Tara	Female	24	Dutch	Canada	Canada	Student	30
Jolijn	Female	21	Dutch	The Netherlands	Germany (for studies)	Student	20
Lee	Male	19	Dutch, Irish	The Netherlands	Canada	Student	53
Tamara	Female	23	Dutch	The Netherlands	Canada	Recently graduated	27
Lisanne	Female	26	Dutch	The Netherlands	Canada	Employee, Mother	44

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All the informants that participated were aged between 18 and 26 with a mean age of 23. Seven of the informants were female while only two informants were male. The gender proportion was not intended to be out of balance. However, last minute cancellations left the composition of the group unbalanced. In addition, almost all informants were students or recent graduates from educational institutions. More information about informants' background, age and migration history can be found in Appendix C.

6.1.3 Data Collection

During the first few weeks of data collection I tried to talk to as many people as possible about my topic of interest. Due to my familiarity with Dutch migrants in Canada I was able to use my own network in order to access possible informants. I reached out to my online, and offline friends who helped me find names of possible informants. Thus, in order to recruit informants, I relied on snowball sampling, a method that obtains informants through a researcher's existing network where informants nominate others to expand the amount of data (Morgan, 2008). A major advantage of the snowball method is that it opened up a diverse range of people that I could connect with easily. Initially, access to informants was made through a variety of channels. First, I reached out to my own network by telling people about my research through Facebook. People then tagged friends who fit the criteria in the post after which I sent them a message with more information about the research. Second, I reached out to several Dutch-Canadian Facebook groups where I posted a message about my research (Appendix A). The Facebook groups that were used are: *Dutch-Canadian Friendship Garden (Bridgewater)*, *Dutch-Canadian Association P.E.I.*, *Dutch Treat Canada – Toronto/GTA*, *Dutch Canadian Society of London and District and Nederlanders in/rondom Calgary/Dutch people in/around Calgary (Canada)*. Within these Facebook groups people commented on posts and offered their help. Third, my parents knew several Dutch crop growers who moved to Canada. I contacted these growers through email and they kindly provided me with their networks as well.

6.2 PROCEDURE

6.2.1 Dealing with Narratives

Informants' narratives that were collected through the interviews were considered as the main material of analysis. Narratives are defined as subjective personal stories in which individuals position the Self and the Other in order to make sense of past, present and future experiences (Trahar, 2009). Similar to plays, films and books, narratives capture stories that include characters, a setting, plots and themes that provide individuals with meaning. As such, I decided to use narratives as my main source of data because I believe that this is the best way to capture the informants' feelings, experiences and

views when it comes to their life stories. I mentioned before that the term identity is in constant flux and is an unstable, every-changing notion that is understood differently by many. As a result, identity is hard to capture through quantitative measures as it is hard to categorize. Through a qualitative analysis of these narratives I thus hope to collect rich, detailed narratives about the informants and their perspective on their lives as Dutch-Canadians.

6.2.2 Interview procedure

For the purpose of this thesis a total of 9 interviews were held with a total length of 298 minutes. Each interview lasted between 21 and 53 minutes. This has resulted in 83 pages of verbatim transcripts (Appendix F) that captured every word that had been recorded. I then read and re-read these transcripts in order to identify the major themes that were related to my research question. As a whole, eight interviews were held through Facebook and one interview through Skype. All interviews were recorded with a recording programme called Audacity. In addition, I also used my phone as a recorder in case Audacity would fail. Luckily all interviews were recorded and transcribed successfully.

In the interviews I started with a brief introduction in which I introduced the aim of the research and explained their anonymity. The interview continued with questions about upbringing and family history as well as general questions about their age, country of residence and place of birth. Additionally, I also tried to link the questions to things I saw on their profiles in order to gain a more personal connection with the informants and to make them feel comfortable. After this the interview was more unstructured, following the pace of the informants' rather than that of the researcher. For each interview the same topic list was used in order to generate answers related to the purpose of this thesis (Appendix D). According to researchers, this semi-structured approach is one of the more practical ways to gain information about informants' lives (Edwards & Holland, 2013). During the interviews I tried to ask open-ended questions that were formulated differently to fit the need of the informants. I hoped that this type of approach would yield more complex answers than simply yes or no. In addition, open-ended questions might reveal answers that could provide new insights in the field that could further be explored and studied.

6.2.3 Analysis Narratives

After the interviews I expanded the interviews to transcripts based on Mazeland's (2003) transcription conventions (Appendix E). After transcribing the interviews, I found myself with a large set of data. As narratives are open to different interpretations it is possible that other representations than my own were possible. However, the data gained from this study has been coded based on what I thought was important. First of all, I carefully read the transcripts and started coding and highlighting interesting responses that were related to the topic list while also taking into consideration answers that brought

in new and unexpected issues. I immediately noticed that many informants saw their cultural background as an advantage and that this made them feel special and unique. Informants also indicated that they often compared the Netherlands with Canada while trying to find out where they belonged. In addition, most participants continued certain Dutch practices in Canada while others tried to find some balance between the two cultures. In order to create some sort of predictability, as time was limited, I tried to keep in mind the theoretical frameworks that guided me to focus on certain patterns related to migration, identity, belonging, and media while also identifying and labelling new findings. I then reread the transcripts and revisited the initial coding so that I could rename and clarify certain codes in order to create consistency. These codes were then developed into a list of categories that were modified after an additional rereading of the transcripts (Straus & Corbin, 1990). After revisiting these categories, I sorted them in order to create the following three themes: narratives of authenticity, narratives of self-exploration and narratives of negotiation. These themes will be discussed and analysed in the following chapter.

6.2.4 Virtual Ethnography

As part of my data collection I decided to do observations of informants' online activity on Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and Instagram in order to see if their online identities were similar to their offline identities. However, almost none of my informants used Twitter or YouTube so I decided to exclude these from the research. Due to the limited amount of data the use of virtual ethnography is merely a small aspect of this thesis and was mainly used to find out more about informants' lives and to provide a link to the information gathered on offline identities. Adopting Hine's (2000) concept of virtual ethnography this research uses an ethnographic method as it is particularly useful in studying the behaviour of migrant EA and how they narrate and negotiate their identity both online and offline. In short, Fetterman (1998) identifies ethnography as a qualitative field of research that intends to depict the everyday practices of people through active participations and engagement of the researcher. Conversely, virtual ethnography recognizes the presence of the Internet by trying to build an understanding of its everyday practices. In this research I will use virtual ethnography by taking screenshots as field notes and use these in order to explain what my informants do online and how they can be related to the theories discussed in my theoretical framework. In addition, I have chosen to do observations of informants' digital spaces in order to find out if what they say in the interviews is similar to what they actually do online. In order to do so I asked the informants' approval upon adding them on social media sites. Although this research only had limited resources in terms of time it did succeed in following the informants' online activity for the duration of this research. Of course, this is little time in comparison to other virtual ethnographic studies.

7 RESULTS

7.1 OFFLINE NARRATIVES OF IDENTIFICATION

The following section describes three themes related to informants' offline identification that emerged from the data: narratives of authenticity, narratives of self-exploration and narratives of negotiation. Together, these three themes form the basis of how Dutch-Canadian EA narrate their identities offline while also demonstrating how different cultural backgrounds are seen as a form of symbolic capital.

7.1.1 Narratives Of Authenticity

"I love being Dutch. I love that [...] it makes me different than most people and I.. Most people would not like being different but in that way I liked it" (Appendix F, Lisanne).

A recurrent theme in the interviews was the sense of authenticity amongst informants. Informants seemed to not only feel authentic and different from people around them but also from people with similar Dutch-Canadian roots. The theme of authenticity came up, for example, in discussions about growing up with Dutch influences but also when receiving remarks from outsiders about their Dutch features. Despite the fact that informants mentioned the diverse Canadian culture and the abundance of people with migrant backgrounds, informants still felt like they stood out from the rest. Throughout the interviews, words related to authenticity were very recurrent such as "special", "unique", "stand out" and "different". When asked about Nathalie's experiences in Canada while growing up with Dutch influences she said:

"I would say in my experience of knowing another language and growing up with another culture I think it was really beneficial and lovely to grow up with the experiences of two worlds rather than just one. And I think it was kind of nice because it did feel special at home having another language that I could speak with my family. It kind of made it like almost this special experience of having our own language and our own.. you know.. traditions that we did at home that were different than what everyone else at school was doing. I don't really remember meeting a lot of Dutch kids at school so it was kind of unique to us if that makes sense." (Appendix F)

Nathalie seems to emphasize the importance of speaking a different language, having different traditions and growing up with another culture. She seems to use these features as markers of distinction in order to differentiate herself from her peers by noting that their lives were very different

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from those of many other people in Canada. During emerging adulthood, markers of distinction and markers of individuality are often used in order to position oneself within a larger society (Arnett, 2007). EA perceive their Dutch and Canadian background as symbolic capital in the sense that they find it an asset that distinguishes them from the crowd.

Besides the fact that informants felt different from their peers, illustrating the constructive and diverging forms of identification, some also seemed to have different perspectives on what it meant to be Dutch. It seems that growing up in the Netherlands provided some informants with a different experience than the informants who were born in Canada and had no direct experience when it came to living in the Netherlands. As Lisanne puts it:

“The area that we live in it’s like all the Dutch people are here when they move here. There’s the church I go to that is pretty much all Dutch people even if they are not directly from Holland.. their parents were or their grandparents were. And all the names.. it’s all Dutch last names. There’s so many in this area it’s crazy. Mostly when I meet them they are like “I’m Dutch” but it’s more back further. When I say I’m Dutch to people they are like “oh yeah everybody is Dutch around here” but I’m like” I’m actually Dutch” and they are like “oohhh okay””. (Appendix F)

It was interesting to see that Lisanne mentioned a certain distinction that could be made based on Dutch-Canadians who were born or not born in Canada. Her search for authenticity underlines the internal heterogeneity that is present in Dutch-Canadian communities. I mentioned earlier that the term roots refers to how individuals identify themselves with a shared community or heritage group that constitutes of common historical experiences and shared frames of reference. It seems that for some participants growing up in a common place does seem to matter. Talking about this issue Marieke also mentioned that: “People always claimed to be so Dutch and I was like “you have no idea, you’ve never been, you don’t speak the language, you don’t know what you are talking about”” (Appendix F). Marieke’s response indicates that, for her, being Dutch meant a lot more than just labelling oneself as Dutch; it meant speaking the language, having visited the Netherlands and having various links to both countries. This example is a form of performativity as informants have to act and be a certain way to fit the part of being Dutch. Of course, it is possible that having lived in the Netherlands during childhood may have instilled different values and perceptions on Lisanne and Marieke that were different than the ones that occurred in Canada (Kebede, 2010).

It was interesting to find that informants like Lisanne and Marieke also mentioned that even among Dutch people a distinction could be made based on generational differences. By looking at Jay’s account of his Dutch heritage I noticed that he felt different from other Dutch people as he was

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not born there. During our interview Jay quite doubtfully said: "There's probably not too much I can tell you. I'm not myself .. I don't come from Holland. I'm just around all the Dutch stuff" (Appendix F). This shows that for some informants identity is blood-based in the sense that it is linked to their place of birth. In that sense, they might not feel as Dutch as others because they were not born there. For others, however, identity is about performativity and how they decide to enact certain parts of their heritage. Yvette's experiences were similar to Jay's because her personal identification with the Netherlands was made stronger after her first trip to the Netherlands. It is interesting that accounts like that of Lisanne, Marieke, Jay and Yvette, suggest the importance of place when it comes to our identities and sense of belonging.

A final notion that I picked up on during the interviews was that outsiders often noticed that informants were not originally from Canada. Informants seemed to have to negotiate and defend themselves from how other people categorized them. In the process of identity formation, it is common that people partly form who they are based on how the wider society pictures them (Hawley, Poor & Tuteja, 1997). The identities and labels that other people give us are often called ascribed identities and greatly affect the way we position and identify ourselves (Sriramesh & Verčič, 2012) Lisanne her comment below touches upon the concept of ascribed identities:

"People hear me speak Dutch, especially for the first time, they are very like "wow, what is that". It's very.. it's.. I don't know. I always got told that I looked different which makes no sense to me. Even my husband says it he says "you don't look Canadian". And then I'm like "I'm not Canadian". And his family always goes like "oh you're so Dutch". And I'm like" it's fake blond.. I don't have blue eyes. The only thing I have is that I'm tall. I don't know how you think I look Dutch but okay"" (Appendix F).

Lisanne mentions that people often link her physical appearance to being Dutch. Her response to "you don't look Canadian" clearly shows that she, in some way, seems to have to prove why she does not look Canadian or why she is not Canadian. In addition, Marieke mentions that people sometimes make comments such as "oh you're so Dutch", "you have so little", "you're so convenient" indicating that she has certain traits that can be ascribed to a stereotypical image of the Dutch (Appendix F). Marieke even states that even though she has been in Canada for most of her life she still finds it frustrating when people persistently ask her where she is really from. In most cases, she decides to either share, or not share where she is from based on the context. In both Lisanne and Marieke their cases their authenticity or uniqueness seems to be noticed by other people which can sometimes result into negative or positive experiences.

7.1.2 Narratives of Self-Exploration

“I feel both. I feel Dutch and I feel Canadian. I don’t know. It’s a really weird feeling. If I’m around Dutch people or around anything that is even slightly Dutch I feel very very Dutch and the other times I am mostly Canadian” (Appendix F, Lisanne).

A variety of views were expressed by informants in relation to their search of identity. They surfaced mainly in relation to how they came to be and how they made sense of having different backgrounds. An interesting finding that emerged from the narratives is that the informants often voiced their personal changes in life. They were often aware of their different backgrounds and tried to make sense of them while growing up. When asked about what his Irish, Dutch and Canadian backgrounds meant for him Lee said:

“I tend to think about that a lot actually because it’s hard to say oh well I’m born in Holland but my mom’s from Ireland but I live in Canada. What really is my true home if I were to call it home? I call.. I mean obviously from like a birth right standpoint I would call Holland my home. But it’s something that I’m still looking the answer for I think. I probably will have it if I end up going back for a Masters or something like that. I just want to see.. I just want to relate back to what I thought Holland was like and then see it through my eyes now and be able to relate to it in other ways. But as a kid obviously I would say Holland was my home and then my mom.. after growing up I’ve had comments.. when my aunt came to Canada she was like “you look so much like your aunt or like your mom”. So I think it’s edging to Ireland right now as I’m growing up” (Appendix F).

Lee seems to be very aware of his changing identity as it is constantly shifting while he grows older. For Lee, the Netherlands is his home from a birth right standpoint but is not necessarily what he identifies himself with at present. Experiences while growing up seem to affect how Lee identifies himself and he even states that he has received comments on his physical features as he looks like his Irish side of the family. Context and agency are influencing factors when it comes to identity construction. Lee’s narratives exemplifies that identity formation is a continuous process that is always in the making and can never be finalized. While Lee tends to talk about Canada, the Netherlands and Ireland separately, Yvette often uses the hyphenated term Dutch-Canadian in order to describe her identity:

“I’ve always sort of identified as English and British-Canadian and Dutch-Canadian. I was always very aware of the fact that three of my grandparents were not born in Canada and came from a different

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place. But when I had that first trip when I was 21 it definitely shifted to being Dutch-Canadian because just that part of the heritage and even it not being a family thing it just became a me thing. Because my sister does not really feel Dutch-Canadian at all but I've sort of discovered I quite liked it here so I've actively acknowledge that. That is part of my heritage ... I'm very happy to be Dutch-Canadian. To identify as both I also don't really always feel like I'm a very good Canadian I always feel very European. So this gives it sort of a grounding in a specific European place" (Appendix F).

The use of hyphenated identity seems to imply the presence of a hybrid identity. It shows that both her Dutch and Canadian identities seem to merge into one as they influence each other. Similar to Lee's account, Yvette mentions that what she identifies with is largely a matter of personal choice. In comparison to her sister, Yvette actively pursues her Dutch heritage as a marker of individuality and authenticity. Marieke also alluded to the notion of hyphenated, or hybrid, identity as she mentioned that she does not pinpoint certain aspects in her life as "this is my Dutch culture" or "this is my Canadian culture" (Appendix F). Rather, they seem to merge into a third space.

I find it remarkable that Yvette and Lee also touch upon the importance of location. For Yvette, it was important to be in the Netherlands physically in order to make sense of who she is and how she identifies herself. She even mentions that it grounded her European identification in "a specific European place" (Appendix F). For Lee, the Netherlands is his home from a birth right standpoint but is not necessarily what he identifies himself with at present. These narratives show that the interplay of roots and routes is constantly present and are understood differently for both informants.

Besides the importance of place both Tamara and Marieke mention the maintenance of their Dutch passports. For example, Tamara said:

"I still have a Dutch passport which I've always felt was something that would always tie me down. And I got offered a job here to work as a flight attendant for a Canadian company but they required a Canadian passport. I just wasn't ready to give.. I just couldn't do that" (Appendix F).

Of course, having a Dutch passport does not necessarily mean that informants automatically feel affiliated with Dutch culture. However, the choice of deciding to get a Canadian passport gives informants some agency when it comes to their official nationality. Tamara seems to give social and personal meaning to having a passport. Although she mentions that having a Dutch passport might limit her from certain jobs that require a Dutch passport, she states that just having it makes her feel more Dutch as she has something that officially states this. In Tamara's case, her Dutch passport can

be seen as symbolic capital as it is of value to her and identifies her with the specific position of being Dutch.

7.1.3 Narratives of Negotiation

“I feel like there’s pros and cons in both countries and you can’t really.. you can’t have both, you can’t just have all the goods so you have a bit of each” (Appendix F, Lisanne).

In their narratives informants were constantly making comparisons between the Netherlands and Canada. Almost all informants cited differences which marked the boundary separating Dutch and Canadian culture. For example, Jolijn, Lisanne and Tamara all reported a sense of difference when it comes to *gezelligheid*⁴. Both Jolijn and Lisanne point out that *gezelligheid* is something that they only experienced with other Dutch people as a certain feeling is missing with Canadians. In addition, Lee mentioned that he is sometimes frustrated with the differences between social relations in the Netherlands and Canada. He mentions that Canadians are very careful with their words and try not to offend people whereas Dutch people are more straight forward. Almost all informants seem to favour some parts of one culture over the other and have to find a way to negotiate between the two.

Although some informants seem to favour certain aspects of a culture others have accepted that one culture does not necessarily outweigh the other. Marieke states that, at the beginning, she often focused on distinct differences between cultures such as clothing or food. However, growing older she notes that she looks at it not as “this is better” or “this is better” but now has a more realistic perspective (Appendix F). At the same time Nathalie also considered she has changed since childhood since she now has a different perspective on the *Zwarte Piet*⁵ debate:

“It’s one of the things I noticed having grow up with Canadian culture but then also experiencing Dutch culture growing up. And I know a lot of people .. Dutch people do not like this .. I know they don’t .. but the whole Sinterklaas and Zwarte Piet and that whole you know where the tradition comes from a lot of people get super super defensive if they even.. even one little thing about it IT’S NOT RACIST. If it wasn’t racist you don’t have to react ... have to defend it because there’s nothing to defend. I think it almost speaks to the fact that they know it’s not right like some of it. And you know it’s like he’s his helper he’s his helper and he’s his friend but and then sometimes.. he’s only black from going down the chimney

⁴ an untranslatable term that the Dutch often use to describe the cosiness or warmth that you feel when with loved ones.

⁵ A controversial character that helps Saint Nicholas hand out sweets and presents to children during the annual celebration of *Sinterklaas* in the Netherlands. Traditionally those portraying *Zwarte Piet* put on black face-paint, golden earrings and red lips although this has been criticized in recent years due to its colonial history.

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but then why does he have the big gold hoop earrings and the big red lips. That doesn't make any sense right?" (Appendix F).

Nathalie seems to be using both of her upbringings in order to make sense of the debate by, in the end, choosing where she stands. She seems to be very critical about certain aspects of Dutch culture and differentiates herself from other Dutch people by saying that she does not share the same view when it comes to *Zwarte Piet* as this tradition is something that she does not take for granted unlike other Dutch people. She later on states:

"I was able to say okay just because that's what I experienced growing up doesn't mean that that's what necessarily should continue as an adult. I still would love to do Sinterklaas in the whole with the shoe out and everything with my kids. I think I would really love to do that but I think I would change it a little bit" (Appendix F).

It is evident that Nathalie has decided to adjust certain Dutch traditions in order to fit her own perceptions. These perceptions probably arose while being immersed in Canada, a multicultural society where the idea of *Zwarte Piet* is problematized. She acts as an independent agent, taking in different perspectives but in the end deciding for herself where she stands. I find it interesting to see how informants state that growing up with two or more cultures has made them aware of certain differences that they either like or dislike and use their own interpretations according to their own set of norms and values. Altogether, identities can be sites of boundary construction and maintenance where informants are constantly negotiating meaning based on their different backgrounds. Whether the differences are positive or negative, informants have the opportunity to strengthen, sustain or desert particular characteristics (Cohen, 1982). The boundaries between both cultures are therefore not static but are constantly being negotiated, changed or abandoned refining and deepening their cultural awareness in the process.

7.2 ONLINE NARRATIVES OF IDENTIFICATION

The following section focuses on how Dutch-Canadian EA perform their identities on SNS such as Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram. By looking at their online activity through virtual ethnography and an analysis of their interviews I will show how Dutch-Canadians image themselves online and how they use certain cultural and identity related practices on social networking sites. I will do this by focusing on the concepts of WhatsApp, Facebook, Dutch-Canadian Facebook groups, pictures, usernames and hash tags, and comments and posts.

7.2.1 Social Ties and Connectivity

“it’s really awesome because technology has made it so easy for us to just say “hey look at this video I was watching” or “hey this is what I did today”” (Appendix F, Nathalie).

One of the main functions of social media among informants is the use of SNS in order to maintain ties and stay connected with the Netherlands. The following sections will deal with the activation of social capital among migrant networks through the use of WhatsApp, Facebook, and Facebook groups by describing how they use these types of platforms.

7.2.1.1 WhatsApp

Among informants the majority mentions how smart phones contribute to the maintenance of social and cultural ties between the Netherlands and Canada. Informants indicate that older forms of communication are supplemented by newer forms of media such as Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram. When asked for the reason why she used WhatsApp Nathalie mentioned that she preferred WhatsApp over older forms of communication such as emails or letters as it is more natural, informal and easily accessible. Nathalie points out that before Whatsapp: “We would just message each other and before that we wrote emails sometimes. Not as often. This is nicer because it feels like this is more .. it’s not as formal, you’re not writing a full letter every time” (Appendix F). She adds to this that it is “more in the moment and real”. Instead of having time in between messages, messages can now be received immediately after sending making it more instant.

When asked about how she uses WhatsApp Lianne states: “All of it.. single chats.. group chats.. we send pictures, videos. I actually even use the recording thing so I will sing happy birthday and stuff” (Appendix F). Informants indicate that the content on WhatsApp is more media-rich since communication is not only verbal but also visual and sensory, for example, through sending pictures, voice messages or videos. When asked who they used WhatsApp with Marieke, Tamara and Nathalie

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mention that they only use it with Dutch family and friends since most Canadians do not use the app as they have phone plans that provide them with unlimited texting. While Nathalie uses WhatsApp “all the time”, Marieke states that: “it’s not super consistent. There are some cousins that I chat with on WhatsApp a while and then it’s kind of silent for a bit. It’s not that we talk on a daily basis it’s definitely weekly or monthly” (Appendix F). The frequency of contact seems to vary among informants and seems to be even less with men as Jay and Lee have not indicated the use of WhatsApp. Altogether, WhatsApp provides informants with the chance to bridge geographical separation by giving them tools to communicate with friends and family in the Netherlands making long-distance communication more intimate and real. WhatsApp provides informants with the opportunity to connect with strong and weak ties resulting in social capital.

7.2.1.2 Facebook

By talking to informants about their use of social media I noticed that Facebook is often used in order to document everyday life and maintain social ties in the Netherlands and Canada. As Mahler (2001) and Haythornthwaite (2002) mentioned Facebook gives participants the tools to strengthen weak ties and to connect to a broader set of contacts with similar backgrounds. For instance, Tara points out that she uses Facebook to show people what she is doing, but also to find out what’s going on in other people’s lives. She indicates that commenting and uploading pictures often results into the exchange of messages through Facebook messenger. In addition, Jolijn notes that, similar to WhatsApp, Facebook enables her to rekindle friendships with friends from the Netherlands. She notes that before Facebook she would talk less to her friends due to the lack of instant forms of communication. She adds to this that the contact has increased in the last three years due to Facebook as she is now able to constantly see what people are doing. Unlike the other informants, both Jay and Lee indicate that their Facebook activity and contact with friends and family in the Netherlands is very minimal. Although they do not talk to people online frequently, they do mention that whenever they are about to go to the Netherlands they will contact people in order to meet up. Interestingly, Lee mentions a reason for the lack of contact with people in the Netherlands:

“it’s more kind of two different worlds almost. I have my friend group here and they have their friend group there and when there’s an opportunity then it’s mainly that we’ll start chatting but it’s pretty hard to maintain and to keep the conversation going. Because your experiencing things very differently.” (Appendix F).

Similar to his narrative of offline identification, Lee draws the line between the Netherlands and Canada indicating that there are certain differences between life in both countries. Both him and Jay

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seem to make connections with people in the Netherlands whenever they feel the need to while at the same time continuing to live their lives in Canada. I find it interesting to see how Facebook activity is different amongst informants as they all find different ways of maintaining ties with the Netherlands.

7.2.1.3 *Dutch-Canadian Facebook Groups*

Informants indicate that Facebook groups are considered a useful way of engaging with local Dutch-Canadians, rather than simply keeping up with their already existing networks. As mentioned before I got into contact with some of my informants through Dutch-Canadian Facebook groups. Within these groups I noticed that most of the posts concerned Dutch related videos, pictures, news, and people asking and answering questions. Most Dutch-Canadian Facebook groups had a large amount of members with mostly the same people posting content. I asked Nathalie about her experiences with these Dutch-Canadian Facebook groups:

“There is a Dutch group in Toronto like a big group .. like a big .. that’s the group I saw your post on. I haven’t actually gone to any of their meetings or their gatherings but I’m sure it would be easy enough to go and experience a bigger Dutch culture in Toronto. It would be pretty easy too but I’ve been focused on my work so much. Just teaching in Canada is really hard right now. It just takes a long time and I’m trying to learn French to get into a permanent position so I suppose when that’s done I can focus on re-joining Dutch culture a little more. I kind of just like to see what people are posting. I don’t really use it a lot I do kind of check in every couple of months and see what people posted so usually it’s a lot of things that I don’t find myself particularly drawn too. Sometimes people ask questions about translating or getting in contact with the consulate.. other things like that or I have a niece coming to Canada soon looking for an apartment to rent.. things like that. Lots of stuff that doesn’t relate to me but I still like seeing it and knowing that the community is there knowing that I can always reach out”
(Appendix F, Nathalie).

The previous quote can be used to exemplify how Nathalie seems to be a passive user in the Dutch-Canadian Facebook group. She is an observer rather than a participant as she does not post things frequently and only checks the group now and then to see what is going on. However, similar to Dekker and Engbersen’s (2012) findings it can be said that these Dutch-Canadian Facebook groups act like communities based on similar roots rather than on prior acquaintance. Both Nathalie and Marieke indicate that there is content in the groups that they can relate to as they are based on having similar backgrounds or upbringings. Although Dutch-Canadian Facebook groups could be used as a powerful

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tool to meet like-minded people my informants have expressed little need to actively participate in these groups as they have prioritized their personal life in Canada.

7.2.2 Representation Online

“Every now and then I’ll post something in Dutch for my Dutch friends to see” (Appendix F, Tamara).

Besides the social functions of SNS informants also use online profiles in order to express their identities. Informants represent themselves through the use of digital tokens such as user names, hash tags, profile pictures, posts and comments. These tokens often become symbolic markers of informants’ identity as they use different aspects of media to express and narrate themselves to others. The following sections will shortly discuss how informants’ online activity on SNS can be linked to Netherlands and Canada. This will be done by focusing on pictures, usernames, hash tags and language, and comments from informants’ social networking sites.

7.2.2.1 Pictures

Posting pictures in relation to someone’s personal identity and everyday life were very recurrent among participants. Among Tamara her Facebook profile pictures, for example, there were multiple pictures with Dutch flags in the background, the colours of the Dutch flags painted on faces and objects with the Dutch national colour orange. Having migrated to Canada during her childhood, Tamara seems to use pictures on social media sites in order to show how she maintains a connection with her native home, the Netherlands.



Figure 1: Yvette's post on Instagram using the hyphenated identity label 'Dutch-Canadian'

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Alternatively, Yvette her Facebook profile is covered with colourful pictures that she drew herself. Often capturing her daily activities, these pictures provide the outside world with a glimpse of what Yvette her life in the Netherlands is all about. When asked about these pictures, she commented:

“I like to draw pictures and because I have so many friends who are spread out across the world .. I’ve done a couple of study abroads now and I have different friends in parts of Canada because I lived in different cities. I like being able to post like little pictures and they seem to appreciate just the pictures that I post” (Appendix F).

Rather than communicating through words, Yvette shows people the details of her life through visual identity markers. Her Facebook wall, full of drawn pictures, gives people a glimpse into her world. Besides pictures on Facebook, informants often posted identity related photos on Instagram. Altogether, these pictures were often related to typical Dutch or Canadian things such as sports, food, national holidays, and traditions.

In addition, Instagram pictures related to family history and Dutch-Canadian migrant generations was also recurrent. Migrant nostalgia seems to play an important role in the lives of informants as Dutch related posts often emphasize the longing for the Netherlands that informants once were a part of. However, this romanticized depiction may be different from the Netherlands that is present today.



Figure 2: One of Tamara’s posts on Instagram showing the hash tag #homeiswherethedutchis (n.d.)

7.2.2.2 Usernames and Hash tags

On Instagram it was noticeable that informants often used Dutch markers in their usernames, profiles or hash tags. Tamara her Instagram user name, for example, is @tamaraisdutch (name anonymized) which clearly shows what nationality Tamara identifies herself with and how she wants to distinguish

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herself. In a follow-up question I asked Tamara about her username and she said: “It kinda just came to me one time when I was creating my Twitter account .. I didn't wanna use my last name for everyone to know it, and even shortening it sounded ridiculous so I just came up with that to distinguish myself on the Internet” (personal communication, April 19, 2016). Usernames on social networking sites seem to be used very similarly to ID cards, or passports, as they provide informants with symbolic capital that gives value them.

Similarly, informants’ use of hash tags on Instagram are also used as symbolic capital. Hash tags often show how informants categorize themselves and what they want to share with the outside world. Examples such as #ifitaintdutchitaintmuch, #homeiswherethedutchis, #dutchmuch, #thisisholland and #imissnl are clearly related to informants’ perception of identity, home and belonging. In addition, the hashtags #dutchcanadian, #dutch, and #canadian also occurred indicating individual and hyphenated identities. The use of usernames and hash tags is similar to the data found on offline narratives of authenticity and self-exploration as informants use online spaces in order to be authentic and establish who they are.



Figure 3: Marieke's post on Instagram presenting the strong presence of Dutch migrants in Canada (n.d.)

7.2.2.3 Comments and Posts

Similar to offline narratives of negotiation, informants also use SNS in order to negotiate between their Dutch and Canadian values. The following example was taken from one of Nathalie’s comments on a video of Dutch football supporters mocking beggars in Madrid.

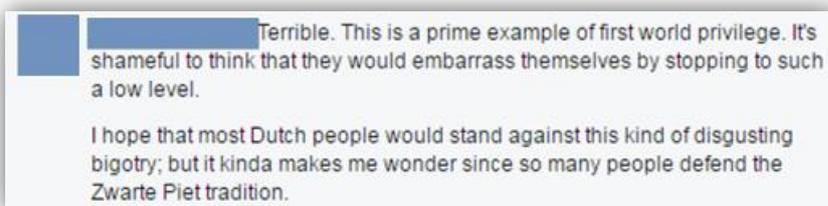


Figure 4: Nathalie's post in the Facebook group Dutch Treat Canada - Toronto / GTA (n.d.)

Nathalie seems to distance herself from how certain Dutch people act by hoping that “most Dutch people” would act differently. She also brings up the *Zwarte Piet* debate indicating that most Dutch people stand by a tradition that she has distanced herself from. She seems to be very critical about certain aspects of Dutch culture and differentiates herself from other Dutch people by saying that she does not share the same view when it comes to the *Zwarte Piet* tradition. Comments about norms and values show how Nathalie has grown out of certain Dutch values.

7.3 SUMMARY OF OFFLINE AND ONLINE NARRATIVES OF IDENTIFICATION

In the case of offline narratives of identification, the three themes of narratives of authenticity, self-exploration and negotiation show that Dutch-Canadian young adults use different ways of maintaining or establishing certain identities. Informants seem to want to distinguish themselves from the crowd, find out where they truly belong and seek different ways to do so. Informants often use both social and symbolic capital to establish a way of keeping in contact with their roots and routes. In addition, remarks about their background produce ascribed identities that informants either have to accept or defend. This constant adaptation and negotiation makes informants' identities in constant flux as they are changing based on the circumstances that they are in. In terms of online narratives of identification, informants use WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, and in particular Facebook groups as ways to stay connected with the Dutch. Accessing SNS is an important part of the young EA' everyday online media use as it also helps to affirm their identity. The use of online media by migrant generations has already been observed in previous studies (Georgiou, 2006; Madianou & Miller, 2013) and are, therefore, not unique to the case of Dutch-Canadian EA. However, it is interesting to note that informants use pictures, usernames and hash tags, and comments in order to distinguish themselves on the internet and to narrate and shape their identities. Surprisingly, male informants were found to be less active on social networking sites in comparison to female informants. Altogether, the results in this chapter indicate that Dutch-Canadian EA use both online and offline narratives of identification. These online and offline narratives of identification often seem to overlap

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as both of them touch upon aspects of authenticity, self-exploration and negotiation. In the next chapter I will now move on to discuss the limitations of this thesis.

8 DISCUSSION

Several limitations of this thesis need to be acknowledged. First, there were a number of issues that were not possible to deal with due to time constraints. It was impossible to do an in-depth ethnographic research as there was limited time to find informants and to observe their offline and online behaviour. Moreover, time constraints also made it hard to thoroughly analyse all the transcripts and therefore it is possible that important themes might have been overlooked. Another limitation of this thesis is the representativeness of the data. The data collected for this thesis was relatively small as it consisted of 7 female, and 2 male informants. In addition, almost all my informants were either students or recent graduates. The data was therefore imbalanced when it came to the representation of people from different gender and class. This is a limitation because I did not have time to focus and analyse dimensions of age, gender and class as they were not equally distributed and I was dealing with a limited number of informants and a limited amount of time. Although the data might not be representative for the entire population of Dutch-Canadians in Canada it does give some insights in the lives of my informants. For obvious reasons, these insights cannot be generalized and therefore only relate to the informants that I interviewed. A third limitation was the subjectivity of the researcher. As mentioned before, there was a limited amount of time to categorize the transcripts and find key elements and themes. It is possible that other researchers would find completely different themes. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that the analysis of the data is highly influenced by my positionality. The themes that emerged were based on my own personal interpretation of the data and might be influenced by my personal background with Dutch-Canadian identity. However, my position can also be considered an advantage because it made me see patterns that researchers with less familiarity of the subject might not have found.

9 CONCLUSION

In this thesis I have presented a detailed empirical analysis on the relationships between migration, identity, belonging and media and, in specific, how Dutch-Canadian EA between the age of 19 and 26 articulate identities both offline and online. By looking at identity as a narrative construction I also highlight how Dutch-Canadian EA make sense of their identity by performing and enacting their identities through the narration of their unique life-stories. The data used to support my thesis has derived from a combination of 9 qualitative in-depth interviews and the use of virtual ethnography of 9 informants.

Through in-depth interviews I established that migration seems to be accompanied by cultural and identity shifts among Dutch-Canadian EA. However, these shifts seem to vary among informants and are largely influenced by factors such as the amount of time spent in the Netherlands, whether they ever visited the Netherlands, and how much they were in contact with friends and family in the Netherlands. The three themes that emerged from the data on offline identities clearly reflect the changes that Dutch-Canadian EA go through while growing up.

Narratives of authenticity show how informants not only feel unique and authentic from people around them but also from people with similar roots. Some informants touched upon the generational differences and how growing up in the Netherlands provided some informants with a different experience than the informants who were born in Canada and had no direct experience when it came to living in the Netherlands. Surprisingly, the importance of place recurs throughout informants' narratives and shows that the interplay of roots and routes is constantly present as informants deal differently with the question of where they belong or what they identify with. For some, home is seen from a birth right, or blood-based standpoint while others identify home as the place where they have most affiliations and connections with.

In narratives of self-exploration, I found out that identities can have different forms and are constantly changing while growing up. Context and agency seem to be influencing factors when it comes to identity construction as informants become less attached to their parents and try to forge their own path and form their own opinions. While some informants talked about different identities separately (e.g. Dutch or Canadian), others used hyphenated terms such as Dutch-Canadian to imply the presence of a dual identity. The influence of legal documents such as passports also seemed to contribute to symbolic capital of certain informants since keeping a passport tied them down to a certain nationality and officially identified them as being Dutch.

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Narratives of negotiation give a clear overview of how informants constantly compare the Netherlands and Canada. Almost all informants cited differences which marked the boundary separating Dutch and Canadian culture. Although some informants seem to favour certain aspects of a culture, others have accepted that one culture does not necessarily outweigh the other. Some state that they can also pick and choose certain parts of a culture to make it fit into their worldview such as Nathalie's modification of the *Sinterklaas* tradition.

Through virtual ethnography of informants' online spaces, I learned that informants use WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, and in particular Facebook groups as ways to stay connected with Dutchness. Accessing SNS is an important part of EA' everyday online media use as it also helped to affirm their identity. Informants often use both social and symbolic capital to establish a way of keeping in contact with their roots and routes. They do this through the use of pictures, usernames and hash tags, and comments in order to distinguish themselves on the internet and to narrate and shape their identities.

Despite its exploratory nature, the results of this thesis throw up many questions in need for further research. Considerably more research needs to be done to fully capture identity construction among Dutch-Canadian EA. Since the writing of this thesis was limited due to lack of time it would be interesting to expand future research by focusing on a larger and more balanced set of data. Future research could further explore concepts that I left untouched such as gender, age, and class. I believe that gender, in particular, is something worth studying as there seems to be significant changes between my male and female informants, especially when it comes to SNS activity. It would also be interesting to further explore the concept of class as my informants were predominantly students and graduates which indicates that they are from at least middle class. Identity formation among lower class EA could therefore be different. The issue of place-belongingness would also be worth studying as informants have specified that identities changed after physically being to the Netherlands. Of course, my methods could be applied to other migrant groups as well. It would be interesting, for example, to focus on marginalized migrants to see how their behaviour differs from elite migrants.

Returning to the research questions posed at the beginning of this thesis, "How do Dutch-Canadian EA mobilize Dutchness in relation to their identities in Canadian contexts and how do they shape, negotiate and narrate these identities online and offline?", it is now possible to say that Dutch-Canadian EA continuously negotiate, articulate, and perform multiple identities depending on the context that they are in. Identity construction is not something that can be generalized, but rather, is something unique that is experienced differently by everyone. Although the terms offline and online identity imply that there is a difference between how informants present themselves both offline and

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offline this thesis shows that offline and online narratives of identification often seem to overlap as both of them touch upon aspects of authenticity, self-exploration and negotiation.

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11 APPENDIXES

11.1 APPENDIX A: REQUEST

Hi everyone!

For my MA thesis I'm looking for people who would like to participate in a research on transnationalism in Canada. I'm Canadian and Dutch myself and I am very interested to find out how having two nationalities can shape our identity.

Preferably I'm looking for:

- people between the age of 15 and 25
- with Dutch parents/one Dutch parent
- currently living in Canada/lived in Canada for most of their life

If you know anyone who fits this description or might be able to help me out please let me know! I appreciate all the help I can get, thank you all! 😊

11.2 APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM

Jasmin Keijzer, MA Intercultural Communication
Utrecht University, Utrecht, the Netherlands

I am writing to ask for your help with a study that is being conducted on young Dutch-Canadians in Canada. The study is part of a thesis, and it is carried out by Jasmin Keijzer, a young researcher from the Netherlands.

For this study one Skype conversation will take place in the month of January or March. The interviewer will ask about your Dutch-Canadian background and your experiences of the internet – this will include discussions about how you uses Facebook, Twitter, Skype and Instagram.

The interviews will be relaxed and informal and you are free to talk about whatever you feel comfortable with. Whatever information you will be able to provide will be of great help.

In addition, it would be much appreciated if you could show your social media activity to the researcher. For this purpose, Jasmin Keijzer has been in contact, and you have expressed initial willingness to give her access to your social media activity on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and/or YouTube. If you want to participate please connect to the researcher using the following details:

Facebook: [REDACTED]

Twitter: [REDACTED]

Instagram: [REDACTED]

Everything you wish to share will be very useful to me. This phase will run for the maximum duration of 3 months (15 January, 2016 – 15 April, 2016).

Your name and personal details will never be used by me or the university. Your privacy will be guaranteed; I will be the only one that studies your activity. Companies or authorities will not have access to your personal information.

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I do hope you will be able to take part in this important study.

Are you happy to take part?

Yes (circle and proceed to complete personal information below)

No (close)

Complete if consent given

Name

Date and place.....

Nationality mother.....

Nationality father.....

Amount of years in Canada and/or other countries.....

Complete if consent given

Name

Relationship to young person.....

Date and place.....

If you have any questions about the research please ask!

For more information about the study you can write Jasmin Keijzer (j.f.keijzer@outlook.com). Jasmin is supervised by Abder El Aissati, and questions and complains can be directed to him (a.elaissati@uu.nl).

Thank you very much for taking part! - Jasmin Keijzer

11.3 APPENDIX C: MEET THE INFORMANTS

Nathalie: I got into contact with Nathalie through the Facebook group ‘Dutch Treat Canada – Toronto/GTA’. Nathalie is 26 years old, was born in Canada and is currently living in Toronto with her husband. Nathalie’s parents are both Dutch. Her father is deceased and her mother still lives in Canada. During the interview Nathalie brought up lots of interesting topics such as the controversy of *Zwarte Piet*. She seemed to be very aware of Dutch colonial history and the representation of ‘blacks’ in North America. It was refreshing to hear a different opinion on the matter and it seemed that she was able to decide for herself how to shape the tradition of ‘Sinterklaas’ to fit her own world and thoughts. Nathalie had some cute bunnies roaming her garden that distracted me from the interview at times. She seems to travel a lot and enjoys her job as a supply teacher.

Yvette: I met Yvette through one of my Dutch friends in Ottawa. I posted a status on Facebook so that friends could help me with the search for Dutch-Canadians. Our mutual friend tagged Yvette and we got into contact. Yvette is 23 years old, was born in Canada and has a British mother and a Dutch-Canadian father. Ever since her first visit to the Netherlands Yvette has been going back and forth between Canada and the Netherlands for her studies. She is currently doing her Masters in Nijmegen. From looking at her profile and talking to her I noticed that she has traveled a lot and has friends from all over the world. On top of that Yvette makes beautiful artworks and shares these on social media.

Jay: Jay and I came into contact through a mutual friend in Ottawa. Jay is 22 years old has a Dutch-Canadian father and a Dutch-German mother. Jay is currently working as a data analyst and hopes to get a full-time contract soon. Jay and I immediately hit it off and talked about a lot of non-thesis related things. He seems like a really relaxed guy and could tell me a lot about Dutch influences (and swear words!) that he picked up on while growing up. Although he has only visited the Netherlands once he hopes to go back soon.

Jolijn: I got into contact with Jolijn through one of the Dutch growers that I met through my parents. Jolijn was immediately interested in the search and was very glad to participate. Jolijn is 21 years old and moved to Canada from the Netherlands at the age of twelve. Jolijn is currently studying international business in Germany as part of her degree in Canada. Jolijn still seems to have a strong connection with the Netherlands and often goes back to visit friends and family, go shopping, and catch up on Dutch foods and ‘gezelligheid’.

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Tara: I got into contact with Tara through the Facebook group 'Dutch Treat Canada – Toronto/GTA'. Tara is 24 years old, was born in Canada and has Dutch parents. Tara is currently studying in North Bay at teacher's college. Tara has spent many summers in the Netherlands and seems to travel around a lot. She has done a study-abroad in France and planned to go to Curacao the week after our interview.

Lee: I got into contact with Lee through one of the Dutch growers that I met through my parents. Lee is 19 years old, has a Dutch father and an Irish mother and moved to Canada from the Netherlands at the age of seven. Just from talking to Lee it was evident that he had a great passion for architecture as he was very descriptive when it came to countries, cities and houses that he lived in. Not surprisingly, Lee is currently studying Architecture in Toronto. Lee often goes back to both the Netherlands and Ireland to visit friends and family. In addition, Lee is thinking about doing a Masters in Delft.

Tamara: I got into contact with Tamara through one of the Dutch growers that I met through my parents. Tamara is Jolijn's older sister who has also been interviewed. Tamara is 23 years old and moved to Canada from the Netherlands at the age of thirteen. Tamara recently graduated from political science and is looking into pursuing law school. Tamara goes back and forth between the Netherlands and Canada almost twice a year to visit family and friends. Moreover, she often celebrates Kingsday in the Netherlands as well. It was interesting to see how her stories differed from that of her sisters'.

Lisanne: I got into contact with Lisanne through one of the Dutch growers that I met through my parents. Lisanne is 26 years old and moved to Canada from the Netherlands at the age of nine. Lisanne has her hands full as she is the mother of two twins. Besides taking care of her twins she also works at her parents company. Although Lisanne seems to go back to the Netherlands quite frequently she also enjoys exploring new countries.

Marieke: I got into contact with Marieke through the Facebook group 'Dutch Treat Canada – Toronto/GTA'. Marieke is 24 years old, was born in the Netherlands and moved to Canada when she was 13 years old. Both Marieke her parents are Dutch. Marieke recently graduated from university with a bachelor of education and a bachelor in English and psychology. She seems to be very busy at the moment as she teaches grade 5 part-time and is also an educational assistant in grade 3 and grade 8 at a local Christian school.

11.4 APPENDIX D: TOPIC AND QUESTION LIST

- Age
- Country of Birth
- Nationality
- Nationality parents
- Occupation

Personal

- Childhood
 - o How was it growing up?
- Life
 - o What does your life look like at the moment?

Migration

- Moving to Canada and first arrival
- How did you feel?
- Reasons to migrate.
- Did you know people there?
- Did it take long to adapt to the country?

Memories

- Memories of the Netherlands
- Connections with Canada
- Connections with the Netherlands
- Friends and family in the Netherlands

Media

- Usage of online media/social media.
- How do you use it?
- Why is this important?

Other

- What does identity mean for you?

11.5 APPENDIX E: TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

The transcription conventions that I used for the transcribing of my data were based on Mazeland (2003) although some adaptations were made:

- ... silence shorter than 0.2 seconds
- . the full stop refers to descending intonation at the end of an utterance.
- , the comma refers to a slight increase of intonation.
- ? the question mark refers to a rising intonation at the end of an utterance.
- ! the exclamation mark refers to a louder statement.

11.6 APPENDIX F: TRANSCRIPTS OF THE INTERVIEWS

11.6.1 Nathalie

Okay. So I have a couple of basic questions beforehand. Your 26 years old?

Yes.

Yes. Were you born in Canada?

Yes.

Okay. So your mom is Dutch and your dad as well or?

Yeah, both of them.

Okay. Do you know why they decided to move to Canada?

My mother moved with her family when she was very young. So she was 5 years old I think. And my father moved when he was 19 and I'm not sure exactly why he moved. He's deceased now so I haven't really had the opportunity... he died when I was a child still so I didn't have the chance to ask a lot of questions. But I think it was just his brother already moved here.

Okay, that always helps. Yeah.

Yeah, coming to spend time with his brother for a year or something like that. I think he just liked it.

Yeah. Okay, that's good. So they are both Dutch, that's good to know. Okay so can you tell me a little bit about yourself, maybe what you're doing right now, yeah just your average weekday, something like that yeah?

Okay. Well, I work as a supply teacher right now with the Toronto district school board. So average day I get up at 6:30 and leave the house around 7. I work in a different school often every day but sometimes same school couple days in a row. And it could be anywhere in Toronto.

Okay.

Schools usually get out at around 3:30 and I'm usually home by around 5 o'clock but that's 5:30 just depends how far the school is because it takes longer if I have to go to a farther school.

Okay, that's good to know. So you live in Toronto there at the moment.

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Yeah.

Okay nice. I have family close to Toronto, they live in Ajax.

Yeah that's right next to it.

Yeah It's pretty close. Okay so let me think. Can you tell me something about growing up? Did you notice any Dutch influences when you were in Canada? Did you often go back to the Netherlands? Anything related to maybe memories that you have from the Netherlands.

Okay. I went when I was a very young child still, maybe 3 years old. I don't really remember that trip. Then I went again when I was 11 and again at 18. And then last year so when I was 25.

Okay, nice. Did you go by yourself or?

No, when I was 18 an 25 I went with my husband. We were dating when we were 18 and so now we're married. But before I went with my mom and my brother when I was 11. And then we always stay with my aunts and uncles and cousins all over.

So you still have quite some family that you visit?

Yeah yeah there's a lot of family. And I also have lots of cousins of my age in Nederland so it's nice to see them and talk to them. I keep in regular contact with a few of them using Whatsapp all the time.

Oh yeah, that's easy.

So it's really awesome because technology has made it so easy for us to just say "hey look at this video I was watching" or "hey this is what I did today" so it's really awesome.

Yeah, no that's great yeah. So do you have like a family group chat?

Yeah with my cousins.

Oh okay that's nice.

So we I guess it's nice because they learn English here in Canada it's not really usable to speak Dutch that often. You don't see it a lot of places. Some parts of rural Ontario you'll see like there are a lot of Dutch farming communities but I didn't grow up in a Dutch farming community.

Oh okay yeah. Oh I didn't know that.

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So I didn't get much practice. I try to work on it but it's kind of one of those things where I just have to I'm gonna have to spend a lot of time. I'm working on French right now so it will come after.

That's already hard on its own.

Yeah. I can speak some basic conversational. I can understand when my family speaks. It was easier I had an oma who lived in Canada and I could understand her accent better but my cousins who live in Nederland I just find their particular accent harder to understand so I can understand everything my oma in Canada says but my dad's side of the family I can't really understand.

Ah, that's quite funny because for me it's the other way around. My grandparents speak really different Dutch. They live in Canada at the moment and they have a really English way of speaking Dutch which is quite funny.

Yeah. Which is how my oma spoke as well even though she was in Nederland for so long.

Yeah.

So my experiences I guess growing up were we did Dutch school both me and my brother.

Oh wow.

And we kept doing it after my father died. But we didn't speak Dutch as much at home after he died because my mom and him used to speak all the time but she didn't really have any one else to speak with as much after he was gone. So it was super Dutch until my father died when I was 9. So me and my brother, my brother was 7. We were pretty Dutch up until then and then it kind of transitioned over to the Canadian side of living.

Yeah.

We did a lot of like the traditions. And ate a lot of Dutch food and stuff. So we still did sinterklaas. Even my husband is really wonderful, he's really taking on a lot of the Dutch traditions. So he will put my shoe out on December.

Ah that's so cute.

Yeah. It's really nice. And yeah just like the foods. For Christmas ... my oma was Indonesian Dutch so for us Christmas food was always oma's cooking. So this for me is Indonesian food.

Oh, that's nice. Something different, that sounds good. Okay. So has your family come to visit you in Canada? Your cousins maybe?

Yeah a couple of times. Now that we're adults. My cousins have come a couple of times. So it's really nice. We're always bothering them, when are you coming back, when are you coming back.

Yeah.

The plan is hopefully within the next year or two to go back and visit again.

That would be nice. It's always nice that you can also travel to different countries when you go to Europe.

Yeah when you come to Canada it's just one gigantic enormous country.

You need someone to drive you around and. Yeah, no that makes sense. So what are do you notice any big differences between Canada and the Netherlands maybe?

Uhhhm yes.

Is that a difficult question?

There's some things I notice that are really good and some things are not as good. Like I find that the Netherlands is more socialists. And their public spending I really like. It seems the taxing are higher but the quality of living is also higher. People get paid more and even when you guys are students you don't have the same debt loan that we would graduate with here. It's amazing because graduating with 30.000 is not exactly ideal but it's what you have to do right now.

It's really different.

So that part of it I think is just wonderful. But then I do find the Dutch to be and having been raised with Canadian society it's just very super accepting super I don't know if you experienced that while you were here but there's like a very big acceptance of other cultures I find.

Yeah I find so as well. Everyone is very open about different cultures as well yeah.

Yeah and I think maybe that has to do with like the fact that Canada is so young. There's not really as much culture here. There's hardly any culture. We did ... people say Canadian culture but I don't even know what that means I've grown up here my whole life. Like it means camping and maybe pancakes. I don't know.

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It's still in the making.

I don't even know. There's a lot of ... generally I think people are nice. Very... I hear from everybody else that Canadians are really friendly.

Yeah I think so.

But then I don't know what that means. But I'd say culturally I just ... I do find a little bit of it personally the taste of... I don't think it's just the Dutch... I think it's other older cultures ... not being as open to ... immigration and the melting of all different groups together. I think that's why I love Toronto so much. I grew up in London Ontario.

Okay, yeah.

I just found it to be very conservative and very white and very ... a lot of people just were rich and liked being rich and didn't really want to spend time being around other people that didn't match them. I think that's why I really like Toronto because there's so much interesting... it's a mix of all the world here.

Yeah I think you're right in the centre of Ontario as well, there's so much going on.

Yeah. So I had to say anything... and even ... don't get me wrong I love my cousins. But to be honest sometimes they say things that are so ... they are so racist that I'm just like oh my gosh like I can't believe ... and then they're like no I'm not racist. Well like that is the heart of racism. And I've ... it's kind of one of those things that you don't ... I would never choose to argue over that because the time I spend with my cousins is just too precious just to argue about it. I don't have that much time when I see them so but it's kind of one of those things where I'm 'just like ugh I can't believe you said that but I love you and I'm not gonna spend the time arguing about that.

That's very wise.

I don't know if you've noticed any...

Yeah people always tell me the Dutch are always open and very accepting but when you actually talk to people you figure out it's not always the case and there's like a deeper racism going on that most Dutch people aren't aware of. And they get really defensive when you say that they are saying something that isn't really correct.

Yeah that's what I mean. It's not necessary as blatant but it's a little bit more under the surface.

It's hidden.

It's one of the things I noticed having growing up with Canadian culture but then also experiencing Dutch culture growing up. And I know a lot of people ... Dutch people do not like this ... I know they don't ... but the whole sinterklaas and Zwarte Piet and that whole you know where the tradition comes from a lot of people get super super defensive if they even... even one little thing about it IT'S NOT RACIST. If it wasn't racist you don't have to react ... have to defend it because there's nothing to defend. I think it almost speaks to the fact that they know it's not right like some of it. And you know it's like he's his helper he's his helper and he's his friend but and then sometimes... he's only black from going down the chimney but then why does he have the big gold hoop earrings and the big red lips. That doesn't make any sense right?

Yeah people just get very defensive when you call them racist in their face. They get really uncomfortable I guess.

It's not to say that you yourself are a horrible person it's just that you might need to look at that part of your tradition. Tradition is tradition because it's going been on for so long but that doesn't mean it's right. Traditionally women couldn't vote does that make it right? No. traditionally we were allowed to keep slaves, does that make it right, no. a lot of things I don't think tradition ought to be respected just because it's tradition.

That's a good point, I agree on that. It's interesting you brought this up.

Yeah so when I think about ... that's probably the biggest part of Dutch culture that I'm just like ughh I personally wouldn't ... I think the whole tradition of sinterklaas is interesting but then ... and especially ... maybe especially ... I don't know what the deal was in Europe but in other American culture it was because black people were so despised for a long time in north American culture they wouldn't let them act in plays so then the white people would be painting their skin black and be acting like black people on stage with them ... it was always in like an derogatory way depicting black people to be like apes something horrible like that. So from my perspective and from how I've been raised and painting your skin black and pretending to be another race is not what we've been taught as acceptable. When people do it I'm like "I don't know about that".

Yeah.

I don't know if that kind of answers the questions between like the Canadian raising versus like the Dutch culture but thats kind of like what I've noticed in my experiences.

You have a little bit of both so you can just kind of fit different ideas to what you actually associate with so that makes sense yeah.

Yeah because I can say I have very fond memories of being at Dutch school and sinterklaas coming to visit and Zwarte Piet coming and taking some kids away in the sac. It was all great fun and having all the snoep thrown out into the crowd and all this stuff. To have these great memories but then as an adult I was able to say okay just because that's what I experienced growing up doesn't mean that that's what necessarily should continue as an adult. I still would love to do sinterklaas in the whole with the shoe out and everything with my kids. I think I would really love to do that but I think I would change it a little bit.

Yeah. that makes sense. Did I just see a bunny there? Yeah I think so.

Oh yeah I have bunnies. They are playing outside right now.

That's cute. I was wondering.

They are running around out there because it's so warm. They were very excited to go outside.

We had snow for the first time this winter, it was two days ago. It was gone in 5 seconds but...

Yeah we had a really weak winter here. It's been... I don't think it got below -20.

Oh wow.

It's the warmest winter I ever remembered.

It's good I guess?

A little bit sad. I'm used to the whole high snow banks and all the yeah ...

It's pretty yeah. That makes sense. Oh okay I was thinking if I have any other questions. We discussed about quite some different things. Could you tell me a little bit about Dutch school? I'm not sure how it works and I've never heard of Dutch school in Canada.

So it was just like a Saturday class and it was in a high school in London. And they had lots of different language schools going on in that high school so every Saturday people from different cultures would come and I'm pretty sure they had some Arabic class going on at the same time. I feel like they maybe also had a Russian class with Russians showing up when going to Dutch school. And we would always make traditional Dutch food during Dutch school and they would do like a brunch kind of thing so it

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would go from say 8 in the morning until 1 in the afternoon or like 12 or something like that. And at 11 o'clock we would sell a bunch of the foods we made. We would make traditional Dutch foods and learn about it and we'd read books and learn about talking. But I was in the little class so up to age 9 or something so we weren't doing super advanced stuff and I already knew everything so I didn't necessary I felt like I learnt a lot as far as language or reading or writing skills went but about traditions and stuff we learned a lot which was great. And then they kind of had a slowly decline in attendance and then at the point when I was going to switch to the older class they kind of shut it down so I couldn't go to the other class where we were learning about language and writing and stuff like that. It was great. It was really fun and wonderful memory I've had. I really loved it.

That's nice. Good to know. I have one more question. You say you have a Whatsapp group with your family? How would you feel if that type of technology would not be there? What would you miss or how would you deal with it?

We would just use Facebook instead. Facebook chat or make a group chat or something like that but it's nice because it's mobile and Whatsapp is a little bit better than Facebook chat. It just seems to work a little faster and it's easier to embed links and add people and stuff like that. I don't know. You asked me why I use it over Facebook I honestly don't know if I could tell you exactly why. Mostly probably because people other than my friends have it. Internet called texting. So it's like, because I think it bases of some sort of made up phone number. So it's ... if you didn't have an internet connection you could still text via the number that it uses.

Oh I didn't know.

As far as I understand that's why it's better. I think we would probably use Facebook. I did before we used Whatsapp and we would just message each other and before that we wrote emails sometimes. Not as often. This is nicer because it feels like this is more ... it's not as formal, you're not writing a full letter every time.

More like an ongoing conversation.

Yeah which you know its more natural too. You know everybody is always busy so it's kind of easy. More in the moment and real and stuff.

That makes sense yeah. And your brother, how old is your brother? Is he younger than you?

Yeah he's 25 now yeah he's just turned 25.

Okay nice. I think that's about all that I need. I don't know if you have anything to add if you want to... I don't know. Yeah.

Ehm I would say in my experience of knowing another language and growing up with another culture I think it was really beneficial and lovely to grow up with the experiences of two worlds rather than just one. And I think it was kind of nice because it did feel special at home having another language that I could speak with my family. It kind of made it like almost this special experience of having our own language and our own you know traditions that we did at home that were different of everyone else at school was doing. I don't really remember meeting a lot of Dutch kids at school so it was kind of unique to us if that makes sense in my childhood. A lot of my memories of my oma and opa here in Canada my Canadian ... the ones that ... they lived here for... it was ... they moved back and forth a bunch. They lived in Nederland for quite a long time and then they moved to Canada and stayed here for something like 30 years and then moved back for another 15 and then my opa died and then my oma moved back here to be with her kids because much of their kids are in Canada My aunt is in Scotland but ... then she moved back to be with her kids. So it was a lot of back and forth but it was nice. Just having that whole experience with my aunts and uncles and everybody. Having the tradition of all of us doing sinterklaas around Christmas time. Just visiting and seeing each other. I don't know. I wouldn't say that there's a lot of other traditions because we didn't have like kermis or anything. Any of the big festivals that you have it was really just like ... the number of people here that do it in Toronto is not as big. There's really just not like... I think the number here that do it in Toronto ... there's not enough people to do all the festivals. But just a lot of nice memoires of going to the Dutch store together and getting all the foods. Eating drop and giving them to my friends and them all being like it's the worst thing ever. And still to this day my top favourite food is liquorice hands down all the time.

Nice. Did you force your husband to like it as well?

He's tried it. He hates it. But I still... I could eat it ... I usually eat it until I don't feel good an then the next day eat it again

One of the things I couldn't really miss either if I would move abroad.

Haha yeah. There is a dutch group in Toronto like a big group ... like a big ... that's the group I saw your post on. I haven't actually gone to any of their meetings or their gathering but I'm sure it would be easy enough to go and experience a bigger dutch culture in Toronto. It would be pretty easy too but I've been focused on my work so much. Just teaching in Canada is really hard right now. It just takes a

long time and I'm trying to learn French to get into a permanent position so I suppose when that's done I can focus on rejoining dutch culture a little more.

Okay cool. Yeah. Just another question that popped up in my mind. You're in the Facebook group, do you use it for any specific purposes? Do you stay active with dutch people?

I kind of just like to see what people are posting. I don't really use it a lot I do kind of check in every couple of months and see what people posted so usually it's a lot of things that I don't find myself particularly drawn too. Sometimes people ask questions about translating or getting in contact with the consulate ehm other things like that or I have a niece coming to Canada soon looking for an apartment to rent things like that. Lots of stuff that doesn't relate to me but I still like seeing it and knowing that the community is there knowing that I can always reach out.

That's nice. That makes sense. Okay, I think that's about it.

11.6.2 Yvette

Okay. That's good to know. Okay so just first something really general, you can just maybe tell me a little bit about yourself. What does your life look like right now? What are you doing?

Just doing a Masters degree in the Netherlands.

Yeah. And what made you decide to go to the Netherlands?

It's kind of a long story how I ended up in the Netherlands. My mother's side of the family is English so I was always gonna go to England. It was always going to be England. And then I took one trip very briefly when my mom said in like first year of University ... she was like "do you want to go somewhere for a few days?" I was like "okay" and she said "where do you want to go?" and I'm like "I guess I'm half Dutch... not really thought about it much before... might as well go there see what that's all about". And I think that immediately getting off the plane at Schiphol I'm just like ((inhaling)) "what is this feeling?" And so I sort of changed my plan for my Erasmus year. Well exchange year. I ended up coming to the Netherlands and I really liked it. And I thought about doing a Masters. And everything sort of fell into place the program I wanted was here I knew the city I was comfortable here it just made sense to come back.

Ah that's really cool. Nice. I guess you don't have a Dutch passport then?

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No I wanted one but then my dad... my dad doesn't even have one anymore he got Canadian citizenship and for like complicated immigration things I can't get it either because the Dutch are a bit more picky than other countries like Germany when it comes to citizenship.

Okay.

So no passport for me.

I mean you're still here so.

Yeah I'm still here. Still made it.

Doesn't really make that big of a difference.

It's a little bit more complicated for me. I can't really work but...

Yeah that's true. You get by.

I get by, I make it work.

Okay, cool. So maybe in general, your grandparents of one side are Dutch I guess.

Yeah.

What are your experiences with this?

Well I call them oma and opa. Or I called them oma and opa which ... which always sort of made it stand out more because most of my friends would be like "what's an oma and opa?". And I didn't really realize that there was anything different about calling your grandparents oma and opa. They would like speak to me in Dutch when I was little so I don't really have much of the language but I'm very comfortable around it. Like my oma and opa would call me like [name made anonymous] or me and my sisters were "schatje" and "lieverdje" and we would eat biscuit met hagelslag. It's all these things that I didn't realize were... I didn't realize they were Dutch things, they were just oma and opa things. They would have like wooden shoes in the house. And oh those are there because they are Dutch but I didn't really make the connection that was just oh that's what happens at oma and opa's house.

Nice. And how about with your dad? How does that work? Does he still speak Dutch or?

He doesn't speak it anymore he understands it. He had a bit of trouble sort of with the transition when ... because he immigrated when he was 2 years old so he had to adapt to a new home. And English in

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school which was a bit complicated. And was a bit difficult for him. But yeah now especially since my oma and opa died very recently there's no real like need for him to speak the language.

Yeah. That makes sense. So do you still have family in the Netherlands as well?

Yes I do. I saw them right before Christmas actually. I have the original Yvonne (last name) the person I'm named after lives just outside Den Bosch.

Oh wow.

Yeah they are my opa's cousins because opa and oma like to hold grudges so we don't know if opa's brother is alive or not but he was still on good terms with his cousin who was I think 10 years younger than him so I still have family around if I have any real big like problems or which is nice because I don't see them very often. And whenever I do we sort of sit in their house for like an entire day just drinking tea and coffee.

Yeah. Sounds Dutch.

Yeah. We sit there and sometimes in silence sometimes not just hanging out and then just every few hours, tea coffee, meal, repeat in about 6 hours.

It's nice to know that they are there whenever you need them.

Yeah it's nice to know that there's a family connection close by.

That's true.

I have enough friends here at this point that are Dutch so I think I would be okay now but when I first moved to the Netherlands when I was still like 20 and never even been to this part of the Netherlands before and only have been to Amsterdam once it was nice to know that there was a support system there.

That makes sense. And during university I know you met (name) who was your buddy or ... yeah...

Yeah she was my buddy.

Very cute. I was wondering if you requested a Dutch person or if it was just totally...

I did. I had a really really ... I mean I had a feeling I would have a really really big problem with the re-entry shock going back so I thought it would be nice to still be around Dutch people so I did put a request in for a Dutch buddy.

Yes. So how did that go?

I saw here a few weeks ago. We're still really really good friends. I introduced her to her boyfriend who she's still together with.

Oh yeah Jake [name made anonymous].

I introduced them. I met her parents a few months ago which was exciting. When I arrived to the Netherlands this time she met me at the airport and helped me with my jetlag self drag my suitcases back and forth across Nijmegen trying to figure out wherever it was and just helping me out which was amazing.

Yeah you need someone like that.

Yeah so we still ... anytime I'm anywhere near Amsterdam I try and be like are you around?

That's always nice. Yeah. It's nice that they are still together it's been what 2,5 years.

Yeah it's been a while. She's always in Schiphol going back and forth.

Yeah that's nice. Okay, do you talk Dutch to her at all or not really? How is your Dutch in general?

I have a few bits and pieces. I'm very proud of the fact that I can say "ik spreek geen nederlands".

That's also good to know.

Which I use a lot because I do have quite a lot of Dutch friends this time and I do sometimes end up being the only international surrounded by a bunch of Dutch. And sometimes they forget and start speaking and I'm like okay... the few words and phrases which I'm starting to pick up a little bit ... I did try Duolingo for a while but it was before I moved here. I did it for about 3 months so I have a few random words but then when I got here I got distracted by schoolwork so I didn't keep it up.

So your course is entirely in English then?

Yes.

Yes, that's nice. Okay cool. Let's have a look. Yeah so do you have any specific memories of maybe the Netherlands like do you identify with both Canada and the Netherlands and maybe is this like ... how do you say that ... how do you deal with maybe having two backgrounds?

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Yeah. I sort of ... when I was little it was different because I didn't really have a physical connection to the Netherlands. I sort of identify ... I've always sort of identified as English and British-Canadian and Dutch-Canadian. I was always very aware of the fact that three of my grandparents were not born in Canada and came from a different place. But when I had that first trip when I was 21 it definitely shifted to being Dutch-Canadian because just that part of the heritage and even it not being a family thing it just became a me thing. Because my sister does not really feel Dutch-Canadian at all but I've sort of discovered I quite liked it here so I've actively acknowledge that. That is part of my heritage ... I'm very happy to be Dutch-Canadian. To identify as both I also don't really always feel like I'm a very good Canadian I always feel very European. So this gives it sort of a grounding in a specific European place.

So you have a nice mixture of different cultures going on then.

Yeah I basically am very very white, have some problematic colonial history but haha...

Yeah still. That's cool. So let's have a look, I'm doing part of my research and I'm focusing on how we use online media to maybe learn more about our background and our heritage and I was wondering if ... when you were in Canada did you maybe actively search for things related to the Netherlands or did your parents teach you?

I did a little bit. I did a lot of like looking at those sort of like travel blogs that were like get in touch with the Dutch or understanding the Netherlands and all those sort of fish out of water stuff Dutch people do type things. So I did read a lot of those. And I was always sort of like... the Canadian Netherlands connection is a really really important one politically. And I did my university degree in the capital city so there's the tulip festival, a Dutch prince was born in the city, there is a very strong like ... if you especially if you are Dutch-Canadian you are aware of like the fact that there's about 2 million of you.

Yeah I think it's about 1.6. it's quite a bit.

It's quite a lot of like Dutch heritage so I was always aware of it and as I got older I tried to seek it out more for myself. I would recognize it and I would be like "oh wow they mention the Netherlands... I'm from the Netherlands".

Yeah so you identify with it in a way I guess. So let's have a look. What other questions do I have. So you are in contact with your family. Yes so what kind of media do you use to I don't know maybe share

things about your life and how would you use for example Facebook or Instagram. Not necessarily related to your heritage but just in general. How do you use it?

I really like taking pictures and images. I'm not always the greatest with communicating through words. I have an art background. I like to take pictures of things. I like to draw pictures and because I have so many friends who are spread out across the world ... I've done a couple study abroad now and I have different friends in parts of Canada because I lived in different cities. I like being able to post like little pictures and they seem to appreciate just the pictures that I post. Not like the big photo dumps of like ... I don't post like big albums in one go. I'll post a picture a day and I gradually build them up or I post an Instagram.

Yeah it's nice to show people what you are doing I guess. It's an easy way to communicate.

And I've had friends from home say like oh you're going to post a picture we can't wait to see the pictures. Are you going to take pictures of this? I know that they want me to do it so it's not like I'm being annoying posting pictures. I get asked to so might as well do it. And if I'm having a boring day or a day like today where I'm just writing papers all day it's sometimes nice to try and plan an Instagram.

A little break, yeah.

To like get different parts of your brain working.

I think I understand that. I do that as well. It's like kind of a relaxing moment to do that sort of stuff.

Yeah.

Okay. That's pretty clear. I think I covered most of it. I think it's a little bit less questions because you were actually born in Canada so you never lived in the Netherlands I think growing up but you have experienced some Dutch culture.

Definitely lived in like a little Netherlands in my oma and opa's house. They had little Dutch music playing and eating the And I've looked at Dutch houses now and it was decorated similarly to my opa and oma's house. And there was a few Dutch food stores in Canada. I know there was one in Ottawa and one outside of Toronto. So they would always go to the Dutch food store so we did have a little bit of the tastes and stuff. ... cheese ... slicer thingies that you see all the time here. So it wasn't a fully Dutch childhood but it did have elements of it.

Yeah you had lots of Dutch influences. It's interesting, when I go to my grandma and grandpa or opa and oma in Canada it always feel like a little museum because they have so many different things collected. It's like a museum through their whole life. It's quite interesting I find.

Yeah I always liked looking around and when they died my aunt was like just put your name on things you like and I covered half the house. Stuff in my room at home is full of like red and kitschy useless objects from my opa and oma's house and I was like "that's kind of cool and I like it". Like a teapot and I just have a giant wooden chest in my room. And a big red chair.

That's great stuff to have. That's cool. Yeah so final question, what does identity mean for you? Might be really hard to grasp.

Especialy because my ... one of my exams that I'm doing right now is actively picking it apart. All of my school projects are like okay here's this word you think you know we're going to make you question it ... question everything. I guess identity is always changing and it can be ... there's a quote I like and I forget the poet but it's like "do I contract myself, very well I contradict myself, I'm large, I contain multitudes". There's a possibility to have more than one identity present at any given time and you're not a singular sort of idea. You make different things, different moments.

I guess it's different for everyone.

Sort of a collection of identities more than any one identity.

Yeah I don't think you can put it in one box. It's too big.

Yeah too big. And too in flux.

Yeah that's a good way of putting it. Okay. I don't know if you have anything else to add or anything that you think might be relevant that you want to share.

I don't know are there many people like me going back to the Netherlands during school?

I actually have one other girl but she's going next year but I don't think she's every been to the Netherlands for an exchange before.

I think I knew one other. An American for the first time. And we were friends mostly because we were both half Dutch but he was a little bit more ... his name was Willem and he got very annoyed in our class that we had together when the teacher was talking about William and he was like "that's not my name". Because his name was Willem. I think he also spoke Dutch and we were only friends really and

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I was only friends with him... better than other people because we moved in different circles and we were like "you're half Dutch, I'm half Dutch yaaay".

A good connection. I wonder if there's more but there's probably more people out there.

There's probably. I don't tend to... people think that it's weird because I don't actively seek out other Canadians.

I think that makes sense.

Yeah well there's a lot of people who have quite big country support groups... there's a lot of Brazilians and they tend to club and Italians that tend to club and when someone says "I met another Canadian" I'm like "that's nice" and when people ask me "wouldn't you want to meet them wouldn't it be exciting?" I'm like "ehhhhh".

I mean if you meet them it's always nice but it's always nice to be one of a kind as well.

Yeah I like being special. I think there's five Canadians right now at the university because there's a meeting with the ambassador tomorrow. And there was an email like there was 5 on us on the email and I knew one of them. There's not a whole lot of us around but there's a few and I like being special.

That makes sense. I had that when I went to Canada. I could say oh I'm half Canadian but also half Dutch.

I get that a lot too because my name is so Dutch. So sometimes I would have problems with the university. The first time I moved here they thought I was a Dutch student who hadn't paid as supposed to a Canadian student who pays at her home university. There was a bit of confusion. I'll meet people and when I went to the bank to get a bank account they were like "you're half Dutch" but I don't speak any Dutch and they tried to teach me because I'm half Dutch. When people find out I'm half Dutch half Canadian I get treated a little bit nicer around here. It's a little bit easier. And maybe it's just me or something. Some other reason but I find it very easy to make Dutch friends like I've got a lot of Dutch friends. And that's not always easier for other internationals.

Yeah maybe your one step ahead because you know so much about the country.

I guess so.

Okay, I think that's about it.

11.6.3 Jolijn (interview held in Dutch)

Laten we maar beginnen dat je iets over jezelf verteld. Wat studeer je wat doe je. Even een introductie.

Oké. Op het moment zit ik in Duitsland voor mijn studie. Ik doe een studie voor internationale business dus dat houdt in dat ik twee en een half jaar in Canada op een universiteit heb gezeten en nu zit ik 1,5 jaar hier in Duitsland. En dan deze zomer ben ik klaar en krijg ik van allebei de scholen een diploma dus dat is wel leuk.

Dat is wel vet. Leuk.

Ja. Ik weet nog niet wat ik hierna ga doen dus ik ga weer terug naar school voor nog een jaartje. En dat is in hospitality & tourism management en dan hoop ik daar wat mee te doen. Want in Canada zit ik bij de Niagara Falls dus grote hotels en veel toerisme dingen te doen dus dat is wel de goede plek daarvoor dus dat zal wel leuk zijn.

Oke cool. Dus je bent nu net in Duitsland of niet?

Nee dit is het einde van de periode. Dit is m'n laatste semester dus ik heb al een jaar gedaan. Tot juni.

Waar zit je in Duitsland?

Ik zit in de buurt van Frankfurt. Ongeveer een uurtje daar vandaan dus wel leuk.

Ik ga volgende maand naar Bonn, bij Keulen in de buurt dus ook wel leuk. Ik ben benieuwd. Mijn Duits is echt super slecht.

Dat was bij mij ook heel slecht toen ik hier aan kwam maar het wordt steeds wat beter.

Dan ben ik wel hoopvol.

Ja het komt wel weer ergens vandaan.

Dat is fijn. Oké even kijken hoor. Ja, zou je misschien iets kunnen vertellen over die 12 jaar die je in Nederland hebt gehad en hoe je leven er uit zag. Eigenlijk voordat je ging verhuizen. Ho, volgens mij lopen we vast.

Ik hoor je nu wel maar het begint langzaam te komen.

Beter zo? Volgens mij niet.

(new call)

Yes. Doet hij het?

Ja bij mij doet hij het.

We kunnen het ook zonder video proberen misschien dat hij het dan beter doet.

Ja misschien dat hij het dan wat beter doet.

Oké. Doen we het zo. Vind ik ook prima. Even kijken ik was net een vraag aan het stellen wat was dat ook alweer. Het is ook eigenlijk de eerste keer dat ik zo interview dus het is voor mij allemaal erg nieuw. Een beetje uitzoeken allemaal maar komt goed.

Dat is niet erg.

Wat ik je eigenlijk wilde vragen is hoe je leven er de eerste 12 maanden uitzag eigenlijk voordat je naar canada toe ging.

Oké. We woonde in krimp en aan de IJssel. Dat is bij Rotterdam in de buurt. En ik ging dan naar de basisschool toen. En ja mijn zus en ik hadden het heel fijn daar. We wilde helemaal niet weg want we waren eigenlijk al een beetje te oud ... te bewust van denk ik. We hadden leuke vrienden en deden het allemaal goed op school. Zat net in de brugklas en ja wij vonden het gewoon leuk daar wij hadden geen probleem met Nederland. Nou ja mijn moeder die merkte al wel dat ja het tuig werd steeds erger en ze was soms bang als we buiten waren. Altijd op tijd weer thuis komen en dat soort kleine dingetjes. Vooral zij heeft een broer en zus die in canada wonen dus als ze daar was zag ze hoe anders het was en hoeveel vrijheid hun kinderen hadden. Want zij merkte wel een groot verschil hoe Nederland vergeleken met canada was.

Grappig.

Ja wij hadden er verder geen problemen mee. Gewoon leuk om in Nederland te zijn.

Waarom hebben jullie uiteindelijk dan de keuze gemaakt om toch naar canada te gaan?

Nou ja het was eigenlijk... mijn moeder heeft daar in de 80^e jaren gewoon met haar familie. En in die tijd zijn mijn oom en tante allebei verliefd geraakt op iemand dus die zijn daar altijd gebleven. En mijn moeder is met haar ouders terug gegaan en die ging ook altijd wel terug om haar broer en zus te zien en toen ze met mijn vader trouwde gingen wij dus ook mee en hij was helemaal gek van canada en wilde altijd verhuizen. Maar mijn moeder had zo iets van nee nee wil toch in Nederland blijven. En een keer waren we op vakantie in Italië en we reden terug Nederland binnen en ze hadden allebei zo iets

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van wat doen we hier nou nog. Waarom zitten we hier. Ze vonden het helemaal niet meer fijn om in Nederland te zijn. En toen hebben hun dus besloten van of Italië of Canada. En omdat ze al een broer en zus in Canada hadden ze zoiets van dan wordt het Canada en laten we het gewoon doen. Dan zijn wij nog jong genoeg dat we het zouden aankunnen. En tijd genoeg om zo'n grote overstap te maken ... soort van. Dus toen hebben ze dat eindelijk gedaan. De laatste kans die we hadden voordat we te oud waren het te doen.

Dat is best logisch inderdaad. Hoe ging dat eigenlijk precies. Dat hele proces? Ging dat makkelijk? Had je veel moeite met aanpassen?

Ja voor ons. Voor ons zelf ging het veel sneller dan verwacht. Het duurde precies een jaar om al onze papieren bij elkaar te krijgen. Dat is eigenlijk best snel want meestal is dat tussen de 2 en 5 jaar. Dus mijn zus en ik vonden het niet zo leuk dat het zo snel ging. Veel sneller dan we hadden verwacht om het te vertellen tegen iedereen. En m'n zus had het heel lastig. Die had echt ontzettend heimwee toen we net aankwamen.

Is zij ouder dan jij?

Ja een jaar ouder dan mij. Ik denk omdat ze de brugklas had gedaan en toen moest ze in Canada uiteindelijk terug naar de basisschool want dat duurt twee jaar langer. Dat vond zij natuurlijk ook helemaal niet leuk. Ja ik had er niet zo'n problemen mee ik had zoiets van dan begin ik maar opnieuw. Maar toen we er eenmaal waren had ik er toch wel soms problemen mee want mijn Engels was lang niet zo goed als mijn zus. Zij had veel sneller vrienden dan ik. Het duurde bij mij wat langer om er in te komen. Het was wel fijn we hadden een veel groter huis daar natuurlijk. En een grote achtertuin. Dat hielp wel. Dat hielp wel met het verhuizen en alles. Zoveel problemen hebben we verder niet gehad. Het ging allemaal aardig goed. We hebben geen grote problemen gehad.

En ook wel fijn dat jullie een beetje familie hadden daar.

Ja.

Dat scheelt ook altijd natuurlijk. Even kijken. Ben je in de tussentijd nog veel heen en weer gegaan toen jullie eenmaal naar Canada waren gegaan?

Ja. De eerste ... ik denk ... zo ander half jaar of twee jaar hebben Tessa en ik gewacht. M'n moeder is wel eerder terug gegaan maar ze wilde ons niet zo snel terugsturen in verband met heimwee en alles. Maar sindsdien gaan we wel een keer of twee keer per jaar naar Nederland. Omdat we onze opa en oma nog hebben en mijn vaders kant woont daar ook. Dus we gaan vaak terug. Het is altijd leuk om

terug naar Nederland te komen. Wat betere winkels te shoppen. Toch wel even anders. En je moet je frikadellen weer even eten. En patatje pinda enzo.

Haha inderdaad. Grappig. Praat je nog veel Nederlands in canada eigenlijk?

Ja, thuis praten we altijd Nederlands. Het is alleen... de laatste tijd is lastiger geweest want mijn zus en ik hadden allebei een vriend dus als hun bij ons thuis zijn wat vaak was dan praten we gewoon Engels. Dus dan merk je wel dat het een stuk minder wordt. Maar nu ook gewoon over Skype als ik ze zie is het altijd Nederlands. Onder ons is het altijd Nederlands.

Gewoon vertrouwd en makkelijk.

Ja en het zou ook gek zijn als we Engels met elkaar zouden praten en het is ook fijn dat we het bij kunnen houden want ik merk sowieso dat ik het een beetje verlies dus als je de kans hebt om met elkaar te praten dan helpt dat wel.

Ja. En ben je nog veel andere Nederlanders tegen gekomen buiten de mensen die je al kende?

Ja mijn moeder is een Nederlands clubje begonnen in canada. Een Nederlandse koffie ochtend. Een paar keer in de maand en daardoor hebben we heel veel mensen leren kennen. Die ouders zijn allebei mijn ouders hun leeftijd dus we hebben een heel clubje van vijf of zes echtparen die geïmmigreerd zijn in de laatste tien jaar ongeveer. En die hebben ook allemaal kinderen maar die zijn jonger dan ons dus daar gaan we niet zoveel mee om. Maar als we allemaal samen komen is het leuk en merk je ook het verschil tussen Nederlanders en Canadezen. Het is toch wel gezelliger als je allemaal Nederlanders hebt. Maar ja er zijn er genoeg bij ons in de area dus niet zo lastig om Nederlanders te vinden bij ons.

Nee want jij zit ook in Ontario ook of niet.

Ja ik zit ook in Ontario. Ja tussen Toronto en de Niagara watervallen in. Ja.

Je zei dat je dus al inderdaad wel vrienden en familie nog in Nederland hebt. Hoe hou je daar contact mee vanuit canada?

Ja we hebben dus met mijn opa en oma en mijn andere ... hun hebben allemaal Skype. Dus een keer in de zoveel tijd Skype ik ze. En mijn ouders elke week wel. En met andere familie in Nederland hebben we een Whatsapp groep met z'n allen. Dat is wel leuk. Je hebt toch het idee wat er met iedereen in z'n leven gebeurt. En dan met mijn vriendinnen ... ik heb er nog heel veel van de basisschool ... dus Facebook dan hou je wel een beetje contact. En dan heb ik twee of drie vrienden die ik zie als ik terug ben in Nederland. Een avondje uit ofzo.

Dat is wel leuk ja.

Dat werkt wel inderdaad.

Het is ook wel makkelijk dat er zoveel online kan gebeuren.

Ja precies. Volgens mij is dat een groot verschil. Ik weet wel toen we eerst verhuisde toen was dat er allemaal niet dus dan spreek je elkaar helemaal niet zo vaak. Pas de laatste drie jaar dat ik echt pas contact met ze heb en goed contact. Dus dan kan je op Facebook met elkaar kletsen en weet ik het allemaal dus dat is een groot verschil.

Dat is wel fijn inderdaad. Zijn er grote verschillen die je merkt tussen Nederland en Canada?

Ja zeker wel. Dat sowieso de gastvrijheid dat mis je wel in Canada want het is gewoon niet zo snel dat je bij iemand uitgenodigd wordt of dat je gewoon even voor koffie gaat of zulke dingen. Mensen zijn veel meer privé. Heel aardig en heel behulpzaam maar op een hele andere manier eigenlijk. Ja inderdaad. En sowieso de vrijheid dat heb je wel in Canada. Je kan doen wat je wil, je kan aandoen wat je wil niemand kijkt er raar naar op dus dat is wel fijn. Maar ja de gezelligheid dat is echt Nederlands dat zie je niet in Canada. Zeker niet.

Dus dat mis je wel een beetje.

Ja soms wel. Je hebt niet door dat je het mist totdat je naar Nederland en zie je weer hoe alle restaurantjes er leuk van binnen uit zien dat het echt gezellig is van binnen en niet gewoon een business. Dat maakt wel een groot verschil.

Ja inderdaad. Nog even een vraagje. Heb je tijdens die jaren in Canada ... heb je veel vraag gehad naar je Nederlandse identiteit of was daar veel interesse in?

Ja tussen vrienden klasgenoten zeker wel. Die vonden het allemaal heel interessant dat meisje van een ander land er bij was. Maar ja vaak genoeg van dat ze wat Nederlands wouden leren wat zinnestjes of wat woordjes. Vooral nu dat ik in Duitsland zit ... ik zit dus met een groepje Canadezen dan vinden ze het helemaal interessant want dan hebben ze een beetje een idee van Europa dus dan willen ze gelijk ook meer over Nederland weten. Dan merk je dat ze veel meer interesse daarin hebben.

Dat is zeker leuk. Wat betekent identiteit voor jou? Is misschien een lastige vraag.

Haha. Mijn Nederlandse identiteit?

Ja of beide.

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Nou ja het is zeker wel ... ik ben trots dat ik Nederlands en Canadees ben. Zeker wel. Dat merk ik ook als Nederland voetbalt dan voel je je toch wel ontzettend trots om Nederlands te zijn bijvoorbeeld. Dan komen we allemaal met een hele groep Nederlands naar een restaurant en gaan we allemaal de wedstrijd kijken. En je voelt je gewoon part of a Group of zoiets. Maar ik ben ook trots om Canadees te zijn. Dat je altijd goed voor het nieuws komt enzo. Dat iedereen Canadezen mag dat is toch wel ja dat is ook fijn om daar bij te horen. Ik ben zeker wel trots om beide te zijn.

Dat snap ik wel inderdaad. Even kijken wat heb ik nog meer voor vragen. Volgens mij heb ik het meeste wel gehad. Ik weet niet of je zelf nog iets kwijt wilt of vertellen.

Nee ik denk het niet, veel gevraagd.

11.6.4 Jay

Okay so let's start. So just something basic like tell me something about yourself, what are you doing, what does your life look like at the moment.

Sure sounds good. So I just graduated from commerce at the university of Ottawa, finance. So I graduated in December from the coop programme and I'm just working for the RCMP as a data analyst. Yeah so I guess. Do you want me to go into more detail than that?

Yeah you can.

Well I'm just trying to think what else. I sort of work there I'm on contract but I hope to get a full time job with them I assume before may. Other than that I live in Ottawa, I go back to Kingston once and a while that's where I'm from. Kingston Ontario. I try and go back there about once a month I'd say ... it's kind of the basis of my life right now I guess.

That's pretty clear. Okay. You were born in Canada?

I was born in Canada yeah. Yes. Born in Ontario.

And you're parents are both Dutch or Dutch and Canadian or?

Yes. So both of my parents are I guess ... I guess my dad was born in Ontario and then both of his parents were born in Holland so both of his parents are Dutch so he's Dutch Canadian I guess. My mom was actually born in Germany that was after... I think. From what I understand her parents were

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also born in Holland and her dad was in the army so he went over to Germany sometimes. He was on a placement there I think in Germany. So four of my grandparents were born in Holland.

Okay nice. And are your grandparents still in Canada?

Yeah all four of them actually live in Kingston.

Oh wow.

And they are all still alive and kicking.

I'm always very wary about asking this question.

No I totally understand. All four of them are alive and all of them are in good health.

That's good.

Exactly.

So first question that is maybe related to Dutch and Canadians I guess. Like how do you encounter like Dutch things in your life in Canada? Is there anything...

So you mean like ...

Anything you noticed growing up.

Yeah sure definitely. I definitely noticed that ... all four of my grandparents are pretty religious so ever since I was a kid I went to Christian reformed church. It was almost like a Dutch community because everyone there was Dutch and it seems like they all stick together almost. I've been there all my life and I always go back and see my grandparents on thanksgiving and stuff. You know once and a while we'll have a Dutch day. We'll have kroketts. I'm sure you've heard of them. Some Dutch traditions. We used to go to family camp and my parents would always do ... I think it's oliebollen. That's like another Dutch tradition that we have. So there's definitely a lot of Dutch things that I still have in my life and stuff. One of my cousins actually from Holland came to live in Canada for about six months as well so he was here and he lived with us for a few weeks but ... yeah there's always Dutch traditions. I'm always around and the traditional Dutch people so yeah.

Okay cool.

So how are you with the Dutch language? Do you know any Dutch? You know some words such as kroket and oliebollen and....

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Oh yeah. I know a couple of curse words. Probably I could say ... are you familiar with the language at all?

Oh yeah I actually grew up here. I lived in Canada three times. I live in BC in Lilouette, close to Vancouver. And I lived in Ottawa and New Liskeard which is north from north bay.

Okay. So where you born then in Holland?

yeah I was born in Holland. Then I moved to Canada with my parents and then we moved back again and then I did my study abroad at university of Ottawa and I also did high school in Canada just for fun.

Okay right on. So you're Dutch then. I didn't even know that. Okay.

Yeah my mom's Canadian and I still have most of my family in Canada.

That's interesting. I thought you were from Canada and just going to school there but that makes sense.

I've a little bit of everything. Some Dutch some German some Canadian roots.

Right on. That's awesome. Well so you can speak dutch then or no?

Yeah I can.

Oh really so yeah. I mean I can't ... my mom speaks fluent Dutch ... my dad doesn't speak Dutch at all but I know a few curse words like godverdomme. Like stront. There's doi. Bye. I'm probably not saying it right but doi. I'm trying to think I probably know a few more but most of them are more I guess curse words or funny sayings rather than actual Dutch words.

I mean you always remember all the funny stuff.

Exactly.

So that makes sense.

And yeah so. I mean there's a few words I know. My sister knows a little bit know about the words so she's just more into learning them but yeah. I can't think of any more but yeah.

Okay cool. So do you have family in the Netherlands as well. And have you been in contact with them...

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Yeah definitely. My one cousin that came to Canada to he lives in Holland right now and actually when I came off to visit Kirsten (name anonymised) I stayed over with his family for a bit. I have family there but not immediate family though. So pretty much all like ... I'm not sure how many because I know there's a lot of siblings. But some of my grandparents siblings still live in Holland. I have like third cousins that live there. I don't communicate with them that often but I know my mom still does. I have uncles there and her cousins live there and my dad has family in Holland. I don't personally keep into contact with them too much.

You've been too the Netherlands once then.

Exactly one.

Okay nice. So let's have a look I have this list of questions here so.

That's good.

Okay so you didn't migrate to Canada so I don't have to ask you about that. Let's have a look. Okay. I'm not sure what to ask. This is actually my first time doing interviews as well.

Well no problem yeah. There's probably not too much I can tell you. I'm not myself ... I don't come from Holland I'm just around all the Dutch stuff.

It's still interesting that even though you have a background of Dutch and not like first or second generation but I think you're third generation then.

Exactly.

You're still quite aware of Dutch things even growing up. I think that's interesting.

Yeah.

So. Okay let's have a look. So you said that you are in touch with some of your family and friends in the Netherlands. Do you do that by email or online media or...

Yeah we're on Facebook I guess. I message him once and a while on Facebook to see how he's doing. I contacted him before Holland in order to meet up with him. And all my parents usually use email to keep into contact with my relatives in Holland.

Okay nice. And your grandparents. Do you know the reason why they moved to Canada?

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Yeah. So I know for sure the one side. I kind of recently asked them this. I asked them ... when you get older you start to care more about where you come from. So it was that there was more jobs in Canada when they were around so it was kind of a new opportunity. I guess after the war a lot of things were destroyed. There were just more job opportunities in Canada. They came to Canada to I guess have a better life. That's the reason they came for more opportunities.

That makes sense. I think that's the same reason my grandparents moved. They were originally Dutch and they went after the war. I think some even got a fee to leave the Netherlands because they couldn't take care of all the people and they didn't have enough resources I guess.

Right exactly yeah. That makes sense.

So there's lots of migrants in new Zealand and Australia and America and Canada. Lots of Dutch people everywhere really.

We can spread our genes around.

I think there's about 2 million people in Canada with Dutch roots.

Really? 2 million. That's crazy. There's only what 35 in Canada so that's quite a bit of people.

Yeah even for the Netherlands. We don't really have that much people here either so that's interesting.

What's the population there anyways.

I'm not sure. About 19 million now?

That's for a small country... Canada's like million times the size.

And in exchange we get really tiny rooms for really high prices which is great.

Right on.

I had a really big room in Ottawa actually. It was so nice to have all this freedom and then I came back and I felt like I was caged up again.

Oh yeah. That's funny.

It has some nice sides as well. Lots of fun people and fun things going on yeah.

Exactly. There's a lot more fun things going on down there. It's a lot more relaxed from what I got from Europe.

So definitely. I think so as well.

I'd like to go back another time maybe for longer but...

It's always nice and it's nice to go to Europe because you can visit so many different countries in such a small time because everything is so close. I mean for Canadians it's extremely close.

And it's cheaper too to travel everywhere in Europe.

Yeah that's nice.

I've never even been to the other side of Canada. I've never even been like to the west coast. I've traveled from Amsterdam too ... I'm always Vlaardingen. Is that right. Or Vlaardingen?

Vlaardingen?

Yeah that's it.

Possible yeah.

Yeah it's like a little town close to Rotterdam.

I think that's Vlaardingen.

That's where my family lives. So I've been more over Holland than I've been in Canada.

That's nice. It's always easy when everything is so close. Whenever I'm in Canada I sometimes become sat because I have to sit in a car for 8 hours to visit a friend. It's a lot more work to keep things going.

Yeah right. Definitely.

Okay let's have a look. Do I have any other questions...

11.6.5 Tara

Okay let's just start. So maybe start off with telling something about yourself. So what you're doing yeah just what you're studying. Something to introduce yourself maybe yeah.

Okay. Well I'm in my first year of teacher's college. It's two years now. So I go to Nipissing university in North Bay. So I'm just finishing up this first year. I did ... I went to Waterloo for my undergrad for 4

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years bachelor of arts and I was in the French teaching specialization program and them ... I'm originally from the Ottawa area and then now we moved outside of Woodstock.

Okay nice. Cool. Yeah so you're 24 right.

Yeah.

You're 24 okay. And are both of your parents Dutch?

Yeah. They are both from Holland yeah and then they migrated.

Do you know why they migrated to Canada?

I know there were like different reasons. I know one was to get new opportunities. They grew up farmers so like you know better opportunities. Different opportunities. Try to get out and explore and I think also partly to like get away from some of the the claustrophobicness in Holland.

That makes sense. I get that. Okay.

That's a good reason as far as I know.

Okay and you were born in Canada?

Canada.

In Canada, okay. That's good. So do you have any maybe Dutch influences in your life right now that you can tell me more about?

Well I always grew up with the Dutch culture so you know I grew up ... my first language was Dutch. Now obviously English because I live in Canada. English has become better but I still speak it. All of my relatives are still in Holland. So I'll like use Facebook to communicate with them. With my tantes and oma and what not. And then I have some Dutch friends as well and like we have a lot of ... where we grew up we grew up in a Dutch community. There were a lot of Dutch families.

Okay.

Yeah we knew so many families so a lot of our family friends are Dutch as well.

Was it like a Dutch farming community?

Yeah. Yeah there was a lot of farmers there. A few others. A few like Swiss families but there was quite a few yeah there's quite a few Dutch families that were in that area that were all farming.

Yeah. That's nice. So you still speak Dutch with your parents as well?

It's more like on and off. Like it's more like words we'll say and expressions like when we speak and then ... but then whenever we're with other Dutch people then the Dutch will come out more.

That makes sense. Okay. Nice. And have you visited the Netherlands recently or ... do you visit the Netherlands.

Yeah. Last time was two years ago when I did a year abroad in France. So I spent my Christmas there. I spent three weeks there but I've also spent a lot of the summers there so I was there when I was 4 years old. When I was 10 I stayed in Holland. And it was just me like my family stayed here and I just jumped from like oma to tantes and ooms. So that was for 10 weeks. And then when I was fifteen I spent five weeks there with one of my sisters. And then when I was 18 I went for a summer again. So I spent a few summers there.

That's quite a bit. And you are in contact with your family in the Netherlands? And you said that you do it through Skype or through Facebook. Could you tell me a little bit more about that?

Facebook mainly.

So you just sent messages or?

Yeah. Yeah they'll send messages and what is really great is that they'll comment on my picture's. they'll see what's going on. And then you know I'll comment on some of their post but then we'll also send messages through Facebook messenger. And then also some of them have Instagram accounts so you know it's mainly like you put up pictures and then writing little notes here and there. And then you know sometimes they actually call but...

Yeah nice. It's easy to stay in touch.

Yeah. Like almost everybody has a Facebook account except my oma. My oma she does not know how to work the computer. Especially like with my one aunt I'm really close with her. So it's great to keep in contact with her so she never had kids so like we have like a special ... a close bond and that's who I spent most of my summers with. So it's especially great to contact her and ask how my studies are going and I'm asking how they are and then if there's anything new or if they are about to go on a trip they'll tell me all about it because I love travelling. We exchange stories.

Did they come to visit your family and you in Canada as well?

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Yeah some of them do. So my one aunt was here last summer. She came with my cousin and then my godmother the one that I have a close bond with she's actually coming at the end of may.

That's great.

For three or four weeks. And then ... yeah but like ... so it's been a few years before that. We didn't have that many people because we just moved. So like from Ottawa to this area so ... like you know that transition where you don't really have visitors but like my Every summer. With my relatives it's more they'll take turns so last summer it was my aunt this summer it's my aunt ... my other aunt and then who knows for like next year or the year after.

That's quite busy then.

Yeah.

That's always nice. It's always good to have family drop by.

Yeah. And then at the end of my year abroad in France my whole family we flew up to Holland so we had like a big family reunion. Almost two years ago now.

Oh wow. Did you see people that you hadn't seen before?

Yeah. Especially like my aunt and uncle they had a wedding anniversary. So they also had their relatives but yeah especially for my siblings because they haven't gone as often as I do. And they don't really speak as much Dutch.

Because you're the oldest?

So it was the first time that they like... it was the first time that as a family we went there. That everybody was in one place. So many times it's been one or two people at a time.

Okay nice. So you're the oldest in your family then?

Yeah.

Okay. Nice.

Yeah. I have two brothers and two sisters.

Two brothers two sisters. Oh wow that's quite a big family then. Yeah. I think we have a little bit of a slow connection at times.

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Yeah.

Can you still hear me?

Yeah it's a little slow.

I'm used to it I always call with relatives or parents and we always have a slow connection.

I'm surprised it's actually working as well.

It's good. I have an aunt and she lives in New Liskeard. I told you about her I think through Facebook so I've been to north bay a couple of times. It's nice. It's still quite a big city.

There's ... it's not ... it's kind of small. I always grew up in a small town but compared to Toronto or Ottawa it's a lot smaller. There's a lot of great outdoorsy things to do. A provincial park and what not but other than that there's not as much out there.

Especially in the winter I bet.

Yeah.

That makes sense.

Yeah.

Ready for spring.

Yeah, oh yeah. I don't know how the weather is there but it's all of a sudden like 15 degrees the past few days so it's been nice.

It's actually still quite cold here. I think it was about 7 today so it's cold for us.

Oh yeah. It's getting

Okay let's have a look what other questions I have left for you. Yeah do you do any Dutch traditions or maybe like typical Dutch things that you do with your family in Canada?

Yeah. Well ... is a big thing. We love our dropjes our speculaas. New years we always do oliebollen.

Oh nice.

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And then yeah and then Christmas we'll do chocolate letters and then ... what else ... I'm trying to think of like other general traditions. Like we have the Dutch calendar birthday calendar in our washroom. We have ... let me think of what other ...

You always take them for granted as well.

Yeah it's like hard to separate. But yeah especially Dutch food we'll have ... especially with the cooking we'll have like bami and pindasaus which you know is a very big like ... or ... fries and you know we eat like fries with mayo and ... so it's mainly the food and then like we go to the Dutch store. We go get candy we get speculaas. We talk to ... we know the people that work there. Yeah mainly when it comes to food and then yeah I can't think of anything else but like especially like the Christmas traditions. We'll have the chocolate letters. The oliebollen. Even like they way we like eat like how do I say this... I don't know. But like those little things like that's what we still keep up with that.

That's nice. And do you celebrate certain things with other Dutch families as well or is it just your own family? Because you mentioned that you had a lot of Dutch friends.

Not as much anymore because we moved. Yeah. But we would you know like with another family we grew up with they also have 5 kids. Had 5 kids and they are also Dutch. Same as us so we grew up with them I'm close with them. So you know like during Christmas we would also do like the chocolate letters and I don't know we just ... there's a lot of like Dutch parties where it's like all Dutch people and we just you know it's like a get together for birthdays and stuff. It's just ... it's not quite so much traditions but we'll still do stuff as a group. Not necessarily Dutch things but like get togethers.

That's always nice. Yeah there is like ... and then this past Christmas like we have a ... there's a Dutch couple that we're close to like family friends. We'll spend Christmas with them. And then also again with the

Are there some Dutch people in North Bay?

I don't know. I haven't... not really. There's a few people in like my class that you know have like Dutch roots. But they are from all over. But normally I haven't ... I didn't really come across ... there's a lot more French families there. There's French people there. Not as much Dutch over there.

Yeah it's a little bit more outside of the big Ontario cities I guess. It's a little bit more isolated maybe.

Yeah and also yeah I'm also in school so it's not like I'm super into the community. It's more like I'm living there and especially since I had a six week placement so I've been at home for six weeks and I

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was home during Christmas and breaks so I haven't consistently been there. I go a lot of back and forth.

No it's just normal student life I guess. Okay.

No like especially in the city where where like I hardly know people there so it's hard to find those little Dutch.... I know they don't have a Dutch store I already looked.

Okay. Yeah. No that makes sense. Okay. Do you notice any big differences between maybe Dutch and Canadian culture?

Yeah. There's especially with like the way I was brought up. The Dutch are very direct for example. And very open minded. A lot more open minded than here in Canada. Especially when it comes to they. Are a bit more advanced in some areas. So like I know that like growing up growing up with my parents they've been a lot more. Maybe like laid back is not the word but because they they grew up in a time and place where it's a lot more accepted. I had less restrictions compared to some stricter parents. Who had stricter parents and then yeah. Just like yeah especially like the way how we like seeing things like in Holland they are much more open when it comes to certain things. They are much more into preserving their it's a multicultural ... there aren't typical Canadian things. There's a lot of like typical Dutch things like. For such a small country you know that they love biking you know that windmills are a big thing all the big stereotypes. There's a lot more than that and yeah yeah mainly that and attitude and the openness and the directness. The different ways and then education obviously is different than like we pay so much more here. And then there's some things like I feel like here it's a lot of like GO GO GO meanwhile in Holland it's a bit more a bit more laid back.

Yeah it makes sense. You're not the first one who brought this up. So that's interesting. It's nice to see certain patterns when you talk to more people.

Yeah.

Okay. So let's have a look. We met on a Facebook group and I was wondering if you were active in that group and what you use it for?

Well. So it's actually a co-worker. So there's so I work in ... at Cambridge. You know where that is. One of my friend one of the guys at work I found out he was Dutch and he found out that I was Dutch so we actually talk Dutch to each other at work. He's like the only Dutch person there so it's kind of our thing so he's he's been here in Canada for like quite a few years. But he still tries to actively keep up with the Dutch things so he has all these groups. So he actually messages me on Facebook and he was

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like hey there's this girl doing a masters research and I think like you're perfect for it I think you fit all the criteria have a look. So he forwarded or he showed me the post or I think he shared it and then I saw it on his thing and I was like yeah I fit exactly in it. So it was more like I went on the group to see what he was talking about.

Yeah that makes sense. Yeah. Okay.

Because otherwise I would have never seen it. He was like hey I think you'd be good for it. He's messaged me before where people post in Dutch groups and be like oh what do you think about this and can we help them with this. So we both ... we try to actively keep the ... you know like the thing going. He'll like teach me different expression. Or learn about different areas. My parents are from the achterhoek and we look up all these things and how they are different there for example.

It's nice to stay active as well. That's good.

Yeah.

So you have to thank him for me because otherwise we wouldn't be talking.

Yeah. No I definitely will. He's awesome. He's a big promoter of the Dutch.

That's always good. Okay... I think I'm actually about done. I don't know if you have anything to add or anything that you think might be relevant or interesting.

I don't know. I know that like one thing that was always big with me was like growing up with Dutch. I have a bit of an accent in English but a bit of an accent when I speak in Dutch I think so that's always been a part where some people can tell my accent or they know like ... you have a bit of a Dutch or German accent I've been told before. That's always been cool. And then also like other things that I have done that don't fall into any of your questions but when I was in waterloo I took a Dutch class.

Cool.

I really shouldn't because I know Dutch but like my writing isn't that strong. It's more the oral because I never really grew up writing. But then I ... like my prof she's great she was from Holland and then she would always like introduce different things in the Dutch class like different foods for example and we actually still keep in touch once and a while we'll go for coffee. So it's a very small community even at the university which is great.

It's nice to hear that the Dutch are so close.

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Yeah. But I'm trying to think if there's anything else that might help your... is there anything you want me to go into more detail about?

Not in particular. Like if you want you could talk a little bit more about how you maybe stay in touch with your relatives? Or do you follow like Dutch news as well, how do you stay updated maybe?

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah no that ... yeah. I do especially with like my mom we'll talk about things or she'll show me different things. But even like on Facebook there's little things that I follow like 'stuff Dutch people like' which I think is very hilarious. But yeah like ... especially...

..... SILENT GAP?

That's nice.

And also... and also like so my best friend her mom was born in south Africa. So she knows some Afrikaans. So then it's like those little things where we're like picking up on words that are the same or slightly the same. Seeing if we can understand it and what not.

Yeah Afrikaans is a beautiful language.

Yeah that's really cool. Yeah so like it's not like your Afrikaans but like Die Antwoord kind of like that culture which is really cool. Having my best friends mom come from there it's kind of cool to see what are the influences and what has changed.

That is interesting. That's nice you brought this up. Yeah I think we covered most of it but if you still have something that you think might be interesting you can share it now or you can always send me a message as well if something pops into your head.

Yeah. I feel like after next week because I'm going to Curacao so that's an old Dutch colony. So I think there'd be so many cool stuff that I might notice and be like hey you know this might help I don't know but I felt like to see how I react to maybe ... if the locals like react to the fact that I might ... I don't know if I'll understand then or if the dialect is different but just how they react to a Canadian kind of knowing. We'll see. Maybe I'll have some stories.

That sounds interesting. Just let me know how you're holidays went. That sounds cool.

11.6.6 Lee

Okay so let's just start. Maybe you can just tell me a little bit about yourself. What are you studying right now, where do you live, what are you doing. Just like an introduction.

Okay. Well I'm currently enrolled at Ryerson for architectural science. I'm second year and ... jeez where to begin ... and I live in Toronto. At least for my schooling I do.

Do you live in residence?

It's a coop building. So it's pretty much this ... the majority is students but it's students from different universities and different colleges.

That's nice.

It's more like a ... I don't know what I would call it but it's a lot like a residence. You have to sign in and everything stuff like that. More about myself ...

It's always hard.

Yeah you don't really talk about it that much. Well... I'll just ... I guess I'll just begin. I came to Canada when I was 7 years old. I was 7 years old at the time. And initially we lived in like a suburb area and in like grade 10 we moved out to the country. And then we lived there in a house for almost 4 years I think. And then now I'm in the city so it's like I lived in the suburbs then the country and the city. So I have experience of almost like every sort of living typology there is.

That's nice though.

Yeah. I guess you have a greater perspective and more respect for where you live. Where you could live. I like to ... I like 3d modeling and 3d printing and ... modeling. Those are the things I enjoy the most and then my program supports that and kind of ... I discovered it in my program and that's it. But yeah the program also supports it because for almost every project you have to need like a model.

I think it's important to be creative when you study architecture as well so that makes sense.

Yeah so that's what I enjoy the most. That sort of ... I find it attractive because I guess you could say it's more hands on than working on your screen all the time... then working with your hands. I guess that's from my dad's side.

Could be yeah.

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Yeah I played sports during high school. I was pretty athletic up until I started uni. I know that's not a good thing but that's reality. So I guess right now I'm not athletic but I guess you could say I enjoy sports and being active. That's the pretty general sweep. Is there anything else...

I think that covers most of it. Sounds good. I just wanted to know what you were doing. It all makes sense yeah. So let's start. Where you born in the Netherlands?

Yeah I was born in Honselersdijk in the south of Holland. It's like right besides Naaldwijk. So like ... I was actually thinking about this conversation and the kind of things that you would ask me. So I kind of had to touch up on my memory a little bit.

That's always good.

Yeah. So I guess you could say I had a pretty awesome childhood to put it ... to be as honest and humble as I can but I was born like literally like right beside the greenhouse.

That sounds nice.

My mom decided to give birth not in the hospital but in the house. So for like ... I guess as a kid you just you know you don't really realize the world until after you've left right. So as a kid that was the normal thing for me. To have glass doors for kilometers long... not kilometers but ... that sort of atmosphere was normal to me until I came to Canada. And then yeah the greenhouse was like a huge ... for me as a kid to you know run ... you can say I had a pretty lucky childhood. For just meeting so many people and hearing what they have to say. And then yeah so I don't remember too much strong memories but I mean I only have the knowledge or I would say the Dutch knowledge of someone of 7 years old. And yeah I haven't really grown up with ... I don't know anything about that so. So then when I came to Canada we first lived in like a rental house for one year. That was that was ... I would say that was pretty different. But it was in the suburbs but it was close to like a canal so there ... this canal is like the canal where the boats from the united states travel through to get to Canada. So it felt a little like Holland just because there was a canal very close to where we lived. And so in the cheesiest way it was a nice transition if that makes sense.

That does makes sense.

So then we were in this house for a year. Just so my dad started ... he started kind of a business here growing orchids.

Is that why they decided to move to Canada?

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Yeah. I think that was the major reason. I recall my dad... I think I've asked my dad this a few times beforehand. And they went on vacation to Canada like a year or two before we left just to see how it was. There was so much more space and so much more possibilities for I don't know ... to start a new green house business. So he I think that's the main reason why they came to Canada. But yeah the orchid takes like 2 years to mature so you know until the actual product so the first 1,5 it was quite difficult. We had the rental house just because all the money had to go that way. To the business. The other house was like ... like a five minute walk away from there so it's kind of nice. You make a few friends in school and since your house is not far from theirs you kind of maintain those friends as a kid so that was nice. I would say I refer ... I'm just going to refer to the second house as the Rochelle house. That's the street name. and all my close friends were in that proximity. So there was a block that would branch off from Rochelle called rainbow drive. And my two best friends were on that drive so everything was in very close proximity. And then Rochelle drive kind of... is a very long road... it extended quite far and I had another friend at the end of that drive so it was a bit like Holland because my best friends in Holland were just across the streets. And their dads were also growers and so my dad and their dad knew each other and it was pretty nice. And I would say that house just because it was not so far from where I was close to as a kid and actually my elementary school was right down ... a 10 minute walk still. And my high school was a 10 minute walk the other direction so I knew everyone in high school. My high school experience was all within my area.

That's so nice. So the same friends from elementary went to the same high school I guess.

Yeah all my elementary schools. I would say about 90 percent went to that high school so it was fun. I wasn't too hyped up about moving again in grade 10 because I know that in grade 10 like I didn't really want to like have to re... so you know like reestablish myself in the community. It's a lot of work to do especially elementary or senior high school. It's hard to reach out to people if you're not going to the same school or if you don't have much in common or many things to sort of like... it was sort of like ... relate between. But like it ended up being working out because at the time we moved and my older brother got his driving license so then he drove himself and I to school and he graduated so he was just a year above me and in grade 12 I got my license so it was perfect so then yeah we got a really good driving experience.

You could visit people a lot. That makes sense.

But if I stayed in the same house I would have walked to school every day. So there's a positive and a negative take from that.

It's always an interesting experience to do something new. That makes sense. Okay. So in which town or city did you live or grow up?

It was in like Rochelle you mean...

Rochelle... is that in Ontario?

Oh I'm sorry. The Rochelle drive was in St. Catharines's.

In St. Catharines's. Oh okay cool. nice.

Yeah. So that's Niagara region. 30 minutes or so drive from Niagara falls. Yeah like a 10 minute drive from Niagara on the lake so it's in the proximity of wine country slash country area slash you know like Niagara falls so it was a small city. It was between other smaller towns and pretty much the way it works is all the cities from Toronto go around the lake and they get less and less dense.

I didn't know.

So St. Catharines was all the way down the lake. A nice quiet town and if you keep moving west until you reach the corner of the lake and turn back to Toronto it's where it gets more dense.

Nice. Okay. Let's have a look. I always get mixed up with all my questions and then I forget them. Yeah so your dad is Dutch... did he know any Dutch people before he moved to Canada. Or did your parents have any relatives or friends who were in Canada?

You mean like did they know anyone from Holland before we moved?

Not necessarily Holland but did they know any people before they moved to Canada.

Oh yeah my dad's neighbor who lived on the same road, he moved to Canada I don't know how many years before us. He moved to Canada and then he opened up his own resort. So yeah he... his name is Daniel [name made anonymous]. He actually just recently passed away but yeah he opened up this resort in Canada it was like ... can't pinpoint the region or drive up north but yeah a really nice place so that's what struck the idea of my dad because he was telling my dad how there was so much more opportunity in Canada. Canada is such a young country. So that's ... I mean my dad was curious and then he went on vacation with my mom and that's how it all began I guess.

It's interesting. I hear this a lot. Like all I hear is that most people go to Canada for the opportunities or their parents go for the opportunities obviously. And some parents just got very claustrophobic in the

Netherlands and that they just went on a holiday somewhere and decided to move there. That's quite funny. I think that's interesting.

No that would be something my mom might say because ... moving to Holland coming from Ireland.

Where is she from in Ireland?

She was born in Ireland and I think when she turned... when she was able to work that's when she decided to take out like a six month sort of like temporary job for you know. So it was like how it worked was it was 6 months and after the six months they would decide if she could stay for work. But then I think within that time my parents met each other and my mom just said I'm staying here.

Yeah. That's nice. That's cute. Okay. So have you been back to the Netherlands or Ireland or Europe?

Yeah like I think the average was we went back to the Netherlands like every other year or so.

That's quite a bit.

Yeah same with Ireland. Every couple of years. But I would say when I was a kid it was very frequent right. I think a few years in a row I went to both Holland and Ireland at the same time. I think it was more yeah more crucial in earlier years and as we grew up we sort of became busy for ourselves.

Yeah, that makes sense. So do you still have lots of relatives there?

Yeah. The only relative I have in Canada is my uncle who's my dad's brother. My uncle my aunt and I have two cousins. They live right beside the greenhouse so... and then I think I have like third cousins I know off are in New York area but that's ... they are so far that I think I think they are my mom's cousins but that's really it. Everyone else is in Ireland still or in Holland.

So your grandparents, are they still alive?

Yeah all my grandparents are still alive.

That's good. They are still in the Netherlands and Ireland?

Yeah.

Okay nice. So what was the last time that you went to Europe Ireland or the Netherlands?

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Ireland was last Christmas. For two weeks. And then Holland was not ... I think Holland was last summer or the summer before. I think ... I think it was sorry it wasn't the last summer but the summer before so yeah.

So then you just visit your family, do you travel around much? What exactly do you do?

Yeah last time in Holland it was more like a family reunion. So I was ... we actually didn't spend most of our time in Holland. It was in Belgium. Right by the border.

Oh yeah.

Right by the ... right by the sort of where all three meet.

Maastricht or? Maastricht is there I think.

I forget the names but that was fun. Like when I go to Holland I mainly go to see family and friends. Other vacations like we went for a summer or spring we went to Cuba. ? and in grade 10 there was a trip organized by the school to go to Paris and Barcelona. So we flew to Paris and then took the train to Barcelona. So it was Paris, Barcelona and two days travel including flights and trains and stuff. I think that's the most of my ... my traveling experiences.

Quite a bit.

Well in Canada actually we did a little tour to the east. So we went to ... we first drove to New Brunswick and from New Brunswick to PEI and ... I forget the whole order New Brunswick, PEI, Nova Scotia. I think it was a day or so each.

Lots of driving.

Yeah.

Okay, nice. So do you speak any Dutch at all?

Sorry.

Do you speak any Dutch at all?

I can but it's like very it's very broken and very slow.

There's nothing wrong with that.

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Yeah and when I'm listening I can understand most of it but it's hard to keep up with my age group because my vocabulary and my slang is not in sync with theirs. By the time... like kids who were around my age I would say... I've been to Holland and when I really force myself I can pick it up almost fluently by the end of the week.

Yeah you have to keep using it yeah.

Yeah yeah yeah. I don't want to lose it. I actually just recently found out about a good Masters university in Delft.

Oh yeah Delft is really really good for Architecture.

Yeah I even looked it up and their ranking is third in the world so I think... probably like the best possibility if you were to analyze it in terms of costs and education would be going to Holland because I could live with my friends or family so accommodation would be very minimal and tuition is minimal because I'm still a European citizen so so I think that would be a dream. Go back by myself for two years or so and maybe do some traveling as well.

Yeah. I talked to a girl a week ago and she's in Nijmegen for her master's. so she also came from Canada so she's doing like one year there which is quite cool. yeah so it's quite common...

Oh so she's doing one year in Holland and one year in Canada.

No I think it's just one year. Because master program's are either one or two years in the Netherlands.

Okay. Yeah so that's pretty cool.

Yeah and then there's a couple of people who did a study abroad so they lived in Canada for most of their life and then did six months in the Netherlands as well. Yeah I think it's interesting. Let's see if I have any other questions. You said that you have some friends in family in Ireland and the Netherlands and I was wondering how you stay in touch with them when you're in Canada.

Oh it's very very minimal. Almost like it's almost like when I'm in the country I just see who is there and is not really doing anything and then try to meet up that way or I'll message them before I'm coming to see what people are up to. But it's more like it's more kind of two different worlds almost. I have my friend group here and they have their friend group there and when there's an opportunity then it's mainly that we'll start chatting but it's pretty hard to maintain and to keep the conversation going. Because your experiencing things very differently.

So it's more face-to-face.

More face-to-face.

I get that. I'm not that great keeping in contact with my family . it's just sometimes people sending me messages like Jasmin are you still alive what are you doing.

My mom always bugs me about keeping in contact with my own parents.

Yeah. I guess it's also a good sign because it means that you're actually doing something that you enjoy and like and you're starting to build your own life so that's also good. So that makes sense.

Yeah.

Okay. So let's have a look. So yeah I don't know I was wondering if you maybe noticed any big differences between the Netherlands and Canada when you visit or talk to people.

Maybe not at the time when I was a kid but if I were to think now I would say more like from the experiences of going back to Holland with you know my knowledge now I would say Dutch people in general are very straight forward. And they don't take offense when you ask like personal questions or anything like that. I feel like Canada.... so like almost you use the smallest words... the smallest words would offend people. Which I sometimes find a little over the top or a little silly. But I guess that's just the way it is. Like even if I had more of a how do you say it like a straight forward kind of mentality I'm here to do something, I'm here to get it done. Even if ... some people would assume that you're not acknowledging their presence enough. Sometimes it gets to me but I think that's one thing I like about the Netherlands. Like people I feel people are more independent and mind their own business but they have respect for other people like other people's ... I guess how do you say that other people's ... whatever they are doing. Whereas I feel like if you're here in Canada I feel like almost everybody has to be satisfied. I think I would say that was the biggest social change that I noticed. A lot of people are afraid here to hurt other people... like stereotypes of people in Canada that say sorry a lot. But like that is ... it's a fact it's not a stereotype like everybody says sorry it's something I have picked up on. It's like if I go to Holland and say sorry to my friend for something and say sorry they will almost be like what do you mean I was the one who walked into you. But yeah that's the biggest thing I've noticed.

Okay so another question. I was wondering if you maybe did any Dutch related things in Canada with your family.

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Dutch related things. Well I mean when I was a kid in Holland I pretty much spent all my days outdoors or being active or something. So I would say that ... in that respect that sort of continued on but that could also just mean me being a kid but obviously I still bike a lot. I hate to pull out that stereotype but it's true. And like I mean in terms of food I tend to think about it a lot but Dutch people are very very simple with their meals. It's not... it's almost not something like it's not something that you could take and say it's all Dutch but for a lot of Dutch food that's very common. Alost like two sandwiches for day, sandwich for breakfast, sandwich for lunch and for dinner it's really anything. So I would say that continued on as well. I remember being a kid and having 6 sandwiches a day and that being normal. I think ... it's also hard to say like what we took from Holland and brought to Canada because a lot of the things already exist in Canada or maybe not globally but it's very... some of the things are very common. I mean probably ... soccer is a huge huge thing in Holland and it's not as big in Canada. But that certainly continued on a lot of that was from my dad. It's also hard to say because I was so young.

That makes sense.

Only so much can transfer over right. I didn't have much of a personality at the time.

Okay. So I think we covered most of the things that I wanted to ask but maybe on like a final note. How do you feel about being Dutch Irish but also being raised in Canada? What does it mean to you?

That's a good question. I tend to think about that a lot actually because it's hard to say oh well I'm born in Holland but my mom's from Ireland but I live in Canada. What really is my true home if I were to call it home? I call... I mean obviously from like a birth right standpoint I would call Holland my home. But it's something that I'm still looking the answer for I think. I probably will have it if I end up going back for a Masters or something like that. I just want to see... I just want to relate back to what I though Holland was like and then see it through my eyes now and be able to relate to it in other ways. But as a kid obviously I would say Holland was my home and then my mom... after growing up I've had comments... when my aunt came to Canada she was like "you look so much like your aunt or like your mom". So I think it's edging to Ireland right now as I'm growing up. But growing up in Canada I would say if I were to move to another country I would... or maybe not ... I mean it's hard to compare to other countries but I would say since Canada is so diverse already it's hard to give Canada ... it's hard to say Canada is mainly this culture or mainly that culture. There's so many different cultures it's hard to say what Canada is strongest in. so I feel like out of a country with so many different cultures it was easier for me to adjust to such a big move as a kid. Just because you meet other people who have or are maybe not from Europe or their parents are. I remember in elementary school that there were only 30 kids there but already over 10 15 different nationalities in a single classroom so like it's strange

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because it's almost like if I moved in I would say like a Dutch community it would be more accepting but because there's a lack of a majority it was almost more accepting because everyone is on the same page. Everyone... you're almost forced to get to know people and accepting them and their culture so I would say it was probably the best situation or the best possible situation at the time in terms of getting adjusted and getting to know people.

I think a lot of people mentioned this as well. It's interesting. They all say Canada is so multicultural and we don't really know how to define Canada. I mean what is Canadian culture? You don't really know because Canada is such a young country as well.

Yeah yeah.

Yeah I think that's interesting.

Yeah so it's a strange concept because you wonder where the stereotypes come from right. Even the very small ones like saying sorry or you know like small things like that. Are they really Canadian or did it come from European country or is it from Korea or like really. After being in Canada now I have ...at elementary school I became friends with two Korean exchange students and it's strange because as a kid I would be very to myself and almost a little bit unconfident in myself as a kid but having I think when there is an exchange students it's so much easier for me to relate for that person because I know exactly what it feels like for them in a brand new country to not know anybody right. So now I have two Korean friends and so that's great... that I'm still in touch with maybe like once a year or so.

Yeah. That's great.

It's something that you would have never stumbled upon if you would have never move into a country that allowed so many people from different nationalities to come in right.

Wow that's a good point. Okay.

Yeah.

Yeah I think you mentioned lots of interesting stuff. Thank you for that.

Good.

I don't know if you have anything to add. Or if you think you missed something. You can share whatever you need to share.

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I mean I've heard... I can't speak for myself but I heard that maybe a bit from my older brother because... and my older dad but the education system here versus education in Holland from what my dad says and what my older brother says because he had one more year of education in Holland than I did.

Yeah.

They say that in Holland it's a lot stricter and I would say slightly more difficult than education in Canada. And I was ... in Holland I was in grade 3 I think it was grade 3 and then I was gonna go to grade 4 but the way... it was funny because the way the education system works is they start at the same time as in Canada but I think they take the people after October or something like that? I forget the exact month but it was slightly different instead of taking people after January or after the new year. I think December and October... I don't know whatever exactly but I'll have to ask my dad.

You mean like for university?

No for just for elementary.

For elementary. I'm not sure I'm actually... it's a long time ago for me as well.

Yeah. So I remember I was like ... when I moved to Canada that was when the education just changed a little bit. But according to Canada I was still born in a proper year for I was born in the class of... at the time it would be grade 2. It was a little weird because I was in grade 3 in Holland and then I came in Canada and they put you in grade 2.

Yeah so you go back somehow.

And yeah it was funny because my dad said to me that they were actually going to hold me back another year because of my English. I remember that the principle was worried that it was too early for me or something. But like I was already taller than everybody so he was like hey you're putting him in grade 2. So it was funny. It feels like I was behind but in Canada it was right and in Holland it was right so it was that little change so that was a little wonky. But yeah because my older brother was in grade 4 and I remember him ... like he already knew the timetables and everybody. He was like fluent in them and I didn't have that opportunity yet because I was in grade 3. I was just starting to learn to write cursive in Dutch and it was funny because when I came to Canada I remember writing cursive in grade 2 but in grade 3 they decided to eliminate cursive from our education system so they didn't teach cursive anymore. So my brother was like the only one in his year who could write cursive and he was cursive right. So when it came to like English assignments he would always right cursive because it

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was so much nicer and he was the only one in the class who could write it so when it came to like grade 7 and grade 8 when presentation matters more he got the higher marks and everything. I could only write a few things in cursive because I was transitioning over so it was kind of funny. It was the end of that sort of sort of tradition. But yeah he also knew his timetables so in grade 3 they were teaching that and started teaching that in grade 3 in Canada so he comes to Canada and he's like oh Canada is so easy like they are only teaching this now I learned this already last year. It's quite funny. In that little like perspective I guess we thought that Canada was of lesser difficulty but maybe Holland just teaches it different. We were not too sure of it. It was just a little funny story that I remember.

I'm not sure. I think they just focus on different things as well. I was talking to another girl and she noticed that she learned about rivers in Italy and capital cities of countries people never heard about and she said that in Canada it was more centered around north America. That's something she noticed at least.

Yeah.

So that's interesting. Okay. Anything else?

Nothing I can think of at the moment.

11.6.7 Tamara

So maybe if you start off with maybe telling me something about yourself, what are you doing right now. Just like a little introduction.

Okay. Well we moved here 10 years ago. I was in the first year of high school in Holland and then we moved here. I just graduated from university. I studied political science for 4,5 years and now I'm working on making an application for law school.

Oh wow. That sounds cool.

Yeah it's a lot of work, you have to study and you have to take like a big test before.

Yeah I bet. It's pretty hard to get in I think.

Yeah. And I actually just came back.

Excuse me?

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I just went to Holland last week to visit family.

Oh you did, that's great, cool. How was your stay?

Yeah it was really good. The weather wasn't so good but...

No... it's a lot better this week.

Yeah. We still go back like twice a year.

Yeah that's quite a bit. Because you still have quite some family there?

yeah a lot. Both my grandparents live there still. And then my entire side of my dad's family is still in Holland so...

Okay nice. So how old were you when you moved to Canada?

13.

13. Okay. And could you maybe tell me a little bit about maybe your life in the Netherlands before you moved to Canada?

Yeah. It was pretty normal I mean. We lived in Krimpen aan de IJssel.

Okay yeah.

So not too big of a town. Yeah we didn't really do anything exciting there. What exactly do you want to know about...

Oh just... I don't know...

Like my dad he works at a company where he did IT. So with computers. My mom didn't work at all at the time. And me and my sister just went to school. And when we moved here my dad started his own company.

Oh nice. Cool that's nice.

Yeah he's been really busy with that.

So you moved when you were 13 and then did you have to do high school again or elementary school?

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Well because I was in first year of high school in Holland I completed that so I moved... school here is a little bit behind. So I actually had to go back to grade 8.

Oh okay.

The last year of elementary school. And that was horrible because everybody had been together for all of elementary school. And so then I graduated from that and then I had to start high school.

Can you still hear me? Can you hear me?

Yeah.

Okay. Sometimes it's a little bit, how do you say that, slow. A slow connection. Okay so you moved when you were 13 and you went to elementary school first and then to high school.

Yeah grade 8. And then to high school.

Did you find it easy to get into the Canadian lifestyle?

We adjusted pretty quickly. We were lucky that we kind of already knew the language a little bit. Well they teach you English at school in Holland. We had been coming to Canada almost every year for summer vacation.

Oh really. And why is that?

well my mom did have a brother and sister who lived here since like the eighties. So we always visited them.

And why did your parents decide to move to Canada?

Well they were just kind of fed up with the way the government was changing in Holland. They weren't so happy with the people who were immigrating to Holland. Mostly from like Muslim countries.

Okay.

So because we have family here this was like the obvious choice.

Yeah. Okay. That's good to know. So you have some family in Canada so that's always good I guess. Were you a lot in contact? Were you in the same region in Canada? Were you close by?

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Same city. So we all lived 7 minutes from each other.

Okay that's nice. And did you speak Dutch with them or English?

Yeah Dutch. My aunts and uncles speak Dutch and my cousins do a little bit of both but I speak English with them because there Dutch is not good.

Okay. Were they born in Canada?

well I have six cousins here and about two or three of them were born in Holland. And the rest all in Canada.

Okay wow. That's cool.

But like they all know Dutch but there's a few who can actually speak it fluently.

Yeah okay. So it's more like with your aunts and uncles and your mom and your dad?

Yeah. At home we still speak Dutch with my parents and my sister we only speak Dutch to each other. Unless there's people visiting or people at the house who don't speak English.

Yeah I think your sister mentioned you both had boyfriends from Canada so you spoke a little bit less Dutch then.

Yeah. We try to teach them a little bit.

How are they doing?

It's a slow progress but...

Yeah I think it's a hard language to learn.

Yeah. Well my boyfriend can now ask me if I would like some water.

Well that's important.

Yeah so...

Okay cool. Okay so let's have a look. So you still have family in the Netherlands. How do you stay in contact with them when you're in Canada?

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Well we actually have a family Whatsapp group and we always post stuff on there everything g that's going on or somebody doing something. And then like my grandparents we always Skype.

Oh yeah that's nice.

Yeah so. We just keep in touch.

And how about Facebook. Do you use Facebook at all?

Yeah but I don't have a lot of family members on Facebook. I know we do have a family Facebook group as well but I don't think we use that at all.

Okay. So what do you use Facebook for? For like personal things or like...

Yeah.

So maybe staying in touch with Canadians more than Dutch? I don't know.

Yeah it's more like keeping busy therapy.

Yeah. I get that.

Yeah. And my boyfriend didn't have a cell phone for a really long time so we always Facebook messages.

Okay that's good to know. Cool.

Yeah I use Facebook message a lot.

It's quite easy as well. Do you a lot of Canadian people have Whatsapp or is it more a Dutch thing?

Yeah it's really odd. People here don't know about Whatsapp. They don't have it at all. People that I'm friends with have gotten it because I have told them about it but most likely a Dutch thing. So I really only use Whatsapp with my family.

That's interesting. It's somehow a European thing or something. I don't know.

I know! Everybody is using Whatsapp in Holland.

Okay so you mentioned that you go back and forth two times a year or something like that? Did you do that after you moved to Canada as well?

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Yeah pretty much since we moved here we do it twice a year. Always in April for my oma's birthday and either in February or in the winter or something.

Okay nice. And does your family from the Netherlands come to visit you as well?

Yeah every now and then. We usually don't stay very long. It's anywhere between a weekend and like 10 days maybe. So we try to see people but we usually just want to do some shopping and eat a lot of food.

Yeah. No that makes sense. Yeah do you notice any big differences between maybe the Netherlands and Canada?

Well yeah I definitely notice with school that school is very... high school was very easy here I found. I wasn't learning anything to the extent that I was learning in high school in Holland. School is very very relaxed here I found. And they are very behind with like fashion ... that kind of sucks. And the people here are very very ... they appear very friendly they are always asking how you are and they always want to talk but they... we've always said that Canadians don't know anything about gezelligheid. They don't want to hang out... they don't come over for coffee.

So maybe it's on a different level being nice.

Yeah they don't do really... if there's a birthday in the family they don't really get together much and celebrate.

Okay that's interesting. So do you do that with your Dutch family in Canada?

Yeah. Actually since we've moved here we met a lot of people who also moved here from Holland. Or they started moving here after we moved. So we have about 5 families that were also friends with that live in the area. So with our birthdays that group just gets together to celebrate someone's birthday.

Okay that's nice.

Sorry I have a bit of a cold.

That's fine. No problem. And any other differences that you might have noticed?

I always think of them but then when I'm put on the spot I don't know.

I get what you mean. That's okay.

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And yeah there's so many differences. Culture like... I don't know. Living here we've had a lot more freedom than we would have had if we were to stay in Holland. I could start driving when I was 16. And I had my car at 17 because you can't get anywhere if you don't have a car around here. Everything is so far apart.

That makes sense. Yeah.

And like the stores... the stores ... grocery stores are open 24/7.

It's crazy. But also super convenient.

Yeah very. And the houses here are all really big.

Yeah that's nice. Big gardens.

Yeah. A lot of yards. It's very hard to find... I actually don't know the English term but like 'rijtjes huizen'. It's hard to find that over here.

It's a lot of like... how do you call that... gewoon... houses not attached. Okay cool. Is there any Dutch traditions that you still do in Canada. Maybe that you continued from the Netherlands?

yeah we still celebrate sinterklaas every year. We write poems and everything. Even the Canadian boyfriends have to write poems.

That's nice.

They don't quite like it but...

You just force them to do it.

Yeah. We celebrate that and we usually we'll celebrate Kingsday too. We'll always put out a flag. Or wear something orange. All of the time we've gone to Holland for kings day as well.

It's the best.

Yeah. We're going to Holland again at the end of April so we'll be there again for Kingsday this year.

Where are you going to celebrate?

Amsterdam.

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That's always good.

Yeah it should be a good time.

That sounds like fun. So that's like your second trip to Holland.

Yeah these ones are very close together. That's nice though. Yeah that's always good.

And do you get any remarks about being Dutch or do people notice it in Canada? Maybe some of your friends.

Yeah most people notice we're Dutch. They sometimes... after I tell them they say yeah you kind of have an accent or people will ask me... I'm a waitress... so customers ask me if I'm Dutch because I'm tall blonde and have blue eyes. But other than that no... like my friends will make jokes about me being cheap. Every Canadian knows that Dutch people are cheap. That's something they know about Dutch people.

Yeah. That's funny.

And yeah I don't know. Yeah. It's just jokes...

Okay, cool.

And like my mom always makes Dutch food for New Years so everybody always know we have the good stuff.

Do you still live with your parents?

I moved out for a few years for school but I live with my parents now again. Just until I figure out where I'm going to school next.

Yeah that makes sense. It's always nice to come home.

Yeah. I would like to live on my own but it just hasn't happened yet.

Yeah just give it some time.

Yeah.

Okay let's see. What other questions do I have. Yeah do you still like some sort of connection with the Netherlands? Do you still stay up to date about like news and political stuff, like how do you do that?

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a little bit. I have the Telegraaf app on my phone and I usually check the news every now and then. And I still have a Dutch passport which I've always felt was something that would always tie me down. And I got offered a job here to work as a flight attendant for a Canadian company but they required a Canadian passport. I just wasn't... I just couldn't do that.

So you just have a Dutch passport now.

Yeah.

Because you can't have dual citizenship in Canada?

No they don't do it anymore for the Netherlands and Canada.

Okay. I didn't know.

Until like 2007 or something like that.

Yeah. Okay.

But other than that we stay pretty up to date about things in Holland. Just talking to opa and oma or something.

Yeah that always helps. That's always nice.

We have a Dutch store down here so we buy Dutch snoep or...

Yeah. Okay cool.

Not exactly the same but you know they still remind you of home.

It's like a little community somehow.

Yeah there's actually a lot of people with Dutch roots here in the area. A lot of people with grandparents have moved here in the sixties or something.

Oh yeah that's nice.

Yeah and I still have some friends in Holland as well. So I talk to them quite often.

That's nice. Did they ever come to visit you in Canada?

One of them did. Just once but I'm sure someday again ti wil happen.

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Plane tickets are always expensive.

Yeah they are not the cheapest from here to Holland.

No, makes sense. It's a long flight. Well 7 hours I think right?

Yeah 7 hours to Holland and 7, 8, 8,5 hours to Canada.

Let's have a look. What other questions do I have. I think that's about it but I'm not sure if you have something that might be relevant or interesting to share.

Because what is it you're researching exactly?

It's a thesis about how young people ... it's mainly Dutch-Canadians in Canada and how they have some sort of Dutch connection. Like third, second, first generation. And they compare and see what the differences are and how they stay into contact with people in the Netherlands or... and Dutch media and that sort of stuff. So anything related to Dutch culture or Canadian culture. You can just share whatever you think might be relevant.

I'm trying to think of what else... with like Holland. I don't know. I have a lot of computer and Facebook settings that are all in Dutch still.

Oh really? That's funny! That's interesting to know.

Yeah so I do that. And like me and my sister still speak Dutch to each other even when my parents are not around.

That's nice. Do you have like a desire to go back to the Netherlands at all permanently or are you happy with your life in Canada right now.

I used to. Because I was really really upset when we first moved. For years I was very very angry and upset but I've kind of grown to the country. I do see the differences and that we have a lot more opportunities here but at the same time I still wouldn't mind living in Holland but it would be so hard to leave things again because I've been to school. Can I transfer that? Can I use that still if I were to find a job in Holland? And I have a boyfriend now so I don't think he would come with me.

No, that's also important.

Yeah so...

Okay. That's cool.

It's just fine living in the here and now.

Okay. Yeah so what does your Dutch identity mean for you being in Canada?

Definitely the fact that we speak Dutch. I think that's really important. I have a lot for people say in school like 'oh I'm Dutch' and 'you're Dutch'. Everybody pretty much has grandparents that were dutch but they had no idea what sinterklaas was or kings day. They only knew some of the foods because their parents would make like stroopwafels at home or like olliebollen. And half the people don't even know that orange is like the big color in Holland or don't even know what the Dutch flag looks like.

Oh wow.

I actually once did a survey in high school and I asked people what's the difference between Holland and the Netherlands and less than half of the people in high school actually knew that that was the same... same country.

Oh wow. That's interesting.

And the same with Amsterdam. Everybody thinks Amsterdam is its own country.

Do they get like European topography in Canada?

Yeah they do. They did in like elementary school. But Canadian education is very very focused on just Canada. Like I found that ... I noticed that they don't teach you anything about the history of Europe or any other country. Not even the states or... nothing really. They all focus on the native people who occupied Canada before and we had to learn the provinces and the cities here but nobody knows anything about other countries. Nothing.

Wow.

Yeah. I found that so weird because I Holland I was being taught like rivers in like Italy and Germany you know.

That's a big difference, yeah. I never actually thought about that.

No. so that was quite funny. They are very self-absorbed here in Canada.

Okay, cool. Okay. Do you have anything else that you want to add or...

No. I don't think so. No I think... Because you wanted to use like social media in your...

Yeah a little bit.

Yeah like. I'm trying to find ways to tie that to being Dutch and still doing that.

Yeah maybe do you still follow certain pages?

Every now and then I'll post something in Dutch for my Dutch friends to see.

I did notice you had some Dutch posts in there as well. I noticed your cover photo with Dutch flags... is that in Toronto?

It's in Rotterdam. A whole bunch of Dutch flags. I still have a lot of Dutch friends on there as well. From like high school. We don't really keep in touch we just like each other's stuff. That's the extent of our relationship.

There's nothing bad with that. It's always nice to see what people are doing. Okay.

11.6.8 Marieke

Maybe start of telling me something about yourself. What are you doing. What does your life look like at the moment.

So what I'm doing right now... I graduated last year from university with a bachelor of education and a bachelor in English and psychology and now I'm teaching grade 5 part-time and I also am an educational assistant in grade 3 and grade 8 at the local Christian school... a private school. And I moved to Alberta... oh sorry. I moved to Ontario in 2011 by myself. And before that I lived in Alberta with my family. My family moved to Alberta from Holland in 2004 so I had quite a few big moves in the last year. Yeah so my family lives out in Alberta still. Three of my siblings... and then I have one brother who still lives in Holland. And when we moved my siblings were between the age of 21 and 11 so that was... we were all teenagers or adults already. We started ... my younger sister and I started school a week after we immigrated. I started in grade 8 and she started in grade 6. And since then I've just been in school until this year.

Very busy.

Yeah.

Okay. That's good to know. Yeah so at what age did you move to Canada? How old were you?

I was 13 when we moved.

13, okay. And do you remember anything from maybe before moving to Canada. So your life in the Netherlands?

Yes. I remember not super clearly but I definitely remember a lot from it. Kind of the details of life I don't really remember but I think no one really remembers life before they are that age... back then unless you are really young still. But yeah I remember things we did as a family when we were all together still and just like the way life went in Holland. A fast paced life... everyone biked there. That sort of general thing. Yeah it's pretty... I have very vivid memories too from Holland and from my time there. They always... my family always kind of mocks me that I remember everything so clearly. They always think it's funny how I can remember little details from my time in Holland specifically... I don't necessarily remember.

Okay. So where did you live in Holland?

I lived in Heteren.

Oh, where is that?

It's about 20 minutes West of Arnhem aan de Rijn river. Kind of across... there's often file or traffic jams around there... by the A50.

Oh yeah. Nice. That's really nice memories... that you still remember these things. It's funny. That's good. Okay. So did you do a year of high school in the Netherlands or did you move before high school?

Yeah I did all of 'eerste klas' and half of the 'tweede klas'.

Oh, okay. So did you ... did you like the fact that you were moving to Canada? When you just started high school.

No, not at all. I was not very impressed with my parents when they decided to move. So my parents talked about moving to Canada for quite a while and I always... I didn't always know. In 2001 is when they told me so that's when I was in grade 5 and I thought "oh that's kind of cool", going to a far away country. And they were going on a three week vacation to check out Canada and see where they wanted to go and if they could find jobs and I thought "oh that's neat" they were travelling and I didn't really know where or what that meant. Then they started the immigration... like visa applications and things too. 2001. And then I was like "oh this is getting a little bit more serious". But it was taking forever. It took my family three years to get the visa thing figured out so I thought it was never going

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to happen. My parents are very religious so they really thought God was calling them to Canada and I was really skeptical about that. I was like “yeah right no one would every move you somewhere across the world because you want to and your kids don’t”. And because I had older siblings my brother decided to stay in Holland. That made it harder too. And my older sister was almost 18 and still had to come because before we moved she was 17 so then you are a minor and you can’t stay behind. So yeah we were kind of all... my older brother and younger sister they were all for it but yeah I didn’t want to come. I was not impressed at all with my parents. So that affected my transition to Canada also because I was resistant.

Yeah, that makes sense. So do you know why they decided to move to Canada?

It was my dad’s childhood dream for the longest time. Like since he was a little kid he had an uncle who used to live on Vancouver island but this uncle of his had passed away in the 80s already so yeah it’s not like my great uncle was kind of a draw to Canada but he does... my dad does remember his uncle coming home... like back to Holland and showing these big maps of Canada and pictures of, you know, the nice life because you only take pictures... he only took pictures of unusual trips and things. Anyway, my dad remembers those and he always said when he was little to his parents “ I’m gonna go to Canada when I’m big”. He didn’t want to be a firefighter he wanted to go to Canada. But then... yeah things were kind of going weird like in politics and things. I don’t know if you remember but like Pim Fortuyn and all that stuff was right around the same time as we had our immigration plans. I think my dad had his own business and it was just getting more difficult in Holland. And since I have two older brothers they wanted to give them opportunities for things. Business owning and career opportunities. And even the fact that it’s almost impossible for young people to get started in Holland... they said anyway. This is how they explained it to me. I don’t know actually... but for young people to start and buy houses they just saw how hard it was so they decided that this is something they wanted to do. Yeah, to figure it out. And my parents love it in Alberta. They would never go back I don’t think.

Okay. That’s good to know. So how were your first couple of years in Canada when you first arrived. Was it hard for you?

Yeah I think one of the reasons why it was hard because I was resistant. Like I was kind of defiant towards my parents which I think any teenager is. And when your parents move across the world around that age it happens even more so. So yeah I was resistant also to learning the language so I didn’t really try very hard in school and I didn’t really attempt to make friends because I didn’t want to be here so why, you know, get yourself involved in friends if you don’t want to be here because then

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you show some kind of commitment which I didn't want too. This caused... like this is my own fault that I did that but that ... relationships develop way later towards later on in high school and senior year when I was like "okay we're staying here for good". But yeah the adjustment was really hard. School was very different. I was in high school in Holland and then I had to go back to junior high in Alberta where you get a bus to school. A big yellow school bus you know. Things like that.

Very different.

Yeah. Just the whole ... you are in school from 8:30 until 3:30 and there's no way you get to leave campus. Anything like that whereas in Holland I would bike and sometimes I was done at 1 and we could bike home or go to the 'stad' and go shopping in the middle. Like you know... I don't know. Did you do high school in Holland?

Yeah I did. I did elementary school and high school.

Okay. So yeah it was a really big switch and I really felt like I was independent when I was in Holland and then that was all taken away which was hard... and friends and family of course who still lived out in Holland.

It's a difficult...

I had friends and they meant a lot to me. And I was just taken away so it was a lot of relational and academic... just the lifestyle change. Also we moved from a small town where everything was nearby to like out in the middle of nowhere it seemed. We always had to drive our like cars to town and it just always took longer and we couldn't really bike because there were gravel roads and lots of hills.

Very different.

Yeah. It was a very different life.

Yeah, it's a difficult age to move as well when you're 13 so that makes sense. Okay. Yeah, so when you moved did your parents know any people before they went? They knew an uncle there I think you mentioned.

Yeah so my dad's uncle moved... lived in Canada I think from the 60s to the 80s but then he passed away so he was no longer here. There were a lot of... I remember that my parents had a whole little address book of contacts when they first went to Canada. Of people who knew people that they knew kind of thing. Family of friends and things. So a lot of connections but not people they really knew except my dad's second cousin lives in Alberta as well. And they ended up staying with my dad's

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second cousin when they were travelling through Alberta and yeah. So they knew... they know his family and we are still pretty close to them. They became like cousins to us.

Oh, that's nice. Okay good. So you knew some people there I guess.

Yeah like one family.

Yeah. So do you still speak Dutch with your parents or is that more English now?

Often... since I live far away from my family I speak a lot of English myself. Because I live among all Canadians mostly. I have some people I know who do speak Dutch. But with my... like when I go home to visit there is a lot of mixture of English and Dutch. But I have siblings in law who don't speak Dutch so that makes it difficult. We can't really seclude them. But when I talk on the phone with my family it's usually all Dutch. And I don't think my... most of my other siblings don't do that but I choose to because I want to keep communicating.

If you actively use it then it's easier to maybe keep as a language.

Yeah. Although I chose to do this Skype call in English because I'm more hesitant in Dutch and I can't formulate my sentences and my thoughts as quickly so.

That makes sense. I guess most of your adult life has been in Canada so I think that makes sense just to me and to you. Okay. So you mentioned that you still have some family in the Netherlands and I was wondering if you still go back often?

Yeah I have gone back five times in the last ten years. I'm actually going back this coming summer as well.

That's great.

So I have... yeah... the first... so three times we met with my entire family. Like my three siblings and my parents and I. so one year it was... the first year that we moved in 2005 they went because my brother got married in 2006 my grandparents had their 50th anniversary and in 2007 my opa passed away so those were three years in a row and then I didn't go again until 2011 and then I went by myself. And then two years ago in 2014 my mom and I and my younger sister went for a wedding and in August I'm going for a wedding again.

Very busy.

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Yeah so I do visit frequently. Well not frequently, every other year on average I guess. So yeah and I have pretty close contact with a lot of my cousins.

That's good. So how do you stay in touch when you're in Canada?

Well mostly through Facebook and Whatsapp. Yeah. And sometimes Skype but not so much with my family. I have a friend who I... well my brother and my sister in law and their kids I Skype with and a friend that I Skype with but the rest of my family it's through Facebook or Whatsapp.

And Whatsapp do you only use it with Dutch people or also with Canadians?

No more and more Canadians start using it but the first three years I think that I had Whatsapp it was only with Dutch people.

Yeah. So how do you use Whatsapp? Like how do you...

Kind of like texting but there's usually more lengthy conversations on Whatsapp with my family. And it's kind of... it's not super consistent. There are some cousins that I chat with on Whatsapp a while and then it's kind of silent for a bit. It's not that we talk on a daily basis it's definitely weekly or monthly.

Okay nice. So are you in like family group chats or do you have individual conversations?

Both.

Both, okay. Nice. And the same with Facebook? Do you use that differently?

I'm not on Facebook way too much. That's more just conversations that happen through comments. Although we have a family group so then we take pictures and videos get shared. We post that way.

That makes sense.

So we got into contact through like a Dutch Facebook group in Canada. The Dutch in Canada. Do you use that frequently? How do you use that?

No, I don't use it very frequently. I usually look what's going on but I'm not really involved.

So it's more just looking at stuff.

Yeah, several times there were interesting conversations or... I see if any video or something or like someone shares pictures that I'm like "hey that's my childhood too". You know like same area we

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grew up in or sometimes they share articles and I read them. So then there's some people I've noticed who like comment on a lot of things and I don't have time for that.

So you don't know any of the people personally?

I know two people personally that I ... one guy went to the same university as I did so that's how I know. And then one lady on there is my friend's mom so I met her at my parents wedding and I was like 'hey you're the same person'.

Oh that's funny. Yeah so they are all Dutch as well then?

Yeah or like children of immigrants or...

Okay, that makes sense.

And some people think they are Dutch because their great grandparents immigrated so they are trying to hold on tightly to their Dutch heritage.

Like a couple of generations ago, yeah. Okay, that's still nice. Yeah I was wondering if you notice any big differences between the Netherlands and Canada maybe during past visits or growing up?

Well when we first moved to Canada we moved to Alberta which is a Western province where there is a lot of agriculture happening. There's two big cities, Calgary and Edmonton and then there are a lot of small cities or a couple of small cities and a lot of towns. And we moved to a small town so it was very much... we came from a fast paced spot where everything is close by to like... I kind of felt like when we were moving to the middle of nowhere I felt like we were going back in time. Going back to the 50s or something and I was like why are we doing this. I remember when we first came in Holland we already had high speed internet and we still had dialup here. I was like HELLO... just like weird things. So that was one thing I remember clearly. And then we had to go to the library to do some internet in the beginning and I thought "man this is ancient". It wasn't really... because in Holland we hadn't had fast internet for that long but it just seemed so weird so we moved to a very low key life and everyone was like WHATEVER... I remember one distinct difference was that their clothing here ... or in Alberta... people didn't really care what they looked like. They almost always look scruffy and things like wearing pajama pants or like track outfits that was okay. And we were always thought you don't do that. You wear those at home and you don't wear those out in public. But like people would go to the store in pajama pants and I was like "What are you doing?". Things like that. It was a big difference I remember in the beginning. Now I went back to Holland last year in 2014 and then it was more looking at it not as "this is better" or "this is better" kind of thing but it was more looking at it

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from a more realistic view. And then you notice that people there are very career driven. Everyone is kind of expected to learn and do post-secondary education and I really personally believe in that and I really pursued education and a lot of Canadians don't as much. So that was something that I noticed that I was like "wow people really are expected to...". And here... like in the Christian circles a lot of people... women especially don't really pursue education and they often stay home and don't really have any career. And when ... so yeah that is something that is different. I noticed in Holland women do have careers and they do go to school and things like day care aren't weird. And for here a lot of Christian people you don't do that. You're a stay at home and you don't choose between career and home you choose always for home. And there's some people that don't and it is happening more but in the beginning I was like wow... so that was one thing. But now I live in Ontario, I live near Toronto so things are... I kind of live the same lifestyle like other Dutch people I think. Just fast, living, you know.

Fast-paced.

Yeah.

Okay. Nice. Any other differences or do you think you covered most of them?

I'm sure there is things like politics that are different but I'm not very educated here in Canada or in Holland on like politics or like the mentality of society. I can't ... I wouldn't really pay too much attention. I also am still a permanent resident. I'm not a Canadian so I don't need to ... I should probably know more about politics and what is going on but I can't vote so I was like "meh I don't really care".

Yeah, okay. So you still have your Dutch passport then?

Yeah.

And how long does it take to get your Canadian citizenship if you would want one? I'm not too familiar with the procedures.

Oh you have to be in Canada for a minimum of 5 years. And then after that you have to apply for your Canadian citizenship and you do a citizenship test in which you have to learn all kinds of things about the ways the country is going and stuff. I have one sister who became Canadian three years ago. And my younger sister and dad are working on their Canadian citizenship as well. Yeah, so it is possible. It takes a couple of months I think from start to finish if you really pursued it. I don't know. I've been really... I'm fine with keeping my Dutch citizenship.

Yeah. I mean the only difference is voting I think so...

And I have to apply for a Dutch passport and a permanent resident card whereas if you're a Canadian you only need your Canadian passport. So I do apply for two legal documents over one.

Yeah that's true.

That's fine with me.

Yeah. Okay. Let's have a look. Yeah I was wondering if you still do Dutch things with your family or maybe things that you continued that you maybe did in the Netherlands?

Well we celebrate sinterklaas and we have fireworks at new years. And like 'olliebollen' and stuff.

That's very Dutch.

So I didn't really live near my family so it makes it a little bit harder but yeah we... my mom and sister make like 'kroketten' and things like that. I don't know. We do life very similarly as we did in Holland. Maybe because there's no family you're a little bit more less appointed to yourself I guess or friends. So that's a little bit different. Yeah for me I don't know... I've never lived in Holland on my own as a student so I'm sure my life looks very different. I know my life looks different than a Dutch student's life. Although I'm not a student anymore but yeah we do... we're not super like traditional people so yeah. For example, what we eat hasn't really changed. It's not like oh suddenly we eat all these north American things. Like we still kind of have those kind of same patterns.

That makes sense.

One thing I remember when we first came to school... in Holland you just kind of take your sandwich box or you're sandwich in your bag and an apple or whatever and here they would come with these fancy snacks like and then they would have their leftovers from last night. Like from the dinner. They would get to microwave that or sometimes they bought mini pizzas or like all kinds of microwavable meals. That was so weird to me. Now I also take leftovers to work because it's really nice. But in the beginning I thought 'what is going on?'. It stinks like in the classroom because everyone is heating up different meals. Like someone has roast and potatoes and another person has spaghetti. It's weird but now it's grown on me.

It takes some time to get used to. That's interesting. Okay. Yeah let's have a look what other questions I have. Yeah how do you feel about being born in the Netherlands and now living in Canada? What does it mean for you to maybe be Dutch but also Canadian, like how do you feel?

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For a while I kind of struggled with that. As a teenagers we always have struggles with identity and commitment. Or like an identity crisis. Who am I and who am I supposed to be? But because I felt like I was transplanted from one place to the next I really didn't know where I belonged so that was hard. What did your question ask, sorry I forget.

What does it mean for you to be born in the Netherlands and now live in Canada and have like two worlds.

Yeah so I felt pretty torn for quite a while because I knew when I went back to Holland that I didn't fit their so much anymore because I had changed so much. But I also didn't feel like I fit in Canada because I was just so... there were a lot of things that were still me or were still Dutch ways of doing things. But then I kind of just embraced the fact that I have two cultures that formed me and now... in the beginning I was kind of hesitant to share that but people often hear because my accent that I'm from a different place so it is kind of inevitable that the conversation comes up. So I do share... I share freely and I tell them too but what does it mean for me... like it took some times for me to embrace that. I was just... also maybe because my resistance towards my parents and just the whole fact that we immigrated that I was not willing to embrace it so much. But now I definitely feel still that I still have Dutch values and ways of doing things I think that aren't necessarily the same as Canada and I don't think I was pinpointed as 'this is my Dutch culture' or 'this is my Canadian ways' but I think it definitely is some of that.

Yeah. It's a combination of both maybe.

Yeah. And then I moved to Ontario and then it changed it even more different. At first I was 'one leg in each country' and now it's like a tripod. It's always kind of a draw. And it's really interesting when I go back to Holland it always kind of feels like I'm coming home.

Yeah that's nice. You moved to a lot of places in such a small time actually. That's interesting. Yeah so you mentioned that you get reactions about your accent or maybe Dutch habits or values. Do people notice it or did you notice that maybe growing up that people were interested in where you came from?

Well we moved to a small town and there were a lot of Dutch immigrants. From recent years or a long time ago. So it was kind of... we kind of moved to a Dutch immigrant community. And we were definitely the newbie's so that was kind of tricky because these people are all integrated and think they are still so Dutch but they are really not. I don't know if you know a lot about Dutch immigrants in Canada but they all kind of are very proud of it and I'm like really you're not Dutch at all. Their ways are not Dutch at all and I think I really remember that from the beginning that we moved that people

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always claimed to be so Dutch and I was like you have no idea. You've never been. You don't speak the language. You don't know what you are talking about. But now people always... some people have more of a ear for accents and stuff right and some people say oh wow I have one professor in university who had no idea I was from a different country so I told him. I'm not an English native speaker and I studied English literature and that is not always... you can see you don't grow up with that same vocabulary in the beginning and things like that. So that was sometimes hard. So I told my prof and he said really I had no idea? He had no idea I was from a different country. Other people I meet them and they are like 'where are you from' and sometimes I decided to say, since I live in Ontario, I'm from Alberta. And then they are like but they don't... it's a subject that they keep asking question and I know that they are fishing to the answer that I am from Holland and want to get that definite. And then I don't always want to share. Sometimes I feel like sharing and sometimes I'm not into sharing so then I don't share it. I think people can tell sometimes. I just moved in with some new roommates and I think maybe in Holland I think we're a little bit less... I know there's people that have a lot of thing is Holland too but a little bit more minimalist and simpler life maybe. There's just not as much room in people's houses so they have less stuff you know. And you don't need ten of the same thing you just kind of ... one is good enough. You don't need five cookies sheets you just have two or one. That's fine. But here people have a whole bunch of different ones. So my roommates are like 'oh you're so Dutch', 'you have so little', 'you're so convenient' and like smart things. So yeah it's funny sometimes people recognize different things and like I live with some girls who have Dutch heritage because their grandparents came from Holland but that's about it so they recognize some things but they also are like 'I'm Dutch too' and then they explain why and I can see because of their upbringing how some of the things are similar but a lot of people claim that their parents came like 60 years ago which is not really as Dutch as like... Holland has moved on. It's not the same anymore you know.

Yeah, that makes sense. Okay. That's interesting. I was wondering what else do I have to ask you. I think we actually discussed most of the stuff. Yeah I think you covered lot's of interesting things so it's always nice to hear different opinions.

11.6.9 Lisanne

Yeah so let's just start. Maybe it's nice if you tell something about yourself so what are you doing, where do you live, what does your life look like?

Okay. I've lived here since I was 9. I'm 26 now. I'm married and have two kids.

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Twins.

Yeah. My life is pretty simple, I just work two days a week and I take care of my kids pretty much.

That's nice. So do you live in Ontario as well?

Yeah, I live in Ontario. It's in St. Catharines near Niagara falls.

Yeah, I had one other person in St. Catharines.

Oh really?

The person I got your contact details from. So his son, Lee.

Yeah.

Yeah so I had an interview with him last week which was also nice.

Oh, okay cool.

Yeah, so both of your parents are Dutch and you've lived in the Netherlands until the age of 9 then?

Yeah.

So do you remember anything from your years in the Netherlands?

Oh yeah. I remember pretty much... I remember a lot. Like I went to school there for a long time obviously. So I remember going to school there, my family and stuff but that's also because I've gone back a lot too. I remember quite a bit.

So do you still go back and forth now you have kids and...

When we first moved here we didn't go back for like at least two or three years. My parents wanted us to get settled here and not get too attached to being back there because we were already having a hard time with it. And then I think we went back pretty much every single year at least once. Because I've lived here for 17 years... probably at least for like 10 years in a row or so. And then the last few years... last year... this past year I've gone again and before that it's been a couple of years. But I go quite a bit.

That's good. So where's your family from in the Netherlands?

De Lier.

De Lier? I'm not sure where that is.

It's by Delft.

Okay, nice. That's good to know. And do you know why your parents decided to move to Canada?

I've heard a lot of different reasons over the years. Space being one of them. I know crime rates in Holland were a big one too so they wanted to get out. We have some family here so they've been here and they really liked it. Then they came here.

Okay, nice. So they knew some people before they moved to Canada?

Yeah, but not very many.

Okay. So were they friends or family?

My dad's aunt and uncle lived here and I think they had maybe a couple of friends but I could be wrong about that. Also just the family, and they had just been visiting.

Okay, that's good to know. So you were 9 at the time, do you remember much from your first year in Canada or when you just got there?

I refused to speak English. I was learning but I refused to speak it. I went to school and my teacher always told my parents "she doesn't say a word". What's wrong with her pretty much. And then all of a sudden one day I just spoke it fluently and kind of started and never stopped. I remember my sister tried to book a flight back home because she didn't want to be here. I don't know. We all kind of had a hard time with it. It took a long time to adjust but we did eventually.

Do you know when the turning point was? When you just started speaking English or did it just kind of happen?

I remember I was at school and I was at recess talking... well there's a bunch of people talking and all of a sudden I started talking and everybody looked at me like. I don't remember what the conversation was about but it obviously made me want to talk.

Okay, that's interesting.

Yeah.

Okay, nice. Yeah so do you know... do you remember stuff about the change from the Dutch high school to maybe the Canadian high school. Did you notice any differences or...

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Well, I went from elementary school to elementary school. I don't remember much it was mostly the same besides the language. I know like here we learn French and when I moved here I was supposed to go to grade 5 but they start French in grade 4 so they were afraid that I was going to be too far behind so they put me in grade 4. And I was caught up fast enough that they skipped me in grade 5.

Well, that's good.

It kind of screwed me up because you learn so much in those grades that you just...

Makes sense as well, you hang out with people who are a year younger and then get fast-forwarded again.

Yeah, and then I got made fun of because I had friends that were a year younger than me. It was just... it was weird.

No, that makes sense.

I know... and growing up I felt the differences... I noticed for stuff like birthdays and stuff were a big deal when I was in Holland. You get together and do stuff together. And here it's like 'happy birthday', okay, you're done.

It's very different.

And holidays too. Holland seems to make a much bigger deal out of it and do things whereas here it's just kind of alright you get the day off.

Okay, that makes sense. Okay. Yeah so what are the biggest differences that you maybe notice between the Netherlands and Canada. Like even now when you go back or... yeah.

I think the people is a huge thing. I notice a lot in Holland it's very... I don't notice it as much these times because I just don't care as much but when I... especially when I was younger I noticed that you have to wear certain clothing and talk a certain way and hang out with certain people to be accepted in Holland whereas here everybody is so different. There's so many different groups and it doesn't really matter which one you belong to kind of thing. I know that's a big thing. I just... everything is just kind of done differently. I know like in Holland they ride their bikes a lot whereas here you never see that. They have all the bike paths and everything and it's really safe and normal and here everybody complains as soon as you get a new bike path somewhere. People go crazy. Like "they don't need to be there". I'm like "yes they do". They become more and more but nowhere near where Holland is at because it's so different.

Yeah, it is different.

And in Holland everybody is used to driving stick whereas here like maybe a quarter to 50 percent know how to drive stick and cars are huge here.

And yeah, I mean the country is a lot bigger as well of course. So it's a big difference.

Yeah we have the space. I find Holland, they don't have much space so they use it way better whereas we have so much space and we don't know what to do with it all.

Yeah. No that makes sense. That's a good one.

Like and I don't personally notice it as much but my mom mentioned that in Holland if a building is not used anymore they'll tear it down or rebuild it and use it again and here they leave it and it just gets unsafe and it just stands there for years and years and years and years until someone finally decided to do something with it because there's just so many other spaces where they can start fresh instead of tearing something down and starting all over again.

Yeah it's a whole different way of thinking as well.

Yeah, it definitely is.

Okay, that's interesting. Any other differences maybe? Friends or traditions or...

Traditions are always different. Everybody... it's so multicultural here so everybody has their own way of celebrating things like we have Santa Claus whereas Holland has 'Sinterklaas'. Everything like even Easter coming up in Holland I believe they have like two days for Easter... I think...

Yeah... it's... Friday and...

Yeah and here it's Friday. It's good Friday. I don't even know what that means.

Yeah we have good Friday as well.

And then it's just Easter Sunday and then it's kind of... kind of different I say. And that's the same with like 'eerste kerstdag', 'tweede kerstdag' stuff like that whereas here it's just Christmas, Christmas eve and then what would be 'tweede kerstdag' in Holland is just a shopping day here, it's not even considered Christmas anymore.

What is that... is that boxing day?

Yeah, boxing day.

Yeah. Okay. That is different. I never thought about that actually.

I find everything is different here. Different ways of thinking, different traditions different way of doing things with everything really. Everything is... and then like the town that I'm from De Lier is so small that everything pretty much closes on Sundays whereas here there's no way anything is closed on a Sunday. That's the busiest day pretty much because everyone is going out. In Holland, in my childhood at least, it's very church and then rest day kind of thing. Not that my family ever even went to church in Holland but we started going to church when we came here, I don't really know why but...

That's interesting. Do you still go to church?

I do but not very much. My husband is catholic whereas I'm Christian so for him he doesn't really find it... he doesn't really want to go. He wasn't really raised in going to church all the time either so I prefer to go but I mean we'll go for Easter and Christmas and stuff like that. Other than that I don't really go very much. Just occasionally.

Okay. That makes sense. Busy life as well.

Yeah and like the kids too.

Do they go to school yet?

No, they turn 2 in May so they don't go to school for another 2 years but I got a church group on Wednesdays where it's not really about church at that time it's more like a mom-to-mom group where we talk about kids stuff mostly but they have the nursery there so it's nice to play with other kids and stuff.

That's always good. A good way to meet people as well.

Yeah, it is. It's nice to get out and talk to grown up instead of just the kids.

Yeah, no that makes sense. That makes sense a lot.

Have a normal conversation.

Yeah. Let's have a look...

I know that high schools are really different here too. We go straight from elementary school to high school and it's just grade 9 and 10 and 11 and 12. No option of going back again. But in Holland I know

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they do it... I don't know exactly how they do it but I know they go... like you have different levels for how smart you are.

Yeah.

Some are more hard... looking at where you are at. Which in my opinion is so much better than just sending everybody to the same school.

Yeah we have different levels here, and different years as well. I think the lowest level is 4 years and the highest level is 6 years. And with the lowest level you go to a different type of higher education as well which is more practical.

Yeah, and I know that... I find, from what I've heard from my friends there and everything, that education is so much better there. You learn so much more different things. It's more in-depth I guess. I know my friends learned like three different languages whereas me I just... I went to a small high school so that's another problem but I just had French. And some of the other high schools were on here and they have Spanish but that's about as far as other languages go. There's some differences on what you can learn.

Do you still understand lots of Dutch?

Most of it yes. I speak it with my parents and I speak it with my friends. I find writing and not so much reading but I find writing really difficult. Just because the way things are spelt and I always get confused.

Yeah and you maybe don't do it that often.

No so I get confused with the 'ei' and the 'ij' and other things. And then sometimes like I try to think of something and I'll think of it in English and translating it just doesn't make any sense. And yeah it works but generally like everybody that I speak to knows enough English that if I don't know it they do it in English.

Yeah, that makes sense. Do you still talk Dutch with your parents or is that English now?

Well... it depends because my husband is around so much now that we tend to speak English a lot because when he's there... he doesn't understand full out conversations so it's ... we just end up speaking English a lot. But we do speak a lot of Dutch and my mom speaks Dutch to my kids so sometimes they'll... because they are just starting to talk so they'll start saying things in Dutch. So then

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I just switch over to Dutch for fun. It's mostly English so when I go to Holland I have to make some adjustments. It's funny for the first few days.

Yeah but you get used to it after a couple of days.

Yeah it comes so quickly.

That's always so surprising. Yeah, that's nice. So do you still have lots of friends and family there that you talk to?

In Holland? Yeah. I have a friend that I actually... I think I was maybe six months old when I met her so I've known her for a long time and I still talk to her. She's actually coming here for the summer.

That's great.

And then I have two Dutch friends... well no... one Dutch friend her boyfriend speaks Dutch but they actually live in the UK. So I speak Dutch to them sometimes. And then all my family is still in Holland. My aunts uncles grandma.

That's nice.

I have some friends that I kind of talk to here and there but not really. It's more like... it's more like it feels... I don't know. It kind of brings me back to talk to them so I like doing it occasionally.

That's always nice to talk to people now and then and catch up.

Yeah definitely.

So when you're in Canada how do you stay in touch with people in the Netherlands?

Facebook. And I have Whatsapp. I use that for mostly... mostly for my friends.

So do you use Whatsapp only with Dutch people or also with your Canadian friends and family?

No I mostly just use it for Dutch people.

Yeah that's what I noticed.

Anybody that doesn't live here... they are pretty much... the only person that I know that has it that are Canadian are my parents. Because we are in a group with the rest of my family.

Yeah, no that makes sense. I noticed that so many people in Canada have Whatsapp but they just use it with Dutch relatives and family.

Yeah, well... like... mostly you can just text when people are in Canada anyway but the company that I am with I have like all Canada I can text or call for free so I don't need to use Whatsapp for it that way.

That makes sense then. How do you use it then, do you send pictures or do you have like a group chat or...

All of it... single chats... group chats... we sent pictures, videos. I actually even use the recording thing so I will sing happy birthday and stuff.

In Dutch or in English?

Usually actually in English. If I do it myself I'll usually use English unless it's for my mom than I'll do it in Dutch.

And how do you use Facebook. Do you use it differently? Or is it similar?

I don't... I say I'm not a big Facebook user but I am. I am on Facebook a lot but I don't post a lot I guess in compared with other people who are posting everything. Not that I have anything against that I just don't... I like to keep in touch and it keeps me informed I'd say. Like I like to figure out what's going on in people's lives and my best friend that lives there she has a boyfriend... her boyfriend is in the army. So it tells me whenever he's leaving or when he's coming back if she didn't happen to mention it to me I'll figure it out through there. If she ever needs somebody to talk to I'm there.

That's good. Nice. Okay. Let's have a look. Are your parents close to you where you live right now?

5 minutes away driving which is close for here. It's not close for Holland but it's close for here. We actually just moved closer to them because where we used to live it was a 30 minute drive which is still not bad but my parents hated it. They are still very Dutch minded like "that's so far" but like for us more Canadian thinkers I guess it's really not... that's normal.

Yeah, something you're used to.

Yeah, it's just driving. We're just really used to it. An hour drive in Holland would be like WOW whereas here it's just like "okay let's go, no big deal".

Yeah, that's interesting. So do you still see your parents a lot?

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Oh yeah. I actually work for my parents. My husband works for my parents. They babysit twice a week. My kids are obsessed with opa and oma.

They call them oma and opa as well?

Yeah they call them opa and oma.

Ah, that's cute. So do your parents speak Dutch to your kids or do they do that in English?

Oh, no. Always Dutch. So my husband gets all worried because he's like "what if they don't speak all English when they go to school". I know so many people that have done that with their kids and that it just seems to work it out. They go to school and figure it out. It'll be fine. I just don't think he likes it because sometimes they'll say stuff and he can't figure out what they are saying because it's Dutch or something.

Yeah. That makes sense. That's nice though. So you were talking about how the Dutch have a certain way of celebrating birthdays, do you still do that in Canada?

We don't. a lot of Dutch people do it. We're doing it for our kids kind of. Because we don't really have our family here we just have my husband's family besides our parents so we had their first birthday last year and everybody came and they got all these presents and it was a huge thing. And then like his mom was kind of like "we can't really do that every year". I was like I don't need everybody to bring presents every year I just want everyone to show up and have a coffee and say happy birthday. I love the way that Dutch people celebrate birthdays, it just feels... I don't know... 'gezellig'.

Yeah, that's a good way of putting it. That makes sense.

There's no English word for that. I think you notice it when you... because I don't have any family here so it's something that I enjoy. Having family around even though it's not my own. When I go to Holland too I make a big point of having all family together.

I think it's such a rare thing to have your whole family together as well so it's always nice when it happens.

And we used to... when we lived in Holland every Sunday we would go to my oma's house and my whole family from my dad's side would be there and then holidays were mostly with my mom's family but it was still like... we always got together. We went from that to no family at all.

Yeah, that's a big step. Yeah, it's nice to keep things going as well.

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Yeah, it definitely is.

Okay. Yeah I was wondering if you certain Dutch things that you notice that you maybe still do in Canada.

Like what?

It could be traditions, food, social things, just really anything.

Well we do... we did a lot of traditions in the beginning. Especially Sinterklaas and stuff. We did that in the beginning and as you got older we started switching more to Canadian traditions. So now we do Christmas eve and stuff, we don't do sinterklaas anymore. Food is a huge thing. My parents eat their 'prakkie' everyday. They never really switched... they do a lot of... we have a Dutch store here. So they do a lot of their groceries at the Dutch store and I'll often be like okay can you get this for me or can you get that for me. Especially like when people come from Holland to we get them to get droppies. My parents don't eat them but I do. And even the chips and stuff and 'kroketten'. Oh my goodness. Like they don't make them the same. They'll make them here and sell them in the Dutch store but they do not taste the same. When I went to Holland last summer me and my husband just every single day we went to those 'eethoeken' and we got a 'kroket' all the time. It was so bad.

Does he like them as well?

He loves them. He never liked them here so he was like 'oh I won't like them there'. I said you will just trust me. So we tried and he loved them. So that's a big thing that we still do. We still get like something to eat like for birthdays you always get like a cake or I don't know something sweet. I don't really... I don't really remember that many traditions from Holland. So I don't know how many we still have but we kind of just adapted I guess. We kind of made sense of what we used to do there and what we can do here.

I think that's normal as well.

Yeah. A mixture.

Different influences.

Definitely. You can't always do the same things whereas the same traditions included family there so here you just kind of... I don't really have that so...

Yeah. You have to find alternative things. Yeah, that's always nice as well. To do something different.

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Oh yeah. And I don't know if they are exactly new traditions but we've stuck with the same ones for so many years so.

It's maybe more family traditions than Dutch traditions.

Yeah, exactly.

Okay, that's good. So have you met a lot of Dutch people in Canada?

Yeah, tons, tons. The area that we live in it's like all the Dutch people are here when they move here. There's the church I go to that is pretty much all Dutch people even if they are not directly from Holland... their parents were or their grandparents were. And all the names... it's all Dutch last names. There's so many in this area it's crazy. Mostly when I meet them they are like "I'm Dutch" but it's more back further. When I say I'm Dutch to people they are like "oh yeah everybody is Dutch round here" but I'm like "I'm actually Dutch" and they are like "oohhh okay".

Yeah. It's interesting how many Dutch people are in Ontario.

Yeah, there is a very big group around. It's crazy. Like my parents they kind of stick to the... it's weird they move here but they stick to the Dutch very much. Like they have... all their friends that they have are Dutch, they speak Dutch, they eat Dutch, they do everything Dutch so... they kind of stuck to the Dutch roots I guess.

Okay, that's interesting. Nice. Yeah I was wondering if you got any comments from people that maybe noticed that you were Dutch like classmates during elementary school or high school. Did you get remarks about having a different background I a different country?

I got a lot of remarks. My maiden name is [.....] so I got a lot of comments about that because that is just a mouthful for people... so they would tease me about it and they called me 'vanalphabet' because there were so many letters in my last name that they didn't know what to call me anymore. They... whenever people hear me speak Dutch especially for the first time they are very like "wow, what is that". It's very... it's... I don't know. I always got told that I looked different which makes no sense to me. Even my husband says it he says "you don't look Canadian". And then I'm like "I'm not Canadian". And his family always goes like "oh you're so Dutch". And I'm like "it's fake blond... I don't have blue eyes". The only thing I have is that I'm tall. I don't know how you think I look Dutch but okay.

That's interesting.

You just look different... do you know what a Dutch person looks like?

You can't really describe a Dutch person.

"Oh, like 90 percent of it is like blonde, blue eyes, tall".

Yeah, okay. It's interesting. So what does it mean for you to be Dutch and having been raised most of your life in Canada?

I think it gives me a whole different perspective on life than most people would have. Like I would never move my kids that kind of thing because I know how hard it was for me to go through. I feel like I have to go back to Holland all the time because it's still... it's hard to explain but it's still home. I would never move back because everything I have is here but it's still classified as home. I love going there I love the way it brings back all kinds of crazy memories. It's a feeling you have. It's really hard to explain but it just... I don't know, I think it changes the way you see things and the way you do things too. Especially for me because I remember Holland and I remember the way people are and I know how they do things there and when I see things done here it makes it very... I don't know. Like they are stupid sometimes.

Yeah, you can compare stuff as well.

I'm like where are the Dutch people? Come on, pay attention! But yeah it's... I feel like there's pros and cons in both countries and you can't really... you can't have both, you can't just have all the goods so you have a bit of each.

That's a good way of putting it.

I love being Dutch. I love that I have that ground... that... it makes me different than most people and I... most people would not like being different but in that way I liked it.

That's interesting. Do you feel Canadian as well?

Yeah.

So you have a little bit of both.

I feel both. I feel Dutch and I feel Canadian. I don't know. It's a really weird feeling. If I'm around Dutch people or around anything that is even slightly Dutch I feel very very Dutch and the other times I am mostly Canadian.

Yeah, not that makes sense. It depends on where you are as well.

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Like it's weird because if I go to Holland too I feel very Dutch I feel like I belong there and then I start talking Dutch and people remind me that my Dutch is not that good so I'm like oh well... you know... I'm trying here. They tease me about it. They know it bugs me.

That's interesting. Yeah you have a little bit of both worlds which is nice.

It is nice. It gives you definitely a perspective other than... it gives you places to go, people to call.

That's always nice.

Yeah.

Okay. Yeah I think I actually asked most of the things that I wanted to ask you. I don't know if you have anything to add or if you maybe have something that you think might be relevant. It can be related to Canada or the Netherlands or whatever.

Not that I can think of right now. Do you live in the Netherlands right now?

Yeah, I was born in the Netherlands but my mom is Canadian. So my grandparents moved there in the 50s I think. So my mom was raised there and then she met my dad and he's just typical Dutch. I lived in Canada for a year when I was a baby and then I did two study abroad in Canada and then I go there every two years or so because my grandparents are there and my family is there, my aunts and uncles.

What part of Canada?

They live in Ontario as well. So they live in Burford, which is close to Branford I don't know if that makes sense.

Yeah.

Yeah so it's nice. So I plan on going this summer again.

And your parents live in Holland?

Yeah, they do. My mom just got back to a trip from Canada because my grandparents are getting pretty old so we tend to visit more than before.

Yeah we do that a lot too. My grandpa past away of my mom's side before I was even born but my grandma was alive a few years after we moved and I think we... I went back for the funeral but my dad and my mom and stuff went back when she was sick. And then my grandpa on my mom's side past

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away just a few years ago so I just have my grandma and we make a big deal of going to visit. And we show her the kids and pictures and videos and stuff.

Have your kids gone to the Netherlands yet?

We went this past summer. We went last year. In July which was great because they got to see everybody and I was there with the kids and my husband. It was kind of strange going back with family instead of just by myself. I'm usually by myself or with my mom and dad.

Yeah, three extra people.

Yeah. It was a little bit more chaotic than what I was used to. When you go by yourself you can just go as your please, go wherever you want do what you want and know I was like okay I have the kids and they have to sleep and they can't go and we need car seats and bike seats. That was a big thing. We had bike seats for the kids in Holland and my husband would never do have thought of doing that here and now he's like "I want the bike seats like in Holland". It was definitely a nice thing. I want to go back some day but it's just so expensive. So we just, I don't know, we have a little bit of a travel bug so we like to go to places and not go to the same countries all the time. So we want to go back to Holland but we also want to go to different places so we kind of have to pick and choose when we go.

You have to find a balance.

My family comes here to but my grandma can't travel anymore. I'll probably go back at some point to see her. My sister lives in the UK so she goes back to Holland all the time now.

It's so easy.

Yeah she's been there a year or year and a half and she has already gone back three or four times and I'm like... I'm so jealous. You can just drive on over whenever you want.

Yeah, and I think the flights are less than an hour. So close.

Yeah. It's crazy. She's lucky. I wish I was that close but... if I was that close I would go back and forth all the time but it's not possible unfortunately.

There's a big ocean in between.

You gotta go on the flight you know... pay for it...

That's the biggest thing.

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That's why we went the past summer because the kids were still free. They could go on our laps. That's why we went before we had to start paying.

Okay great. I think we're actually about done. I don't know if you have anything else to say?

No.

I'm done as well. I think that's it. It was very interesting. You mentioned lots of interesting stuff. And stuff that other people discussed as well so it's nice to see some sort of pattern after a while. You talked about the 'gezelligheid' a lot and a lot of Dutch people in Canada seem to miss that.

It is. It's not the same here and even with Canadians you just... I don't feel like you get that feeling as much as you do as with Dutch people. I feel like they are much more connected. It's weird how different that can be even if you have people here and even if you see them here it's just not the same.

I find that very interesting. I have no idea what that is.

They don't even have a proper word for gezellig so that might be the problem.

Yeah, just having the world helps as well.

Yeah, something to describe it as. I tell my husband as well 'it's just not the same we can't get the 'gezelligheid' and he never knew what we meant by it and when we went to Holland he said "I get it" it's a cozy homey thing surrounded by people you love kind of feeling.

That's a good way of putting it. Okay, nice. Yeah, I think we're done.