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The British Academy for the Film and Television Arts Scholarship Essay

I can't remember a time when television and film weren't a part of my life. Through my personal trials and tribulations, the only thing that could pull me out of my own rut time and time again were the characters from my favorite films and television shows that I have latched on to. Characters to me are family, close friends, or even self-representations that remind me of the moments in life that deserve to be celebrated and cherished. Absorbing, telling, and sharing stories, whether they're about the brutal reality of losing a loved one or the realm that lies deep within a child's imagination, can stir emotions that enable people to connect to one another. Stories start conversations. Film as a medium exposes human behavior in the rawest form, using the senses of sight and sound to express a character's journey with conviction. In my future, that is what I plan to be: a story teller. Particularly, I would like to be a writer who works on character development and dialogue for film and television.

My past experiences, both academic and professional, have not only ignited my desire to be a part of the television and film industry, but also gave me a well-rounded understanding of how each crew member has a vital responsibility that contributes to telling a story. This ultimately helped me breakdown where I see myself within the field, which is pre production and development. Some projects I have worked on include student films such as: *Monday Morning*, a story of two roommates who are the complete opposite, *Violence is American as Apple Pie*, story about a doctor having to choose between eating pie and an opportunity to save a criminal, and my first short film, *Letting GO*, a story about a father's conquest in helping his daughter "let go" of the idea that her mother is not coming back. In addition, I have written an hour long drama pilot called, *The Protector*, which is about a biracial woman who enters the Child Protection Services and finds the half sister she never knew she had. When it comes to professional projects, I have interned at Viacom/ MTV Networks as a part of the development team for their new channel NickMom. That experience has led me to appreciate the research and analysis skills required to make a program fun, relatable, and authentic to the channel or brand it is representing. I am currently a development/ production intern at Glimmer Productions. This opportunity is giving me more of a "hands on" experience. I'm able to closely assist the director in her decisions for the independent feature film *Strange Play*. All of these opportunities have pointed me in the direction of development. I can see myself researching, casting, and ultimately writing characters and their stories.

British films have influenced me greatly in every genre imaginable, from main stream fantasy trilogies like *Narnia*, to dramas like *My Left Foot*, to play adaptations like *Easy Virtue*. These movies are just some of the British films that I grew up on and continue to love. When it comes to television, it is not uncommon to find that popular American shows are often recreations of British shows, such as *The Office*, *Skins*, and *Shameless*. This shows how Britain and America are connected on a television cultural basis and have a positive influence over one another. I am interested in how the development and production process differs in the United Kingdom for film and television. My interest with no surprise lies within the dialogue and character development: how does one come up with characters such as Charlie from *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, or Bridget from *Bridget Jones Diary*? I ultimately think British film and television bring a style of storytelling that has transcends far beyond the UK culture. Lastly, I am curious about how British television and film businesses works; what elements go into a project, and how do they all come together to tell a great story?

In conclusion, I have only dipped my toe in the pool that we call film and television art. My prior experiences have only inspired me to be more, do more, and tell more. I aspire to create great characters with inspiring journeys, and in the process I hope to expose our human nature and evoke feelings that we usually push aside. British television and film have greatly influenced how I tell stories, but I know I still have much to learn. I would love nothing more than to gain knowledge in the industry and celebrate the British Academy of Film and Television Arts' prestigious method of storytelling.

