I wonder how this application will be perceived. One begs to question!

From a young age I delved into the world of serial killers. Growing up reading crime books and sneakily watching movies like The Silence of the Lambs - family members found themselves (awkwardly) gifting me forensic evidence books upon request – so I could learn about the analytical and justice driven sides of the crimes and their perpetrators I had previously read about. This was my first step down the rabbit hole…

In teenage years my sights turned toward depressive disorders. Interested in music I found myself sitting up to all hours psychoanalysing the dairies of Kurt Cobain. His life, lyrics, drawings and poetry – in a vain attempt to draw my own conclusions as to whether he was capable of suicide.

This sparked a new neurological based interest in the psychoactive effects of drugs, coupled with lifestyle and environmental factors. Time was taken to read the biographies of Marilyn Monroe, going full circle to back to the darker sides of the mind with Charles Manson and his cult following, finding the manipulation of the weaker mind and cult culture equally as fascinating as the crimes that ensued them.

Academically, I attended university as a mature student in photography. I studied societal factors, spending time with the homeless residing in squats who numbed themselves into the night with drugs and alcohol. In my final year, I delved into the psychology of image. My dissertation, “Is Seeing *Really* Believing” explored the concepts of image portrayal and its place within society. From imagery represented by the media to tell a specific story, to a clever framing technique used invoke a certain emotion; to the grandiose lifestyle ideals sold by high fashion brands in pages of glossy magazines. I explored the world of advertising by producing a work entitled ‘Needful Things’ – addressing the crude concepts of these marketing strategies in hope of bringing alternative ways of thinking to the viewer.

My working life surrounds IT Security – my favourite area being Social Engineering, with the human element serving as the weakest attack surface when protecting business assets. As someone often armed with a camera, I have experienced first-hand how easy it is to manipulate my way into places where I would never have found myself otherwise! All from creating an illusion with constructed masks from some intelligent reconnaissance.

Researching aspects of masking in certain social constructs my readings turned toward ASD and neurodiversity. Questioning a late diagnosis myself, I spent the latter part of my studies looking at ASD within females and often the myriad of misdiagnosed conditions prior to final diagnosis of being on the spectrum.

Gaining a place on this course would be a dream come true. Being surrounded by like-minded individuals, having access to materials and tutors would help reign a focus on a topic I would like to carry forward to PHD level, to make my own contributions and research around a subject that is prevalent within our world today.