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### *Capturing Quarantine: Student Pandemic Experience Journal*

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Evan Chhabra

Public History

First Journal Entry

## The Pandemic in Perspective

### **1.) Why is documenting the crisis important?**

To document a crisis as large as this one, is to capture history. Right now history is being made, CoronaVirus is not only the most recent disease, but it's one of the most globally transmitted in quite a long time. By documenting what's happening, it gives everyone a different perspective, considering you are in a completely different position as the next person. Documentation can aid more than just researchers but the public as well. "The idea is to bridge communal history and offer a fully realized look at the outbreak that can help the public, researchers and policymakers better understand how the pandemic permeated our lives" (Historians, Burch). Researchers may be able to understand the different effects of the virus of each individual, and get closer to developing a cure. Documentation is highly important, whether it's day to day tasks, important events, or your experience, it can aid the world around you.

### **2.) Why is the college-student voice so important?**

The voice of a student is incredibly important because they have the power to change the world around them. This generation can impact the perspectives of people around them. Also, students are going through some of the pandemic's effects, which is the cancellation of school. Their education is being postponed due to the virus. College students could have a much different perspective as, let's say, someone who is well over the age of 70. Like one of the article states

that over 80% or more have experienced issues due to the virus. Listening to a student, is understanding how they are getting affected. To understand the affectations of people around you can widen the perspective of the virus.

**3 & 4.) What medium will you use? Why?**

I want to focus my documentation of the crisis with writing. I personally love to write and have been doing it for a long period of time. I document my life in a journal every now and then so I might have already started my documentation of the crisis a couple months ago. I think writing can give a perspective like photos, more details and more context. I feel writing is the most effective when portraying one's perspective, the thoughts and ideas coming straight from the head.

Evan Chhabra

Public History

Second Journal Entry

### Are There Any Normal Days?

It seems like forever ago that this entire pandemic started and it absolutely baffles me how used to it we are. I never thought I would, without hesitation, put on a mask and gloves. It seems like this is the new norm. That these standards have bled into our minds. I think that there's a lot to learn from this pandemic, especially with the health of our bodies. I feel as if this virus has trained our minds to consistently wash our hands, avoid unnecessary touching/contact, and following respectful safety guidelines.

When was my last normal day? I don't even know what normal means anymore. If normal for this journal is defined as the feeling or life we had pre-virus, then there's that. However, I don't think there are any normal days that stick out to me. Everyday seems to be filled with new events, stress, and opportunities that overwhelm my mind. However, we won't get into the perspective of what's normal to me. Let's view the perspective of what's a normal day considering the virus. The last normal day, I could say was the other day, of my personal life. I would say this because nothing occurred that day, I didn't travel anymore, I didn't need to conform with regulations. It was "normal" because it could've been a day that occurred pre-apocalypse. A day consisting of relaxation, movies, and the great fun of homework. However, let's dive into the perspective of the last normal day considering the pre-virus. I was located in Chicago where it was safe to go out to eat and do basically anything. Although I couldn't do basically anything because I am not made of money and it seems you need to have

that quality to do a lot in Chicago. I was able to go watch a movie at River East, go to the Original Pancake house, and go grocery shopping calmly. A normal day is hard to define or understand for me. It could mean a multitude of things, however, this is my interpretation of what is needed for this journal entry.

There are many consequences of being isolated from society, good and bad. To deal with social isolation is a completely different situation. I have dealt with isolation mainly with the development of my creativity. What my mind is capable of with the limited supplies that I have for me. I have found myself more creative when I am personally isolated rather than getting distracted by the interesting world around me. I study films, I watch them every now and then, old one, new ones, all of them. I find this to be incredibly beneficial to where I want to go in life. Since I plan on directing films, I need to understand the many ways a director can impact a film, what works and what doesn't. I have been documenting what I enjoy the most and what I could do better in films that I have been watching and it is by far the best thing I have started doing. It is extremely fun to dissect the horror which is Netflix, oh the terrible rom-coms that we watch with guilt. I also developed an artistic side that I only began years ago. I have been painting and exploring new creative paths with fashion. I have always had a love for those two since the beginning of high school, yes, a fun fact about me, I won most fashionable in high school, I am pretty cool. All jokes aside, this isolation has taught my brain to think more creatively and analyze things to provide a deeper insight than what I would have done months ago. However, the physical isolation and absence of physical contact bothers me somewhat. I don't really hang out with a great deal of people, I live with one other in Chicago, but now with my family. It just limits what we can go do. We can't go out and explore, we have to stay in. Which gives us

motivation to find the fun moments we can accomplish in a studio apartment. However, it is terrible being isolated away from society. It makes you feel like you're trapped and can't do much. Which is what I love most about the pre-virus perspective, I miss being able to go do whatever, whenever.

Evan Chhabra

Public History

Third Journal entry

### The Lifting of Restrictions; The Death of George Floyd

When the stay at home restriction was lifted in Michigan, which was officially June 15th, it felt the same. Many people never really obeyed the restriction and went out anyway, it's just now they are reopening stores all over the states. I still don't think it's safe to go out in large numbers and act like Covid is over, because it's not. The fear dissipated within a month of people getting tired of being restricted, they should know better and know that it was for their own good. During the restriction lift, I am maintaining a healthy mindset and keeping the prevention standards close so that I wouldn't be at a greater risk as some people. When I go out, I wear a mask, gloves, and keep my social distance. If I go out, I try to make it only for the necessities and if it is for a want, like clothing, I would have to time it out and make sure it's safe to go. I think more people should be aware that Covid is still thriving and making itself available to a second wave.

The death of George Floyd is one of the most tragic events that have occurred in the past few months. Police brutality is something we are all aware about and do absolutely nothing about, even when it's affecting lives all over the world. The death of George Floyd gave communities incentive to put their feet down and stand up to the people up stairs, they are tired of being looked down to. The Black Lives Matter movement is one of the most significant of our times, they have been experiencing discrimination and abusive treated for their entire lives and everyone needs to actualize that and get together to make a change. George Floyd did not die in

vain, and there will be justice. His death made me more aware and more active in protesting and aiding the lives that we should be helping for a long time. His death impacted not only the U.S., but the entirety of the world. Justice needs to be done here, it enrages me that people can still be treated like this for such a long period of time. The ignorance of many must dissipate in order for our country to be greater.



Evan Chhabra

Public History

Fourth Journal

### The Absence of Networking

I am from a small town in Michigan, and when I say small, I mean classically small like the cliché. I love my hometown, but there's just so much you can do. I always knew I wanted to go to school or university outside those boundaries, whether it was Chicago, New York, or California. I knew this would necessarily challenge me to become better and integrate me into new experiences I wasn't used to before. When I first came here, I met a lot of people, some that stuck, some that didn't. I always try to find the right people that inspire me to do better, it's very easy when everyone around you is going to an art school like you are. My favorite type of networking at Columbia College Chicago is the ones that happen on set. I have taken Lighting I, Directing I, Directing II, Camera Seminar, and more that have placed me on a role on set. The most memorable and best people I have met were when I was directing and meeting my crew. In which, I found a great deal of people that were incredibly hard-working, funny, and immensely talented. Networking is a great thing, it benefits so many people and no matter what, could benefit you in the future.

Since the spread of Corona, I have been isolated from networking since the start. I am taking online classes and it is very hard to connect with people you can't actually see. Especially if you're me and have the worst internet. I am not able to physically see anyone in classes or meet new people. It puts a bit of a damper on things because it is my last two semesters and I wanted to meet a couple of cool people for the last time. Who knows, I could have met someone

that I would have worked with for a long time. As of now, I do not have any solution on networking, other than online communication, but to me, that's not as effective as seeing someone in person. However, I am looking forward to the day where I can continue to network and meet new people.