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Capturing Quarantine: Student Pandemic Experience Journal

JJ Fisher

Columbia College Chicago

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Recommended Citation

Fisher, JJ, "*Capturing Quarantine: Student Pandemic Experience Journal*" (2020). *Public History Journals*. 8.

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JJ Fisher

Journal Entry 1

1. Why is documenting this crisis important?

Documenting this crisis is important because it is part of history. People can look back on what this time was like and learn from it. I hope that it will help to prevent future pandemics and instruct doctors and scientists about what worked and what did not with this current one. We are learning and reflecting on past pandemics, like the Spanish flu and the Black Plague during this time and seeing what has changed and what has remained the same throughout the hundreds of years. It is a good tool to learn from. Decades from now when the world starts to forget what this pandemic was like because of how removed everyone will be from it, it will be important to have these resources to look back on.

2. Why is the college-student voice important?

I think that the college-student voice is important because they are the voices of the next generation that will be in power, affect change and become doctors and scientists. They will be the next wave of people to help out with future viruses and pandemics. I think college students offer a unique experience or look into the experience because a very specific, short period of time in our lives was uprooted. There has been lots of change for college students and as young people that is a new experience for most of them. As they mentioned in the first article, it is important to do this in real time so that people's emotions are raw, and they fully remember them. On top of that, many college students have struggled with mental health issues since having to return home, sometimes to situations they wanted to never return to. The documentation of that is important because it shows another side effect of a pandemic that hopefully we can all learn from and make us try harder to prevent pandemics in the future.

3. What medium (or combination of mediums) will you use? Why do you want to use these forms?

I like the idea of using both video platforms and written statements in my journal. I think written words can be more powerful sometimes, if someone can express themselves through powerful words however I also think that sometimes, to get emotion across, a video would be a better platform because people can see how you are feeling which can be easier to relate to. There is times when there are no correct words to get a point across and a video journal might be better in that case.

JJ Fisher

Journal Entry 2

- 1. Describe your last "normal" day**
- 2. What strategies have you developed to deal with social isolation? What about the physical isolation you have experienced? How has the absence or reduction of physical contact affected you?**

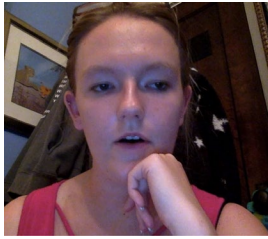
It's hard to say what my last normal day was because it felt like every week, every day we were getting new information about the Coronavirus. I was studying abroad in Paris and just the week before everything fell apart, I thought it was a sickness like the flu, like most people thought. A week later, everything had started to fall apart, especially in Italy and then in the States. I went from definitely staying in Paris for the semester to staying for half of the rest of the time until my parents visited and then all the sudden it was just one more week. In the end, I ended up only staying for four days after things changed.

I'd say my last normal day was Wednesday the 11th of March 2020. I went to class as normal but around 5pm that evening, my school emailed to say that classes would be moved online from now on. I wasn't too upset or phased by this and most of my roommates were not either. My roommates and I all went out that night and around 2am Paris we got a notification that Trump had announced he was closing the boarders between Europe and the States except for the UK. Understandably, we all freaked out and called our parents in the middle of the street outside of Café Oz. We did not know at the time that the order did not apply to United States citizens but either way, I was not planning on leaving Europe in the next 30 days so after talking to my dad, I decided to stay, and I calmed down significantly. Two of my roommates booked flights that night and left in the morning so then there were only six of us left. Two of my other roommates were leaving Friday morning but I still wanted to stay. I decided to go on my trip to

London solo Thursday afternoon and even though it was weird, I am so happy that I went. Despite everything going on, I still did not feel too worried about the virus. Obviously that all would change in the coming days, but I'd say that was the first day things really started changing for me.

In the beginning of quarantine, especially the first two weeks after I returned from Paris, when I was in quarantine, zoom calls were the best thing for me. My friends and I would do them often and they were especially helpful when online school started wrapping up and I had a ton of extra time. I also FaceTime my friends from school and from abroad and that is really nice to reconnect. Physical isolation is tough for me because I am a very touchy-feely person so I hate not being able to hug my friends and family; air kisses have become my new best friend but it's still not the same. I've gotten to hug a few of my friends now that have also been social distancing and isolating and go back to work on Monday so that will give me some much needed social and physical interaction. I think I crave physical contact more than I ever have before so when I get it, I hold onto it because it is not often and often brief! Can't wait for when we all just hold each other again.

Fisher: Journal Entry 3



VIDEO: http://colum.duracloud.org/durastore/casc.temp/ph_03_fisher_journal-PH.mp4

LENGTH: 07:33

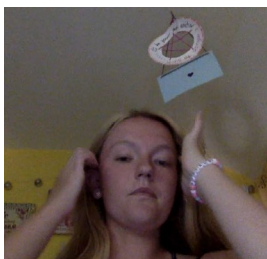
Fisher: Journal Entry 4



VIDEO: http://colum.duracloud.org/durastore/casc.temp/ph_04_fisher_journal-PH.mp4

LENGTH: 05:51

Fisher: Journal Entry 5



VIDEO: http://colum.duracloud.org/durastore/casc.temp/ph_05_fisher_journal-ph.mp4

LENGTH: 04:46

JJ Fisher

Journal Entry 6

The future is definitely scary right now. I am going into my final year of college and I am so very sad about it. I know “life isn’t fair” for anyone, ever, but it particularly challenging for college students right now because we only get four years of this at a year plus of our whole experience will be taken away. Unlike someone in their mid 20’s or 30’s, whose life may not change very much over the course of a year or two, we only get a couple years at this and that whole experience will be altered now. I hope that we find a vaccine shortly, that is available for everyone and life can start to go back to normal. Now when I say that, I just mean life changes due to coronavirus. I love that there are changes in our world and country due to the growing involvement with Black Lives Matter movement. I hope that can continue to grow when life goes back to normal in the next year or two (hopefully). We just need a vaccine for racism too! I guess I fear the opposite, that life due to COVID will not go back to normal and this countries attitude towards racism will. We need to learn from our mistakes as citizens and politicians and leaders and hopefully do better in the future when it comes to everything going on right now. I wish everyone would just care about one another but sadly it is a truth of our country and I’m sure the world as well that some people simply do not care because it does not affect them “and things have been like this forever”. When something is so engrained in society that people don’t even care, that’s how we should know just how much of a problem it is. My hope that the changes that need to be made are actually made and people start becoming better humans as a collective whole. It is not just one person, or one races job to fix the world we are living in, it is everyone’s job.