7-2020

Capturing Quarantine: Student Pandemic Experience Journal

Parker Jonas
Columbia College Chicago

1. As Howard Zinn put it in his book "Artists in Times of War", it is everyone's duty to speak up against the government in times injustice and war and for artists it's our jobs to make work about current goings on. There is a very blatant air or dishonesty coming from the head of the White House right now and it's important to call out lies and misinformation whenever possible.
2. The college student voice is important because we're likely to be the future voices of the generation as non-college educated people are not offered the same platform or opportunities to speak up, It's our job as college educated people to be aware of and dismantle systems of oppression we are involved in, including systems like Columbia College in which the attendance policy was only removed when it would become a financial or public relations disaster for them. Even when Corona is gone, will CCC still keep the same opinion on absences? If not, are they willing to address the financial inequality people might face when a doctor's note is required to prove illness? I feel it's more than likely our school will continue to ignore voices as soon as its most convenient for them, faculty voices included.

3 and 4 I think I'm going to stick to writing as it's the most directly understood medium available to me. Although I am a photo student, I dislike using my work for political messaging when I'm not entirely sure of the situation. I also lack have a grasp on fine art theory which is essential for not tripping over your own metaphorical feet, and we all know how the internet loves to dig up the past to prove disingenuity

I don't think I ever had a last normal day, but if I did it was March 15th because that's the day, I've been telling my friends it's been going since. My last normal day was hell, just like many of them. Life had become like working for 5 bosses all at once and all of them expecting you to treat their class like a part time job all while trying to make it in the industry the school is supposed to be helping me to access . I was in the process of meeting with friends to discuss business plans post-graduation. Midterms were about to happen, and I couldn't get ANY studio time, it's probably good I didn't because 1104 was the first building to close

All but 2 of my friends are now gone. I graduated a week or so ago and since then I've felt both free and even more constrained. I've been trying to keep in touch with my friends, we started out talking near daily, then every couple days, then a week apart. Now it seems like I must schedule a week in advance just to hear my friend's voices. I always kept my life pretty 50/50 when it comes to online socialization and real-life socialization. It has always allowed me to get through whatever hardships that either side may present while leaning into the other side for support. Now that I'm all online, I dislike it. I was enjoying it the first 8 or 9 weeks but now I'm just bored. I'm not one of those extroverts that feels a mortal blow when they can't go out, but my brain feels like it gets less and less conversational every day. My thoughts seem slow and repetitive and my dreams mimic my waking hours. I dislike the same in and out every day, whether its pre or post quarantine

Parker Jonas

I'm honestly scared to see things reopen. Everyone is seemingly trying to paint a pretty picture with Illinois being down in cases, but the fact of the matter is that reopening is only going to lead to more deaths. I get that the economy is important and stuff, but right now the most severely affected people in the country is the Black population which is disproportionately affected by the pandemic. The pandemic has put so much pressure on the community that people have decided that they're either dying sooner or later in a broken system, so it's time to step up and do something, anything.

My roommate is coming back in 4 days, so that's going to be a bit of a stress and a joy. I'm worried because my partner is older and at risk. I'm not allowed home because my dad only has one lung. I hate that taking proper precautions places my loved ones further away from me, but that's the price of safety.

Many of the people I know seem to be on the side of "well if the suits agree we can, then its fine" when the problem still lies mostly unresolved as people see masks as snowflake material.

Until things get better, I plan to keep my distance and enjoy my drinks with a friend from across the room

Parker Jonas

Connecting in college is an odd topic to me seeing as I'm now well outside the window to socialize with peers. In the beginning years socialization was easy, everyone wanted to be friends, and nobody was preoccupied with those life changing projects that move them away. Then sophomore and junior year hit, and I felt in the thick if it with no time or mental capacity to even think about my social life. I had my roommate and a couple close friends and that's all I thought I needed. We went out and I was socially friendly with lots of people, but I never really had that many serious friends offline.

I wouldn't describe myself as a social person, but I still do feel a loss at the fact that I don't feel I used my time at Columbia to network effectively because I was too preoccupied with work, homework, and my own mental breakdowns. In that regard I've cut myself some slack and I try to forgive the times when I wasn't at my best and unable to go out. Now it seems like I must try and be patient and forgive society for not being able to go out. Much of my life has been spent in waiting for freedom or better times and this is just another one of those times.

Like those other times when my life shuts down, I know I can rely on my gaming friends to keep me in a good mood. I am on video calls nearly every day, and this has been the mode of 2/3 of my socialization in life. I am not a fish out of water in this situation, though it does just feel like regressing back to my childhood.