



1 Interview of Alexandra Resendez

2 Interviewed by Nick LaMaack

3
4 Nikolas LaMaack 0:09

5 Okay, um, welcome. We are here today to do the oral history project for Capturing Quarantine:
6 Student Life During a Pandemic. My name is Nikolas LaMaack What is yours?

7
8 Alexandra Resendez 0:20

9 Alexandra Resendez,

10
11 Nikolas LaMaack 0:22

12 and Today is May 4th 2020. The time is 2:42pm. And where are you right now, Allie?

13
14 Alexandra Resendez 0:32

15 I'm in Brownsville, Texas.

16
17 Nikolas LaMaack 0:34

18 Awesome. And I am in Chicago, Illinois. I'm just getting my timer started so we don't run over.
19 There we go. Um, so first question is where do you go to college?

20
21 Alexandra Resendez 0:47

22 Columbia College Chicago.

23
24 Nikolas LaMaack 0:49

25 Awesome. What year are you and what year is your expected graduation year?

26
27 Alexandra Resendez 0:55

28 I'm a freshman. So my expected graduation years 2023.

29
30 Nikolas LaMaack 1:00

31 where were you born?

32
33 Alexandra Resendez 1:02

34 Here in Brownsville, Texas.

35
36 Nikolas LaMaack 1:04

37 Then where did you grow up?

38
39 Alexandra Resendez 1:06

40 I've lived in Brownsville my whole life.

41
42 Nikolas LaMaack 1:08

43 Awesome. What's your mother's your birth and place of birth?

44

45 Alexandra Resendez 1:13
 46 1973 also Brownsville, Texas.
 47
 48 Nikolas LaMaack 1:16
 49 And what about your father's
 50
 51 Alexandra Resendez 1:19
 52 1960's. 1969. Late 1960's. *Distorted Audio*
 53
 54 Nikolas LaMaack 1:30
 55 awesome, love it. Um, okay, so what is your earliest memory?
 56
 57 Alexandra Resendez 1:39
 58 So, I talked about this in class because I guess it's been usual but my first memories when I was
 59 I think it was my first birthday party. I don't have like a very clear memory but I just what I
 60 remember it was I was in a kiddie pool. And I just remember My cousin, Vosey, at the time was
 61 like 10 and her just like looking down on me to like pick me up. And I just remember being a
 62 baby and like having everyone looking at me in this kiddie pool. And then I looked at pictures. It
 63 wasn't until I was like seven or eight years old. I looked at pictures. And I was Hey, I remember
 64 that pool and like that. I remember her wearing that bathing suit. My birthday party.
 65
 66 Nikolas LaMaack 2:26
 67 I love it. That's a beautiful memory. Um, do you know the story of how you got your name?
 68
 69 Alexandra Resendez 2:33
 70 Yeah, my mom named me after herself. So her full name May Alexandra Martinez. SO she just
 71 named me Alexandra? I don't have a middle name because my first name is long and my last
 72 name is long so they thought like a middle name would just be excessive.
 73
 74 Nikolas LaMaack 2:51
 75 Oh, yeah. Um, where did you go to elementary school.
 76
 77 Alexandra Resendez 2:56
 78 I went to gieggle tree from the serial program to once a third grade. And then they built a newer
 79 school and I was moved I moved to their fourth and fifth grade school Benioff Elementary. The
 80 following one.
 81
 82 Nikolas LaMaack 3:16
 83 Okay, who was your favorite teacher?
 84
 85 Alexandra Resendez 3:19
 86 Probably all, on like an elementary or of all time?
 87
 88 Nikolas LaMaack 3:25

89 Let's do of all time.
90
91 Alexandra Resendez 3:27
92 Okay. *Dog Barks* Oh my neighbor's dog sorry I don't know if I have one makes that question
93 makes me nervous just because I have so many favorite teachers. Um, I guess my ninth grade
94 English teacher. Also, who I haven't talked to since leaving high school. *Distorted Audio* But
95 um, yeah, her class. I got every single semester. I got a hundred *Distorted Audio*. I felt so
96 encouraged by myself and she just made me feel really good about my writing. *Distorted
97 Audio* And was like, that was the point like, for me when I realized I wanted to pursue writing as
98 a career.
99
100 Nikolas LaMaack 4:21
101 Okay, and then where did you go?
102
103 Alexandra Resendez 4:26
104 I went to Hana High School, Hana high school from ninth grade, halfway in my junior year, and
105 then I moved to a charter school called a premier high school to finish because at that point, my
106 junior year I had, I mean, I had been struggling with depression and anxiety, since like Middle
107 School. But I had kind of fallen into really bad depression my junior year and I was like, falling
108 behind in credits, and the administrators weren't really understanding. So I moved school to
109 come here.
110
111 Nikolas LaMaack 5:07
112 Oh, awesome. Um, what were your excellent questions when you graduated from high school
113
114 Alexandra Resendez 5:16
115 Uh, to look forward to the future to like, you know that like the world is your oyster like that
116 feeling? I don't think I've I've been excited for the future. Probably *Distorted Audio*.
117
118 Nikolas LaMaack 5:33
119 Um, we're all did you apply for colleges to go to when you're a senior?
120
121 Alexandra Resendez 5:40
122 I applied. So there's a University here in my hometown as well as a college. I applied here for
123 like, the safety net. And I had been wanting to go to school, either in New York or Chicago.
124 Unlike my senior year, I was having that argument with my mom. Like every day, like you're
125 crazy, you're not moving to a big city, like that's expensive and how are you going to live? But I
126 kind of I kind of applied to Chicago to Columbia, because the application was really easy. And I
127 was like, it won't hurt. And I got in and I got a scholarship. So I decided to go.
128
129 Nikolas LaMaack 6:23
130 Yeah, why did you decide to go to Columbia? What was it about Columbia that made you come
131 here?
132

133 Alexandra Resendez 6:28
134 And just, um, I've always wanted to surround myself with other creative people and to just be in
135 Yeah, I guess I was just looking for like a community of artists and, and artists that aren't bound
136 by like one, uh Medium, or media. So yeah, I just that's what I was seeking.
137
138 Nikolas LaMaack 6:57
139 Yeah. So what's your major
140
141 Alexandra Resendez 7:00
142 So that's currently up in the air, officially I'm explority I went into college thinking I would
143 probably be like a journalism major, and then my minoring in cultural studies. But after now
144 almost like completing my first year, I probably will major in journalism. I think I'm going to focus
145 on cultural studies and more creative writing, just because, I mean, that's when it all comes
146 down to it. Like I, I'm a writer, and I felt like taking journalism classes and having to write only in
147 that like newspaper format. It kind of like crushed my soul a little bit. So yeah, that's still been
148 still figuring that part out.
149
150 Nikolas LaMaack 7:51
151 Awesome. And then, uh, do you participate in any activities at Columbia?
152
153 Alexandra Resendez 7:58
154 so I'm doing Government. I am the mental health senator. yeah I don't feel like a good senator
155 right now though because I I don't feel like a good student right now. I'm like really behind in
156 classes and I'm behind in student government. *Distorted Audio* Pretty much the only
157 extracurricular I like committed to when I started like the beginning of where I went. *Distorted
158 Audio* coalition of female creators. *Distorted Audio*I was interested in joining like, *Distorted
159 Audio*so far.*Distorted Audio*
160
161 Nikolas LaMaack 8:45
162 Describe your life outside of school in Chicago.
163
164 Alexandra Resendez 8:50
165 Like here in Brownsville?
166
167 Nikolas LaMaack 8:52
168 Well, in Chicago specifically when you're not in school?
169
170 Alexandra Resendez 8:55
171 wow. Okay. Sol guess the first semester was like me trying to understand how the CTA works,
172 like visiting different neighborhoods and just trying to learn about Chicago. Like in the
173 weekends, we go to like a different neighborhood and go, thrifte shopping or I like going to the
174 library *Distorted Audio* ninth floor. Yeah, that was right before. All of this pre Corona. I had
175 kind of I started volunteering for like the Bernie campaign and started like canvassing and I went
176 to like a Barnes form in Pilsen. And I met this person who gave me like their card. *Distorted

177 Audio* I'll help you. So I think like, right Before I had *Distorted Audio* I was like just getting into
178 like that routine. Yeah, cuz the rest of that like me trying to figure that out and learn about
179 *Distorted Audio*.

180

181 Nikolas LaMaack 10:15

182 Yeah. How would you describe your education at Columbia up until recent times?

183

184 Alexandra Resendez 10:22

185 hands on. Yeah, I think one thing I *Distorted Audio* let me know if the audio is off because it's
186 kind of windy um usually with your professors or people who are *Distorted Audio* like

187

188 Nikolas LaMaack 10:57

189 Where were you when you learned Colombia was training to remote learning.

190

191 Alexandra Resendez 11:02

192 Um I think I was back home. No, that's not true. That's not true. I wouldn't have no, I think it was
193 the weekend before St. Patrick's Day. I think. Yeah, that weekend on I say we get my weekend
194 starts on Thursday. So I remember that Thursday. It had been announced that the other like
195 Chicago area school, we're going to do switch to online. And every class is like, all of the
196 classes are like, hey, just so you know, it's a possibility and then what that weekend was the
197 other side, it's announcing that they were gonna be switched *Distorted Audio* Not just
198 Columbia students, like DePaul and Roosevelt students. And the first students to be kicked out
199 were the DePaul students *Distorted Audio*. Oh, like this is really I probably can't come from
200 these but like, blank has hit the fan.

201

202 Nikolas LaMaack 12:29

203 Yeah. When did you first become aware of the Coronavirus?

204

205 Alexandra Resendez 12:36

206 *Distorted Audio* very beginning of the year, like January I remember reading about like,
207 terrible. *Distorted Audio* China. It was like *Distorted Audio* Yeah, I remember reading that
208 and not ever thinking about like was something that was going to directly impact life here, you
209 know? Yeah. Yeah. That was back in January.

210

211 Nikolas LaMaack 13:07

212 Oh, so what was your initial response then?

213

214 Alexandra Resendez 13:11

215 I just said it was heartbreaking that that that that many lives are being lost. But again, it was like,
216 also from a place of, like, removed from the situation. Like, looking at like an outsider's
217 perspective. And that's obviously changed.

218

219 Nikolas LaMaack 13:32

220 Yeah. Could you describe how the progression of COVID has happened through like, a lens as
221 if you were like a filmmaker making a movie about it then? So like, a timeline of how COVID has
222 happened in life?

223

224 Alexandra Resendez 13:47

225 Yeah, so January, I would say it was like, in the background, I know in my peripheral and not
226 really because it's like it's not gonna happen. It's not gonna, I didn't *Distorted Audio* to ever get
227 to the United States, but I didn't think it would be a pandemic like I thought like someone like in
228 New York and then there'd be like a small outbreak in New York and then you know, everything
229 would go back to normal. So that was like January I was like, hey, there's this like really terrible
230 thing happening in China, but that's the other side of the world. That's just there. It's gonna be
231 fine. And then there was that one case? I think the first confirmed cases were in Chicago first in
232 some cases the United States when Chicago but it was just like a couple. And they seem to I
233 think they recovered. I remember might be aunt messaged me on Facebook and was like to say
234 no, like, be extra save because this virus and like, Don't worry, I have my purell Yeah, and then
235 it kind of it just started like, February it was getting worse. Like in the East Coast. And maybe in
236 California too, and I remember having this conversation with one of my professors and cars like
237 to look, you know, like, we have the *Distorted Audio* middle of the country. I was gonna, like hit
238 the coast, but like we're okay because we're in the center of the country. Not gonna spread over
239 here. Like Yeah, yeah, like it's not gonna. So I think for a period, it was like, denial almost, or.
240 Yeah. And, and then March happened and like, everything happened so quickly in the month of
241 March. Yeah.

242

243 Nikolas LaMaack 15:53

244 Yeah. Um, and then so what is a pandemic in your words? So there are so many definitions.
245 There's obviously you A clear definition but how would you describe a pandemic with the
246 physical and emotional ties to it?

247

248 Alexandra Resendez 16:07

249 Ah, I guess it's like a forest fire. Um, and it's yeah it's in the way it spreads and, and in its
250 destruction. Yeah, like a forest fire. Like another analogy. Yeah.

251

252 Nikolas LaMaack 16:28

253 I loved it. Um, how has COVID affected your education? education? I can't speak.

254

255 Alexandra Resendez 16:36

256 I don't I don't feel like I'm getting an education like or at least not. Not from school. I think I'm
257 learning a lot more from the world around me. But when it comes to like college and my courses
258 I remember like the first week of online classes, I went doodling into my notebook and I was like,
259 This is not real. This is fake school. This is not real. Because that's kind of what it felt like like it
260 so like I was in a weird dystopian movies. And then when it comes to like, me actually putting in
261 work and doing assignments that has felt close to impossible constant being able I can't focus
262 or concentrate on anything for too long. Yeah.

263

264 Nikolas LaMaack 17:41
 265 Um, so how much of a structural role did school play in your life before the pandemic?
 266
 267 Alexandra Resendez 17:48
 268 I mean, it was my routine. Now, I don't really have like that. And I don't think anyone has that
 269 barrier between like school life, Personal life, work life because it all happens in the same place.
 270 And you kind of have to decide when and maybe I haven't been like the best job at like
 271 managing like time management but yeah, just the establishment of those those barriers Oh
 272 boundaries
 273
 274 Nikolas LaMaack 18:24
 275 what have the biggest disappointments been in the switch to online education?
 276
 277 Alexandra Resendez 18:31
 278 Just Yeah, exactly what I said just that separation between when is full time when it's me time. I
 279 like going outside especially like coming back from Chicago. I miss the Texas sun so much. So
 280 even when I like come outside and just like sit in the sun. It's like schools always on on my mind.
 281 And so I don't I'm See Yeah, I've been struggling with just separating when to do what? Yeah.
 282
 283 Nikolas LaMaack 19:07
 284 Uh How would your life change if Columbia automatically passed you in all of your classes
 285
 286 Alexandra Resendez 19:13
 287 automatically what?
 288
 289 Nikolas LaMaack 19:14
 290 automatically passed you like many other colleges students have been pushing it on us
 291
 292 Alexandra Resendez 19:19
 293 relief. yeah cuz that's currently like what has been giving me so much stress like even though I
 294 opted for the I did the pass fail thing. I'm a part of me fulfilled like, what if I fail? Actually, like the
 295 last few weeks? I'm still kind of behind on assignments. And then I have *Distorted Audio*.
 296 Yeah. *Distorted Audio* I wasn't behind. Like I've been. I don't feel like I wouldn't be *Distorted
 297 Audio* Like, oh, like I worked hard, it's not fair that other people get to pass as well. But I don't
 298 see it that way. Like you don't know what, what other people are experiencing right now. And
 299 even it's like *Distorted Audio*. Like maybe like, if you don't know anyone who's gotten the virus,
 300 it's still it's impacting everyone in his own way. But we're all being affected.
 301
 302 Nikolas LaMaack 20:31
 303 Yeah. Um, so how do you feel about Columbia's choice to allow pass fail grades? *Video Stops*
 304 There we go. We're back. Okay, you're back. Awesome. How do you feel about *Distorted
 305 Audio*? Uh, how do you feel about Columbia's choice to allow pass fail grades?
 306
 307 Alexandra Resendez 21:14

308 *Distorted Audio* I feel like they should have just done that by default. Because even though
309 they gave us the option, there's still a bit of like stigma. Oh, why did you do that? Or why did you
310 choose*Distorted Audio* from like, some of my friends like, you kind of get the feeling like, Oh,
311 you chose the easy way out. But it's like, yeah, we're in the middle of a pandemic, like of course,
312 I *Distorted Audio* yeah.

313

314 Nikolas LaMaack 21:47

315 Um, next, How are your you and your professors communicating with you?

316

317 Alexandra Resendez 22:00

318 What do you mean? Like? Email?

319

320 Nikolas LaMaack 22:04

321 Yeah. How are your professors communicating? Is it working? Is it not working?

322

323 Alexandra Resendez 22:11

324 So for some professors it is working. But for other professors I haven't even had like one on one
325 communication with some early March. Yeah. And then the extra, I guess barrier is like, the fact
326 that I am. I have kind of like fallen back into a depression. It's harder to like reach out to people
327 and be like, Hey, I'm having a hard time and I'm behind in your class. So it kind of makes things
328 more difficult and it would just be so much easier to you know, show up during office hours.

329 Yeah.

330

331 Nikolas LaMaack 22:55

332 Um, and then how has moving into an online classroom or Your creative work I know you talked
333 about liking to write a lot creatively. How do you think now being stuck where you are and being
334 out of the classroom and out of the environment of the creatives. How has that affected you?

335

336 Alexandra Resendez 23:15

337 I, I feel like that's probably the silver lining of all of this. I've been writing a lot more and not
338 anything like I usually write. I've been writing a lot of like poetry and I think it's because I'm, I see
339 I feel like I'm only capable of focusing on like the abstract right now. Because I can't really grasp
340 reality. Yeah, and so like, I think I've been struggling with like, essays and more like structured
341 forms because because I just like, lose my concentration or my train of thought and with poetry.
342 It's more like whatever You feel like stream of consciousness I've been playing guitar kind of like
343 excessively now. And I think it's I think I've been using guitar as like justification to just like
344 continue *Distorted Audio* fascinate fascinating *Distorted Audio* by the garage.

345

346 Nikolas LaMaack 24:27

347 So are you seeing art as a form of escapism right now then then?

348

349 Alexandra Resendez 24:36

350 *Distorted Audio* Me?

351

352 Nikolas LaMaack 24:40
353 No, you're freezing. Okay, there we go.
354
355 Alexandra Resendez 24:51
356 I okay, I'm going to switch the Wi Fi network. Okay, that may be that may be the issue.
357
358 Nikolas LaMaack 24:58
359 Awesome.
360
361 Alexandra Resendez 25:00
362 What happened? Sorry. Okay, I think we're back.
363
364 Nikolas LaMaack 25:27
365 Awesome. I see you. um, yeah, take a drink. The next question I have for you, if you didn't hear
366 me, um, was a how has art I know you talked about writing poetry more and playing guitar? How
367 do you feel like that's been escapism for you?
368
369 Alexandra Resendez 25:47
370 Um Yeah, just Well, when it comes to guitar, it's like I have to like physically the guitars in my
371 garage. So I have to, like, physically leave my room. Which is like probably the only thing that
372 other than like having to eat and use the bathroom. That's like the only thing that's been forcing
373 me to leave my room. Yeah, and I remember the first couple of weeks all I was doing was like
374 sitting outside and reading poetry. Um, I think like, I've kind of use art to like, create like little
375 protective bubble to not and I don't want to like, ignore what's happening, but every now and
376 then you do kind of need a break. Yeah, it's giving me it's giving me that.
377
378 Nikolas LaMaack 26:48
379 a switching some topics now. Oh, where have you had to travel to during COVID ?
380
381 Alexandra Resendez 26:56
382 so I flew home. from Chicago to Brownsville, and then we got an email, like, two days after I got
383 back. saying like, Hey, get your stuff up by Sunday are going to charge you a lot of money. So
384 my family and I, well, me, my mom, my sister had to drive across the country. And Brownsville is
385 like the southern tip of Texas. So driving straight across the country during a pandemic.
386 terrifying. Having to wear gloves and like masks, for like a bathroom break. Yeah, that's
387 definitely something I'm so upset over the fact that we have to kind of endanger our own health
388 and the health of others.
389
390 Nikolas LaMaack 27:49
391 How do you think? Yeah, how do you think the college could have handled the dorming life like
392 moving out situation better what what do you think would have made that better?
393
394 Alexandra Resendez 28:00

395 I think we just needed like a little bit more time with more. Yeah. Because when we when they
396 switch, so I flew home and then two days later we got the email. Before I flew home there was
397 that whole weekend where we were kind of in this weird place of like not knowing what was
398 going to happen. Weird Limbo situation. And I think in that time, if they had just told us, like
399 giving us a heads up like we are giving you a whole week, instead of, you know, a few days,
400 we're giving you a whole week to move out. And it would have been it would have been easier
401 to I probably would have got like a u haul or, you know, I would have had more of a plan. So
402 yeah, I think and I understand why it took them a while, you know, they needed I'm sure they
403 needed their own answers. But I think we needed decision and there's so much time wasted
404 because of indecision, you know. Also, I just thought your last question you asked me where
405 I've traveled. I had been home. But last weekend, I went to, cross, I went to Mexico, which is
406 always kind of not scary. Yeah, there's like a little bit of fear just because we're in patrol agents.
407 It's like, there's like a different It always depends on like, the individual agent you get.
408 Sometimes they're friendly. Other times they're on like a power trip. So, and also like in the
409 context of a pandemic, really, what are they gonna do are they we need to like, follow certain
410 precautions. But all we have to do is wear like a face mask. And when we got to the border, it
411 just took our temperature we're able to cross and then same thing we got back it was actually
412 pretty easy but I was stressing about it all day.

413

414 Nikolas LaMaack 30:12

415 Why did you go to Mexico and how long were you there for?

416

417 Alexandra Resendez 30:16

418 I went to Mexico to get my wisdom teeth extracted because I don't have health insurance. And
419 yeah, the US health care system is great. It's not. and I was only there for a few hours I went to
420 my appointment I came back

421

422 Nikolas LaMaack 30:33

423 just from what you like saw there. Do you think precautions are being taken the same in
424 Mexico?

425

426 Alexandra Resendez 30:39

427 No.

428

429 Nikolas LaMaack 30:40

430 Like how what are the differences between how Mexico where you were is handling it versus
431 the US?

432

433 Alexandra Resendez 30:47

434 So I mean, I guess I don't know about all Mexico but in my look like Texas operating now
435 because Texas is open business. Yeah, people, people weren't facemask *Distorted Audio* by,
436 for example, we had, we got breakfast there, but we didn't get off. We just kind of ordered from
437 our car and they gave us the food and we ate in our car. So I would say it's the same as what
438 Texas is doing now. Now that they've like they decided, open the economy or whatever. But

439 before we were last week, we were in a under a stay at home order. They don't have a stay at
440 home order. And I think their businesses have been operating throughout the whole time
441 throughout the whole period.

442
443 Nikolas LaMaack 31:51

444 Um, so tracking back a little bit. How did the announcement that the college would close and
445 impact your living situation then I know you said you had Go back home but how are those
446 decisions made?

447
448 Alexandra Resendez 32:07

449 I mean, I don't feel like I had much of a there was much decision making on my part it was kind
450 of like I had no choice but to go home. Um Yeah, and now all right now I'm in like, I'm still in like
451 a weird in between place because I still have my stuff that was in my dorm. And then the stuff
452 that was like already in my bedroom and I'm still having to like figure it out. What to get rid of
453 and *Distorted Audio*

454
455 Nikolas LaMaack 32:38
456 Yeah, you did. Uh, can you just describe your current living situation then?

457
458 Alexandra Resendez 32:43

459 Yeah, so I'm at my, I guess, I don't know if this is my childhood home. I moved here and I was
460 like, 17 but with my mom, my stepdad and my step brother. Luckily, I have my own room. I there
461 was a point in my life I was sharing a bedroom and I could only imagine like, I feel so bad
462 people love to share their bedrooms because that's so chaotic right now like it's stressful
463 enough having to be on an online class and then having my step brother offering an online class
464 for but I can only imagine what that dynamic dynamic would be like in the same room.

465
466 Nikolas LaMaack 33:23
467 How involved were your parents and in the decision of you would like coming home?

468
469 Alexandra Resendez 33:29

470 Well, my mom, so we had all kinds of kitchen. When I, my mom, my dad, my sister, I think my
471 grandma also pitched in for a plane ticket back. And then when we have to go pick up our stuff,
472 my mom called off and drove up with my sister. And then afterwards because she traveled out
473 of state to *Distorted Audio* for two weeks she was working from home, because they didn't
474 want her to go back into the office after traveling, which is good.

475
476 Nikolas LaMaack 34:07
477 Yeah, uh, how's the pandemic changed your relationship with your parents?

478
479 Alexandra Resendez 34:15

480 So, I mean, I feel a lot closer with my mom, obviously, because I am living with her again and
481 seeing her a lot more. And, neither of us can really go anywhere. So when we were like in the
482 living room, watching a movie, when it comes to my dad, I don't live with my dad. And my dad is

483 in his 50s, and he like doesn't have health insurance. So, like, I'm always worried about his
484 health. But now more than ever, especially because he has been working this entire time, which
485 is something that really upsets me that his boss is greedy. And so the fact that I live with him.
486 I've been seeing him a lot less. Like I, I got back home from Chicago. And you know, like
487 instinctually you want to see your family and like the people that you love and you miss. But I
488 couldn't because I was scared of getting him sick and getting other people sick to my
489 grandparents. I remember like, the day before I flew back I had a dream that I saw my grandpa,
490 and I hugged him and I woke up crying because it's like, I don't know when I'm going to be
491 hugging like that. And it's things like you miss, you want to hug the people you love, but now
492 you're hesitant because you don't want to endanger them in any way. Yeah.

493
494 Nikolas LaMaack 35:45

495 Um How do infection prevention restrictions, slash like recommendations in your new location
496 differ from the stay at home order in Chicago in Illinois?

497
498 Yeah. So I wouldn't say a week ago. They probably didn't. They probably weren't very different.
499 Because we're also under like a shelter in place stay at home order. Essential travel only try to
500 keep like the passengers in your car at minimum. But now we're at like a really weird. Now I
501 don't I'm worried about what's going to happen in Texas and other states that are opening up
502 again. Yeah, so business businesses are supposed to be operating at like, minimum capacity.
503 But they're no longer like enforcing people were math. Which, I mean, I think it's up to like
504 *Distorted Audio* some owners are being like, No, you can't come in without a mask. Other
505 people will. I know gas stations, my Mom went to the gas station the other day and she said,
506 people were just like, not caring. So I think because our government has told us that it's okay to
507 go out or under *Distorted Audio* period it was like okay, maybe like, well, things are gonna get
508 better. Everyone seems to be staying at home. This is gonna pass and then now they reopen.
509 *Distorted Audio* I don't know.

510
511 How long has Texas been open for?

512
513 Alexandra Resendez 37:33
514 Just started on May 1 *Distorted Audio*.

515
516 Nikolas LaMaack 37:43
517 Awesome. I didn't know that. Uh, okay. What are the precautions you take? Even when just
518 going to the grocery store and has that habit?

519
520 Alexandra Resendez 37:51
521 I haven't.

522
523 Nikolas LaMaack 37:51
524 You haven't gone to the grocery store?

525
526 Alexandra Resendez 37:52

527 I haven't gone to grocery. I'm terrified to go to grocery store now. I haven't been to a grocery
528 store since March 18th. Yeah, and I'm terrified for the next time I go like I I don't want to go.
529

530 Nikolas LaMaack 38:09
531 Have you like really left the house that at all?
532

533 Alexandra Resendez 38:12
534 Um, I went for doctor's appointment? Um, no, not really. I I feel like I have left. *Distorted Audio*
535 My sister went through a drive thru and it was really it's so funny now that like, when I do leave
536 the house, I'm just like looking out the window like, wow. Even though I've already seen all
537 these streets. Yeah, but No, I haven't. I haven't gone any stores. And even though they're open
538 now, I know the mall is open. I'm not interested in going to a shopping mall right now.
539

540 Nikolas LaMaack 38:47
541 Yeah. Um, so I guess this kind of applies to you. Already. What would you tell someone who's
542 planning to take a trip across country? Um, I know that you were forced to Do it. What would
543 you tell somebody? What you'd be like, pack this, bring this make sure you don't do this. But
544 what would your advice be?
545

546 Alexandra Resendez 39:10
547 Well, yeah, if you have to, if you don't have to, don't do it. But if you have to just face masks,
548 purell, gloves, wear gloves at every gas station. And so washing into wearing gloves and really
549 mindful of everything you touch, touch something at the gas station or at a convenience store,
550 and go back into your car, you know, make sure you take your gloves off and yeah, just be
551 aware of like, what you're touching and how close you are to other people.
552

553 Nikolas LaMaack 39:48
554 Um, and then how has economic inequality and an equity impacted your response to COVID
555

556 Alexandra Resendez 39:57
557 What do you mean by my response?
558

559 Nikolas LaMaack 39:59
560 Um, Have you noticed just like within your own life within other people's of like, not being able to
561 find masks or yeah and so forth stuff like that?
562

563 Nikolas LaMaack 0:00
564 Then how has economic inequality and equity impacted your response to COVID? What do you
565 mean by my response? Um, have you noticed just like within your own life within other people's
566 of like, not being able to find masks or Yeah, so forth stuff like that?
567

568 Alexandra Resendez 0:21
569 Yeah. So when it comes to masks, my mom works with older people. So she her job we're
570 getting masks through her job. But when it comes to like, income inequality, my sister *Distorted

571 Audio* working class community a lot a lot. I don't know. I know a lot of *Distorted Audio* health
572 insurance. We lack access to medical care. Yeah, I don't want to come to work. I mean, I, I was
573 already *Distorted Audio* looking for a job and now they're like, there's no way I'm going to get a
574 job now. And the fact that like, students, college students were like excluded from the stimulus
575 package like I have no source of income whatsoever. I'm *Distorted Audio* in San Antonio. And
576 she's been out of a job. She has to like, so if you're like applying to unemployment *Distorted
577 Audio* and luckily, she lives in apartment but luckily her landlord is generous and did not ask for
578 rent, in fact, gave her like a laptop because they don't have Wi Fi and yeah So, um, but I'm, I
579 feel really privileged that I, I still have, we still have food on the table. My mom is still working we
580 still have income coming in. And even though I was like kicked off campus, I still have a home to
581 come back to I think I've always been, like aware of these inequities within our country but now
582 it's just like it's you can't it's like undeniable now. And now for me like I just feel so frustrated
583 with people aren't leaders that our politicians that like we're not like yeah, there now I'm, there
584 was a period where I was just like really, really *Distorted Audio* on the lack of compassion in
585 human life, you know,

586

587 Nikolas LaMaack 3:12

588 I'm, yeah, I'm gonna give you another second to rant or another question to rant about that stuff
589 and like another second, but first, what are your new sources?

590

591 Alexandra Resendez 3:23

592 Ah, okay. *Distorted Audio*

593

594 Nikolas LaMaack 3:27

595 Yeah.

596

597 Alexandra Resendez 3:29

598 Okay. Um, The Washington Post cnn LA Times. It's really I choose the news app on my phone
599 for like, whoever. I'm pretty sure I'm following people. Yeah, I follow the bronco Herald, which is
600 like the, my hometown hometown newspaper, Texas Tribune. NPR. Vice, Vox. I like the
601 intercept. Yeah, but I suppose it's usually like the news app. I used to go on Twitter for news.
602 Like, obviously you find your reliable sources on Twitter, but I use Twitter as like a way to find
603 them. I don't do that anymore. And just because it's, it's a lot like going on Twitter is a lot like I'm
604 strictly there for the memes now.

605

606 Nikolas LaMaack 4:24

607 I love it. Um, okay, going back to letting you rant for a second. How do you feel the government
608 has been handling the pandemic?

609

610 Alexandra Resendez 4:31

611 Ah, I think on a federal government lacks, like a, what we need is like a front we need, like a
612 federal response. And the fact that we don't have that has led to what we have now, which is
613 like some states are trying to transition back to normal life, whatever that means. Other states
614 are going No, we're going to continue for quarentining. So now like, Yeah, I don't even know

615 what's happening right now. Like with all the protests. I'm talking about liberating people. And I
616 think what we needed and what we still need. *Distorted Audio* Yeah, and we don't, but we
617 don't have any *Distorted Audio*.

618

619 Nikolas LaMaack 5:37

620 Yeah. Um, what are your feelings about the people protesting right now?

621

622 Alexandra Resendez 5:42

623 *Distorted Audio* Especially when you look at the demographics of who is being affected by this
624 virus and the fact that like black and brown can They're disproportionately affected. And then
625 you look at the people protesting, and it's obviously majority white. I can't make any
626 assumptions about like, their class standing, but I'm assuming it's like small business owners
627 that just want their workers to get back to work and keep making them money. So I just I just
628 think they're selfish. And, so, harmful right now.

629

630 Nikolas LaMaack 6:30

631 What's the biggest change that you would have done that the government hasn't?

632

633 Alexandra Resendez 6:36

634 *Distorted Audio* years ago. Yeah, I mean, I know, in 2015 or 2014, there was already a
635 discussion about creating like, a federal plan for a response to a pandemic like this. And then
636 The Trump administration we've seen like a lot of cuts for funding for like, I know like even like
637 after Hurricane Maria, you think our government would have learned from like those kind of
638 natural disasters and be like, okay, we need a better response to emergency situations. But
639 that's not what happened. I guess putting in more money into creating and executing like those
640 kinds of plans and listening to scientists.

641

642 Nikolas LaMaack 7:37

643 Yeah. This is gonna be a big switch. Um, you talked about it earlier a little bit, but how do you
644 deal with feelings of depression?

645

646 Alexandra Resendez 7:45

647 Um, I don't have like a go to way of coping. It just kind of depends on what time of day it is and
648 but usually Usually it's writing, it's just because it just feels more natural to kind of lean on my
649 writing. Even when I don't like it, you know, just to like, get it all out there on paper, it feels a lot
650 better. Um, it's really different Now, obviously, because before you know you before COVID I
651 feel like there's like two different worlds. There's like the world before COVID and the world now.
652 So in the old world, when you go through depression, and like, isolation, you're like, I just need
653 to be around people that I love. I need to like be around my friends. I need to have a good
654 laugh. I need to go to the beach. I need to leave the house. And now it's like you. None of those
655 things are even options for you. I mean, there's different ways of connecting with people you
656 love, have the internet you can exchange my friends and I are making like playlists together. So
657 there's, you know, we're finding our own ways of connecting. I'm sending like, I will I want to
658 start like sending books to friends, but I need to buy. I need to buy like a post with

659 that.*Distorted Audio* Wow, I don't send mail ever. I need to buy stamps and envelopes but like
660 we're coming up with our ways of staying connected. But it's a lot it's a lot harder. Not being able
661 to, to just be around people. Yeah. And I feel like I was and it's so it's crazy because like, that
662 week, like right before then there was like the Bernie rally in Grant Park. And I remember like
663 looking at like thousands of people and being like, wow, like look at these people. Like look at
664 The movement *Distorted Audio*, like, beautiful people are coming together, and like
665 canvassing and talking to strangers and even when you don't agree with them, just the fact that
666 you get to have that conversation and like, and then disagree and be like, okay, have a good
667 day, like just those interactions. And then, and it was so exciting to just be a part of that. And
668 then at all it just like went away and it's like, you can't the people can't come together anymore.
669 But that's not true. We just we have to find our own ways, I guess. If your way.

670

671 Nikolas LaMaack 10:35

672 Yeah, so there's there's so much negative going on in the world right now. And everybody's
673 feeling a lot of negative things. But what is something you're most thankful for during the
674 pandemic?

675

676 Alexandra Resendez 10:47

677 Um, life. My birthday is actually Sunday. Less than a week away and There was like a week
678 ago, for like, the past few weeks, I've been like thinking about reflecting on my life, like, I'm
679 turning 20 and I'm like, Oh my god, like, all this was, from 9/11 to now, all that has happened in
680 my life span. And it hasn't even two decades. And I've lived in like three different worlds
681 because there was like, pre 9/11 world and then you know, and then now it's like COVID-19 but
682 I'm just I'm, yeah, just remaining hopeful for change. grateful that I have a home and like all the
683 things I said all the things that people are. Because right now, I mean, the people most affected
684 are people that lack a lot of things that I have access to. So I guess I'm just more grateful and
685 also So, kind of trying to harness like any, like negative feelings, whether it's like anger or
686 sorrow, just trying to harness that into like, something good. So I've, like I've tried I'm trying to
687 become more involved, which is difficult, like solely on line. But I've been going to like zoom
688 meetings to like the sunrise movement and trying to come up with ways to like, get a green new
689 deal and like fight for like a better future. Because there's so much right now there's so much
690 that destruction happening. And I can only hope that like that will make way for the creation of
691 something better.

692

693 Nikolas LaMaack 12:54

694 Um, and then I know you talked about it a second ago about how like you and your friends,
695 make them playlist, and like you want to send books, which I think is a genius idea. Are there
696 any more coping skills that you use to deal with anxiety from the virus stuff?

697

698 Alexandra Resendez 13:12

699 Kind of revert back to that return back to that little protective bubble of art, whether it's like
700 escaping in a book, or in my own writing or in my terrible guitar playing some I don't want to say
701 like *Distorted Audio* crazy, but it's kind of a crazy situation. Just giving yourself those moments
702 of listening less to like the outside noise and just doing what you feel is right, you know? Yeah,

703 cuz yesterday, I, I've been having panic attack, but I started writing this paper that I'm still
704 stressing over. And it's stressing me out so much like I thought I was going to throw up. And I'm
705 like, I can't I need a break. And so just giving yourself just being a lot more kind to yourself a lot
706 more patient with yourself and giving yourself a break.
707
708 Nikolas LaMaack 14:19
709 Um, and the next one is Who do you talk to you about your concerns?
710
711 Alexandra Resendez 14:25
712 What concerns?
713
714 Nikolas LaMaack 14:27
715 Um, it's one of our core questions Yeah, about your general.
716
717 Alexandra Resendez 14:33
718 I mean, my friends, um, I don't really talk about it with my parents. Just because they don't
719 agree. And I don't now doesn't feel like the time to fight. Yeah, my friends. Those sunrise
720 meetings have been really helpful. Just like being able to see The faces of people who like also
721 want change and being able to like address that openly. Yeah.
722
723 Nikolas LaMaack 15:13
724 Okay, we're gonna move on to a little bit of reflection. Um, let me see which ones are there. I
725 have a lot of reflection ones here. Let me see which ones are the good ones. Let's just start out
726 by, how are you adapting to the new schedule and New Living style that you're in right now?
727
728 Alexandra Resendez 15:34
729 I did. So. I don't have a routine. And I'm still trying to find one. I feel like I did a good job today. I
730 woke up at like nine in the morning. And I had time for a nap. So yeah, this whole time I've kind
731 of been trying to find a schedule and the routines. But that's always disrupted by like my chaotic.
732 sleep schedule, which is disrupted with like my own depression and anxiety. Some night I stay
733 awake. And other days I just sleep all day. So, yeah, I'm still I'm still trying to figure it out
734 honestly.
735
736 Nikolas LaMaack 16:17
737 Um, the next question I have for reflection is how is your outlook on equality changed during the
738 pandemic?
739
740 Alexandra Resendez 16:23
741 *Distorted Audio* prepared at all. I don't know. *Video Pause* Village The coal plant Oh, am I
742 still frozen?
743
744 Nikolas LaMaack 17:03
745 We're good now we're good now
746

747 Alexandra Resendez 17:04

748 ... demolition in little village and *Distorted Audio* all this debris and dust in the air and it took
749 place *Distorted Audio* while *Distorted Audio* going around decided to pollute the air in this
750 neighborhood and the city of Chicago approved it. So I think like sometimes you ask yourself
751 like how deep does their greed run? But it's like the more you ask them, the more they show
752 you like it's just so I guess if there's just the clear and undeniable lack of compassion to people
753 And people will put money will choose money over human lives and you see it here in Texas
754 like the fact that they opened up the economy because they want people to get back to work
755 even though getting them getting back to work puts them at risk. I don't think it has taught me
756 anything like anything new. I think it just kind of like reaffirms what I already *Distorted Audio*
757 kind of, I guess. In some ways I don't. It's firing I feel like for lack of a better word inspiring me to
758 to act on that anger because I I just don't I can't like I don't feel comfortable with just like living
759 and not doing anything about it.

760

761 Nikolas LaMaack 18:54

762 Oh, what should Columbia have done differently?

763

764 Alexandra Resendez 19:01

765 Well, going back to your conversation earlier about housing. I think if our administrators just
766 showed more decision, there was like a lot of there's a like, I want to say like five days, maybe a
767 whole week of just like, not knowing and Limbo and in a weird place and if they just acted.
768 *Distorted Audio* Now, you know, when you have time to prepare for that, that would have been
769 so much better. Like they kicked us out and then sent us like, a list of like procedures and if you
770 do this wrong, we're going to charge you this much. If you do this wrong, we're going to charge
771 you like they still were asking for our money during a time where like, our income had been. So
772 many people's income had gone down and they were so asking for money. That that was also
773 really upsetting.

774

775 Nikolas LaMaack 20:03

776 Yeah. Uh, what would you like to say to President Kim?

777

778 Alexandra Resendez 20:10

779 Yikes. So what's funny is I was at his house a week, a week before that, that week, the big
780 week where everything was like shut down. I want to say it was like a week before that I was
781 like the first Friday of March, I think I went to President can tell for like a, it was a luncheon for
782 like student leaders. And we had a conversation about like, changing the culture, when it came
783 to like, shaking hands. And also like, and then he also went on he had this speech about like,
784 the way we treat each other and treating each other with kindness. He talks about like, how
785 Obviously, since this outbreak, there's been an increase in like, crime in towards Asian
786 Americans. And so we talked about like, the way we can way we can, like, resist that. But as we
787 were talking about, like, we talked about kindness, and I feel like the way Colombia treated or
788 handled the situation handled their students was kind of opposite of that, you know? Yeah, I feel
789 like the lack. Like he went on along, which I agree with everything. He said he's talking about

790 compassion, but I just wish we could receive more of that. I don't know if I would say that to him.
791 Maybe anonymously. Yeah.

792
793 Nikolas LaMaack 21:59

794 Oh, And then if you were to look back at this experience in 20 years, what's a piece of advice
795 you would give yourself?

796
797 Alexandra Resendez 22:08

798 Um, yeah. You're gonna live. if I'm alive in 20 years, I think all of this has made me realize how
799 kind of arbitrary a lot of roles are. And like even Time, time itself feels like really arbitrary. When
800 especially when like your schedule is completely messed up and you're waking up at like 6pm
801 and going to sleep at like 8am. And there's this, especially when you move to a city and you got
802 to call If you feel like this, you just you move your patients and you feel like you're always in a
803 rush for something to get somewhere to get something done. But I realized that I realized now
804 that none of those are like, those aren't real pressures, like the other pressures you put on
805 yourself. So I guess my advice would be to remember that it's not to not put too much pressure
806 on hearing.

807
808 Nikolas LaMaack 23:36

809 Um, how do you feel about the future?

810
811 Alexandra Resendez 23:40

812 The big question mark. The future looks like a big question mark. I don't I don't want to sound
813 like cynical. But I don't always feel like I have a future because because I had plans. I had 2020
814 plans and then They were interrupted. And now it's like, is this what it's going to be like for the
815 rest of my life? Like, is this as a generation? Is this going to be our struggle like having our
816 future be continuously robbed from us? Yeah, so I feel like the future is going to be a lot. Like
817 we're gonna have a lot to fight for. Because otherwise, we won't have one.

818
819 Nikolas LaMaack 24:30

820 Yeah. And then the last thing, do you have any remarks that you want to add before we end
821 today? Take a moment Think about it for a second. There's always like one little thing that
822 you're like, I wish I said this.

823
824 Alexandra Resendez 24:45

825 I don't know. I really don't know. I know. I'm gonna like think of it as an hour from now. I don't
826 know. Take time to go outside. what the weather is even if it's negative five degrees in Chicago,
827 sometimes you need that cold air in your face, you know, like you just Yeah, that's it. I really
828 have nothing.

829
830 Nikolas LaMaack 25:09

831 I love it. Um, thank you Allie. I appreciate it.

832
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