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Public History Final Pandemic Essay

In all my years being born, I had never seen so many empty shelves in the city and suburbs grocery stores at one time. Americans did not know where to get the items they needed. Those who had money were buying in bulks and not leaving anything for everyone else. It was like you had to always have money. If you did not have the money when the items were on the shelves you were out of luck, simply because who knows when the items would get back on the shelves. The local gas stations and corner stores were even out of things. Even amazon the largest online merchandise store was out of stock. Small businesses lost a lot because their sales depend on the local men and women to shop, and no one wanted to come in their stores to shop. because of the fear of the virus spreading.

I decided when I got money I would stock up on things, since I saw everyone else doing it. Just so I do not run out of things. That taught me a lesson. It became heartbreaking and challenging when I had to travel across Chicago and the Suburbs, to find things to stock up on for my family. Or hope my family would pick up items for me when they went to the store if they had enough money to include my things in their purchase. That became the norm for my family. We all looked out for each other when one of us went to the store. I would ask them to purchase items for me and pay them later. If I did not have the money at that moment. We did this for each other because we knew these were items, we all needed in case our kids got hungry or sick. This was another thing that was keeping our family bond together.

This pandemic taught me survival skills. In my opinion struggling to feed our families and keep ourselves healthy is when my survival skills kicked in. Not just for my family, but for every family. I was glad my kids did not lose their jobs because we still needed money to pay rent and bills. During this time a lot of people lost everything including their jobs. This is when the family bond should have been tighter for people. Especially because we needed each other. Even though you could not see your families like you wanted. This should have made you miss and cherish them even more. Families should have been able to borrow from one another when one did not have it, and comfort each other when you needed it. Because we are all in this together.

Inside the privacy of our homes Americans became more cautious about their health their happiness their hygiene. As the government created more and more laws to keep society safe and healthy. Some states did their own thing while others worked together to find a way to

bring their numbers down. Death tolls were rising higher and higher, and emotions were all over the place.

Meanwhile I noticed a lot of states working together to keep the spread of the virus out of the schools. Which is a good thing because the kids were taking the virus back home. If you think about it not many 5- or 6-year-old kids are going to keep the mask on their faces for 8 hours. And they pass the virus to others including the teachers. That is why I was glad to know they had online school. So, our kids were continuing to learn, and we are monitoring their health all at once. That was probably one of the biggest things Illinois and other states agreed on. Besides acknowledging how high the numbers were, and how it is affecting their states. States were scrambling trying to find a way to get some help from the government. As far as wearing the masks and social distancing I don't feel like the states were on the same page. Especially when you go to one state who does not enforce the social distancing and masks laws. People end up coming back home to their home state and possibly contributing to making the virus spread because they are infected and don't know it. I am interested in seeing how this will all play out this year especially with the new vaccine to stop the virus.

Through it all one of the biggest lessons I have learned is to cherish your life and the life of others because you never know who you will need. I have gained more appreciation for family time and the little things in life. Considering life is too short and we may not ever get another chance to live it, so we should cherish every moment with our family and friends.