

**Oral History
Capturing Quarantine
Spring 2020
Final Reflection**

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1. How did you feel when you read the email notifying students the oral history project would change from *Interfaith Chicago* to *Capturing Quarantine* due to the transition to remote learning?

I was a bit relieved. My narrator for the Interfaith project and I had already faced some communication issues and I was afraid of trying to do a zoom meeting with him. Having the interviews with each other seemed far more doable for me and I thought the premise of the project was exciting

2. What were your initial thoughts about participating in an oral history project documenting your classes' experience during the first months of the global pandemic?

I was interested to see how different all of our experiences were. I know that most people went home, and I wanted to know how my classmates were handling that change in their environment.

3. How do you feel about the project now?

I am glad that we still had the opportunity to participate in an oral history project. I was afraid of how the class was going to look once we went online, but I think that the Capturing Quarantine was important for how future Columbia students will understand this time in the college's and world's history.

4. As an interviewer:

- a. How did you prepare for the interview?

I read over her Bio Data Form as well as the script several times before I called her for the meeting.

- b. What was it like to interview a classmate?

It was not as scary as I expected. I was lucky that I had already had a few conversations with Claire in person, so I wasn't as nervous as I think I would have been had I not spoken to her before the zoom meetings. Claire was really fun to talk to and it was so interesting hearing how different it is on the east coast than it is here in Chicago.

- c. How did you feel after the interview?

I felt pretty good. We talked for a bit after the interview about how we were both nervous but eased into it. It was comforting to hear someone felt the same way I did about people not practicing social distancing and how the school handled everything.

- d. What is the most important thing you learned as an interviewer?

I learned to hold back from relating to my own experience. While I think in normal conversations that's acceptable, it doesn't serve a purpose in an interview. By holding back I was able to catch things that I might not have noticed if it was a regular conversation and I got a lot more insight into Claire's experience.

- e. What advice would you give to future interviewers?

Practice not to saying "right" or "mhm" on a phone call or in a conversation prior to the interview. I caught myself doing it a lot, but I wish I had practiced it before the interview. I would also say don't check the time as much, I did that because I was so nervous about it and I think that held me back a bit.

5. As a narrator:

- a. How did you prepare to be interviewed?

I didn't. I rolled out of bed because I wrote down the wrong time, and I'm thankful for that so I didn't spend too much time stressing out about it.

- b. Describe your experience being interviewed.

It was a lot easier than I thought it would be. I didn't realize how I felt about some things until I was asked about it. I'm more of a listener than a talker, but I found it pretty easy to keep talking during my interview.

- c. How did you feel after the interview ended?

I felt good finally getting some stuff off my chest. I was essentially living alone at the time of the interview and I hadn't really had an opportunity to just talk about the situation we are in. I felt really strongly about how our current administration and the school handled everything and it was nice to have a space where I could express myself.

- d. What would you tell someone who is hesitant to be interviewed?

Don't allow yourself to get too in your head before the interview. I think if I gave myself time to prepare for the interview, I would have psyched myself out. An oral history project is about you and you know yourself better than anyone, so you don't really need to prep for it.

6. (OPTIONAL) Questions about narrators' private lives and personal relationships were not included in the formal interview, how do you feel about this?

I think for some, questions about those topics can be triggering and the narrator should be asked beforehand if they are comfortable answering topics about them. However, if the subject is comfortable, I think those questions can give a better understanding to the narrator's experience.

- a. How has your gender, sexuality, race, and/or ethnicity affected your experience during the global pandemic?

- b. Exploring and developing new relationships is an important part of the undergraduate experience, how has this aspect of your life been affected?

- c. How are you dealing with the absence of physical contact?

7. Is there anything else you would like to include?