

**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 thought it was incredibly exciting and fitting for us to shift to this project instead. One of the first thoughts I ever had about the pandemic and resulting quarantine was wondering if this was a time that would be presented in oral histories in the future. I looked forward to the opportunity to participate.

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?

Again, it seemed only natural and appropriate. I joked with myself about being interviewed or questioned by future generations about what living through this was like. I'm really glad this project gave me the opportunity to have a direct hand in creating a project that will answer those questions.

3. How do you feel about the project now?

I feel pride to have contributed to it and I hope its preservation finds meaning to people who had no prior connection to it.

4. As an interviewer:

- a. How did you prepare for the interview?

Reading over the bio a lot really helped me prepare and getting to know Alex better influenced my questions what I knew he could elaborate on or what about his experience could provide for an individual account.

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

it was very comfortable, and provided for a more engaging interview on my part. I think it enforced my questions because they concerned things I was very personally interested in. Seeing how the narrator's experiences compared and contrasted with mine was an unexpected advantage of this new project.

- c. How did you feel after the interview?

I immediately started thinking about other questions I could've asked.

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

I still have a lot to learn. The time I felt the interview was most effective when was when I was totally immersed in the narrator's responses and not concerned with the script, but shortly after that moment I found myself lost, and looking for the question that would serve as the next directional step. Maintaining that balance of awareness and immersion is something I hope to practice and learned was a requirement to an optimal oral history.

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

Don't become dependent on the script. Let your follow-up questions stem and flow from previous answers. Try not to be too nervous either. Allowing yourself to be comfortable and open will reflect in the narrator.

5. As a narrator:

- a. How did you prepare to be interviewed?

I didn't really. I had an idea of the questions I was going to be asked and understood they were going to need genuine responses, so I tried not to prepare too much. Other than that, my true plan was to remain as open as possible and to let those first few questions allow me to get there.

- b. Describe your experience being interviewed.

It was really nice. I felt that time really flew by. I understand how a common narrator experience is one of catharsis because many of the things I found myself talking about were not things I had ever directly said before.

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

I really wanted to keep talking especially knowing that a real conversation could develop in a post-interview context. I wanted the opportunity to hear Makeda's thoughts and experiences with the things we were talking about.

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

Well it would depend on the context of the interview, but in most cases I would say that the narrator is greatly respected and that the interviewer values their responses. I would also say the narrating experience itself can be very emotionally fulfilling.

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

It could've provided the opportunity for some welcomed insight and intimacy with the narrator into these dire times, but perhaps that information wasn't entirely necessary for an overall view of their experience.

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

I don't really feel like it has.

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

It's essentially non-existent now. I had new friendships before relocation that I feel are being strengthened due to FaceTime and similar virtual video calls, but relationships that are more intimate are impossible to find when one doesn't leave the house or fully find the Tinder approach very appealing.

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

It is difficult, but I feel that there isn't any choice other than to accept the absence. It will definitely make that connection sweeter when these conditions are hopefully safer.

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

I look greatly forward to seeing this collection of interviews presented and preserved.

