

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

NAME: Kelso Antoine

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Section I:

1. Thinking back to the start of the semester, what were your initial thoughts about participating in an oral history project documenting your experience during the ongoing global pandemic?

Towards the beginning of the semester, I was a bit hesitant going into the project. I'm not normally use to talking about myself in such depth and having someone inquire about so many intimate details. Not knowing anyone in the class also caused some hesitance as well as the fact that the topic of the pandemic was so fresh in terms of our experience with it so I hadn't even been entirely sure of my own opinions on it.

2. How did your feelings about the project change?

Once I started getting to know the other students in the class and we had a better understanding of how the process of getting all the materials for the project would work, it became way less daunting. Before, the thought of doing and hour-long interview, coming up with questions on the spot, and doing a verbatim transcription seemed like a lot of work and very tedious. However, once we actually started, doing most of the work was very simple and I even grew to be excited about finally getting to record our interviews.

Section II:

3. As an **interviewer**:
 - a. How did you prepare for the interview?

To prepare for the interview I watched a lot of the oral history interviews from last year's project to get an idea of what it would be like to interview for this topic. I made sure to look through my script so that I had a solid number of questions to ask my interviewee and even interviewed some of my friends for my podcast to get a feel for how the process would go.

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

Very intimate. I didn't really know much about my interviewee prior and had my own perception of who she was and what she was like and the interview completely shifted that narrative. I'd compare it to interviewing a coworker.

You know of the person and are acquaintances and suddenly you know more about them than probably anyone in their life.

- c. How did you feel after the interview?

After the interview I felt relieved. Though I was looking forward to it, it was still something that was looming over my head for me to get done.

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

The most important thing I learned as an interviewer is to LISTEN. It's something I've been implementing more in my everyday life and intend to practice throughout my entire life. You learn more when you're listening than when you are speaking.

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

I would tell them to LISTEN and to be present, after that everything will fall into place. Being present and ridding yourself of the past or any future plans allows you to fully focus on the moment you are in and the person in front of you. You won't have to overthink asking your next question and you'll find yourself genuinely curious about your narrator.

4. As a **narrator**:

- a. How did you prepare to be interviewed?

I didn't really prepare to be interviewed as a narrator at all. I knew some of the topics we would be talking about but never sat down and actively prepared for it.

- b. Describe your experience being interviewed.

It was very interesting. I knew there were things my interviewer wanted to comment on but couldn't because of the nature of the interview which didn't allow us much room for conversation.

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

It was another feeling of relief. It did feel strange knowing someone had access to a video of me that I didn't yet have access to.

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

I would tell them to relax, because their interviewer has most likely prepared extensively for the interview and will have everything taken care of. All they have to do is respond to the best of their ability.

Section III:

5. What information is missing? What else do you think those trying to understand the pandemic should know?

I think they should know that at the time we were being interviewed, though there was a vaccine in the works, most of us did not know when it would be distributed or any of the intimate details of the vaccine, so we went in with the notion that the pandemic would last well into next year.