

Transcript of Interview with Dolores Stanford by Kit Heintzman

Interviewee: Dolores Stanford

Interviewer: Kit Heintzman

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Location (Interviewer):

Transcribed By: Angelica S Ramos

Some of the things we discussed include:

Having been raised as an “army brat”. Learning about COVID-19 from the news. People violating masking policy, such as on Septa buses. Living alone during the pandemic, isolating and missing friends. Keeping in touch with family members over the phone. Difficulty using computers. Choosing to get vaccinated as consenting to be experimented upon by the government and pharmaceutical industry; getting vaccinated and boosted. Difficulty navigating vaccine appointments early in the pandemic. USA government’s treatment of Native Americans. Comparisons of COVID-19 to Polio and AIDS. A significant back-injury in October 2020, seeking out-patient medical attention during the pandemic and at home care. COVID weight gain. How little most people know about history; the importance of the accurate telling of history to combat racism. The relationship between white supremacy and capitalism.

Changing class structure in the USA. Aging and watching friends die, living for happiness day-by-day. Sexism in religion and turning to spirituality; comparisons between Native American and Wiccan religious/spiritual practices. Other people acting like the pandemic is over.

Dolores Stanford 00:00

My name is Dolores Stanford, I am at my home. And basically, I stay have stayed in my home most of the time for the past two or three years that the COVID has been out. And I live alone. So I don't and I have not had any people in here. Except cert, you know, certain people who have had their shots and have never had COVID.

Dolores Stanford 00:47

Basically, the only time I do go out, would be to go food shopping, and to go to the post office, and to the pharmacy. But I wear a mask the entire time. I'm on the street, and inside a building, because there are people around and you do not know if they've had shots or if they've had coven. Even if they're out in public, they might have had it before makes me feel more secure by doing those preliminary things in order to prevent me from getting it. The reason I feel that way up about the coven. And what's going on is I feel that taking doing the shots. And I've had the Boosters is the fact that it'll keep, if you do get it, it at least keeps you out of a ventilator. It doesn't prevent you from getting it. Um, basically, I really, more or less think about the way we went about when there was polio when I was when I was like in second grade. Back when Eisenhower was President. We all had polio shots. And nobody complained about it. None of the adults none of the children and they came in and gave us polio shots, right at our desk, sitting in our seat doing the whole the whole school. So I felt that's what the COVID thing remind me about when they were giving out shots.

Dolores Stanford 03:26

Um, other than that, I basically know that doing these shots and things we are being experimented upon by the pharmaceutical companies and the government. And it's just the way it is, it's reality. And you can't ignore it.

Kit Heintzman 04:07

Would you tell me what the word pandemic means to you?

Dolores Stanford 04:10

Pandemic. It means to me, pandemic means something that everyone is going to catch. And it has to do, for me pandemics remind me it has to do with the entire world. There are pandemics in probably every country in the world. Some form of pandemic. Another pandemic that we had was AIDS that people had to deal with and didn't know anything about and it took Took them quite a few years before they even had medicine to take care of these people that had AIDS to pro you know, prolong their life. And also for them to be able to live with the disease that was kind of a pandemic for a while. Because you didn't know anything about it, men were getting it. Women were getting it, people were getting it and it was all being sexually transmitted. Where as the COVID-19 is not being say sexually transmitted, it is being blown through the air. That is why we have to wear mask. So because it has to do with our breathing. And of course, you wash your hands and do all those kinds of things. Which is, which is a deterrent. And other than that it's a different kind of, it's a different kind of pandemic from something we've had before.

Kit Heintzman 06:38

Before the pand, before COVID-19, what was your day to day life looking like? What was your day to day life looking like pre pandemic? How [both speaking] were you before hand?

Dolores Stanford 06:48

Pre pandemic right, well.

Dolores Stanford 06:50

Well, before I could go to I could go to the art museum. I didn't have to make I didn't have to call and make appointments. Now that things are opening up, after two or three years, you have to make appointments, you have to do zoom calls. Didn't have to do that before you kind of you kind of feel isolated as far as doing normal life things.

Dolores Stanford 07:41

Going to the movies, you can't be in a room with a lot of people because they're breathing. You can't be in in areas where parties, weddings. Even with your family, Thanksgiving, Christmas holidays, planes, it limits you from actually having a regular normal life you have to think think twice about before you do anything. It has it has stopped people from living day to day normal life.

Kit Heintzman 08:28

Do you remember when you first heard about COVID-19?

Dolores Stanford 08:33

No. Probably on the first time I probably heard about it was on the television, on news.

Kit Heintzman 08:43

When you first started hearing about it, what were your early reactions?

Dolores Stanford 08:55

I don't think that I had any kind of fears, or any of that because I didn't know enough about it. To have an opinion about it. I had to wait until I heard more and more about it from the news. And what we had to do, we had to wear mask that I knew that I better wear masks. We had to wash our hands we were told things like that. That's just my earliest experience. And so I just continued for three years.

Kit Heintzman 09:50

When did you start to notice that it was getting really serious?

Dolores Stanford 09:59

When I was listed into the news. And everybody had it in Japan. All over the world, Russia, France, England, Africa. Every country in the world, Ethiopia, Turkey, every country in the world had it. And they didn't have a, what do you call it

Kit Heintzman 10:33

A vaccine.

Dolores Stanford 10:34

A vaccine. They hadn't developed a vaccine yet. People were dying from it. And getting very ill and dying from it, because they hadn't gotten a vaccine yet. And that went on for, I'd say, a good year. And then they finally got a vaccine. And even with the vaccine, they weren't even sure. Because they hadn't tested it. For a couple years, it was only like, say, a couple of months or whatever. So basically, that's why I said that we were an experiment. When we took the vaccines, we were all hoping that it would work.

Kit Heintzman 11:33

When you decided to get vaccinated, how easy was it for you to get an appointment?

Dolores Stanford 11:39

I had to go into the internet. And I, they were giving vaccines in certain drugstores and certain places, but you didn't know where. And then if then when you did know where you had to call and make an appointment, and sometimes they would run out of the vaccines in the different places. So I went and called black doctors, Doctor Stanford. And I thought I got an appointment with them. And that's how I got my vaccine. Both times. I went to 21st and Lehigh to the church there a black church. And then after that, I went back I called them and then they gave me an my second appointment. And that's how I did that. And my second appointment was up at Temple.

Kit Heintzman 13:03

How did your body reacts to the vaccine?

Dolores Stanford 13:07

Nothing. I felt nothing. I didn't get sick. I didn't. I just skipped down the street. I didn't get ill or anything from the vaccine.

Kit Heintzman 13:23

What's isolation been like for you?

Dolores Stanford 13:32

It's been depressing. Um, I have anxiety. And fortunately, I'm used to living alone. So that didn't bother me living alone. But it bothered me because I could not invite friends over for dinner. I couldn't have to go out and be at any restaurant I want. Or whatever. It limited me basically, I basically did my own cooking and my own food and everything for the whole time. Thank God that I am a sous chef. And I know how to cook. And my mother, my grandmother, all the women in my family are cooks. So I had wonderful meals. Um other than that That's per that that.

Kit Heintzman 15:08

How did you keep in touch with friends?

Dolores Stanford 15:11

Mostly I was on the phone. I mostly did all my phone calling and call friends see how they were doing. Call them my sister, who is in her is 83. Now I called all my old old family up. I called all my elders basically call, by phone, everything by phone. Even if it was calling the phone company or, or any kind of public services, or whatever, everything had to be called by the phone, or you had to do it on the computer.

Kit Heintzman 16:03

How easy was it for you to do things on the computer?

Dolores Stanford 16:07

Um, not very easy for me, because I'm not computer oriented. Other than going to college, and doing all my term papers. I'm really not computer oriented. I really don't even, I have an attention deficit disorder. When it comes to computers.

Kit Heintzman 16:43

What does the word health mean to you?

Dolores Stanford 16:54

it means that, for me, health means the condition in which my body is in whether I'm good health, which is most of the time I really don't have any ailments. like high blood pressure or any of those kinds of things. I've been tested for everything. I did my colonoscopy my heart test. Every test you can think of that you have to take. I took a mammogram, whatever. So I've done all those things. You know, the only problem I had was that I did have an accident with my back. And I broke my back. Two years. It's on it'll be two years October this coming October 16. And that was the only thing that I had a problem with. So I couldn't ride my bike. I couldn't lift anything heavy, more than five pounds. When I went food shopping, I took my cart because I could not carry because I was used to doing it on my bike and putting it in the baskets and riding on not carrying that was the biggest inconvenience with this pandemic.

Kit Heintzman 18:56

When you when you broke your back, how did you get what was the health care access like because the pandemic was still going on?

Dolores Stanford 19:04

Um, I went to Pennsylvania Hospital had X rays done. They took care of everything. I had doctors, they took care of me right away. I had all my appointments for my back and with no problem and I got all my medicines and everything that kind of thing. Other than that, I just had to I had to take care of care on my back. You know?

Kit Heintzman 19:54

Was it scary being in the hospital?

Dolores Stanford 19:56

I didn't stay I didn't stay in the hospital. I was an outpatient.

Kit Heintzman 20:00

Outpatient.

Dolores Stanford 20:01

So basically, they took all my X rays and did all my things. They put a brace on my back. And I had to sleep with it for almost a month and by it was hard sleeping, I'll tell you that much for it other than that they gave me medicine to put on my back patches. Um and that was it, yeah, lidocaine. Lidocaine patches I forget. And other than that, they told me I had osteoporosis. So I do take calcium. And I didn't have osteoporosis like two years ago, but now I have it. So I do have to take calcium. And that's about it. I'm just waiting to get. And then therapy, of course, I had to do back therapy. And I just have to do my therapy every day. And basically wait until I get stronger. The muscles around my back and my body and see where it goes from there. The doctors did tell me that I would have always had pain or discount discomfort with my back, my lower back. So that limits me from being able to go to work in the profession that I did work in, which was catering. And other than that, that's about where that's at.

Kit Heintzman 22:31

We're friends and family able to check up on you?

Dolores Stanford 22:35

Who? Friends and family?

Dolores Stanford 22:37

We call each other.

Kit Heintzman 22:37

Yeah, do you

Kit Heintzman 22:39

Yeah.

Dolores Stanford 22:39

Yeah. Friends and family. We call each other and I of course, I call my sister every couple of days. You know, and always on Sunday. And then I call my niece but my older sister I call every other day.

Kit Heintzman 22:58

What does the word safety mean to you? Safety.

Dolores Stanford 23:03

Safety?

Kit Heintzman 23:04

Yeah, we just started safety mean to you?

Dolores Stanford 23:05

Safety, means I have to be careful where I walk. When I feel that I imbalanced I use a cane. And basically, I have to be slow and deliberate. When I do things, because of my age now.

Kit Heintzman 23:36

What are some of the things that you've done to keep yourself feeling safer from COVID?

Dolores Stanford 23:42

Keep myself safe?

Kit Heintzman 23:43

Safe from COVID

Dolores Stanford 23:45

Safe?

Kit Heintzman 23:45

Yeah.

Dolores Stanford 23:47

Staying in my house all the time. Keeps me safe from COVID by being inside all the time.

Kit Heintzman 23:59

What are some of the things you've noticed about other people and safety?

Dolores Stanford 24:05

Um, now that they feel other people now that they feel they have some freedom or whatever, they are not wearing their mask all the time. And when I get on the bus, you're supposed to wear your mask. And some people aren't wearing their mask. I don't, I don't understand why not. Don't they realize that they can. It's not over. And I want to add I want to say to him, What do you think it's over? You know, but they probably get nasty with me. And I said to and I feel and I feel like yelling on the bus and telling them that we got two more years of this. It's not over

we got two more years. and it's and it's reality, if you have any kind of common sense, if you've had any kind of if you read and I do read AARP, and they have even said that because of this COVID that after it's over, we won't even know what organs in our body is going to be affected.

Kit Heintzman 25:38

How does that make you feel?

Dolores Stanford 25:43

Well, there isn't, I can't, I, I, it's really out of my control. It's something that I can't control. Um, it's something that I can't fix, all I can do is live with it. And hope for the best. And pray a lot you know, which I do anyway. Um, and that's, that's it and live my life the best I can. It's like anybody that has any kind of thing wrong with them. You try to, you know, whether you have you just live with it.

Kit Heintzman 26:44

What are some of the things that you want for your own health?

Dolores Stanford 26:48

My own health? To lose the weight that I gained while I've been inside the house, you know, the 10 or 15 pounds I gained. And so only in one area. It's not my wrist, um, lose the weight that I gained, because I want to be able to fit back into my clothing.

Kit Heintzman 27:21

Other than the pandemic, have there been other social and political issues that have been on your mind over the last couple of years?

Dolores Stanford 27:31

Yes, yes. The way that this government treats my people, Native Americans. Um, and I'm in good standing with my tribe. That that bothers me a lot. And that's been bothering me for decades. Not because of the pandemic

Kit Heintzman 28:13

Is there anything more you want to say about the government handling either the pandemic or anything more generally, with Native Americans?

Dolores Stanford 28:25

When it comes to the government, I am not all very happy with our government. They seem to always be fighting with each other the Democrats and the Republicans and all kinds of things and not getting anything done for the people in this country. Or it takes them a long time to take care of any kind of atrocities that happened in the United States um, instead of preventing it before it happens, this government seems to wait until it happens. And then it takes them a while to take care of it which is wrong I feel I don't know I feel this way because I'm, you know, at, you know, at one time I traveled with my one of my fathers. And I'm an Army brat. So I know what this government is about. Orders from the Pentagon. That's really [inaudible] Pentagon basically other things that worry me until they until the history of this country is written correctly we will always have racism in this country until the history is written with properly about all the people that have come here the true history, not through history written by the people who have conquered [inaudible] this country America as a call it until that happens I

don't think I think there will be always be constant turmoil which is something that bothers me a lot more than the pandemic

Kit Heintzman 31:44

Why does it bother you?

Dolores Stanford 31:49

Because it bothers me because people are not treated fairly, it is a a our class system you in this country has gone away years ago, you you had you are either rich or you had three different degrees of middle class you had upper middle class middle middle class and lower middle class and then you have poor now we don't have any of that we you either have rich or poor and that's the way the government country's going because of the corporations the pharmaceutical companies and the oil companies they are controlling the United States and the government. Yes, that bothers me a whole lot.

Kit Heintzman 33:29

How are you feeling about the immediate future?

Dolores Stanford 33:33

The media?

Kit Heintzman 33:34

The immediate future so like the next

Dolores Stanford 33:38

I hadn't all I had no idea about the imme, about the future because there's just so much going on. As far as my future goes. I'm an artist. And my future is creating and making myself happy painting, drawing all the different forms of art I do. That is my future.

Kit Heintzman 34:29

What are some of your hopes for a long term future?

Dolores Stanford 34:40

For long term future I really am not really sure. Because I am at the age of 73. I don't even think I can't even think of long term. because friends are dying at 50-60-70-80. I don't know when it'll happen. I could die tomorrow so I've tried to live every day the best I can and try to make myself happy.

Kit Heintzman 35:36

What are some of the things you do to keep yourself happy?

Dolores Stanford 35:42

Ah, my art, watching different shows on PBS, when they're good ones on, playing in my garden that's about that's about it.

Kit Heintzman 36:21

Do you think

Dolores Stanford 36:23

Since I can't ride my bike anymore, I can't lift it in and out of the house.

Kit Heintzman 36:31

Do you think they'll ever be the kind of true history written that you want people to write?

Dolores Stanford 36:38

No.

Kit Heintzman 36:40

Why not?

Dolores Stanford 36:43

Until the people who came here or on the Tall Ships get their act together and their prejudices. And you know how the conqueror writes the history the way they want to see it? And not the way it really is. And a lot of lies are in it. And mistruths until that happens. Which I do believe that I'll just say it now. White people don't want too many people of color to have too much control, because then they would have control of their money and their fear of having them in control of their money.

Kit Heintzman 38:17

What do you think people in the humanities can be doing to help us understand the pandemic better?

Dolores Stanford 38:31

That answer I can't answer that because I don't know. I really haven't had any thoughts on that, if the news media has an influence people by now I don't know what will the amount of deaths that have happened because of them pandemic, if that hasn't taught people things, I don't know what will.

Kit Heintzman 39:16

I'd like you to imagine speaking to a historian in the future, someone so far away, that they have no lived experience of this moment. What would you tell them? They can't forget about right now?

Dolores Stanford 39:38

I really don't know. Because of the fact that we've had other epidemics. And I don't think that people even have thought about them. I mean, In about pan about the different pandemics that we've had, I doubt once they're gone, I think people just go off and just forget about it just like they've forgotten about history most people don't even know the history of this country or of the world. Why we had different wars? Why? I mean, even the Civil War or the 1800 War, or the First World War or the Korean War, I mean, the Second World War was only 10 years in between the second First World War and Second World War and then the curse then you had the Korean War. And then you had the Vietnamese you know, then you have that war. There has always been conflict. And it seems to me that every time there's conflict or whatever, as I told you corporations and different things of that nature they make money when there is more and that that is that is that is the way it is.

Kit Heintzman 41:39

I want to thank you so much, Doloris, for answering these questions with me today. Right now I just want to ask if there's anything you want to say to whoever might be listening to this please take some time and tell them what you think they should hear. Tell them what they you think they should hear anyone listening to this.

Dolores Stanford 42:11

The only thing they can do is the only thing that helps is education. Whether you educate yourself which I did all my life, I educated myself. I did a lot of reading, anything that I wanted to find out about I research I research and, basically, knowledge is the only thing that really people need to do and there are people that are intellectuals but they all talk to each other people that are not interested in certain things don't care there I mean it's just the way it is. Um, basically education. And unfortunately in this country education has gotten worse. You're not allowed to write cursive you're only allowed to write on print and you're only to write on the computer and that's it. You don't write thank you notes you don't write you don't write I don't even think these people read poetry or whatever you'd have to be an intellectual things of that nature. I don't know what they do to amuse themselves. I know what I do to amuse myself um I have no idea.

Kit Heintzman 44:29

What would you want someone listening to this to know about you?

Dolores Stanford 44:34

About me?

Kit Heintzman 44:34

Yeah.

Dolores Stanford 44:53

I was raised by very strict parents. They were very knowledgeable we were girls. So they were on our case about protecting us being an artist, I was a free thinker. I gave my mother a lot of trouble, especially, yeah, about art and religion. about religion. We were raised high Episcopal. I got tired of going in and out of the [inaudible], those kneeling on my phone and crawling constantly. Oh my god. This is not for me. The sides religion. You study the different religions. And they're all mean to women. And I said, I gotta find something out something else. And then I found Sybil Leek. And read her read things are and then there's another woman I can't remember right now. And it was Maiden, Mother, Crone. And then I started reading all the history about that. And I was every bit of 12 and 13, every bit of 12. And after I saw that 13 Stations of the Cross, I went the Louvre, the Prado, I saw all the different stuff. I decided that I wanted to be Wiccan and didn't realize at the time before I went to PowWow that I was praying in the four directions. The East for air the South for fire, the West for water and the North for for Earth.

Dolores Stanford 47:48

And was it's what you do when we were Indians. We do the same thing. Burn candles, I smudge we smudge. You know that way I smudge and I go well I'll go well, I won't kill anybody today you know, um, my religion has kept me through every day as well. And then I read everything from all the different countries about Wicca and I follow the moon when it goes into all the signs. I'm a cancer. So I go into every body sign because I'm ruled by the moon every two to three days I go into somebody else's sign and sometimes can feel that persona.

Dolores Stanford 49:04

That's how it is for me. You know, and also with Wicca you learn a lot. You learn all kinds of history my witches on there. You learn about the weather your sign. You live you learn about all kinds of little stories and little ditties from all over the world. They had in your I have witches almanacs from the 70s they're all in my room. Read about everything. Mushrooms, every all kinds of little little antidotes. With your with with with with your witchcraft. You read about what leaves and herbs and healings and potions and who did what to you. I mean you know what does it mean everything he learned from from this is about what the summer is going to be your weather that's where they get the US weather a straw and you know your weather books and then you have your monthly thing with your sign so what's today signs were an Aries.

Dolores Stanford 50:32

Tuesday Aries so all that is in here plus all little stories what phases of the moon you're in and what they mean in the signs and the symbols and all those signs and symbols you can go to everywhere in the country and you put it down that's the symbol for the sun, all witches know this they all share with each other those kinds of things. So I've been doing this for a long time all my life since I was 12 but that's kept me together to my religion and which is really really good. You know and keeps my mind active. You know? It makes you think about stuff you know besides you know besides your yourself you know and I raised my son [inaudible] this was one picture I have and that was when he was younger he's now 52 September 3 he'll be 52. This is when he was much younger this is like 20 years ago

Dolores Stanford 52:19

He's in Hawaii, then that's my sister's son and his wife. They live down in Delaware you know and, yeah.