

**Interviewee:** Deshawn Lee

**Interviewer:** Westley Hart

**Date:** December 8, 2020

**Format:** Video recording, Zoom

**Location of interview:** Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Transcriber:** Westley Hart

**Additional Transcription Equipment used:** Otter.ai

**Project in association with:** University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

**Abstract:**

The novel coronavirus known as COVID-19, was first officially reported on December 31, 2019, by Chinese officials in Wuhan, China. Since then, the lives of people around the world have been dramatically transformed as the world's population fights one of the deadliest and most contagious pandemics of modern history. Archivists of all different backgrounds quickly began engaging in what is known as rapid-response collecting—the archiving of historically important, donated artifacts and the collection of oral accounts from volunteer witnesses. Milwaukee resident Deshawn Lee was willing to sit down with Westley Hart, a student at UW-Eau Claire, and participate in the university's effort, in collaboration with the Journal of the Plague Year Archive as well as the Chippewa Valley COVID-19 Archive Project, to engage in rapid-response collecting of oral histories from the Upper Midwest region. Deshawn comes in direct contact with the virus every day as he works, transporting patients from place to place at Froedtert Hospital and Medical College. He is also a hard-working student, pursuing a career in counseling while raising his 1-year-old daughter together with his girlfriend on the south side of Milwaukee. The purpose of this interview is to document the dynamic impacts that the coronavirus pandemic has had on Americans in the year 2020, particularly those of the Upper Midwest. His account touches on his personal interactions with the virus in work, school, and public, the actions that his local government has taken in response to the virus, as well as the virus's interaction with the nationwide public protests that followed a series of high-profile police brutality tragedies, with an interest on the impact felt by his local Milwaukee community.

**WH:** Okay, so, today is December 8, 2020. I'm here speaking with Deshawn Lee, who is a patient transporter at Froedtert Hospital and Medical College. Hello, Deshawn.

**DL:** How are you doing Westley?

**WH:** I'm doing well, how are you?

**DL:** I'm doing good.

**WH:** Okay, do you mind sharing a bit about yourself with us, your age, ethnicity, gender and where you live?

**DL:** So, I am 22 years old, and my ethnicity is African American/black, and I am a male, and I live in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

**WH:** Now, as you know, we've been dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic for—throughout all of 2020. The United States has had 15.1 million cases and 285,000 deaths as of today. Wisconsin has had 443,000 cases and 3,983 deaths, and Milwaukee has had 78,380 cases and 789 deaths. What are your initial thoughts on these numbers?

**DL:** Those are really high numbers for this kind of pandemic going on, and I feel like it should be something that should be done about it. Like, I just wish something—I just wish that some of these states just had something to fall back on. If they can, like, cure the patients or anybody that has COVID. Well, I just wish there was something for them to fall back on.

**WH:** Okay, yeah. So what are the primary things that you do on a day-to-day basis?

**DL:** Well, mostly, I go to work, which is at Froedtert Hospital and I usually just come home and do my homework and take care of my daughter.

**WH:** Alright, and has that routine changed at all since the pandemic started?

**DL:** No, not really.

**WH:** Okay. What is it like to live in Milwaukee?

**DL:** It has its perks. Well, sometimes it can be a little bit, like, mad irritating, like, it can be frustrating, because sometimes, I look around and there's, like, shooting going on or there's, like, people get into accidents because of somebody's wrong being[?], and it just feels like not the top place to really be in that much.

**WH:** Do you feel safe, going to the grocery stores?

**DL:** Not really no.

**WH:** Yeah.

**DL:** It depends on what side of town, because I live on the south side of town. And over here, it's more, like, it's okay to a certain extent. But still, like, you have to always watch your back. You never know what could happen. And that goes for everywhere.

**WH:** And Milwaukee is one of the most racially—it's the most racially segregated city in the United States, isn't that right?

**DL:** Yes, that's right.

**WH:** So, when you go up to the north side of town, you feel safer? Is that right?

**DL:** Nah.

**WH:** Oh no, south side?

**DL:** Yeah, south side.

**WH:** Okay, okay. Alright, so I want to ask you about—When was the first time that you learned about COVID-19, as best as you can remember?

**DL:** I had a co-worker that brought up COVID, well, brought up coronavirus, and I just randomly just looked it up because I didn't know nothing about it at all, to be honest with you. And I looked it up and it just didn't feel like—it just didn't look, like, amusing or anything like that. So I was asking around, and that I got more information out of it and it's bad, like, it's just really, really bad, by what I've been hearing. Like for the first time when I heard that COVID-19 was happening.

**WH:** Do you remember when that was when you first heard about it?

**DL:** That was, uh, last year, what was it? I think it was Sept—No, no, no, not September. December, December.

**WH:** Okay. And so, when—when you first learned about COVID-19, you mentioned that it didn't look all that serious, right?

**DL:** Mhmm.

**WH:** And as things developed you started to take that much more seriously?

**DL:** Yes.

**WH:** Okay. Alright, so I want to ask you a couple questions about the topic of mental health. Do you or any family members suffer from any mental disorders, like mood, anxiety, or personality disorders?

**DL:** That I do not know—what—Here, let me take that back, because I think my middle brother, he has, like, mental health issues or—what is it?—What do you call it? So, yeah, it's mental issues because he been dealing with it all throughout his, uh, his tenure[?] of life, so like when he was born, he was born with it.

**WH:** Okay. And how would you best describe that? What he deals with.

**DL:** So he has to, like, what, what, wait, what was the question again? I'm sorry.

**WH:** How would you best describe what your middle brother deals with on a day-to-day basis? Or how would you characterize—if you had to put a name to it?

**DL:** Okay, so he has to deal with, like, emotions, a lot. Like, he has to deal with, like, people. Like, he has to deal with, like, family issues, it's a lot. And people targeted him and he feels like everybody's just, like, targeting him for something. Like, it don't matter what it is, like, he can

ask for something, then somebody could just say, like, assume that he's doing it just for his fun of it, and he just, like, gets mad about it.

**WH:** Okay. Has he ever received a diagnosis?

**DL:** Not really, no.

**WH:** Or gone to see a doctor for a diagnosis?

**DL:** Yes, he has.

**WH:** Okay, Now, how—has the pandemic had any effect, to your knowledge, on how your brother seeks treatment, or goes about his daily life?

**DL:** Can I pass on that?

**WH:** Sure.

**DL:** Okay.

**WH:** And if I may ask, has the pandemic exacerbated his symptoms?

**DL:** No, not really.

**WH:** Okay. Alright, so returning to the pandemic more specifically, what issues are of the biggest concern to you right now, with regard to the pandemic?

**DL:** Catching it. Like, catching the COVID-19 and spreading it to my daughter or my girlfriend, or anybody.

**WH:** Okay. do you have any set up routine that your family does when you come home?

**DL:** Not really. They—we really don't wear masks around each other that much because we used to each other. So—

**WH:** Okay. So I'm gonna—Let's move on to school.

**DL:** Okay.

**WH:** How has COVID-19 impacted your experience with regards to school?

**DL:** With COVID-19, it's just been a while[?] hectic when it comes to school because, at first I was getting sick. At first, I didn't know what it was, and then I went to the doctor and come to think of it, it wasn't just COVID. It was just, like, my original, like, allergies that was coming up. But I could say that COVID-19 has affected, like, a lot of people with people that's in school. And I can see why, and it's bad for them up there because it's like—they have to deal with it, like

every step of the way. And I feel like they just, like, have this mentality where they couldn't—they can't, like, finish in time. Like, they can't finish their assignments in time.

**WH:** Where do you go to school?

**DL:** I go to school at University of Wisconsin-Stout.

**WH:** Okay, now UW-Stout is in western Wisconsin, but you're living in Milwaukee. So, how do you go about getting your education?

**DL:** Well, I do online, and I do lots of reading. All my professors, they lay out, like, the PowerPoints. They lay out the assignments. They lay out everything it is. But see, I am more, like, a in class kind of person. Like, I'm not so good with, like, just reading it, I need to see something physical, like, from a teacher's point of view.

**WH:** Has this semester been particularly difficult getting your coursework completed on time?

**DL:** Yes.

**WH:** [Fumbling his next question] Oh, I remember—how—excuse me—Did you have any difficulties with receiving your textbooks on time?

**DL:** Yes, I have. Yes, if—it was one class that I kept asking for, like, it was a book that I needed, and it was, like, two or three weeks prior to, that I got it. And I failed my first test because of it.

**WH:** What was your experience trying to get that textbook?

**DL:** I had to call the bookstore and I have to give them my address and they just literally had to send it in, and it took about, like, at least 5 to 10 business days.

**WH:** What—Were the phone lines pretty crowded? Did it take them a long time to get back to you?

**DL:** It took them a while, but they got to me as quickly as they can.

**WH:** Okay. Now, what are you going to school for?

**DL:** So I'm going to school to become a school counselor, and I'm also trying to work on being a basketball coach for little leagues.

**WH:** Okay, so are you—is that primarily centered around working with younger, like, K-8 kids?

**DL:** Yes.

**WH:** Okay. If you are working in—as a school counselor or as a coach, how do you think the pandemic would have affected what you're doing?

**DL:** Well, I can tell you right now that schools, it won't be easy as a school counselor, because it's like—you have to like, take time to talk to students, one on one. And I just feel like it's hard for school—student counselors out there because they have a hard time finding, well, who needs help, and what they need help with, and everything. And as a coach, I won't say, like, it's bad, but it's bad like, coaching in schools, because you can't really, like, work with them when it comes this pandemic because you don't know who has what.

**WH:** Now schools, to varying extents, have been participating in sports or—and also electing to skip seasons. What is your opinion on that?

**DL:** Can I skip that one?

**WH:** Sure.

**DL:** Okay.

**WH:** Okay. So, you mentioned that you work as a patient transporter at a hospital, what has it been like dealing with the pandemic on the front lines?

**DL:** As far as, like, inside my job or outside?

**WH:** Inside, like, everyth—anything that has to do with your work at the hospital.

**DL:** Well, it's been a lot that I have to deal with because it was a lot of things that we wasn't doing before that we doing today. And, which is like, we have to wear masks. Everybody has to wear a mask. Everybody has to wear goggles. Everybody has to wear, like, gowns, gloves. And at first, we didn't used to do that. The only time we used to do that was when it was, like, a special patient that came in and it was an isolation patient, and that was the only time that we needed to use those [unclear] equipment, but now, it's like, we have to use them daily, like, every time, when we come into work and out, because, it's like, nobody doesn't want, like, catch the pand—the COVID-19.

**WH:** How often are you permitted to change your PPE [personal protective equipment]? Like, your gloves and your masks, which are more likely to come in contact with the virus.

**DL:** So I use—I change them like every time when I'm touching something. So it's like, if I touch a bed, I change them. Like, as soon as I get done with the patient, I change, like, my gloves, I change everything.

**WH:** Were you experiencing any shortages on that protective equipment—

**DL:** No.

**WH:** Throughout the year? No?

**DL:** [shakes head in dismissal]

**WH:** Okay. So what does a patient transporter do? What are your duties?

**DL:** So with patient transport, what we do is we, like, we grab wheelchairs, we take patients in wheelchairs, and we bring them to their cars. And we also take patients to surgery, and we take them to get scanned, like, for anything like, it could be head, body; it don't matter. And also, we do scree—so we do like temperature checks too.

**WH:** Okay. Is there a demographic that—the people that you're working with, skew towards? Old or young? Any particular ethnicity?

**DL:** I will say probably more old, I would have to say. So more like in the middle age.

**WH:** Okay. How has sanitation been? So beyond the PPE, how has been—how was the process disinfecting, like, the handrails, and the wheelchairs, and whatnot. How has that changed?

**DL:** To be honest it look like it hasn't really changed, but I can see, like, a little bit changes when it comes to, like, that kind of situation, but all I see is, like, people that don't really use gloves that much and there'd be some people that do use gloves. But to be honest, relevance[?], like, really—not really a factor. But as long as you wash your hands after you like, touch something, then you shouldn't really have a problem.

**WH:** That's—you bring up a good point. What are your co-workers doing? With regards to the virus, how seriously are they taking it?

**DL:** They take it real well. So it's like, they do the same thing as me, so they just come home, go to work. Sometimes they go out and have fun to themselves, which I do too. Because it's like, sometimes I want to get out and just get some air or something like that. And yeah, that's what we all do. I mean, it'd be some co-workers that we always, like, talk outside of work or we always like, go out to a bar or something like that together.

**WH:** Okay. And how would you say the patients are taking that? are you—how would you say the patients are taking that? I have another question after that.

**DL:** As far as like, taking what, like, us hanging out and stuff? Or—

**WH:** Sorry, no, the pandemic. Like, are they—wearing masks and stuff?

**DL:** [nodding head in affirmative] Yes, everybody's been wearing masks. Like, if we don't see them with a mask, we try to always keep a spare mask with us.

**WH:** Okay. And are you—is the area where you work sectioned off from the coronavirus patients? Do you have coronavirus patients in your hospital?

**DL:** Yes.

**WH:** And are you sectioned off from them?

**DL:** No, not really.

**WH:** Okay. So there's a mix of non-covid and covid patients?

**DL:** Yes, but they're just in different departments, though. So it's like, some is mixed in with the non-covid patients and some is mixed with the covid patients. So it's like, we—it's covid patients, like all over the hospital, but it's like, they give us a heads up on like, who has covid and who doesn't have covid.

**WH:** Okay, so what is the protocol when a patient who has covid is going to be coming across someone who doesn't have covid?

**DL:** Can you explain that again, like explain it more?

**WH:** Yeah, so if you're transporting someone who has COVID-19 or someone else is, and there's a patient that does not have COVID-19, and those two are going to be crossing paths, is there some protocol? Do you move that person out of the way, or does something else happen?

**DL:** So, if we see a person that has covid we—well whoever has them, they say, "Covid patient! Covid patient!" Like, they say it out loud so we can get out of the way. No matter where you are, we just move out the way, because it'd be a lot of doctors and nurses that'd be around a covid patient and they get to their destination, like, in a hurry. So it's just like, our best to just, like, move out of the way.

**WH:** Okay. And do you get many notifications that you've been exposed from—to coronavirus from the state health department?

**DL:** No.

**WH:** Okay. Alright, and now I want to talk about the economy. What concerns do you have about the pandemics impact on our economy?

**DL:** I still feel like the cities should like, be shut down. I feel like whoever still, like, dying from covid—it should be like—a 50 to 60 day—[stumbling]

**WH:** Lockdown?

**DL:** Quarantine. Quarantine—

**WH:** Quarantine?

**DL:** Yes.



**DL:** Just like—just to make sure everybody just, like, safe and there ain't no more spread—it ain't like spreading around. I just feel like everybody should be on lockdown, as far as now.

**WH:** Alright. Now, we recently had an election with Joe Biden winning. He is now the president elect. How do you think Joe Biden's administration will handle the economy? Do you think we'll have a slow recovery—something—a recovery that is slower than what you may have predicted with a Donald Trump administration, or do you think it would be faster?

**DL:** Ehh, you can't really answer that one because it's like, some people they bring—they talk a good game, but some people don't really do it. But I'm not saying that he will or I won't say that he will not. But sometimes, I feel like—I think he might, but it'd be a process that he won't, but it's like—it's just something that you really can't answer. You just have to wait and see, like what he will prescribe and that's really what I think about it.

**WH:** Okay. How effectively do you think the Biden administration will control—try to control the spread of the pandemic compared to Donald Trump's performance this year?

**DL:** So off a percentage of that I'll probably say like—a 95.

**WH:** So he'll do 95% better, or 5% better?

**DL:** Ninety-five percent better.

**WH:** Okay. Do you have any thoughts on that?

**DL:** Not really. I mean, if he says that he can do it, then I believe him. But like I said, like, you never know what can happen, so you can't really, like, expect something and then next thing you know, it don't really come true. So it's just like, giving my honest opinion about it, and it's like I feel like he will, but then again, he probably won't.

**WH:** Okay, yeah. So in Wisconsin, the Tavern League is—which is a coalition of bars and restaurants has been heavily involved in repealing state mandates meant to protect the public and stop the spread. Knowing this, do you think that small business owners should be doing more to control the spread, or do you think the state government has a greater responsibility to keep these businesses afloat and open?

**DL:** Can I pass on that?

**WH:** Okay, yeah. And, do you think the presidential race would have turned out differently without the pandemic?

**DL:** Hmm. It'll be more of a challenge. Like, it'll be more like, a win-win, lose-lose column.

**WH:** What do you mean by that?

**DL:** So I feel like it'll be more competitive, because I feel like if the [pandemic wasn't?] there, then there will be more, like, to talk about, but it's just mostly on this pandemic like, "Well, what're we going to do about it? What are we going like—how are we going to survive? How are we going to do this? How are we going to do that? There's just so many questions that you can ask, and really, like, you can't really get to that point because it's like nobody doesn't know, like, doctors don't know, like, governors don't know how to handle this, and they just tried to live with it day by day and see how it goes. Which is—that's how like, all the pandemics that's going on, like, people that is getting killed by it, like, that's how it is. I just feel like something should be done.

**WH:** So do you feel that this election was more or less a single issue election?

**DL:** Pretty much.

**WH:** Okay. Alright, so moving on from the economy and politics, I'd like to talk about your family.

**DL:** Mhmm.

**WH:** Could you take a moment to describe your family for me?

**DL:** Like—would you like, relate on that question again? Like, what do you want to know?

**WH:** So, who lives in your household? Is that family, or is it roommates?

**DL:** Family.

**WH:** Okay, and let's talk about your family, immediate family.

**DL:** So my girlfriend, she works at St. Luke's so she's a ED Huck[?]. So like, she puts papers behind the desks and she checks them into, like, rooms.

**WH:** Okay, and what is St. Luke's?

**DL:** St. Luke's, it's a hospital. So it's on the south side of Milwaukee, and it's more like a—Christian kind of church, I believe, or—I don't know what kind of hospital it is, but it's more like a Godly kind of hospital.

**WH:** Okay—

**DL:** More than Froedtert basically.

**WH:** Okay. And so, what it sounded like is she goes and delivers papers and paperwork transports that.

**DL:** Yes.

**WH:** Okay. And is there anyone else in your family?

**DL:** Yes, my daughter Aliyah, which, she just turned one, so—

**WH:** Okay—

**DL:** That's about it. Whoever lives in my household, I mean, my mom and dad they stay on the north side of Milwaukee. And I had—Well—yes, my mom and dad, and my step-dad too. And my brother, he lives on the south side like, literally 10 minutes away from me, so I'm basically, like, I have family close to me whenever I need it.

**WH:** Okay, how many brothers do you have?

**DL:** I have 2.

**WH:** Do you have any sisters?

**DL:** Two.

**WH:** And so, you have one brother who's 10 minutes away, how about your other three siblings?

**DL:** So my middle brother, he's in Arizona. He lives with his girlfriend; and my big sister, she lives in Milwaukee, and she has a son; and my little sister, she lives in Milwaukee, too.

**WH:** Okay, and so that would make you one of the middle children?

**DL:** Yeah, so like 2nd to last.

**WH:** Okay. So, has COVID-19 impacted the way that you, your girlfriend, and your daughter go about your day-to-day activities?

**DL:** [coughs] Sorry. Yeah, pretty much, because we always do a movie night at the theaters and they just, like, shut that down, so it's like, it cut off our fun, which we love to do. We like to go to the movies a lot, and what else? We like going to Sky Zone and it—that was about it. It's just like those two are the main two that just like messed up our whole fun like, from COVID-19.

**WH:** Okay, so when the movie theaters or—with the movie theaters, how long were they open while the pandemic was going?

**DL:** That I do not know.

**WH:** If you had to put a guess to it?

**DL:** I say like, about—[blows raspberry] Probably like 10-11 months, probably.

**WH:** So like, February, or maybe January?

**DL:** Mm hmm. Yes.

**WH:** Okay, and were you and your family going to the movie theaters, up until they closed? Or did you start taking—Did you realize that the movie theaters were a possible spreading venue that would be at risk—put your family at risk beforehand?

**DL:** We thought it could be a risk, so we didn't try to, like, go. And also, like, who would be paying like \$100 just to like, rent out the whole movie theater, because that's what you have to do around here. So we just—really just stopped going.

**WH:** Yeah. Okay, and then you mentioned Sky Zone, what is Sky Zone?

**DL:** So, it's a bounce house. We love bounce houses and we usually go, but it stopped when, like, the pandemic happened. Everybody was quarantining from it.

**WH:** Okay. So, has COVID-19 affected the way that you interact with your friends and family?

**DL:** No.

**WH:** So currently, what does that look like then?

**DL:** Well, I still kick—I still have fun with my friends, and my family still come see my daughter sometimes, and yeah, we really just haven't lost touch.

**WH:** Well, I'm happy to hear that. So, what are the biggest challenges that you, personally, have faced, with the pandemic?

**DL:** [yawns] Basically going to work, because I've been working since the pandemic happened, and I'm surprised, like, I haven't been, like, having any symptoms.

**WH:** That's very lucky of you.

**DL:** Mhmm.

**WH:** Have you taken on any new hobbies with the pandemic?

**DL:** I've been learning how to, like, cook more and I just been learning how to, like, get my homework done more on-time. So it's like, I just been trying to, like, keep myself occupied. And also, I've been just, like, cleaning the room more and more, because sometimes, like, our living room is kind of junky when Aliyah—my daughter comes and plays in the living room. So it's like, I just try to keep it as clean as possible.

**WH:** Okay—Okay, so now I want to talk to you about—I want to have a discussion about your community. Does the neighborhood you live in have any sort of, like, colloquial name?

**DL:** Not really, no.

**WH:** Okay, for sure. However, what do you see most people that you associate with doing, just in general?

**DL:** Basically going out to like bars and stuff. That's what I be seeing.

**WH:** Do you think less people are going there or more?

**DL:** It has its nights, so like Friday and Saturday, it'd be like a bunch of people, like, packed. College people, and people—that just like, live wherever, like, they just come down to, like, go to the bars. That was about it.

**WH:** How is mask enforcement at the bars?

**DL:** It's very big. Like, you can't get in without a mask, so—

**WH:** Okay. Now, have you had any very localized outbreaks in your neighborhood that you know about?

**DL:** No.

**WH:** Are there any communities, like, for example, the Knights of Columbus or Elk Lodge that you're a part of?

**DL:** No.

**WH:** And are there any online communities? Something like a discord server.

**DL:** Not that I know of, no.

**WH:** When you're in, like, the grocery stores, or out in public, what do you feel is the general perception that the public show about the pandemic?

**DL:** Can you explain that question, a little bit more?

**WH:** Like, for example, you go to the grocery store, and there is a “Karen” who's yelling at the cashier—

**DL:** Mm hmm.

**WH:** —About mask enforcement or something like that. Does that happen often, or not at all?

**DL:** No.

**WH:** Okay. So, May 25, George Floyd was slain by a police officer in Minneapolis, Minnesota. How did you personally respond to the death of George Floyd?

**DL:** That was tough. I couldn't like—I couldn't imagine, like, how they'll feel, because it'll just, like, destroy me on the inside and that's something that's just, like, it's kind of hard to think about.

**WH:** Now for the historical record, there was a video published—that came out—

**DL:** Mhmm.

**WH:** —Regarding his death. What are your thoughts on that video?

**DL:** Can we skip that one?

**WH:** Sure, yeah. Did you personally go out to in-person protests?

**DL:** No.

**WH:** How did Milwaukee experience protests? Were they big and violent?

**DL:** It went viral. Like, it literally went viral, like, it was people that was right by Miller Parkway, and they just was, like, walking all the way down to like the north side, and it was pretty big.

**WH:** Were there are a lot of peaceful protests in Milwaukee?

**DL:** Mhmm. Yes, it was literally all over the news.

**WH:** Were there any curfews that the mayor of Milwaukee or Sheriff were trying to impose?

**DL:** Everybody should be home at 9:00.

**WH:** And were those well-followed by the public?

**DL:** That I do not know.

**WH:** What do you think about going to an in-person protest, in light of the pandemic?

**DL:** I mean, I think, it's okay, like, to a certain extent. Because you never know what could happen, because it could be somebody that's—that can get shot from protesting, or somebody can get hurt. You never know so, it's just best to not, like, get involved with it. I mean, I stand for them and everything that they do, but it's like, I gotta look out for myself too, because you never know what could happen.

**WH:** Do you feel like there was a particular risk because of the pandemic?

**DL:** Hmm, I don't believe so, no.

**WH:** So with regards to the George Floyd, Black Lives Matter protests, was—is there any extra thoughts that you have on that subject?

**DL:** Black Lives Matter. That's all.

**WH:** Absolutely. So—now, on August 23, 29-year old Jacob Blake was left paralyzed in a police shooting in Kenosha, Wisconsin, which is much closer to Milwaukee. What happened in Milwaukee?

**DL:** Like, as far as what?

**WH:** Was there a—Was there public outcry in Milwaukee?

**DL:** Not that I know of. I don't know.

**WH:** Okay. Were there any protests—

**DL:** [simultaneously speaking] There was protests [nodding in affirmative].

**WH:** [simultaneously speaking] —that happened for Jacob Blake?

**DL:** There was protest.

**WH:** Do you feel like the protests with Jacob Blake ran, or were organized, in a very similar way with the George Floyd protests?

**DL:** I believe it did.

**WH:** And was there any looting that happened in Milwaukee with a connection to either of those two protest movements?

**DL:** No.

**WH:** Do you have any thoughts on the shooting?

**DL:** I think—[yawns] excuse me—I think it's bad that people have to go through with that kind of mess, because it's like, you literally, like, you're being shot. And I'm like, I don't know what state of mind that the police was really thinking, but it's like, it's just wrong.

**WH:** How do you feel about police unions right now in their current political status?

**DL:** [referring to police *forces*] To be honest with you, I really don't feel safe.

**WH:** Do you think that police unions are a threat to black lives?

**DL:** [referring to police *forces*] I wouldn't say they a threat. I know they trying to be better at what they're doing. Like, I already know they try to protect the city and everything, but it's like some police, it's like, they're dirty police. And when I say by “dirty” I mean, like, they'll just try to pin something on you and try to get away with the situation.

**WH:** And—

**DL:** That's—

**WH:** —How did the police unions play into those dirty cops? What's the relationship there?

**DL:** So with the police unions, I feel like they, like, they're in cahoots together with them. So it's like, I feel like they come up with a plan, just to like, get off easy. So it's like, I feel like they work together just to, like, find any excuse to just, like, pin something on somebody, or anybody.

**WH:** Did the Milwaukee city council or mayor show any initiative to police reform?

**DL:** I don't know.

**WH:** Okay. And my last question is, do you believe that any racial tensions have been particularly—excuse me—do you believe that racial tensions have been particularly high strung this year, or do you think it's par the course.

**DL:** I think it's par the course.

**WH:** And why do you feel that way?

**DL:** Mm, I really don't have a reason by it, I just feel like it's, like, all in the process.

**WH:** Okay.

**DL:** I just think it just goes along with the flow. Like, it just like—it comes through naturally, like, you can't really like have a reason by it.

**WH:** Sure. Okay, so that was my last question. To end, is there anything that you'd like to add regarding any particular subject that we may have talked about, or we didn't get to talk about?

**DL:** Well, on this note, I just want to say, like, I hope I didn't offend you or anybody. I just like—this is this is how I feel. So it's like, I don't, like, I don't want nobody to take me the wrong way or anything like that. So, that's all.

**WH:** Yeah, absolutely, and the benefit to this being an oral history, is that you are entitled to all of your opinions and—that's just it. We were looking for public perception. So, thank you for sharing all of that with us.



**DL:** No problem at all. I'm glad I could be of help.

**WH:** Alright, Deshawn, thank you and have a good night.

**DL:** You too. Have a good night.