

Interviewee: [Anonymous]

Interviewer(s): [Butler, Andrew] [Lawson, Ellie]

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Byline: This interview was recorded as part of The Covid 19 Oral History Project, a project of the IUPUI Arts and Humanities Institute associated with The Journal of a Plague Year: A Covid 19 Archive.

Andrew Butler 07:59:10

Okay, I am now recording. My name is Andrew Butler. I'm here with my classmate. We will be interviewing an anonymous individual. And we are in me and my classmates are in Indiana. I briefly want to run through with you the informed consent. Consent and deed of gift document that I sent you. This interview is for the oral COVID-19 Oral History Project associate with the Journal of the plague here at COVID-19 archive. The COVID-19 Oral History product is rapid response oral history, focused on archiving the lived experience of the COVID-19 epidemic. We've designed this project so that our professional researchers in the product public can create and upload the oral histories to our open access and open-source database. The study will help us collect narratives and understandings about COVID-19, as well as help us better understand the impacts of the pandemic over time. The recordings of this information and verbatim transcripts be deposited in the journal of the plague year. A COVID-19 archive in the Indiana University Library System, for the use of researchers in the general public. Do you have any questions about the project that I can answer? No. Okay. Taking part in the study is voluntary, you may choose not to take part or you may leave the study at any time leaving the study will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you're entitled Your discussion, your decision whether or not, to participate the study will not affect your current or future relationships with Indiana University IUPUI or the IEP Art and Humanities Institute, participating in this project means that your interview shall be recorded in digital video or audio format, may be transcribed the recordings and possible transcripts of my interviews, copies of any supplementary documents additional photos that you may or may not wish to share, and the informed consent and deed of gifts, maybe the deposited in the journal of the Plague Year take a COVID-19 archive, and the Indiana library system will be available with researchers and the general public as per your request your name and means of identification will be kept confidential. Do you have any questions? No. In addition to your signed documents, would you please offer a verbal confirmation. That you understand and agree to these terms.

Anonymous 08:02:23

Yes, I do.

Andrew Butler 08:02:27

Okay. I am also asking you, That you verbally confirm if agreed to the that your interview will be made available under the following light under the following license and terms, the COVID-19 Oral History

Project, the Journal of the Plague year a COVID-19 archive, and the trustees of Indiana University's actors agents, employees, or representatives, have an unlimited right to reproduce use exploit display perform broadcast create derivative works from distribute the oral history materials in a manner or media now existing or hereafter developed in perpetuity throughout the world. I agree the oral history materials may be used by the voices from waterways and IU, including its assigns and transferees for any purposes including but not limited to marketing advertisement, publicity, or any promotional purposes. I agree that IU will have the final editorial authority over the use of oral history material, and that I waive wait the right to introspect, inspect or approve of any future use of the oral history materials. Moreover, I agree that the public has the right to use the materials under the terms of fair use.

Anonymous 08:03:37

Yes.

Andrew Butler 08:03:41

Finally, I want to ask for verbal confirmation you have agreed that your interview will be made available to the public, immediately.

Anonymous 08:03:49

Yes.

Andrew Butler 08:03:51

Okay. That's concludes the legal portion. Okay, let's see. We'll start with a few background questions just some things to break the ice and get some general information. I would say what are your primary activities such as your job or any big things you participate in,

Anonymous 08:04:17

Um, right now I currently work as an RN and an EMT on an ambulance, and on a dairy farm.

Andrew Butler 08:04:31

I'll ask for this one to be as general as possible and this will be the only information, I collect would you be comfortable sharing what state you live in.

Anonymous 08:04:43

I live in Michigan. I have a small town in the thumb.

Andrew Butler 08:04:48

Okay. And what does it like to live there.

Anonymous 08:04:53

It's a very rural community. I mean everybody helps each other out with ever then got a whole lot of stuff to do around here. Okay.

Andrew Butler 08:05:12

With that out of the way let's see, the speed, refresh question about COVID. When you first learned about COVID-19 What were your general thoughts about it.

Anonymous 08:05:24

When I first learned about it, it was still in China and my brother was living in China, so it was kind of scary just because my brother was there. Um, as far as me. I mean, the community I live in everything happens here last so nobody here was afraid of it or anything because nothing ever happens here.

Andrew Butler 08:05:48

Okay and I'll have your thoughts changed since you first knew about COVID-19.

Anonymous 08:05:55

How have they changed. Well, when we finally got our first case in my area, like everybody started to panic. I panicked a little bit. I'm kinda you're always afraid to getting sick but this was worse than just the flu so like as far as, even going out to go grocery shopping. Shopping wasn't even something I wanted to do. Oh, once we had it around here then it was scary.

Andrew Butler 08:06:38

Okay, now to connect to that, what issues have concerned you the most about the COVID 19 pandemic,

Anonymous 08:06:48

um, people getting sick and dying because, because, basically, we don't have the resources that we need, especially where I live.

Andrew Butler 08:07:07

Okay. Now, earlier you said you were registered nurse How is COVID-19 affected your job.

Anonymous 08:07:17

Oh, we've had a lot of nurses out of work, because they got sick with COVID. We have a whole floor that is specifically COVID Now, so the patients that would normally goes to that floor are on other floors. So, our hospital is pretty well full right now. Not too many open beds just because that one, one whole floor is only COVID, So we have that full. And then we have all those patients that should be on that floor, but they don't have COVID So they're on all the other floors.

Andrew Butler 08:08:11

Okay. Has COVID-19 affected your job and the way in particular.

Anonymous 08:08:19

I'm being a lot busier than we should be. We're not the floor that I work on, we're supposed to have only five patients per nurse, and there's been nights where we've been short staffed and we've had way too many patients, so we'll have six or seven patients, instead of the five that we're supposed to have so it makes everything a lot harder. So, some of the patients don't get the care that they are they still get taken care of, but they don't get the one on one that they deserve. Are umm. All uh, instead Intensive

Care Unit sometimes gets full. So, we have patients waiting for an ICU bed, and there, they are on our floor and they, they shouldn't be they should be a one on one in the ICU and there with nurses who have, you know, four and five other patients to take care of too so

Andrew Butler 08:09:37

let's see what concerns, if any, Do you have about the effects of COVID-19, unemployment in the future, in your fields like more generally do you think this will have an effect on nurses in the future.

Anonymous 08:09:54

Um, it's, it's kind of hard to say really cuz like the amount of nurses that we have right now, we have a we actually have a lot I got my job, basically because of COVID because we had so many patients so they need more nurses. When COVID is gone. Maybe they will not need as many nurses and I don't know how that's goanna go.

Andrew Butler 08:10:31

Let us see. Yeah. You mentioned that. See, has COVID-19 affected the employment of anyone that you know, and if it has in what ways is it was affected.

Anonymous 08:10:47

Um, I, I know a couple people who like were wages. This stuff in Michigan they shut down restaurants for quite a while. So, they ended up losing their jobs. As far as me and so my classmates, we, he ended up getting jobs as nurses because there was so many openings and huge need for nurses. Then my, my brother lost his job that was in China, so he is back in the United States now. Okay, I,

Andrew Butler 08:11:41

I, I am ready to move on, I'm going to move on to another topic but first you have anything else you would like to say on the matter of employment. Before I move on.

Anonymous 08:11:53

No. Okay,

Andrew Butler 08:11:56

I think what if it is okay with you, I think we'll move on to family life. How is COVID-19 affected you or your family's day to day activities?

Anonymous 08:12:09

It affected us quite a bit when COVID started I was still in nursing school and I have two kids who are in school. School shut down so I was trying to do nursing school plus homeschool them and work full time. So that has been pretty rough. Lately, they have gone back to school and it's kind of in and out of school right now I have one that's in school and the other one school is shut down so one at school mourn at home. So, we're still trying to do the online learning, which isn't working out very well. Oh, other than the school stuff though, and our lives have pretty much been normal.

Andrew Butler 08:13:21

How has the COVID 19 outbreak affected have associated communicate with friends and family. If it has not all.

Anonymous 08:13:32

Um, I, for me it really has not I don't really go anywhere anyway, so. Okay.

Andrew Butler 08:13:52

What would you say if in the biggest challenges that you faced during the COVID 19 outbreak?

Anonymous 08:14:03

Um, I would say, trying to homeschool my kids while I was trying to do my own schooling and working, and then the stress of my new job as an RN. With all the extra patients, new nurses you when you first started out. You should have more hope than what we got just because there weren't the people there to help us. They are so short staffed.

Andrew Butler 08:14:48

Okay, what have you, your family and friends done for recreation during COVID-19?

Anonymous 08:15:00

I am pretty much the same as always, we just stay home play board games. We have a big yard, so we were still able to play outside and do all that stuff when it was nice, so, we still went camping a few times.

Andrew Butler 08:15:30

Okay, I am going to move on to another topic just. Of course, if you have anything else to say about sort of family life. You can let me know now.

Anonymous 08:15:45

Not really.

Andrew Butler 08:15:47

Okay then, with your permission, I would like to move on to talk, discussing community a bit more broadly, how is the COVID-19 outbreak affected your community, you know sort of local community, or any other communities, you're a part of like school or any other organizations.

Anonymous 08:16:14

The community that I live in for every holiday, they always do something for the kids you know Easter there is always an Easter egg hunt, on Christmas, there's always, you know, the big town get together with Santa Claus and all that kind of stuff, because it COVID Last year on Easter. The Easter Bunny came around on the fire truck, and they just did like a curbside drop off candy. Um, Santa Claus was the same way. Now with the drive by with the curbside drop off stuff for the kids. Um, my kids generally play sports, but those have kind of been shut down, they are starting to get back in sports, or it's now certain backup with the baseball and stuff. Um, the, all the summertime. Park and Recreation stuff for the kids ended up getting canceled my community did a lot of a lot of food drives for people to come

and pick up food because for a while there, it was almost impossible to buy groceries, like my whole county. There is your one Walmart. So, there's nothing left in the store for a while, so they did a lot of free grocery handouts for everybody. Okay. Now,

Andrew Butler 08:18:05

How people around you are responding, I know you've mentioned some of that. Do you have anything more to say to that to the COVID 19 pandemic.

Anonymous 08:18:15

How are they now.

Andrew Butler 08:18:18

Yeah, how are people around you, just responding in general.

Anonymous 08:18:22

Well, where I live, nobody's wearing masks or anything like that even though. For a while I think it might still actually be a state mandate not positive. Um, most people are not getting vaccinated. Still, that's just kind of how the community that I live in is. Other than that, most people now have gone back to just see all their normal lives.

Andrew Butler 08:19:06

Okay, then let us, let's go back just a little bit and talk about how the as the pandemic progressed. Have you seen the people around you, change their opinions, day to day activities or relationships in response to the pandemic as it was progressing?

Anonymous 08:19:28

Actually, as as it was progressing. I mean, like the first, the very first month or two, you know people wore the masks and they stayed home and everything and as it progressed, they just quit doing all of that. And that was only probably six months in when people were pretty much back to normal as far as I know, they were going back out, doing pretty much whatever they want on it, and you know not wearing masks and stuff.

Andrew Butler 08:20:11

Okay, with that, his COVID-19 Change relationship with your family, friends and community and if it has in what ways.

Anonymous 08:20:24

Um, I do not think it really has. Other than you have. There are some people that are big on wear masks and they, they look down on anyone on who does not, but other than that, it really hasn't changed a whole lot. Okay. Now,

Andrew Butler 08:20:54

again, I will ask you if you have anything else you want to say on the topic of community and if not, I think I'll move on. No. Okay, Now I am going to go on to health. Now of course with this topic, I have to

say that if you do not feel comfortable answering this question. You do not have to answer. And if you discuss anyone. I would ask that you focus on their relationship to you rather than their own personal identity. But have you or anyone you know, gotten sick during the COVID 19 outbreak in what has been your experience in responding to the sickness.

Anonymous 08:21:39

Um, I had COVID I got it from work. For me it was not that bad I was I was off work for a few weeks, I had a hard time breathing, but I was ever hospitalized. I'm a very good friend of mine was hospitalized and nonevent. Um, he is good. Now, he still has, he still gets short of breath. But I mean he left. So,

Andrew Butler 08:22:22

okay, and in what ways do you think that COVID-19 is affecting people's mental or physical health.

Anonymous 08:22:31

People seem to be a lot more depressed. They are not supposed to go out and do all this stuff and spend time with their families and that's what they used to doing. And they, they seem a lot more depressed than what they used to.

08:23:02

Okay.

Andrew Butler 08:23:04

Do you have anything else you want to say on the topic of health. No. Okay, we will move on then. What have been your primary sources of news during the pandemic.

Anonymous 08:23:29

Watch the actual news so I guess just what people have told me or what I see on, you know, social media and stuff.

Andrew Butler 08:23:42

Okay. So, has that been a, a change for you during the pandemic or is that generally where you get most of your news information pre pandemic?

Anonymous 08:23:55

Oh, that is just how it's always been.

Andrew Butler 08:24:01

Okay. Do you think there are any important information that the media or other news sources aren't talking about your covering at this time?

Anonymous 08:24:15

I am sure there probably is, but I wouldn't really know what it is so.

Andrew Butler 08:24:26

Okay. Let us see. Um, how have municipal leaders and government officials in their community responded to the outbreak.

Anonymous 08:24:42

Um, like at the state level or smaller than the state.

Andrew Butler 08:24:51

I would say, sort of, state level and you can include local level if you would feel comfortable doing that, But,

Anonymous 08:25:00

well, I mean the state level. They shut, like the whole state down for quite a while and then gradually are starting to reopen it. I am like masks are still mandated. They closed all the schools last year. Slowly reopen them at the local level. They were not in weren't and still aren't really enforcing any of the stuff that our governor has put into place. Um, when all the restrictions first came out, the sheriff's department actually put a letter out, saying that they will not enforce any of it so.

Andrew Butler 08:26:01

Okay. Do you have any thoughts on how local, state, or federal leaders are responding to the crisis differently?

Anonymous 08:26:14

No What do you mean.

Andrew Butler 08:26:16

like like I believe you mentioned earlier on the how the local government seems to not be taking leave the state governments, you know, recommendations seriously. You mentioned the lack of enforcement, and that kind of thing. Do you have any opinion on that?

Anonymous 08:26:39

Well, with the lack of enforcement, it is more than that we're getting a lot of calls about the masks, people not wearing masks, and whether it be in a small community. Now they do not have the resources to be sending police officers out every single person who wasn't wearing a mask. So that was taken time away from no more important things like your car accident, all that kind of stuff. Um, I mean, the way people live around here they're going to do what they want to anyway. It really does not matter. You know, if, if they are supposed to wear a mask or not, they don't want to, they're just not going to. And I think there was talks about finding people for not wearing them. People would just rather pay the fine then. Then they do not wear masks so.

Andrew Butler 08:27:50

Okay, do you have any concerns about, you know, different states and their enforcement's of dealing with the COVID 19 pandemic, or anything.

Anonymous 08:28:04

Um, well with everything that was going on with my state. As far as all the restrictions and stuff that our governor did I, I had a hard time keeping up with what we couldn't do here that I don't even know what other states did. Okay.

Andrew Butler 08:28:31

I am going to first ask if you have anything else you want to say regarding government or local leadership and the COVID 19 pandemic.

Anonymous 08:28:41

No.

Andrew Butler 08:28:43

Okay, we will move on then. Let us discuss the future, as you're experienced in the COVID 19 pandemic transformed how you think about your friends, family and community.

Anonymous 08:28:57

No.

Andrew Butler 08:29:01

Okay. How does this pandemic compared to other big events that have happened in your lifetimes?

Anonymous 08:29:16

Which, which big events,

Andrew Butler 08:29:20

has this become a, I suppose, a defining event or there be other events that you would consider to be more important or relevant to your life and this?

Anonymous 08:29:33

I still think 911 would be bigger than this. Okay.

Andrew Butler 08:29:45

What can you imagine your life, being like in a year?

Anonymous 08:29:52

Oh, hopefully, everything is back to normal, but, um, I think we'll probably still be having to wear masks and everything other than the masks, um, I think it'll pretty much be back to normal, other than the masks.

Andrew Butler 08:30:12

Okay, now what do you hope your life will be like in a year.

Anonymous 08:30:18

My life. Yes. Oh, well play I am still working as a nurse. I do not know, probably be the same as it is now.

Andrew Butler 08:30:42

Knowing what you know now what do you think that individuals, communities or governments need to keep in mind for the future.

Anonymous 08:31:03

All right. I do not really know.

08:31:14

Okay.

Anonymous 08:31:27

All right.

Andrew Butler 08:31:30

Is there anything that we have not discussed that you would like to talk about.

Anonymous 08:31:49

I do not know.

Andrew Butler 08:31:57

Okay then. Let us see if we have that. Okay, then if there is no further questions, then I think that we can end the interview now, is that we are with you.

Anonymous 08:32:29

Okay.