

Transcript of Interview with Elizabeth Sconyers by Angelica Gallegos

Interviewee: Elizabeth Sconyers

Interviewer: Angelica Gallegos

Date: 10/09/2020

Location of Interviewee: Jacksonville, Florida

Location of Interviewer: Santa Fe, New Mexico

Transcriber: Angelica Gallegos

Abstract:

This oral history was conducted for the HST580 Archive course through Arizona State University. The interviewee discusses her life and experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. The oral history explores the COVID-19 virus and its relation to themes such as, lived experiences, family life, employment, the economy, government, and community.

Angelica Gallegos 0:07

Okay. My name is Angelica Gallegos, and I am doing an oral history for the Archive 580 class for ASU. Can you tell me what the date and time is?

Elizabeth Sconyers 0:26

All right. The date is October 9, 2020, and the time is, for me, 2:37 PM.

Angelica Gallegos 0:35

What is your name, and what are the primary things you do on a day to day basis. For example, your job and activities?

Elizabeth Sconyers 0:44

All right, my name is Elizabeth Sconyers, and on a day to day basis, I mostly do school, and then in the evenings, I might write or play a game or something like that.

Angelica Gallegos 1:01

Where do you live, and what is it like to live there?

Elizabeth Sconyers 1:06

So. I live in Jacksonville, Florida. And right now, it's, I guess, kind of normal, I would say as normal as it can be. We still have to wear masks into public areas, but outside we don't have to wear masks, and there's really not a quarantine going on right now. They're starting to kind of wind down the testing because there's not very many cases anymore. So that's kind of what-where we're at right now.

Angelica Gallegos 1:39

When you first learned about COVID-19, what were your thoughts about it, and have your thoughts changed since then?

Elizabeth Sconyers 1:46

Well, I think a lot of us thought that it was going to last for like a month or two, and obviously, that's not what happened. I think more than anything, it's starting to get a little old, you know, everything being shut down and not being able to go certain places, but still it's- some of its necessary to keep older people from getting sick and that's fine.

Angelica Gallegos 2:15

What issues have most concerned you about the COVID-19 pandemic?

Elizabeth Sconyers 2:22

I guess, well, whenever it first started, my grandfather was- he had- he was in a high-risk population. He had respiratory illness, but he passed in early August, so that's no longer - it was unrelated issues, but... so right now I guess there's not a huge concern because there's no one who is in the family was high risk.

Angelica Gallegos 2:58

How has COVID-19 affected your job? In what ways?

Elizabeth Sconyers 3:04

Oh, definitely. So, I was a tutor and was for like a year and a half before starting the Master's program, and so about, I would say about March, late March, early April, I can't remember exactly. We started you know shutting down and working from home through Zoom because before we were at an actual office situation. So, we did like work through Zoom for like, a few months, and it was actually whenever we came back, and we had been there for three weeks that one Friday I- right before work. I almost failed my temperature test and then started getting sicker and that was like, "Oh boy, I guess I need to go get tested." I didn't have it though, but I still requested to go back to working online remotely.

Angelica Gallegos 4:08

Has COVID-19 changed your employment status? In what ways?

Elizabeth Sconyers 4:14

Um, I mean employed versus unemployed, no. I wasn't unemployed during COVID-19 except for whenever I turned in my resignation.

Angelica Gallegos 4:277

What concerns do you have about the effects of COVID-19 on your employment and the economy?

Elizabeth Sconyers 4:39

Well, I have to say a lot- let's focus on the economy one, since I'm not no longer employed technically, so um... I know a lot of my family members work in like, movie theaters and like, the hospitals, and so there's a pretty big concern there, especially with the movie theaters, because they haven't been open in so long, and now, hoping big blockbuster movies that are supposed to be hitting this fall and December are getting pushed back into next summer, so there's a huge concern about that. Mostly I think the economy did really suffer whenever we did

shut down and- but I'm not sure if that was avoidable to be honest because you kind of need to try and stop it, but... so a lot of it is just the way it is.

Angelica Gallegos 5:56

How has COVID-19 affected you and/or your family's day to day activities?

Elizabeth Sconyers 6:02

Well, to be fair, I've always been a bit of a homebody, so I think the big thing is- was no longer going into work each day, but to be honest that wasn't a huge deal to me. I would rather do work from home than the office, to be honest. The same for my dad; he used to go into the office every day. Now he's got to work from home, and he prefers it that way as well.

Angelica Gallegos 6:35

How are you managing day to day activities in your household?

Elizabeth Sconyers 6:41

I mean, I guess the same as always, there's not much change that has happened other than just being at home all the time. Grocery shopping, I mean you just wear a mask whenever you grocery shop. So that's about it.

Angelica Gallegos 7:05

Has the COVID-19 outbreak affected how you associate or communicate with friends and family? In what ways?

Elizabeth Sconyers 7:13

Well, I think- about a couple months in, I remember because we hadn't seen anyone in like, two months and so like one Saturday, we drove by my cousin's house because we were just completely going out of our mind with not having any contact with anyone, and so we just like parked in front of their front driveway, rolled down the windows and like six feet apart, we were talking to each other through all that. I think that's the big thing that kind of crosses my mind when I think of changes in communication.

Angelica Gallegos 7:59

What has been the biggest challenges that you have faced during the COVID-19 outbreak.?

Elizabeth Sconyers 8:09

I guess fear that I was going to get sick, to be honest. There are like two times where I thought that I might have had it. Like only the second time I was able to go get tested, the first time the testing wasn't even open for people who weren't at high risk because it was like mid-March, so I still don't know if I had it or not to be honest. [laughs]

Angelica Gallegos 8:37

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

Elizabeth Sconyers 8:46

A lot of TV. Lots and lots of TV, streaming, YouTube, that sort of thing.

Angelica Gallegos 8:58

How has the COVID-19 outbreak affected your community? Community members can include school, club, church, your job, et cetera.

Elizabeth Sconyers 9:10

Well, I mean, I go to church like semi-regularly. I guess you would say, and- but I haven't been to service since like March because it's like completely shut down until recently, and now they're only doing it in like small groups that you have to actually register online for and then you get put into a group where like, group one goes one Sunday, group two the next Sunday, group three goes the next Sunday, and then it starts all over again. But I have not been since like beginning of March, to be honest.

Angelica Gallegos 9:54

How are people around you responding to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Elizabeth Sconyers 10:01

Hmm, I would say most of them are just kind of frustrated and ready to be done with it. I don't- I think, with the exception of a few people, most of them don't take it very serious.

Angelica Gallegos 10:15

Have you seen the people around you change their opinion, day to day activities or relationships in response to the pandemic?,

Elizabeth Sconyers 10:27

Yes, and no. I would say at the beginning we were pretty, pretty good about, you know, not having any contact with anyone, and just not going anywhere. I think as it's gone on, that's kind of not been the case. A lot of people I know just, you know, go everywhere. They- if they can get away with it and the businesses don't notice it, they won't wear a mask. [phone rings] And I'm sorry about that. Just give me one second.

Angelica Gallegos 11:21

Self-isolation and flattening the curve have been two key ideas that have emerged during the pandemic. How have you, your family, friends, and community responded to request to self-isolate and flatten the curve?

Elizabeth Sconyers 11:38

I feel like - again, that was mostly done more in the first couple of months and then it kind of- people stopped doing that kind of round here, and I still try to not go anywhere, and whenever I do, I'm always wearing my mask. But a lot of people I know are kind of getting tired of that.

Angelica Gallegos 12:07

Have you or anybody you know gotten sick during the COVID-19 outbreak? What has been your experience in responding to the sickness?

Elizabeth Sconyers 12:19

Hmm. Well, aside from my getting sick, my cousin and his fiancé both had the virus, and I think a lot of my cousins have talked about how, you know, in early March, they had some sort of severe sickness that was similar, but again, there wasn't any testing available until like April around here for people who hadn't been, you know, out of the country or weren't in a high-risk group.

Angelica Gallegos 13:02

In what ways do you think the COVID-19 is affecting people's mental and or physical health?

Elizabeth Sconyers 13:12

Well, I know I gained a little bit of weight because I eat way too much ice cream now. [laughs] Um, I think mental health - I can see where if you're, you know, being in self-isolation all by yourself, that would be really tough situation. Um, thankfully, I'm not in that situation, and I have family who's with me right now. Um, other than eating way too much ice cream and that, I mean I've never been one big on exercise. So that really hasn't changed much. [laughs]

Angelica Gallegos 13:58

What have been your primary sources of news during the pandemic?

Elizabeth Sconyers 14:03

I'd say just mostly local news. To be honest, the news kind of stresses me out, and I try not to look at it too much. [laughs] Sometimes my mom will tell me stuff, but other than that, it's just mostly looking at the local news.

Angelica Gallegos 14:22

Have your news sources changed during the course of the pandemic?

Elizabeth Sconyers 14:28

No. The news has just been stressing me out since for a couple of years now. [laughs] So...

Angelica Gallegos 14:38

What do you think are important issues that the media may or is not covering?

Elizabeth Sconyers 14:45

Well, I can't say I can answer that very well to be honest. [laughs]

Angelica Gallegos 14:52

How have leaders and government officials in your community responded to the outbreak?

Elizabeth Sconyers 15:00

Well, I kind of live between two counties and like St. John's County where St. Augustine is they've already suspended the masks and to be fair, there really hasn't been any- very many new cases in quite some time. So, they've already suspended that, but Jacksonville still has a mask mandate. I think it will for another couple of weeks at least.

Angelica Gallegos 15:31

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

Elizabeth Sconyers 15:40

Hmm. Well, I do think that it's good that it's mostly left up to the local governments because they have more of an idea and more of a taste of what it's like in their actual communities. I feel like that's one thing that has, that should be the case. I mean, if they have like a federal shut down over everything, to be honest, there's places in Oklahoma and others where there haven't ever been a case. So really should those be shut down because a place like Florida can't keep it under control?

Angelica Gallegos 16:28

Has your experience transformed how you think about your family, friends and community? In what ways?

Elizabeth Sconyers 16:35

Yeah. Well, I mean, I think, before I took a lot of this for granted that you could just go out and do anything and it'd be okay. So I think to a huge extent that's taught me to not take everything for granted that you know you'll always be able to go see your family or your friends or go to the movie theaters, or go to the park.

Angelica Gallegos 17:04

How does this pandemic compare to other big events that have happened in your lifetime?

Elizabeth Sconyers 17:11

I mean, to be honest, I don't think it's the most- the most dramatic life change. I think that was whenever the markets crashed in 2012 because, well to- to be able to stay employed, we had to move over to Texas for my high school years. So that was like, I would say even bigger culture shock because even with this pandemic, you can still drive maybe thirty minutes and talk to family like over a driveway or something like that. But moving to Texas you couldn't do that. There wasn't really like Zoom calls back then or FaceTime, very much, so you had to drive like, I guess it was eighteen hours before you can get back here to Florida. That, I think, was a lot bigger; a lot- a lot bigger deal than this.

Angelica Gallegos 18:17

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

Elizabeth Sconyers 18:25

Well, I assume I'm still gonna be kind to school and probably still stressing out about that. Um, I would definitely hope we're not still dealing with this virus next October. Um, I don't- I would imagine that it would be done by then, to be honest.

Angelica Gallegos 18:47

What do you hope your life is like in a year?

Elizabeth Sconyers 18:51

Well, I would hope that I'm not in quarantine in a year. [laughs] I'd like to maybe go somewhere on vacation next year.

Angelica Gallegos 19:08

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

Elizabeth Sconyers 19:19

I guess, just follow the rules you know? If your governments' telling you to quarantine for two weeks, there's- just go ahead and do it. You know, 'cause I have a feeling if everyone had just done that and not gone out and been without masks, I feel like this would have been over a lot quicker, but it's the people who were maybe a little sick or maybe didn't have any- or asymptomatic and then went out and gave it to other people that this kept spreading. So, just follow the laws, I guess.

Angelica Gallegos 20:06

Thank you. That was your last question.

Elizabeth Sconyers 20:10

All right.

Angelica Gallegos 20:11

I'm gonna stop recording now.

Elizabeth Sconyers 20:13

All right. Sounds good.