

For Immediate Release:

Arizona State University Has Created The Journal of the Plague Year, an Archive to Document and Preserve the Experiences and Thoughts of these Unprecedented Times We Are Living In.

The archive, Journal of the Plague Year, was started in March 2020 by Catherine O’Donnell and Mark Tebeau, professors at the university and has become a valuable resource for people to look back at and understand what people around the world have experienced during the Coronavirus period. It will shed light on everyday occurrences and the big events of our time through people’s thoughts, writings, and photographs. What started as a brief ten-line email from O’Donnell to Tebeau floating the idea as a tool for future students and historians has become as a connection to other people and may even provide comfort for those who are experiencing isolation, boredom, a sense of doom, or loneliness as a result of the quarantine and business and entertainment closures. Perhaps uploading and browsing the archive would be another way to join with other people. O’Donnell agrees. She said, “It’s kind of nice to have an excuse, just as a human being to tell another human being, what you’re thinking matters, other people care about what you’re thinking.”

The repository is seeking any sort of material that defines, documents, or explains the strange days we are living in now. Tebeau explains that “The historical significance of one’s own times is always difficult to assess. We tend to be too close to the events of our own lives to achieve much perspective on them. But we do have access to something future historians might not — namely the texture of our own immediate experience, including the very disorientation and uncertainty characteristic of being caught up in events beyond our control.” The archive’s name has a historical significance as well—it was inspired by Daniel Defoe’s 1722 novel, *A Journal of the Plague Year*, which tells the story of one man’s experiences and observations during the bubonic plague in London.

It is open for submissions to everyone around the world by filling out a simple [form accessible here](#). Nothing is insignificant—any contribution small or large is welcome and important. The contributions are not altered in the curation process. It is very important that the voice and intention remains authentic. Here’s the link once again to get started: “[A Journal of the Plague Year: An Archive of COVID-19](#).” Future generations will be grateful!

Contact Lyn Ribisi @Lynribisi@gmail.com for further information.

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