

Transcript of Oral History Monologue by Alina Rios

Interviewee: Alina Rios

Interviewer: Self

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Location: Los Angeles, California

Abstract: In this monologue, Alina Rios discusses how she and her family have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. She discusses how her day-to-day activities have changed and also talks about California had implemented safety measures to keep everybody safe.

Alina Rios 0:02

Hello, my name is Alina Rios. It is Tuesday, May 26, about 8:52 PM. Um, yeah, this is my oral history project. I live in Boyle Heights, which is a suburb of Los Angeles, I guess. I go to school in Pasadena, where I'm a student at Pasadena High School where I'm also a cheerleader. I used to take the train and metro to school every day. Metro bus. But now I stay at home. I had first heard about COVID-19 probably in February, or January, I'm not sure, probably late January. And it didn't really concern me at the time, because I knew that it was something that was in China, and which in my mind is like, all the way across the world, so there's no way that it could have affected me. However, I was wrong. Somewhere around the week that my school got canceled, or when the last day was, I remember hearing about a case of Coronavirus at a school or college that was next to my school. And there was rumors going around about whether the school would shut down or not. And on March 13, it did. So yeah. I didn't have a job, so I didn't have to worry about unemployment. But some people around me did. They didn't get unemployed, nobody lost their jobs, thankfully, in my household or in my family. But a lot of them had their hours cut, or they don't really like do it anymore, or do it right now, or they have to work more because they're only taking a little bit of [unintelligible]. Like for instance, my mom, she used to drive for Uber and now she doesn't really do it anymore, because who wants to take an Uber around this time? And my dad works at a power plant. So they only have like 10 people working a day for a week, which means that they all have to work way more than they did before. So yeah. But now that my mom is home more, this has all kind of brought me closer to her, which is very nice. We bust out games all the time, start playing them together, you know, got to make the best out of a bad situation. Um, in my community, everybody wears masks. It's very good. I'm proud of my community for that. I've never, like I go out there like every once in a while to take a walk or to go run to the grocery store, or to stop at a CVS so I can get a snack. And I don't ever see anybody not wearing a mask, which is very good, you know? Keep it contained, flatten the curve. It's nice to see that. However, you don't see it as much in downtown Los Angeles. So yeah. Um, my primary sources of news on this pandemic, I don't watch the news. We don't have cable in my house, so I kind of just depend on whatever I see on social media. So I'll usually check in on Twitter every once in a while. I hear some things on the radio sometimes when we're in the car, but otherwise than that I try not to think about it or else it kind of weighs on me, kind of scares me. Yeah. Thank God nobody in my family or anything has gotten sick or had Coronavirus but you know, not everybody is healthy in the way that it's physically, like everybody's physically healthy, thank gosh, but not mentally, or at least I'm not, and I know my sister's not. Something about like seeing people every single day, having people around you, that make you happy is like really nice and being able- not being able, but not being able to see them all the time. It's kind of like, well, what am I supposed to do now, you know, I used to have something to do every single

day, I'd go to school, or I wake up, I take the train, I'd go to school, I do some cheerleading after school, and maybe a game or two. But now everything has been stopped. And it's kind of just like, more, I don't know. It's not as happy as it should be. But, you know, you try to find something to make you happy. Something new. Like I started painting, so that kind of helps with my mental health. I don't really pay attention to politics or the government or anything. You know, I am 15 years old. And my birthday is about 30 days away, or... yeah, just about 30 days away. So I'll be 16 soon, but just because I'm so young, like, I don't really have to worry about anything yet, you know, I'll start- I have my own opinions on things, but I don't really think they matter. So I don't pay attention to the government or how leaders of our country respond because I don't exactly like the leaders of our country. So yeah, but, you know, I'm glad that California is staying very safe, because this is a big state. So we have to watch out for everybody. Um, the future. Man... [laughs] I'm going to be so careful in the future. Always gonna keep a hand sanitizer on me. It's crazy, 'cause I never thought I'd have to ever experience something like this. Like, even when I was younger, and Ebola came around, I was like, oh, okay, that's kind of weird. Like a couple of cases showed up and only a couple you know? But that's how I thought about this one, too. It was only a couple and then it kept popping up all over the country and more and more people were dying of it and more and more people were getting it. And now look where we are now, and I never thought I'd have to go through something like this. It's crazy. Like, people- or not people, but kids will learn about this one day. It's kind of like a very mild version of the Black Plague. But it's gonna be something serious like that. And to know them living through it is very crazy. But I'm definitely gonna try and keep myself, you know, prepared for the future. Because you never know when this can happen again. Hope that was good.