

Transcript of Interview with Cheyenne Alexander by Colton Schuman

Interviewee: Cheyenne Alexander

Interviewer: Colton Schuman

Date: 10/04/2020

Location (Interviewee): Lawrenceburg, Indiana

Location (Interviewer):

Abstract: In this interview, I am asking my girlfriend questions about her life and how it has changed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some topics that we go over is some background information about her, how her employment has been affected, how her family is handling these extreme situations, her community's response, any health risks or experiences with sickness, how she believes the government has handled the outbreak, and what she sees for her future. We are both just average middle-class college students, and she has some interesting insights on the past six months.

Colton Schuman 0:02

All right. Now we have started. Are you ready? We are recording. My name is Colton Schuman, I am here with Cheyenne Alexander. The date is October 4, 2020. The time is 2:42pm. We are at my house together. Um, so I want to briefly review the informed consent and deed of gift document that you signed. This interviews for the COVID-19 oral history project which is associated with the Journal of the plague year, a COVID-19 archive. The COVID-19 Oral History Project is a rapid response oral history focused on archiving the lived experience of the COVID-19 epidemic. We have designed this project so that professional researchers in the broader public can create and upload their oral histories to our open access and open source database. This 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, demographic information and the verb verbatim transcripts will be deposited in the Journal of the plague year COVID-19 archive in the Indiana University Library System for the use of researchers and the general public. Do you have any questions about the project that I can answer?

Cheyenne Alexander 1:55

I have no questions that I am ready to roll.

Colton Schuman 2:00

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 are entitled. Your decision whether or not to participate in the study will not affect your current or future relations with Indiana University I I up UI or the I up UI Arts and Humanities Institute or the University of Cincinnati, through which we are running this project. Participating in this project means your interview is being recorded, and will be transcribed the recordings and possible transcriptions of my interview copies of any supplementary documents or additional photos that you wish to share. And the informed consent and deed of gift may be deposited in the Journal of the plague year a COVID-19 archive and the Indiana University Library System and will be available to both researchers and the general public. Your name and other means of identification will not be confidential Any question? No. In add- In addition to your signed

document, would you please offer a verbal convert confirmation that you understand and agree to these terms.

Cheyenne Alexander 3:27

I understand and agree to the terms.

Colton Schuman 3:30

I'm also asking that you verbally confirm that you have agreed that your interview will be made available under the following license Creative Commons Attribution non commercial Share Alike 4.0 COVID-19 oral history project the journal the plague year in the trustees of Indiana University acting through its agents employees or Representatives has an unlimited right to reproduce use exhibit display perform broadcast create derivative works for works from and distribute the oral history materials and any matter or media now existing or hereafter developed in perpetuity throughout the world. I agree that the oral history materials may be used by the voices from the waterways and IU including its assigns and transferees for any purpose including but not limited to marketing advertising or publicity or other promotional purposes. I agree that I you will have final editorial authority over the use of the oral history materials and I waive any right to 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 US copyright. So verbal agreement.

Cheyenne Alexander 5:00

I agree.

Colton Schuman 5:02

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

Cheyenne Alexander 5:17

I agree.

Colton Schuman 5:19

All right. Now on to the question. Okay. What is the date and time?

Cheyenne Alexander 5:27

It is currently October 4, 2020. And it is 2:47pm.

Colton Schuman 5:34

What is your name? And what are the primary things you do on a day to day basis, for example, your job, extracurricular activities, etc?

Cheyenne Alexander 5:46

My name is Cheyenne Alexander, and on a daily basis, I babysit my niece and watch TV until it's time to go to bed.

Colton Schuman 6:00

Where do you live? And what is it like to live there?

Cheyenne Alexander 6:04

I live in a small town called Lawrenceburg, Indiana. And it is uh, basically cornfields and pickup trucks and yeah, that's pretty much it. I mean, it's- it's- it's a very, it's a very tight town. Everyone knows everyone though.

Colton Schuman 6:31

Okay. When you first learned about COVID 19, what were your thoughts about it? How have your thoughts changed since then?

Cheyenne Alexander 6:42

Um, I think when I first started, when it first started happening, we were at your sister's house. And we were trying to figure out like, if this was actually like, happening, or if it was just like, everyone's freaking out for no reason, type of thing. Yeah. And then I think it's all started to hit me when I realized that, like, stores were running out of things, because then I was like, it kind of felt like apocalypse movies, like, everything is running out. So at that point, I think I was just scared of like, how do I because we didn't have much information yet. So I think I was more worried about like, how do I get it? Can I get it? Like, what what does it entitle that sort of thing. And now that it has been, what, seven months, probably since the beginning of all of this. It's kind of just become a new regular, I guess, he wear your mask when you go out. You take precautions, I mean, we don't really go out anymore, which kind of sucks. But it's all based on choice. Like we choose not to just because we're not comfortable with it, but I guess that's how it's changed.

Colton Schuman 8:04

I was I think I said like, when it first started, I didn't think it was ever gonna, like get out of China or whatever, like I didn't think it was gonna be as big of a deal.

Cheyenne Alexander 8:13

It was surprising every week to see like, the different numbers go up in different countries because it wasn't just the US or like, it wasn't just China. Like it was everywhere.

Colton Schuman 8:25

Yep, all right. What issues have most concerned you about the Covid 19 pandemic?

Cheyenne Alexander 8:35

Um, I think the hardest part for me is that individuals are given rules and regulations, and some still choose not to follow them. Which everyone has the right to their own opinion, and their own freedom of action of words. But at the same time, you're not just putting yourself in harm. You're, you're disrespecting other people. Yeah. So I think that's the hardest part. For me. It kind of takes the normal stress level of being in a pandemic, up a notch because you also have people who aren't even paying attention to it. Who don't think it- Who don't think it's real, like that kind of stuff. All right.

Colton Schuman 9:21

All right. Um, has COVID-19 affected your job, in what ways?

Cheyenne Alexander 9:29

Um, my current job I'm just babysitting my niece but my sister who works for UC health, she can't go into work. So she's working from home. So it kind of hasn't had a negative effect on my job. I want to say it's almost positive because my sister can kind of be home with her daughter and see her grow up. Um, but I'm not saying like, thank you. virus that's just like something that has happened but it definitely has people in my family? My mom did have two jobs, but she ended up losing her second one due to the vet clinic not needing that many employees during the time and that kind of thing. So not me personally, but some people around me.

Colton Schuman 10:18

So it hasn't hasn't changed your employment status? No.

Cheyenne Alexander 10:24

I mean, if I didn't have the job of watching my niece, and I had to go out and get a job, then it would, because I wouldn't want to work anywhere.

Colton Schuman 10:34

What concerns do you have about the effects of COVID-19? On your employment, but also the economy more broadly? Which I know you already said that it doesn't really affect your employment? It doesn't really, what do you think? How do you think it's affecting the economy poorly?

Cheyenne Alexander 10:54

I mean, without jobs, there's no people who have money and without money, people can do anything to spend money. So businesses everywhere around the world are losing money and jobs. And that's the epitome of that.

Colton Schuman 11:13

As the Covid 19 pandemic affected the employment of people, you know, in what ways I guess you kind of already went over your mom.

Cheyenne Alexander 11:21

Yeah, well, my mom, she did have, she did have two jobs part time job. But the second job, they had too many employees that they could pay for, and then obviously, my sister's working at home.

Colton Schuman 11:35

Okay, so we're going on a family. How's COVID-19 affected you or your family's day to day activities?

Cheyenne Alexander 11:47

Well, like I mentioned before, I don't really go out that much anymore. Just due to the type of person I am and some of the conditions I deal with on a daily basis. But also like having a new

baby in the family is pretty scary. Because you never know. If anyone comes to visit, we have to make sure everyone's being super careful, super clean. And then also my grandmother who is in her 80s, she hasn't gone out. I think since March, we've been doing all the shopping for her. We've been taking her everywhere, that sort of thing. So I think it has affected my family more than it has affected me just because I'm the type of person that would rather stay indoors anyway, but it's definitely getting to me now. It's definitely feeling a little weird after seven months of being inside.

Colton Schuman 12:36

So I guess that's how you guys have managed your day to day activity. Okay, has the COVID-19 outbreak affected how you associate and communicate with friends and family? In what ways

Cheyenne Alexander 12:54

I have not hung out with a friend since March of 2020. I had a friend over once about three months ago, I think and we stayed six feet apart and talked in my garage and that was for like a 30 thing, because she just needed advice with us only friend Dave seen. Family we used to have a lot of family get together but obviously we've cut back on those a lot. Um, I think that's it. What was the question? Was that the answer?

Colton Schuman 13:27

Yeah, just how you associate and communicate with family.

Cheyenne Alexander 13:31

Yeah, I haven't talked to friends in a while. Except for online friends. I mean, that helps.

Colton Schuman 13:37

What been the biggest challenges that you have faced during the outbreak?

Cheyenne Alexander 13:44

I think it's just started hitting me recently that like, we can't go anywhere, like we can't do it. Or like we can go somewhere. But we're just choosing not to like I just don't feel safe enough to do that. That also some things aren't open yet. I don't know. It just it's it's a lot of different. The beginning of 2020 is a lot different than what we're in right now. So it's like two completely different planets for living on.

Colton Schuman 14:14

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

Cheyenne Alexander 14:22

Um, during the summer, we just did a lot of grill outs we tried to hang out in the garage. I mean, your brother and your sister came over once or twice to swim, but it wasn't. We used to do parties almost every weekend in the summer, like last year in the years before but this year, we didn't.

Colton Schuman 14:41

Because what have you done during the outbreak for recreation? Well, we've

Cheyenne Alexander 14:47

just we've just been doing things at home more because we can really go out. So yeah, I mean, sometimes play board games, really since my niece has come around. We've just been spending a lot of time Her showing her new things, walking, watching TV shows trying new recipes, just small things.

Colton Schuman 15:11

How is the covid 19 outbreak affected your community? That would be like school, or church or you job.

Cheyenne Alexander 15:27

I know that the local high schools are doing some regulations. Obviously, I'm in college. I am an online student, but everything is online. So that doesn't affect me too much. I know the community, a lot of small businesses are struggling. And then there's also a lot of hardships in between different unions and the community. So everyone's kind of butting heads on what they think is right, what they think is wrong, kind of stinks.

Colton Schuman 15:57

For that's how people are responding to the pandemic. That's the next question.

Cheyenne Alexander 16:01

I think it's I think there's just like, a lot of confusion. Nobody's on the same page. Yeah, everyone has a different mindset.

Colton Schuman 16:13

So have you seen people like change their opinions, or their day to day activities or relationships, in response to the pandemic?

Cheyenne Alexander 16:26

I mean, I think the people around me like I've noticed them staying more going out. Like we don't do things like we used to. My I have a friend, in particular, who her whole family has doesn't really think it's the pandemic is that big of a deal. So they are still going on vacations, partying and going to bars and restaurants. And I mean, that is their choice, but it's the opposite of what we're doing.

Colton Schuman 16:57

So 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 requests to self isolate and flatten the curve?

Cheyenne Alexander 17:13

We have self isolated I think completely, completely. Um, I mean, my parents have gone out to dinner twice in the past seven months, but they go wear masks and everything. And the restaurant they go to is a local business that we support.

Colton Schuman 17:30

So we've isolated pretty good,

Cheyenne Alexander 17:31

yeah, we, me and you, in particular have not gone out in about six months, anywhere.

Colton Schuman 17:42

Has COVID-19 changed your relationships with your family or your friends or your community?

Cheyenne Alexander 17:51

I think worse? Well, I think when it comes everyone having different opinions, there's a lot of anger. It's really showed me that some of the people in my community don't deserve my respect. If they don't respect others. My friend that isn't taking it seriously. I'm, I can't really.

I don't really have motivation to be around her because of the things she said, like that I don't agree with and it sucks because we have different opinions, but at the same time, I don't think it is. I don't think of it as just different opinions. I think of it as we are people who are following the regulations and guidelines and being respectful of others, whether we think that Coronavirus is serious or not. And then you have people who don't think it's serious. So they're not respecting, but they don't think oh, other people do think get serious. Maybe I should respect their decision. They don't think like that. So I think that it's been tough because I have a couple people in my family and friends who are thinking like that, and it makes it really tough to be like, Do I want this person? like saying these things around me or? Yeah, yeah. It's it's kind of hard to go without their opinion, when it's like people's lives are on the line, right.

Colton Schuman 19:10

Okay, moving on. Okay, so anybody you know, or have you yourself gotten sick during the COVID outbreak? What has been your response? Or what has been your experience in responding to people with COVID-19 or possible people who have been exposed?

Cheyenne Alexander 19:40

Well, no one in my family has tested positive but there has been like one or two instances of exposure. When those instances happen, the whole family including me and you and like your family. We all kind of quarantined for like seven to 14 days. Without any symptoms. And then at one point, my dad did have a fever. He had to come home from work. And he actually stayed in the room with the mask. took his fever, Tylenol, you know, stayed in one space one until he got the results back that he was negative. So we're taking it seriously. Luckily, we haven't had anyone in the family who has tested positive but yeah, we treat every small thing as if it could possibly be the virus.

Colton Schuman 20:30

Um, so what ways do you think the COVID-19 is affecting people's mental or physical health?

Cheyenne Alexander 20:40

Oh, man. Mental health, I can 100% stand by and tell you that it starts to feel like you're going a little crazy. Just not even, like not being able to go out but like, people arguing. I mean, the debate going on. Like, it's not just the Coronavirus that's happening. I mean, I know that's what

this was all around the Coronavirus. Yeah, there's so much happening this year. It's such a huge year, there's so much going wrong. But for your mental health, when you sit down and you kind of think I don't have any control of this, you just kind of have to sit back and watch the numbers rise or lower. See the polls, you can't really do much about it except low. Um, so I mean, that's a little scary. And then physical. I would say at the beginning, I think I was like eating a lot more like gaining a lot of weight because we were staying home and I had like money and I was just like, let's go out there. Let's order out and stuff like that. But now it's gotten to the point where I'm like losing weight, because I'm, I'm almost like, losing my appetite. I'm like,

Colton Schuman 21:55

who just feels like we've eaten the same thing. A million times. Like,

Cheyenne Alexander 21:58

nothing sounds good. Like food. I'll I feel like I only want to eat if I if like I'm hurting for food. Yeah. Like, I don't have an appetite at all. But that's just me personally, and you a little bit.

Colton Schuman 22:14

So what have you been- What has been your like primary source of news during the pandemic?

Cheyenne Alexander 22:21

I tend for the past, like, I would say, four or five years, I've always gone to Twitter, for news, just to see what is trending because they have. It's not like, they don't tell you like if Justin Bieber is trending, they only put like the important stuff up these days. So I always can tell like the election, the economy, the COVID-19 progress, I can always see everything on there.

Colton Schuman 22:47

So they haven't change since the pandemic during the course

Cheyenne Alexander 22:51

No, not really I think Twitter. Yeah, I think Twitter has always been the fastest way for me to get news.

Colton Schuman 23:00

Um, what, what do you think are important issues that the media may be covering or may not be covering?

Cheyenne Alexander 23:13

I think the biggest one for me is global warming, as our planet is literally falling apart, um, and everything that's going on the election, all of the Black Lives Matter, you know, the protests, the COVID-19, everything that's going on, no matter what it is, none of that matters. Like you can throw it all down the trash if our planet is no longer able to live on. So it's like we can sit here and fight for all of these things. But we don't do something none of that's going to matter. Because we're not going to have a planet for any of it to exist on. Yeah, I mean, it's it's really bad. Like, I understand people are dying, but like our planet is too. So I think that's something that obviously, the world isn't gonna crack and fall apart like tomorrow. But as each day goes by, like we need to make small differences, I think. So that kind of scares me. Because no one really

talks about that. No one's paying attention to that. I mean, like, glaciers are like melting, like Antarctica is falling apart. It's lost like 20% of its ice. It's like melted. Hmm. And no one has discussed it. And I think that's huge. Because it's like, I know there's a lot of problems going on, but none of it exist if we don't have a planet to live on.

Colton Schuman 24:44

Um, so now this is more about our government. So how do you think that our leaders and government officials in our community, which I guess would- would include Ohio and Indiana, mainly, kind of Kentucky, not really, though. So how do you think, also federal- so how do you think they've responded to the outbreak?

Cheyenne Alexander 25:21

Our governor, the governor of Indiana, if I can be blatantly honest, has just done whatever Mike Dewine, the governor of Ohio has done. I have agreed with most of Mike Dwayne's rules, he's the governor of Ohio, we have followed them in Indiana as well. I've agreed with most of them. When it comes to federal it's very one sided.

Colton Schuman 25:50

So, I guess that kind of ties into the next question. So how do you think local, state and federal are responding differently to the crisis? So you think states are doing better?

Cheyenne Alexander 26:03

Well, I think states are focusing on the the safety of the people, regardless of what your opinion is, I think they're putting rules out. Like if you don't want to wear a mask, if you hate it, and you think it's dumb, still have to, and I'm sorry that you think it's dumb, but I think it's a good rule that they have to. Um, but then when it comes to federal, I think it's a lot of the things that they say about the pandemic, how they weren't taking it seriously at first and how the whole thing was a fake virus. And now the president is tested positive, which is a little funny. I think that they speak, they speak to whichever political party voted for them.

Colton Schuman 26:48

You know, its more of a political thing in the federal than state

Cheyenne Alexander 26:52

Yeah. Yeah. Because there's so many of one party in the white house right now. And I think it's very... it's not a mixed, it's not a mixed room of people, if you know what I mean. It's not a fair chance.

Colton Schuman 27:12

All right. So we're going to talk about the future. So as your experience transformed how you think about your family, friends and community, and then what ways

Cheyenne Alexander 27:26

How I think about them?

Colton Schuman 27:28

Yeah, like, I don't know, maybe you value them more now. Or, or something?

Cheyenne Alexander 27:35

Well I definitely care more like if someone in my family isn't feeling well, I think we all are kind of like, Okay, well, what are your symptoms? Like? Let's see how things go. Um, same with friends. Except, I haven't cared much for friends lately. Like, I know, that sucks to say, but like, most of them aren't making good choices. And I don't want to be around them in these moments in my opinion, but...

Colton Schuman 28:09

How does the pandemic compared to other big events that have happened in your lifetime? Something like this swine flu?

Cheyenne Alexander 28:20

I remember when Yeah, it was the h1. h1, or something like Yeah. I remember that one around that everyone thought, like everyone panicked, kind of like they did for the Coronavirus, but it wasn't like anything as severe.

Colton Schuman 28:38

So you think- think that had a reason why people didn't take it so seriously? Yeah, the swine, just kind of, I mean, they

Cheyenne Alexander 28:45

think it was just like a flu.

Colton Schuman 28:47

Yeah. So maybe people just didn't take COVID as seriously because they thought it was just another swine.

Cheyenne Alexander 28:53

Yeah, they didn't think it was huge. And I think that's why it took me a little while to be like, Okay, this is serious. Because things started like restaurants are closing grocery stores were empty. Like, that's when I knew something was up.

Colton Schuman 29:11

So, imagine life in a year. What- what do you think is going on? Do you think we're still dealing with this? Um, maybe we've already had a vaccine. Just what are your estimations?

Cheyenne Alexander 29:28

I don't know if we will ever find a 100% guaranteed vaccine. I don't think we will. I think it's going to be different. I think the coronavirus is going to affect every single person differently based on their diet based on their medical conditions, their history, their daily activities, everything. I think it's all going to depend on that I don't think a vaccine will ever be able to go around and everyone's cured. Um, I hope that does.

Colton Schuman 30:01

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

Cheyenne Alexander 30:05

I hope that, um, the pandemic is close to me over because I don't think it's going to be completely over. I don't think a year from now we're going to be able to say there are zero cases. Yeah, I really don't. I think there will still be some mild. Like I said, I don't think the vaccine I don't think we'll get a vaccine. I don't think it'll work for everyone. Um, I hope it's over.

I do, but we're learning from our mistakes right now. I think so hopefully, eventually, we can get there. Okay.

Colton Schuman 30:44

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

Cheyenne Alexander 30:56

I think they need to take things seriously. Like, obviously, the President has admitted to knowing about the pandemic before the people. And he decided not to tell anyone because he didn't want to scare them. And I'm pretty sure that's direct quotes. Um, and I think that's messed up. Like, if something like that is going on.

Colton Schuman 31:21

So you think they need to be more open minded.

Cheyenne Alexander 31:23

Yeah, you need to if someone comes to you and says, like, hey, the world might end tomorrow. Like, maybe let's look into it. You know, let's not just throw it behind our shoulder. Okay.

Colton Schuman 31:38

Well, that was all the questions. We got through it. So, Thank you for participating.

Cheyenne Alexander 31:46

Thanks for having me.

Colton Schuman 31:49

And you have a wonderful day.

Cheyenne Alexander 31:52

You too.

Colton Schuman 31:54

Thank you.