

Transcript of Oral History Interview with Cameron Mitchell

Interviewee: Caitlin Daugherty

Interviewer: Ben Yrad

Date: 09/19/2020

Location (Interviewee): unknown

Location (Interviewer): unknown

Transcription Equipment: Otter.ai

Interview Technology: Zoom-recording

Abstract: The submission is a testament to how much the pandemic has influenced this very important year of both our lives, that a class we take in our first semester revolves so heavily around COVID-19.

Ben Yrad 00:02

Actually, actually, yeah, okay, there it is. Okay, go. Okay, so I'm here with Cameron Mitchell. The person will be interviewing for the COVID-19 interview project. Cameron, I'm going to need your consent to be interviewed before you start.

Cameron Mitchell 00:22

Yep, sounds good.

Ben Yrad 00:23

Okay, can I ask you for the date and time?

Cameron Mitchell 00:27

It is September 19, at 3:41pm 2020.

Ben Yrad 00:33

Great, thank you so much. We're gonna, we're gonna get right to it hear. What were your initial thoughts on the pandemic, when it first hit the news in February of this year? How big Did you think its impact on you is going to be if anything?

Cameron Mitchell 00:46

Um, my initial thoughts personally, were that it was a far-flung issue that didn't really mess with anything in my life. And I didn't have anything to worry about. From when I started hearing about it in February. It was in China, and it was an outbreak that was happening in China, and wasn't necessarily something we should worry about. I had something in the back of my head that it could come here because how connected our world is today, but it wasn't really something I was too concerned about.

Ben Yrad 01:18

Right. Okay. Make sense? Um, all right. So, on the back of that, obviously, the pandemic did end up being a little bit bigger than either of us anticipated. What was the moment for you that the pandemic became real, so to speak, where it had its first notable impact and effect on you? And how did you feel about that? How did you react to it?

Cameron Mitchell 01:42

Um, when the pandemic became real to me when school got canceled for two weeks. So right, it was March 13. Friday, March 13, was the last day of school that I went in. And they told us that the school would be closed on Monday and Tuesday, or just Monday because they were going to do cleaning. And they said that they were going to prepare for the unlikely circumstance that we would have to close for an extended period of time. And I was like, Okay, and then later the next day on Saturday, they told us that they'd be closing for two weeks. And that's when I realized that maybe this was something more serious than I had anticipated, and we had anticipated in the previous week of school.

Ben Yrad 02:25

Okay, makes sense. So how did that make you feel? I know, it was unexpected, but where you were you like happy for the break? Were you scared? Like?

Cameron Mitchell 02:37

I was happy for, for the brief time that I would not have school. But my school was pretty, pretty quick to get going online. I believe we started the next Wednesday, so we only had two days off really. Um, but I was hesitant as to how online schooling would go. And if it was really worth spending my time. If it was if it was really what it was supposed to be and if, I was getting the education that I was supposed to be getting in my last semester of senior year.

Ben Yrad 03:09

Right. Okay. Make sense? Okay. Uh, so how did you how did you cope with the first few weeks of quarantine with online school and stuff like that? Did it get harder or easier to deal as the months went on? Etc.

Cameron Mitchell 03:25

Um, well became harder and easier in different ways. So I got into a flow of things with school online schooling became, um, I got no rhythm with that. So it didn't really become an issue. And it wasn't necessarily as hard as doing actual schoolwork and going into school would have been every day. But socially, I mean, it was more difficult because I hadn't seen any of my friends and weeks or by some point months. And I was basically just locked in my house. So it got really boring. And yeah, that got a little upsetting. But for school, I mean, it gotten easier.

Ben Yrad 04:03

Sure, sure. Okay, so you talked about a habit you settled into what exactly did that entail? Um, and how did you feel about it?

Cameron Mitchell 04:17

Um, okay, so it wasn't necessarily a good habit, but it was, um, it worked. So my sleeping schedule got really messed up a couple weeks and I mean, it was basically just I, I wake up at noon, do the small amount of schoolwork that I have to do for the day and then basically, just sit on it sit watching TV or playing games as friends until 3am 4am and then go back to sleep and then wake up at noon again. So it wasn't necessarily a good habit to get into but it was it was working. And I didn't, I knew it wasn't a good habit when I was doing it, which is which is why I had to fix it and getting ready for school. And summer and working again. So, but

Ben Yrad 05:04

Right, right? So, did as the months went on, did restrictions ever loosen up where you live? How hard hit was your was your state? And when restrictions did loosen up? Were you scared to go out still? Or? Like how did you guys react.

Cameron Mitchell 05:25

Um, so in Southern New Hampshire, we didn't really get hit as hard as many other places in the country. Thankfully. However, it still did take a while for restrictions to loosen up. And like work to start happening again, I be I believe I went back into my job in a restaurant in mid May. So it took it was probably two and a half to three months before things really started to open up again. And I really started to leave the house. And I really didn't start to leave the house probably till the end of May, beginning of June. That's when I started to see my friends again, and stuff like that. But I didn't necessarily feel scared of going out. I mean, at that point, I was so deprived of social relationships with humans that I was just so ready to get out of the house and see people

Ben Yrad 06:15

Right

Cameron Mitchell 06:15

No matter what it took

Ben Yrad 06:17

Yeah, yeah, that makes sense. Um, so if you're comfortable answering How have you dealt with the various losses of things as a as a result of the pandemic, but in particular, the experiences you missed out on like, graduation or sports, etc? And how have you? How did you cope with that? And how was the coping effective? Does it still bother you now, etc.

Cameron Mitchell 06:48

Oh, at the time, it really bothered me, I was really upset that sort of the senior year that I had pictured growing up wasn't gonna be how it how I would imagine it would be. But at the time, I was really upset. But as I sort of thought about it, this was sort of it was really important that this was happening. And, and that I really didn't have any control over it at that point. So I also knew that, you know, one day This will be a very interesting thing to tell your kids or your grandkids or your friends like that you got to live through this. I mean, whether it was enjoyable now or not. So right. At this point, I'm still upset that I didn't get to do all the things that I was looking forward to doing. But I know like, at this point, I have no control over it and they did what they could,

Ben Yrad 07:38

Right

Cameron Mitchell 07:39

Graduation and stuff like that.

Ben Yrad 07:42

You had you had it wasn't a virtual graduation, right?

Cameron Mitchell 07:47

No, no, it was it was a graduation that they prerecorded. And we ended up going to a drive-in movie theater and watching it there in our cars.

Ben Yrad 07:55

Okay, great. Thanks so much, Cameron,

Cameron Mitchell 07:57

Of course. Thank you. Sure.