

Transcript of Interview with Sarina Singh by Quincy Boardman

Interviewee: Sarina Singh

Interviewer: Quincy Boardman

Date: 09/17/2020

Location (Interviewee):

Location (Interviewer):

Transcriber: Gilbert Lopez

Abstract: It is a personal account that describes some of the common factors and experiences that occurred with the onset of the global pandemic. This is a short interview of a fellow Northeastern Student about their personal experience with the pandemic.

Sarina Singh 0:00

This interview was recorded on September 17, 2020, at 4:10pm, Eastern Standard Time.

Quincy Boardman 0:09

Hello, this is Quincy Boardman interviewing Sarina Singh for the COVID archive project. First of all, do you consent to have this interview being placed into the COVID archive project?

Sarina Singh 0:21

Yep.

Quincy Boardman 0:22

Fantastic. All right. So starting off, where were you when the COVID outbreak happened?

Sarina Singh 0:32

I was at home in Seattle, Washington. I lived a couple, like a couple of miles from where the first outbreak was in Washington. So I was pretty near to the like nursing home where there were like, a lot of people that I know has grandparents were there. All of them were sent to the hospital that I was born in. And like, there was a lot of different issues as a result of that for everyone.

Quincy Boardman 1:02

Wow. All right, then. So previously-, before the outbreak happened, what was your knowledge of the virus, if any?

Sarina Singh 1:13

It had been like, sort of talked about it, it popped up on social media and in the news a couple of times. I hadn't really put much thought into it, just because at that point, the media coverage of it was that it was essentially just a really bad flu or cold, sorry. And I was kind of, I wasn't sure how it was gonna play out, but I assumed that it would go away pretty quickly. I had a lot of friends who were really concerned about it, and who had already been very, like, very cautious, who had already started wearing masks in like, mid February to early March. And so I was kind of, I wasn't sure what was gonna happen, but I didn't think that anything really was gonna come of it.

Quincy Boardman 1:59

So on a timeline, just about when do you think you were actually starting to become informed that this would be an issue?

Sarina Singh 2:06

Right, when like, the outbreak at the nursing home happened, it had been a couple, a couple weeks before that, we'd been kind of more aware of the fact that it was going to be a bigger thing. We, a lot of it had been like, we'd seen the cases in Italy start to happen, the a lot of the, like, Eurasia, sort of outbreaks had begun. And so we knew that it was a thing. We just didn't know how big it was going to-, how big of a problem it was going to be in Seattle or in the US more broadly.

Quincy Boardman 2:42

All right. So what were the effects on you and your life?

Sarina Singh 2:47

I mean, obviously, I had, I lost my senior spring, which did suck, but I mean, it wasn't the worst issue, it was-

Quincy Boardman 2:59

-not the worst thing ever-

Sarina Singh 3:00

-Not the worst, it like it was definitely like, of all of the issues I could have had, it was pretty low on like, the concern spectrum like it, like I didn't personally know anyone who, like ended up getting the virus and like losing their life to it. I was pretty fortunate in that regard. But it was like, it was still hard, obviously. I think everyone our age kind of understands that like, while it may not seem like the biggest deal, it still like, it's still stings-

Quincy Boardman 3:30

-it sucks.

Sarina Singh 3:31

It's still, it still stings just a little bit. But I mean, it was a bigger problem for me and my family. It is, my grandparents are, my family's from India, so my grandparents spend half the year there. So when everything was shutting down in Washington, my grandparents were still living in the village in India, where they spend like six to nine months. And they, so we assumed it would be safest for them to stay there just because it had become a huge issue in Washington. And as time passed, it became clear that it really wasn't going to be safe for them to stay in India. And we would have to figure out a way to get them to come back. And that was going to be a huge, huge hassle as we would later learn. Just because it requires a ton of communication with like, embassies and various like leaders just to like try and get like your paperwork in order to, like prove like, you don't have COVID, you can fly home, you're like, have like, there's a reason for you to need to come back into the US and like all of that kind of stuff. It was a long and arduous process to say the least.

Quincy Boardman 4:42

Wow. So um, that must have been a huge challenge, but any other family issues that came up at the same time?

Sarina Singh 4:52

Not a ton. It was all, other than that, it's pretty like we were lucky enough to like not have anyone in our family come into contact with it or like get it in any like, in any way. It was just like, it was pretty much we were, we pretty much just had to deal with figuring out how to get my grandparents home and in from a foreign country, which was more complicated than it would

seem, especially because airlines were very like, air travel was super weird, getting in and out of the US was super strange as well. Everything is, everything was very like, was made infinitely more complicated just because of like, my grandparents age and the like, various health things that they have to deal with. As well as the fact that in India COVID was becoming a bigger problem. And like the lockdown was, it was making it harder for them to get out of India. And the problem was no longer getting them into the US, but the problem was getting them on a plane out of India.

Quincy Boardman 5:54

Right, wow. What time are we at, then? All right. Um, what were some of the effects of your, on your local area, you're from Seattle, what was the, what was the effect on the city?

Sarina Singh 6:09

It was, everything shut down pretty quickly. It was a huge impact on like the music industry in the area, just because that's a huge like, a, like huge source of income. It like, there are a lot of like indie artists who are just around the city, and who suddenly had no form of income other than like, their music sales, which isn't always like-

Quincy Boardman 6:34

-not always the best.

Sarina Singh 6:34

-Which isn't always great, just because streaming services take like, a large portion of any revenue that you generate. And so there was a huge push to go through things like Bandcamp and other things to try and get more like solid percentages of income to the artists. And there's been a huge outpouring of support just from like, local, just locals in Seattle to give more money to various venues to help them stay open, to try and like donate to various arts funds to help to like give any relief to like artists. Be it like musical artists or like, to like digital artists or whatever it may be that like they, their medium was. There was a huge outpouring of support for that community just because it hit that industry particularly hard.

Quincy Boardman 7:25

Alright, so I think we're just about running out of time here. So quickly, what is your speculation on the future of COVID and how it may end, and what will happen after the pandemic is over?

Sarina Singh 7:37

I mean, I definitely don't think we're gonna go back to normal. I think that a lot of it's just going to be kind of new facets of like our everyday lives. It'll be, I can't say for sure, I don't know enough about the that epidemiology in general to understand it, but it'll definitely be like, life is not going to be the same to say the least.