

Transcript of Interview with Greta [REDACTED] by Shane Carlson

Interviewee: Greta [REDACTED]

Interviewer: Shane Carlson

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Abstract:

Greta [REDACTED] lives in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin and is a science teacher at McDonell High School. Greta talks about the background of her science education and how being a cancer survivor has made her especially cognizant of what is going on with Covid-19. Greta helps take care of her parents and uncle and has two sons: one who lives in Denver, and another who is in the military. Greta is emotional about being far away from her sons at this time. Greta is shocked that more people haven't died from Covid and expresses concerns about the long-term impacts of the virus both psychologically and physically. Greta is angry about some of the response she has seen from the federal government and worries that more people will die as a result.

Shane Carlson 00:00

Alright. It is, it is May 8th, 2020. The time is 3:37pm. My name is Shane Carlson. I'm a graduate student of public history at the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire, and I am here with Greta [REDACTED]. Greta, could you tell us a little bit about yourself, for example, what your job is where you live, what it's like where you live and just day to day life?

Greta 00:30

I live on the West Hill in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. I teach science at McDonell High School, physical science, mostly. Ninth through 12th grade. I live with my husband. I have two grown children who do not live at home. One is in Denver. One is in the army. And I we take care of my parents, my parents live with us as my dad goes through his end of life process. And my mom is here and I also care for my uncle, who is elderly but he lives on the other side. So.

SC 01:04

If it's alright, could you explain your your dad's situation is...

G 01:11

My dad had last year, this time in March and April, had a heart attack, two strokes, a pulmonary edema, edema episode, went through rehab was not expect... and has like two or three blocks in his heart that are almost completely blocked. I don't know how he started deleting[?], um, he, he wasn't expected to

make it through the summer. He's still with us, and we take really good care of him. He also has diabetes and COPD and asbestosis lung, and I mean he's just there's nothing I can really do at this point. We just make him comfortable and make sure his days are happy. And he has developed Alzheimer's. So he is like, moderate Alzheimer's right now. It's not super bad by any means. I say it was even mild. I don't even think it's as bad as they think it is. There's only sometimes that he gets really, really confused. And of course, my mom, he, they've been together for 53, almost 54 years. And, you know, we we we intentionally bought a big house because we knew we would have kids still when we moved here. And we did. We had our two boys were still here at the time. And we wanted to make sure we had a big enough house so that we could take in family when we needed it. And it has, thankfully, we have been able to provide that. So, yeah, it's been really interesting. It's been a year now in May, since we all you know, moved in together. Um, my uncle has always lived with my parents. I grew up with him in our house. He is I can't really say developmentally disabled and yet he is, I would I would say that he's on the autism spectrum. At almost 80 he's very highly intelligent. He just can't function. within the bounds of society, but when my dad got sick I I moved him in... He didn't want to move here. And so I moved him into his own apartment, and had been working with him on living alone and well with the cat, and doing kind of his own thing, which has been moderately successful. So we take a lot of we take care of everybody. I'm so glad everybody lives here. Now. So.

SC 03:24

Yeah, that sounds like probably an unusual blessing in these times where everybody's nearby... Worried about parents far away.

G 03:36

[Mumbles in affirmation] Yes.

SC 03:40

So, you know, I'll definitely get to asking you about how that's impacted your family because I mean, I'm sure you have a really unique response for that. But you... could you explain when you first if you can remember back when you first heard about COVID and maybe what what some of your first thoughts were?

G 04:00

I heard about it. And I read about it at the beginning of January, we weren't even back to school yet. I remember reading an article, I'm a really avid reader of scientific journals and papers and stuff like that. And I read an article on it, and I follow some of the flu virus stuff. I got H1N1 [Swine Flu]. And I have had type A as well. And I've lost like my sense of smell and stuff like that from having these really virulent strains of the flu in the last probably decade. And so I kind of keep track on stuff like that. Part of it is because I'm a cancer survivor. And so, we've had a lot of kids that were sick. And so I just I read on that stuff anyway. Because if it's coming through, I want to know what it is so that I can make sure I protect myself and started reading then into January. You know, by the end of January, it was kind of a

regular thing that I was like checking on like every other day or so seeing that anything new is coming out of China. And I know I was reading a lot of stuff before a lot of even people knew what, where Wuhan was and where, you know, I just just by keeping in touch with people I know who work in the field. So.

SC 05:18

How would you say your thoughts have transformed since your first hearing about I guess since the earlier... it sounds like you've kept with it through the whole process. So maybe are... maybe I should ask, are there any areas that have really surprised you about the development of COVID?

G 05:41

No. I'm surprised actually, if anything, I'm surprised it's not worse. I am surprised there aren't more people dead, because of the way it's been handled. And the more I read about the virus itself and the way the virus mutates, um, nothing really surprised me surprises me that comes down the pike. I mean, all of the you know, everybody gets mad at all the misinformation Well, it's just because they do research and this comes out and then it's like "oh wait a minute, that's not true anymore because this came out," that is the nature of science. Most the general public doesn't get that. So it doesn't bother me. It's just like oh, okay, well now we're... this is this is the current information. And I guess I try and deal with whatever the current information is, on... on what they're saying about it. have had to be very careful lately about distancing myself from the more blog emotional related responses, because it just doesn't do me any good. I mean, it really doesn't. I try and stick to the facts. The stuff that is surprising me now is how quickly people are trying to dismiss what this is. Not that things are opening back up or anything like that, but just like they just want it to go away and they think it's just going to go away. And that's just not how these things happen. So, um, but I'm trying to stay on a very, very scientific bent.

SC 07:27

That that's interesting that the very last person I interviewed said almost the same thing and he had mentioned that he sees one of the issues being that people aren't patient. The virus is and and I think that's also reflected in your thoughts on how science works, where people aren't patient with the science. They want it to be fast, but as you said, it's, it's just not science...

G 07:55

[Verbally agrees with interviewer] It just doesn't happen like that. And I have I have a friend from high school, a good friend from high school who is a professor out in Boston at Tufts and he... he's into all the CRISPR [Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats] biology, I mean, just really amazing biochemist. And you know, when he passes stuff along like down to us, like through Facebook and through like social media and stuff like that, I listen, I have a couple people like that in my life, where when I get stuff from them, I listen, I read it, I make sure I absorb it. Because those are the... those are my experts. Those are like my frontline people to disseminate what happens and and he goes, "I just hope you're staying put." I said "we're not going anywhere." He goes "me either I'm really antsy,

but I am... I am not gonna, I'm not gonna play the waiting game because we won't win." And that... that statement mattered to me a lot. And that was just like last week. So [laughs] anyway, um, but yeah, it is... It's gonna have its own timeline.

SC 09:04

Mm hmm. Well, could you speak about how this has – how this has affected your job?

G 09:10

Well, we had to be moved out of school in mid-March. There were a couple of us freaking out about it in February... that were disinfecting, and trying to give people opportunities to clean desks and, you know, supplying materials so that people could do it because there... it wasn't that I or administration didn't want to do it, it's just that they didn't realize it was a thing. Like they didn't. They weren't aware that it was a big deal. I mean, we had other kinds of flu going around the school. I mean, we had so many kids sick. Oh my gosh, we have so many kids sick with with with flu, A and B. And so just, you know, good practices, good hygiene practices. You know, some teachers were like, oh, I shouldn't have to clean my desk. I'm a teacher, that's a custodians job. Well, no, like right now, this is your job because your job is to keep kids safe. Those were some interesting conversations. I kind of got put on our schools pandemic response team, because I had a lot of information and a lot of data and was trying to disseminate that data to my superiors on a fairly regular basis about "hey, we should do this" or "hey, you know, you need to make sure... we need restocking of hand sanitizer, we need access to this, we really should do this." And that was like, like, the third week in February through the first part of March. And then, of course, everything hit the fan.

G 10:51

Once it hit the US and, and then everybody got on board really quickly. Prior to that, it was there, there are a surprising amount of non-believers, including it within my own family, not physically here in my household, but like within my immediate family is affected my job [sic] and then now we're teaching online. And most of our kids are not online learners, despite their technologi- technological dependence. I guess I say that right. That doesn't mean they can learn online. A lot of our kids, very few of 'em [sic] do really good with this format. They're hands on learners, they're struggling. I've taught online classes at the college level before but they've been very different than this. This isn't really teaching this is... this is survival-mode instruction, to try and get through material. This has nothing having to do I don't think with education, for learning for knowledge that we intend them to keep for a long time. That's, I feel... As much as we're trying to do a good job and we are, it's just... we're going to have to deal with, with when we go back and we see them again, we're going to have to cover the holes. You know, especially a lot of our kids who are struggling learners, that's a nightmare. This whole experience teaching online is a nightmare. I hate it [emphasis]. With all of my being, if I can be totally honest. I... at first I kind of thought I kind of was bewildered, I thought, "oh, I'll get to the home and I'll get to take care of mom and dad more and I'll get to you know, I'll get to do laundry in between classes and everything." I'm running around, barely keeping up. My grading is like three weeks behind because I had to figure out how to

grade without paper. Um, you know, without like, killing trees and printer ink and I suck at it. Okay, it's not that I'm like, not look teachable, but oh my god. I spent many a day in tears, trying to figure out how to make it better because I want it to be amazing and I want it to matter. And I feel like it's just not going to matter right now.

SC 13:14

I can relate with you a little bit. And I'm for for the sake of the interview like I I teach with you. But also, Katie is teaching full time and I... I hear her phone go off at one in the morning. And it's virtually nonstop at night to just , she'll wake up with 60 something emails and the grading... grading things that were due two, three, four weeks ago. And kids want immediate responses and...

G 13:49

[Mumbles in affirmation] Yes, and parents are angry, and parents are frustrated. And I've literally taken to the parent format and you know and get usually in dealing with parents I was you know, my first thing is always to hear them to hear their complaints, I let them complain, vocalize whatever they want to vocalize. I try and give that acknowledgement, you know, if not really credit, but I try and let them know that that's valid, you know, and then I try and convert them back to my side [laughs], which is I think what we all do, um, but I've taken to just apologizing and saying, "I am so sorry, I understand your your frustration. I am doing this. I am trying. I am sorry. Again, I will do it as soon as I can." And you just hope that you're, you hope that your credibility and your reputation as an educator after this experience holds up. So.

SC 14:54

Well, could could you speak about how are your thoughts on how COVID is has [sic] impacted other forms of employment too?

G 15:04

Oh, wow. Yeah, it's wiped everybody out. I... you know, there's a lot of scenarios. I have a master's in environmental science. So, my master's isn't in education. My master's is actually a science master's and I had a lot of classes on risk characterization, and you know, stuff with pollution. I've done a lot of work with radioactivity, and I like hazardous waste. Okay, so a lot of the studies and the classes [laughs] that I've taken, have been, you know, if the world stops working, and we have a nuclear bomb, or we have all these things, you know, what are the things that go in place? And... I've been... initially I was really scared, like when everything shut down in March. It was like, I was waiting for the other shoe to drop because I was waiting for people to start freaking out and getting crazy. And my husband's like "I don't think that's going to happen." I'm like, "I don't know, you know, all the all the research and all my education and all those years of doing risk assessments and planning these kind of worst case scenarios, and learning how to put those together." I was terrified that like the people component of it was going to go nuts. Luckily, it's been really calm, for the most part. I don't think we could have anticipated the job thing. All the people losing their jobs, of course, they're gonna lose their jobs, not lose their jobs, but not

be able to work. I feel really positive about how we've stepped up as a country as a culture and been feeding people. I wish our government would take care of people more. And I'm not... I'm by no means a liberal. I'm actually a pretty solid conservative, but never in my life have I wanted it to be split up to where it's like, "well, if you make this much money, you better figure it out on your own." And if you know these people over here who are hurting, they need all that care. They need money, they need supplements. If I'm paying all that money in taxes every year, I want those people taken care of, I want them fed, I want them healthy. I want you know, if that's what I'm paying into, I don't want a big business. I don't want like a sports team or a big business taking that money away from the people who need it. So that part to me is really frustrating. And makes me downright angry.

G 17:38

Again, I just I want people fed and taken care of so that when we come back from this, everybody's okay. Our society is not equal. I feel very fortunate that I have I have all the needs, you know, I can go buy groceries, I can get medical care for my parents and my family and stuff. I know not everybody has that. And I wish our government cared more about the people who don't have that. I don't think enough attention is being given to them. But I'm glad our fellow man, I mean, food banks and people feeding people and like are feeding the kids to the high school each and every day, people are making sure that some basic needs at least are met. I worry about, worry about the jobs part that some of those jobs are never going to come back. But once they're gone, they're gone. You know, they were, I'm not sure why they were there in the first place. But I think there's going to be a whole chunk of jobs that are not going to come back. And so then we're gonna have a whole part of our society that we need to retrain for another job. And we don't have the infrastructure for that. We have some great schools for that. But we don't have the infrastructure to allow those people to attend those schools, because it costs too much money. So I'm very concerned about the job thing, and that people are going to get disheartened and get angry. As they should.

SC 19:11

Yeah. You spoke a little bit about the community response and... and towards helping, you know, fellow community members. Could you expand on that a little bit towards just how communities have maybe in some ways come together, but also just general changes in the communities that you've noticed?

G 19:33

Well, I mean, I think I think as a whole, this is my biggest fault... I believe that there's good in everybody. And I really do believe that when push comes to shove, most people do the right thing. And that's helping each other out. That's, you know, talking to your neighbors more, making sure people have what they need and are taken care of, I think we've seen evidence of that all over the country. That it's not going to be any entity that tells us to do it. We're just going to do it because it's the right thing to do. And I think... I hope there's enough of that in the US to carry over all the rest of the crap. I hope that can carry us through. I really do. I think most people are more than willing to give up their time and their talents to help others in the right situation. I just I just want to believe that that's what people are going

to do. That's what I've seen here. I am glad I am here. I'm worried about my son who's in Denver. He says it's a little nastier out there. Being in the big city and even though he's in a suburb, that it's pretty bad from everything from like food on the grocery store shelves to, you know, taking care of people and people being able to get what they need and old people being able to be taken care of. He's like, it's it's not as prevalent here. So I'm very thankful to be in the Midwest. Let's just put it that way. I would imagine that the coasts, I don't know, I've never lived on the East Coast, or the West Coast, but they're different societies than what we have here. So.

SC 21:25

Could could you speak more about how this has impacted your family? Cuz [sic] I know a lot of your family's here on West Hill and Chippewa. I mean, even with your son being in in Denver...

G 21:38

Mm hmm. So, it is... My biggest fear is that I'm going to bring it home and kill one of my parents. That is just really what it is about. That's our biggest fear. And that's why we have exhibited, like the first four weeks we did not leave the house, not to go get food, nothing. I mean, we just I went to the grocery store and that was it. That was the only trip anybody made outside of this house. And so now that we've learned a little bit more about the virus and how it works and everything, like I've like I went out today and I picked up us lunch at McDonald's and so then I come home and I, you know, wipe down all the cups and everything like that. And I'm kind of like overly OCD [Obsessive Compulsive Disorder] about making sure I disinfect everything before I pass something off to one of my parents. And that's the biggest concern and same thing with my uncle. I don't want my uncle to get sick. I've been instruct... trying to instruct him, you know, this is what you need to do. This is how you need to behave, this is what you need to do in your house. He hasn't been over, which has been kind of hard on him because he's used to coming over here and having meals and stuff. Sometimes with it, I mean, several times a week with us. It has it stopped a lot of my parent's doctor visits, regular doctor visits, because both require quite a bit of care. Um, we now are on video visits with doctors. Boy, that's fun [laughs]. The... you know, doing a video visit my mom has been having problems with her blood pressure and trying to play doctor and get all the readings that the doctor needs so that she doesn't have to go in and then we can sit on here and have conversations. So, health management over the internet is challenging. It has really affected our family that way. Sometimes we have to just make a guess like with my dad's insulin, I have to look at Mark and I, we look at the... we look at the records for the day and we go "okay, I think it's going to need to be this much insulin" and we've got to guess. We don't have the benefit of being able to just go see the doctor whenever we need to anymore. And that's hard.

G 23:51

My mom was doing some physical therapy because they fused her back a few years ago and they did a very poor job. The people at Marshfield [Medical Center in Eau Claire, Wisconsin] did a very bad job on it. The guy, just the one guy, it's not all Marshfield, but just that guy. And so she's been really getting help with physical therapy. And we can't do that we couldn't do that for like over a month. Well, she's in

so much pain in the last couple of weeks. She finally went yesterday for the first time again, and she was really scared to go. And I said, when you come home, take a shower, we'll take off your clothes, I'll wash your clothes right away, and you'll get into different clothes and it'll be okay. It'll be fine. Lots of fear, though. Lots of fear. I worry about them getting out. We try and take them for drives. We try and you know, take them, you know, to get an ice cream cone or something like that sometimes, you know, but they've been really isolated. And I worry about that with my parents. It's caused a lot of stress with my husband and I but we've got a pretty solid marriage and when we need to, we go into our bedroom and we shut the door. We face each other and one of us breaks down [laughs]. And we talk about it and we get through it. And we take a deep breath, and then we keep going. Because that's all you can really do. I am worried about my son in Denver. I know I can't go see him. I know I can't go help him. I know I can't... I know I can't take care of him. I can't reach him. It scares me to death. Yeah, I'm gonna get teary about that [tone of voice becomes emotional]. My other one is in the army. He went through basic training. We were supposed to get to see him graduate at the beginning of April and we didn't get to go because they closed all the bases. And so we were really looking forward to seeing him but he took it like a tr... he took it really well. I don't know that I took it so well, but he took it very well. And you know, the army has been very protected. They had them going out in the field like three days at a time with just you know, food and they do their training and then come back and and take showers. They have all kinds of precautions on the base, those guys aren't allowed to do anything or go anywhere as far as exposure, so I feel really good about Ethan being taken care of, because the army is going to make sure that he's taken care of. I have faith in that, that for all the things the army can do. I know that they are trying to take it from everything I've heard and I keep up with all the updates on the base, you know, the base that the guy who Carl, whatever it is, controls, the base gives like a briefing every week about what they're doing for COVID. And so that's really good information. So yeah, I guess I'm really worried about my older son. He works for Jimmy John's. He's making deliveries to people. Nobody in Denver cares about this virus. Nobody wears masks. Everybody's just mad. So I'm really scared. So.

SC 27:04

I'm glad. I'm glad you can give us insight though towards, you know, the not just the physical health but also also the mental health, the fear as being a mother, the fear as that your parents might have just going out into society and, and, yeah, that's, that is the brave new world we live in for, you know, the near future. Right. I think it's especially important that we capture that in this moment. And I'll speak just for a moment as part of learning the role of a public historian sometimes it's hard to capture memories and are because when you look back people tend to look and like decentralize the past where they're very nostalgic and it's something they missed, or, or it was the worst thing ever. But it's hard to remember just the extreme uncertainty in the fear, where it's not just fear in the moment that you're describing.

G 28:16

Yeah, I mean, it's, it's, it's real. I mean, for me, too, I guess I didn't speak to that. But my husband's fear about me doing all of these things. You know, I'm the grocery store (_____???) [audio buffers], my

husband's trying to make money and work as much as he can. He's self employed. And so he still has work, thank goodness to do and so I'm the one that runs around and he's like, his big thing is, I'm just five years out of chemotherapy and cancer. And if I get sick, I'm dead. I won't make it. I know that. I know that if I were to get one of the virulent strains of this virus, I'm probably gone. And I was okay with being told I might die with cancer. Because of what it was I'm really not okay with the randomness of being told that this could take me out. I don't know if that makes sense.

SC 29:18

Oh, no, totally.

G 29:22

I can, I can control my cancer treatment. And I can control my environment while I'm going through treatment and everything. I can't control this. And that's a little scary. And so I just keep hoping that maybe I would have the ability to fight this off, if I got it. Or when I got it, it's not gonna be an if, it's gonna be a when. We're all gonna get this at some point, a version of it. And that is what the numbers say. That's that's statistics. That's... that's why you don't get them. You know. That's why you don't get the measles anymore, you know that that's like 20 years down the road. Initially, people were still... with a measles vaccine people were still getting, even with the vaccine, still getting measles and dying for years after the vaccine until enough people got vaccinated that it was eradicated. It's going to be the same way with this. So I just want to make that curve. Yeah, I'm not done yet. I really want to make... I really want to look through that. So anyway, I don't mean to be morbid, but that's just reality that is just that is... factual. And it's hard to... hard to think about.

SC 30:44

How how do you see the role of information playing out? I know you spoke before about misinformation, but also and the nature of science takes time. But if you if you could speak towards misinformation and the nature of science, and also the the media, how that might play into how information is being received from what you see?

G 31:14

Well, if we had to rely on them, we'd all be dead already [laughs], or close to it. Nobody goes into public office. And I tell this to kids all the time. I know I'm not a history teacher, or historian or anything. But nobody goes into politics into government to say, yeah, I'm really going to screw up my country. You know, nobody does that. Most people when they go into those jobs, want to help people. Initially, that's, that's why they do it. They have a calling. Most of them have a calling to to help other people and to be the force of change to make things better for people. And I don't know what happens between that perspective, and what happens when they get in there [laughs]. But it's like a lobotomy. It's like, wow, did you forget what you were doing? Did you forget who you were working for? You know, you are working for us. And I feel like I feel like our government is more unreliable than ever. And I very rarely speak out against that. I've been a federal employee. I've worked for the federal government as a

scientist. I you know, I'm very pro-military, but oh my gosh, the people in charge right now. You have to be smart enough and humble enough to know when you don't know something. And if you don't know about it, for goodness sakes, get somebody in there who does. Or at least somebody who has part of a clue, assemble people who can help, who can make a difference, but stop trying to get people to believe that you know everything. And that can be applied to our president and some of our governors.

G 33:14

There's some governors that have done a bang up job, an excellent job trying to manage, you know, people versus what they're actually able to physically do for people, other governors, it's like, wow, that person is going to go down in history in a really bad way. I I don't think, I don't think information should be released from from a political standpoint. I think it needs to come from science. If science had control over what was being said, and could regulate what comes out could vet it and could say, "okay, well, this might work and this might not work" and the people conveying that information, or the people in the trenches doing the work would it would be so much easier. The media gets ahold of stuff and blows it. I mean, they either blow it out of proportion or they don't give it any credit because it's not sensationalized. You know, how many bodies do we need to have before it's sensationalized enough for the media? You know, before you're willing to talk honestly about what's going on with this virus. They all of a sudden, the media becomes statisticians and all these expert people and it's like, wow, you're an idiot. I sorry [laughs], that's really terrible of me to say, but it's like, I listen to stuff on the news. And I'm like, really? Oh, that's gonna be good. And I was listening to the governor. I was listening to the day that that Trump made the comment about been trying not to mention names, but on the day that he made a comment about the bleach and injecting it and cleaning stuff out, you know, and that I have watched that happen. And I wanted to vomit, I'm like, "oh my god, people are gonna go do this and they're gonna die." And it's gonna be because it's not because they're dumb. It's because there's a lot of people in this country who don't have the benefits that the rest of us have, of educated thought.

G 35:21

They're going to follow who their leaders are. And if their leader says something, they're going to do it. Our leaders have the responsibility to measure every single word that comes out of their mouth for the protection of the people in this country who follow what they say. And that's not happening. Those people are not being protected. I don't know who is I mean, I don't know who is who should be the top person. I don't know. But I think it's got to be not politics at this point. This is a, this is almost a military CDC, you know, kind of situation this isn't a situation for our legislators at all. There shouldn't be arguing over and lawsuits as to was it viable to shut down the government you know, and you know that people do what they think is best at the time. And then they can change it, they need to be able to change it, they need to be able to live not live in fear of being retaliated against for doing what they thought was the very best thing at that moment. With good information. I am very disheartened by my democracy. I am hoping my Republic steps up and what I what I believe which is to makes me some very much like a libertarian. Which is fine, but that I'm very much into the states having control. And the states managing

their situations independently. Because they're going to know their people. They're going to know who they're working with. They're going to know their resources. Federal Government is just an orchestrator.

G 37:20

All right, they are just a move this here, get this here. You can't get that. Sure, I'll get that for you. But I didn't... nobody's talking to anybody. And I get more and more frustrated. And I'm a news junkie and I like to listen to everybody. And everything I see on the news, it's like, "oh my God, you guys are gonna kill people." You have to like, think and read and be educated before you say these things to people. And there's no rules. So I I just hope that Americans aren't listening. I really hope they're not listening. I hope they're taking it in one ear doing their own research and trying to find out what's going to work for them. Sorry, that was very, very political in nature. I apologize, but I'm just so sick of it. I I'm sick of people dying because of other people's stupidity. It's one thing if you catch a virus and you die from the virus, it's another thing if you die because somebody told you to do something that ended up killing you, that is a person of trust. It would be like us with our students, saying something like that to our students and having one of our students go try it and then die. You feel horrible, right? They should too. And they don't. So anyway. Did you have more than you bargained for interviewing me [laughs]? I'm very opinionated.

SC 38:49

It's a lot of material and I think, you know, for future generations that want to look back at what it was like. They're going to have a very real response.

G 39:01

That is true.

SC 39:03

And and I can't imagine how frustrating that must be coming from your your, you know, scientist background to see that misrepresented on TV and you're powerless. I mean, the closest I can relate is, you know, you watch the History Channel and everything is sensationalized. Everything's World War Two or the Templars.

G 39:22

Yeah, exactly. Like, what about the rest of it?

SC 39:26

Yeah. You shake your head and you're like, that's not how real history is done. But when it comes to science, like, you're right, people are losing their lives. And, and it's, it's got to be incredibly frustrating.

G 39:42

It is. But anyway.

SC 39:46

You spoke a little bit about the difference in state and federal response and that you believe that states are probably better suited to you know, see material handle their response for their areas because they understand what they need more. Have you seen anything from your your local government?

G 40:13

A little. I mean, I think like what I have seen, the stuff I've seen has been the stuff really that's come out of Eau Claire or La Crosse [City in Wisconsin]. I haven't seen any Chippewa [County in Wisconsin] stuff by any means. Other than a few little things. I've noticed the response. I can see it around town. I can see the lines, the x's, the tape, the you know, that kind of stuff. I see evidence of it, but I haven't actually heard a whole lot from it. And again, most of it comes through the school too. I mean, the only thing I've heard from the you know, from our emergency responders and our nurses, if I wasn't on this pandemic response team, I probably wouldn't hear anything. Because there's very little, nobody's talking a whole lot. If they are, they're like, well, we only have like 27 cases. So Chippewa's okay. That doesn't mean we're okay. We live like between Madison and the cities. We're, we're just delayed. Hopefully, you know, that won't happen. But yeah, not a lot locally. If anything, it's just from the bigger places like Eau Claire and La Crosse.

SC 41:39

Yeah. Alright. Well, I have one more question for you with regard to the future. How, how do you see this experience transforming the way you interact with your family and friends and the broader community?

G 41:56

Well, it won't change the way I act with my family. It's gonna cause me to miss a few weddings that I wanted to go to. We're probably going to have to bury some people alone. Which is unfortunate, because that's when you need family. I I don't think our world will ever be the same. I don't think we can go back to exactly the way things were before. You know, I think about how when I first came to McDonell [High School in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin], you know, sir, was all about the handshakes and everything like that. I think that aspect of touching each other is going to be hurt for a while, and that's too bad because it was already hurt. When we went to this politically correct. You know, mantra. I'm just talking about an education for one thing, you know, when the teacher started touching the kids too much and everything and then you couldn't have a kid anymore and you couldn't touch a kid or whatever. Oh my gosh, it. You know, kids need hugs. People need hugs. You need to be able to hug people you love. We're tactile creatures. We require that as part of our sensory input. I worry about how that is going to impact the children kind of in this generation. Because without that, they become very... You're either going to be desensitized to it or you're going to be really hypersensitive, it's going to go one way or the other. You're not going to get an even balance of like, knowing like what kind of

touching is okay and what isn't that it's okay to be hugged. And I worry about that neurological, I guess brain development part of it, because it'll hurt in the long term. Because then you're going to have those kids grow up and be parents who aren't huggy and lovey on their children. We already have a lot of that. In this area I grew up, I grew up being just hugged to death. And I'm a hugger. I just am hug person even though (_____??). I am very much a hugger. And I noticed that with kids that some kids are just not, and I worry about, they're going to grow up to not be that way to their children. And so how cold emotionally socially, emotionally are we going to get? Hopefully we won't get angry at each other. For our differences, there's going to be people who are going to be on one side of the camp, saying "I don't want to ever leave my house again." And there's going to be people on the other side that says, "screw it, we can do whatever we want."

G 44:40

We need to make sure those two camps can agree to disagree. And I think that is going to carry a few years out. It may eventually then go away. But I think for a few years here that's going to be valid. I I think we are going to see the beginning of tracking, of humans, being you know, infection tracking, like you have a little thing where they can scan you and you've had this virus and you've had this virus, and you've had this virus, you know, stuff like that chipping people like that been a long time coming, but it's already coming to the forefront. And now we're talking about people keeping databases on people and having phone apps with, you know, with people who have been infected willi-, like willing to be put on there. But we're coming to the time where our surveillance of who we are and what we carry could be used against us. I know that sounds futuristic and kind of weird, but it's not that far away. It really isn't. It's like in your children's future. That's how close it is. I may not see it with me, but my kid's kids will see it. And so that kind of concerns me. Keeping track of people who have been affected. And, and have it be a derogatory thing where, "oh, well, you've been infected so you can't do this anymore." All of a sudden we have a subclass. And we start to fail developing more a class system that we have never even imagined here in the United States, based on your health and what you carry. So that concerns me.

SC 46:28

Are there any questions you have for me?

G 46:34

No, I, I hope, I hope you get a lot of different people to respond and a lot of different ways to this, who are who are willing to be honest with you because I do think I think honesty is important, and I don't, people are so afraid these days. They need to stop being fearful. There's no need for us to be afraid. Fear just brings distrust and brings hate. And we already got enough of that. So, I would like to I would like to minimize that.

S 47:17

Alright. Well, thank you so much for participating.

G 47:21

You're very welcome.

SC 47:23

I'll I'll stop the recording.