

## Transcript of Interview with Emma Matheson and Katie Kurkendall

Interviewee: Emma Matheson

Interviewer: Katie Kurkendall

Date: September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Location (Interviewee):

Location (Interviewer):

Transcriber: otter.ai, 2<sup>nd</sup> pass by Gilbert Lopez, JOTPY curator

Abstract:

Katie Kuykendall 0:00

This is

Katie Kuykendall and I'm interviewing Emma Matheson. The date is September 19 2020. The time is 10:31am. And we're in Boston, Massachusetts. Do you give your consent for this interview and having it be released in the COVID-19 Archive Project?

Emma Matheson 0:18

Yes.

Katie Kuykendall 0:19

So where were you and what were your thoughts when you first heard about COVID?

Emma Matheson 0:25

So I was actually in Florida. I was on spring break with my twin sister, my mom, and three or four of our friends and their moms. Because we were on spring break. We were supposed to go to Puerto Rico, but that got canceled. We were like Florida. So we were in Florida when everything was happening. We were actually driving back when everything was shutting down. So it was weird. Driving through all of the states and just seeing everything shut down around us. And we were when we were in Florida, we were wiping down tables, and we were getting weird looks, because we were kind of stressed about like, pandemic but we were like, you know what, we're gonna have fun before everything shuts down. So that was really interesting. We didn't

leave the hotel. We just kind of stayed there. But it was so weird seeing everything shut down as we were coming back and then having to go right into quarantine.

Katie Kuykendall 0:32

And how did you're like, wait, so you were on the road when you first heard about the lockdowns when everything?

Emma Matheson 1:26

Yeah, when we first heard about the lockdowns, we were on the road and we were like, Oh my god, like, there's no we can't stop. We have to go straight. So we I think it was we left at like 7am and got back to around Washington DC. At like 1230 to 1am. It was a really long drive,

Katie Kuykendall 1:52

I bet. And so how did the lockdowns, how did it change you like your experience was a second semester senior.

Emma Matheson 1:24

So it was really interesting because we have a weird schedule where we like do. It's a mod schedule of five weeks each. So we had the Friday before spring break, we knew that we would not be returning mob six. And then I have my we do internships. So I had my internship mob seven. So I knew that that was my last day of classes. So that was really emotional. And it was honestly hard for me to keep up with work. Because I like doing work with people and deadlines. And that was kind of hard. So that kind of impacted me. And then I had to take classes the last month. So I was not there for that. But yeah, and I was sad. We didn't have a prom, we had a virtual prom that like no one went to I didn't go to and me and my sister. were like, this just sucks. But then for graduation, we did a drive by diploma pickup in the morning. And that was cute to see all the teachers like line the roads and like hold signs and like cheer for us. A little bit emotional, but that was really nice. And then we did a friend graduation where we got dressed up in our dresses, and we took pictures. We made little speeches for each other and had a little pool party. So that was special. And we were supposed to have one on August 8, but that got canceled. So

Katie Kuykendall 2:27

And around the decision time for college. It was like at its worst near its worst in Boston. And so I don't know when you decided to come to Northeastern, but what were your thoughts like making that decision?

Emma Matheson 3:42

So I actually applied to Northeastern Ed, so I had been in for a while. And I knew that I was going to Montreal for like a couple months at that point. So I was getting excited for that. So I thought I was going to be in a different country. And then Montreal got cancelled. And I was really sad about that. But then I was getting excited for Boston. And I kind of like, I didn't really know that Boston was bad. But when we decided we're like, okay, Boston is doing pretty well with its response. So I was I felt fine coming into Boston.

Katie Kuykendall 4:16

And how did you feel about like, the policies vary a lot based on local, state and federal, how did you feel about the various responses to the pandemic?

Emma Matheson 4:28

So in Virginia, I feel like, especially in Northern Virginia, where I'm from, everyone kind of responded really well to it. I don't think it's to the extent of Boston, but we all like wore masks going into grocery stores, stores and everything food, places. We didn't really go to restaurants we just did take out. But when we were walking around like I don't really wear a mask because like it was in my neighborhood. But I feel like the response was better than other states, such as the southern states a lot of people wore masks and stuff. So I think that was good. Yeah, I didn't really pay attention to the local responses. It's like, Okay, this is what people are doing.

Katie Kuykendall 5:24

And then on like, the federal level?

Emma Matheson 5:26

Oh, God, the federal level. Um, I think it could have been better. I think it could have been a lot better. Especially like mandating wearing masks everywhere. I think that should have happened. And I. Yeah, I just think it could have been a lot better in the situation that we were put in, like the world response was there the global response was, I think, a lot better than the US response.

Katie Kuykendall 5:56

Yeah. All right. That's all the questions I have. So thank you.

Emma Matheson 6:01

Thank you.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>