

Transcript of Interview with Sierra Butler and Thomas Ligh by Each Other

Interviewee/Interviewer: Sierra Butler

Interviewee/Interviewer: Thomas Ligh

Date: 09/22/2021

Location (Interviewee):

Location (Interviewer):

Abstract: Both of the students taking part in the interview take turns being the interviewer/interviewee. In it, they discuss what their life was like going into and throughout the pandemic. For them both this was high school. Some of the areas focused upon were mental health, isolation from friendships, loss of sports, new hobbies, and online learning.

Thomas Ligh 0:01

Hello, my name is Thomas Ligh. And I will be interviewing Sierra Butler. Sierra, what is the date and time?

Sierra Butler 0:09

It is 12:05pm on September 22, 2021.

Thomas Ligh 0:14

And do you consent to this interview?

Sierra Butler 0:16

I consent.

Thomas Ligh 0:19

For the first question, when did you realize that the pandemic was going to be a major issue that affected many aspects of your life.

Sierra Butler 0:26

Um, at first, I didn't think that the pandemic was really going to influence my life very much at all, because it seemed like something that was just going on in like... other countries, like I didn't think it was actually going to come to the United States. And then I started hearing of schools being shut down in certain parts of the States. And then like schools, like really close to me, were getting shut down. And then all of a sudden, my school is like, we're sending you home for two weeks. And I was like, okay, it'll probably pass. Like, we'll figure out how to get through this, and then ended up being the rest of the year, I was home from school. And that was kind of when I realized that this was a really big deal. And this was gonna affect me for longer than I had thought.

Thomas Ligh 1:15

For the second question, what changed about your everyday life? And did you pick up any new hobbies or adapt any old ones?

Sierra Butler 1:24

I think what changed mostly was not being able to see the people that I saw every single day. And that was really hard. And I realized how much I relied on like human connection with like my friends and family and everything. And it was a really hard and stressful, and kind of emotional time for me because I couldn't see my friends. And it was just really difficult. I'd say some new hobbies, I play hockey, so that was tough, because I didn't get to play hockey. But I started rollerblading again. So I went rollerblading a lot outside, like around my neighborhood. And then I actually learned how to sew on a sewing machine. And my mom and I made masks out of fabric. And we made like 100 masks and donated them to the hospital. So that was one thing that I did that I've never done before. And that was really cool, because I got to help out with the mask shortage and everything.

Thomas Ligh 2:31

And then for the last question, how did your school manage the lockdown? Did your school go to like online through various apps like Zoom or how did that affect it?

Sierra Butler 2:41

Yeah, so we went totally online, we had Zoom classes every day. And it was honestly worse than regular school like I was downstairs at the table on my computer for eight to 10 hours every day, doing class and doing homework, and it just was very draining. And I always felt so tired at the end of the day, being on my computer all day, I think it took a lot out of me. And also it was just a very different experience. And I realized how much I'd taken for granted actually being able to go to school, and have discussions in class and be in person like firsthand, learning and talking to people and not having everything be digital. And I didn't realize how terrible that would be. But it was a really hard adjustment, and I did not like it at all.

Sierra Butler 3:37

This is now Sierra Butler, and I will be interviewing Thomas Ligh. Thomas, can you please state the date and time?

Thomas Ligh 3:43

Today is September 22 at 12:11, 2021.

Sierra Butler 3:50

Thank you, and Thomas, do you consent to this interview?

Thomas Ligh 3:54

I consent.

Sierra Butler 3:56

First question, how did COVID-19 affect your ability to learn? And how did you continue school?

Thomas Ligh 4:03

So when COVID first affected my school, we kind of just closed down for two weeks before we really did anything so the school could kind of figure out what the situation was. But then after that we moved on to fully online classes. First it was kind of asynchronous where it was you didn't meet every day it was up to the teacher. And that was kind of like really hard to follow the schedule, kind of get work done because we didn't meet as much per week for as long. But then eventually after like a week or two the school decided to make it synchronous again where it was we'd follow our normal everyday school schedule. And that itself kind of helps to like the learning process. It kind of got back a little bit back to normal, but it was still pretty hard. And then for last year, my senior year of high school for the majority of the year we were hybrid schedule so half the school would be online on Zoom still and the other half would be in person in class. And that was, while it wasn't perfect, it was still much better than just being online.

Sierra Butler 5:10

How did COVID-19 affect your mental and or physical health?

Thomas Ligh 5:16

For my physical health, it didn't really affect it too much, I was still able to like, keep myself in shape and keep myself active. But for my mental health, I was still able to kind of talk to my friends through whatever may be online. So I still had the interaction, even if it wasn't like in person, like face to face. So that kind of helped. But I guess I didn't really realize the effect it was having on me. Like, I was kind of thinking to myself, Oh, it's fine. I'm still talking to them. I'm still like, you know, hanging out with them. But I didn't realize that it was like I was still kind of like getting more depressed. My anxiety was getting a bit worse than I had, like, first anticipated.

Sierra Butler 5:59

And what activities did you miss the most when you were in lockdown?

Thomas Ligh 6:05

So I, the only sport I continue to do is fencing. And for lockdown that like, we had to stop that. And that was kind of stopped for the majority of like, my junior year. And then for my senior year, we were still allowed to like have the team sport at school, but the practices were a little different. We were only allowed to have like half the team there at once. And we didn't have very

many like meets or anything like that. And we were unable to have States. But it was kind of like a disappointing because a bunch of like me and my friends were all the captains. And we like had a pretty good chance at States this year, and we kind of got upset last year. We were really close to like winning the state title and then we just lost it at the end. It was kind of really disappointing. So we were looking forward to kind of like get back into it for our senior year, but then COVID hit, and all that happened, so we weren't really able to do any of it. While we were still able to have practice and see each other face to face more often now, it was still like really disappointing. Like in the back of our mind, we were still thinking like man, we really wish we could have done this like, how would it have gone.

Sierra Butler 7:14

Nice. Thank you. That concludes the interview.