

This journal covers the 2021-2022 college year in America. My name is [REDACTED] and I am an NAU student who was tasked with writing a journal for my second semester. The following is my complete journal that I am donating to future historians. I am female, a member of the honors college and at the start of this assignment I was 18 years old. This journal contains no name but my own and hopefully no identifying features for anyone mentioned.

Monday January 10, 2022

My name is [REDACTED], and I am living in a pandemic. The word pandemic seems so abstract; before covid I don't think that the word really would ever convey the depth of meaning that that word now carries. Pandemic is not just a sweeping sickness, an abstract thing that happens to other people in long ago times. Not anymore, not now. It means fear, pain, death, isolation, food and supply shortages and an emotional tole that no one truly understands right now. This all started when I was in my first semester of my junior year of high school. Back then I used to read my BBC news app on my phone whenever I had a few moments to spare between classes, I haven't done that in two years now its simply too depressing and overwhelming. Back then I saw this new disease cropping up in China, as the months passed, I kept thinking that it would spread and like the forewarnings of Cassandra it did. We went to spring break, and we never went back. At first looking back I felt guilty as if me reading about the early stages of covid somehow caused the pandemic. I felt guilty that those first few weeks I was relieved to be living in a pandemic, after all I no longer had to deal with assignment deadlines that I had been so stressed out about or wake up so early. I spent two years in isolation due to covid I had online classes exclusively by choice. My elderly grandmother refused to isolate from us, and I wouldn't live with the idea of putting her in harms way by going to school. By the time I finally got the courage to reach out to a friend to meet almost two years had passed. To this day I wonder how those years of complete isolation from my peers have affected my mind. Only time will tell.

I am writing this in my college dorm, I attend the NAU honors college and am lucky enough to have a private room. Today was my first day of classes in my second semester of college. It seems so strange to be writing a journal entry, even in my own personal reflection of the day is completely overshadowed by the pandemic. Even college life supposed to be the freest time of your life is overshadowed. It's hard to forget about the pandemic when every class has mask mandates and there is a permanent testing center on campus. Hard to forget the axe that rests over all of our heads, even harder to imagine what it was like before. Before the masks, before the lockdowns, before the pandemics. Maybe one day ill be able to live in the *before* again but I doubt it. My life has been divided into two clear stages: the *before* and the pandemic.

Monday January 17, 2022

Today is a national holiday. My college NAU is shut down to observe the holiday meaning that there is no classes to attend today. This is a great relief as the three day weekend is great for catching up on

assignments. I spent Saturday and Sunday more or less lazing about in my room. But today I decided to get ahead on readings for multiple classes. I went to breakfast this morning late at about noon. I stopped to talk to one of my favorite cashiers Liz who is always happy to see me when I come in. After breakfast I went back to the dorm and chilled for a while before opening my laptop and beginning to do assignments. I started with my US history reading which was about 24 pages. I don't think that I absorbed to much but I'll bring my laptop to the discussion so that I can reference the paper when my memory fails me. I then did my math homework, its due on Wednesday but I like to keep buffer room between assignment due dates incase something urgent comes up. It's a practice that has served me well. Later I will complete my psychology reading and some other tasks that I have been putting off.

Monday January 24, 2022

It is only Monday and I already feel off-balance. Last week ended on a strange note for me. Everything was going fine until Wednesday rolled around. In my Latin American history class, we had had our first discussion day. I thought that it went well and had had an interesting discussion with my small group. I

went back to my dorm to do some homework before I went to lunch. As I walked to lunch my phone vibrated and as I checked my family group chat, I learned that my sister had contracted COVID. I had not seen her in almost two weeks, but I was still somewhat concerned about possibly having it. I had been in in person classes and if I had the virus, I could have spread it to so many people. I immediately went back to my room and emailed all my teachers to notify them and enquire about making up the work that I would be missing by being in quarantine. The first testing appointment that I could find was for Friday, so I spent several days isolated in my room waiting for a negative test. Luckily, I tested negative and was able to return to in person classes today. It feels strange to return to class like everything is normal. Its like we all ignore that we are living in a pandemic until something happens that jars us back into the harsh reality that we are living in. But then again, we can't keep thinking about it, that path only brings pain.

Monday January 31, 2022

I am currently waiting for my first class of the day to start. My weekend for once was relaxing, there was no family emergency or assignment that came out of nowhere. I was able to actually relax in my room for once. Lately I've been knitting a scarf for a friend in my free time. They recently came out as gender fluid, and I want to show my support for them. So, in secrete I've been knitting them a scarf that mimics the gender fluid pride flag for them. I've been working pretty hard on it, and I hope to be able to finish it this week so I can give it to them as soon as possible. I am on the fourth color and after I finish the fourth color which is black, I will only have to do the blue portion before I will be done with the project. It was completely super of the moment when I decided to start the project as I try to never have more than two knitting projects going on at once, and I already had another partially completed scarf and a Afghan that I have been weaving on a loom. However, I'm glad that I decided to take on the project as I think that they will really like it and it has given me the chance to perfect a new knitting pattern.

Monday February 7, 2022

I am feeling particularly sluggish today. Usually, I write this entry in the morning after my first class, but it is almost 3:00 PM right now. I think that test anxiety is what is driving this strange haziness that seems

to have come over me. I have finished the scarf that I was making for my friend that I discussed on my last entry. They loved it. I have since moved on to a new project that seems to be a new form of procrastination for me. I have two exams this week one in my psychology class and a second in my math class. I have yet to truly study for either and they are both on Thursday. I also have a quiz in my Latin American history class on Wednesday. I hope that tomorrow I have an easier time focusing on my endless list of tasks to accomplish.

Monday February 14, 2022

I am actually feeling pretty good today. I had a surprisingly good weekend. Last week I had two exams and a quiz so the previous weekend I was studying like crazy to prepare. However, this weekend I had nothing to study for and no assignments to do for once. So, I was able to relax for all of Saturday while doing my laundry, and that night I even went to a concert on campus. And on Sunday I was able to have lunch with a friend and was told that I am getting a job interview! A little while ago I signed up to be an RA on campus, I didn't think that anything would really come of it, but I got an email over the weekend saying that they wanted me to come in for an interview! I'm really excited as this will be the first time, I've ever had a job interview. My mother also called me over the weekend to tell me that she had gotten a letter from NAU saying that I had made the Deans List which I am so proud of. I also learned this really I as good as the weekend was. I also talked to my grandma this morning. She had a minor hand surgery last week and I wanted to see how she was doing. She is in some pain but is doing well and is always happy when I call.

Monday January 21, 2022

I am actually pretty excited for tomorrow. Tomorrow, I have my first ever job interview to be an RA on campus. I always wanted to be an RA during college as I think that it is a position that offers valuable job experience and will help me get into grad school. I applied on a whim more or less. For the creative element of the application, I wrote a free verse poem so to be frank I'm pretty surprised I was even offered an interview. I have not told my parents about my application or my interview. I'd rather surprise them if I get the job and say nothing if I do not get the job. I think that as a psychology major and honors student I am more likely to get the position than my non honors counterparts. However I'll definitely be doing a lot of research on how to be successful in a job interview before tomorrow just to be safe.

Sunday February 27, 2022

I was born in 2003. My generation was defined as those too young to have lived through 9/11. We grew up under the war on terror, we were at war for my entire life. My parents had known peace, they had known a time when there was no airport security. And yet my generation grew up knowing only fear, every year watching videos of people jumping from the world trade center windows knowing that it was better to die by falling than to be trapped under the rubble. I watched these videos in school as early as third grade. Every year we would sit together as a class and watch as people committed suicide out of desperation. Every year. But this was not the only tragedy that my generation was raised with, we also had school shootings. My high school had several. I remember sitting in the gym my freshman year and feeling that something wasn't right about the room's atmosphere, there was a strange tension. Then another girl told

me that there was a shooting threat against my school, the Los Vegas music festival shooting had been only weeks before. So we talked about how if there was a shooter then they would pull the fire alarm so that we would all go outside and all they would have to do was pick us off from above just like what happened at that music festival. And then the fire alarm went off and none of us would leave the gym, we all thought that if we went outside then we would be killed. We all just stared at each other in fear. This would not be the first threat or the last against my school. We survived the hearts and then in my junior year a pandemic started, and the world would never be the same again just like after 9/11. My generation may be the most traumatized generation since the Vietnam war and yet we are lumped in with millennials and seen as worthless and lazy by baby boomers who grew up in a time of unprecedented peace and prosperity in America. They didn't grow up being defined as the generation that was too young to have watched live as people jumped from the twin towers. They didn't grow up sitting in class and being told by a friend that the middle school across the street where their younger sister was in lockdown due to a potential shooter. They didn't stay in lockdown for two hours in 6th grade as students-built barricades out of desks because a parent had seen a construction worker with a soldering gun and called the police thinking that it was a gun. My generation was raised in the war on terror, survived unprecedented violence in our schools, are actively dying in a pandemic that locked us in for going on almost three years now. And on Friday a war started. Russia invaded Ukraine. And if even one bullet flies over the polish border article 5 of NATO will be enacted and WWIII will start. My generation after all that we have already been through may also be drafted. I don't think that we can take much more, we're all starting to break. My generation is more desensitized to violence than any that has come before it and now we are watching a war play out live on tik Tok, God help us all. I'm not even 19 and I just want to be able to open a news app without living in terror of what I might see on the other side. I want boring back, I don't want to live in fear of terrorism, plagues, and war; I've already had to do so since I was in third grade watching those people jump from the twin towers.

Monday March 7, 2022

I am cram studying for an exam today. The exam is in my psych class on Thursday, but I still consider it to be cram studying for myself. I had a pretty lowkey weekend. I mainly hung out in my room and knit. But I did see a couple of friends for dinner on Sunday which I'm pretty happy about. I hadn't seen some of them in a while and it was good to catch up. Over the weekend the mask mandate for NAU expired, but today in my first class everyone still wore masks. Its too much of a habit at this point to not wear one constantly. I wear a mask from the time I leave my room to the time that I return to my room. It feels too strange not to do so, like I'm exposed. Its so strange I couldn't stand masks at the start of this pandemic and now I can't imagine life without them. I've made friends that I've never seen their entire face. Spring break is next week, and I get to go home and see my parents and dog for the first time since Christmas break. I don't go home except for breaks; I don't have a car on campus and though my sister does her work schedule, and my school schedule don't line up. She has work or class when I'm free and I have class when she is free. It has also been snowing lately. Not nearly as much as a few weeks ago in volume but it's been colder for longer stretches so the snow stays longer.

Monday March 21, 2022

I didn't write last week. Last week was spring break for my college NAU. My friends invited me to go with them for a trip to California, but I declined; I wanted to see my parents. It was a good visit; I finally finished the cable knit scarf that I've been working on for weeks. I almost cried when I had to say goodbye to my dog on Saturday. She doesn't understand why I keep leaving, I told her that I would see her during summer but that just made it harder. She doesn't understand that I was leaving or when I'll be coming back. I was able to get several assignments done yesterday so I am ahead in some of my classes. I'm also meeting with my estranged aunt for lunch on Tuesday. We don't really have a relationship, but she is really trying to become a family member again so I'm willing to give her a chance even if my sister isn't. I rescheduled a doctor's appointment this morning so that I don't have to worry about cutting lunch with her short. I also made a list of neutral topics to discuss with her that I will be studying, hopefully there are no incidents, she is my godmother, and I should be able to have a simple discussion with her, but I am still nervous. She is practically a stranger to me and practically terrorizes my dad. We'll just have to see how it goes, I guess.

Monday March 28, 2022

It is super overcast today. The gloom feels rather appropriate for a Monday. Last week on Thursday I went to a class for the first time not wearing a mask, it felt weird. I'm so used to wearing them that even in an almost empty classroom I feel exposed without one on. It is supposed to snow again which feels weird. I have a math exam later this week which I have studied some for, but I need to study; more for it. I got an A on my last math exam, and I really want to get a similar score on this one too. I

had a pretty relaxed weekend, I just stayed in and worked on my blanket that I have been making on; my loom. On Thursday last week I turned 19, I was pretty sad the day before as I have never had a birthday alone. But my sister and her roommate took me out for dinner on my birthday and it wound; up being really fun. My parents also had called the restraint ahead of time to tell them that it was my birthday since they couldn't come themselves. I'm glad that I wasn't alone on my birthday. I'm really happy with the progress that I've made on my blanket as well I probably did at least 70 rows and finished several colors over the weekend. I also did my laundry and put it away, I do that every weekend, but it still feels like an accomplishment for some reason.

Monday April 4, 2022

It was perfect whether this weekend. I really wanted to stay outside in my hammock but instead I stayed inside. Allergy season has been really bad for everyone this last few weeks. I didn't want to start sneezing again so instead I stayed inside in my room. I did a lot of work on my blanket that I've been look knitting. According to the post it note that I've been using to track rows I did nearly 200 rows which I'm pretty happy about. I also was able to use up about 4 different skeins of yarn which I'm happy about. I really need to change my sheets this week, I was supposed to this weekend but the reminder on my phone went off on Sunday and by then it was too late to really complete the task. I

think I might do it on Tuesday instead. I have a doctor's appointment on Friday for an abscess on my ear that I got from constantly wearing masks. Hopefully they will be able to remove it so that it won't

come back again. I also have to check my grades today to see if my math exam from last week has been graded yet.

Monday Aril 11, 2022

Today was hectic. Last night I couldn't fall asleep and kept getting thirsty which never happens to me at night. Then I went to breakfast at my usual time. Everything tasted wrong. I was eating a biscuit like I do every morning but today it tasted like a paper towel. Nothing tasted right. SO, when I got back to my dorm I just hung out for a bit before realizing that I needed to be Covid Tested today. So, I lucky was able to get an appointment to be tested and left for it immediately so that I wouldn't be late. On the way I frantically emailed all of the teachers whose classes I would normally have today. Luckily most of my teachers are extremely accomodating so it shouldn't affect my GPA too much. But it would still suck if I got sick as I'm the last person in my immediate family who has not gotten COVID.

Monday April 18, 2022

It is overcast today again. However, it is starting to get hot, so I don't mind at all. My weekend was pretty chill it was my first easter away form home. It also happened to be my dad's birthday so I made suer to call him. I got him a cookbook for his new Dutch oven that according to my mom he is verry excited about. Finals are fast approaching, and I am rather stressed about having to pack up my dorm room and study at the same time. I have a lot of final papers that I have barley started that are due soon that I need to work on. I also have a math exam this week that I need to study for. I wish it was windier today as that would make it less hot. I am a bit worried about my math exam as this probability unit was not my best unit in the class. I also have a quiz that I need to make up in my Honors class this week. I haven't started packing at all, but I really need to start strategizing about how to do it most efficiently and figure out my move out date with my parents.

Monday April 25, 2022

It feels weird to go to class today. It is my last week of classes before finals next week. It feels so strange, this semester seems to have gone so fast. I keep waking up with sore throats which sucks, I'm tempted to find an app that will record me when I sleep to see if I've been snoring. It is really windy still. The tunnel fire near flagstaff is still going strong and out of control 14 miles away. The record winds have been making it impossible for the firefighters to contain. Last I checked it was less than 3% contained and it's been burning since last Sunday. I scheduled my move out for next Monday after my math final. It would have been better to move out on Tuesday but that is my parent's anniversary, and I didn't want to make them travel all the way to flagstaff and back to move me out of my dorm on their anniversary. I still need to pack the only things that I have packed up are my books right now.

Tuesday April 26, 2022

It is still overcast today but that is fine for me. Today I only have one class which feels strange after so long. My first and only class today is my Psychology class, and it will be the final in person class for that subject for me which feels even more strange. This morning I went to breakfast as I usually do and stopped to talk to my friend at the register as I entered and again as I left. I did my usual hour or so of lazing about after breakfast. I have been surprisingly on task today which I am extremely happy

about. I finished one assignment for a class, turned in my ANT 205 final paper which I had finished a while ago. I also made significant progress on my HON 294 final which had been taunting me for a while at this point as I could seemingly never make any real progress any time, I attempted to work on it. I also did my math homework, and I will try to work on my final papers for my PSY 250 class, my HIS 291 class and my HIS 281 class though I doubt that I will finish or even start all of them today. But I have to capitalize on my productivity when I have the chance as It is exceedingly hard to focus with the end of the semester so close.