

Transcript of Interview with Sophia Press by Madison Morris

Interviewee: Sophia Press

Interviewer: Madison Morris

Date: 09/18/2020

Location (Interviewee): Boston, Massachusetts

Location (Interviewer): Boston, Massachusetts

Transcriber: Clinton Roberts

Abstract: [curator] Madison Morris interviews Sophia Press and asks her about experience during the pandemic closing at her high school. Press also speaks about having to move back home after spring break. She also tells about the status of her family, as her sister moves home with a new born baby. [from item description] Sophia Press, a freshman at Northeastern University, shares her experience with Covid-19. Audio Recording Interview conducted by myself, Madison Morris.

Madison Morris 0:00

Hello, I'm Madison Morris, and I'm here with Sophia Press. The date is September 18, 2020, and the time is 2:15. And we're currently at Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts. This interview is part of the COVID-19 Archive Project. Sophia, could you state your full name, the date and time, and whether or not you give consent to be interviewed for the COVID-19 Archive Project?

Sophia Press 0:23

My name is Sofia Press. It is September 18, 2020, 2:17 PM. And yes, I do give consent.

Madison Morris 0:33

All right. So just to get us started, do you want to describe your original impression of when you first found out about the pandemic?

Sophia Press 0:40

At first, I kind of just thought the pandemic was a joke. I thought that it would go away. And it was just not serious at all, but turned out that I was very wrong.

Madison Morris 0:54

Yeah, was there a specific time that you noticed how severe the pandemic was?

Sophia Press 0:59

I mean, probably just when it started to come, like, probably when it started to invade like, Italy and then like, into the US because people kind of started talking about the magnitude of it. And schools started closing and all that.

Madison Morris 1:15

Yeah. So about school. How did that affect your high school experience?

Sophia Press 1:19

Yeah, so I found out that the school was not coming back. I was on spring break and on a ski trip with my friends, and it kind of turned out to be our like, last hurrah. And we all said goodbye. And yeah, like, I went to a boarding school. [audio cuts out] So when we were sent home, all our stuff was like stuck at school. And so I actually had to drive up and get it. And I did that before everyone else because I kind of knew that we were never going back. But yeah, some people had their stuff stuck in school until May.

Madison Morris 1:56

Yeah, that seems really difficult. Did you guys do anything for graduation and prom? Or was it just canceled?

Sophia Press 2:01

Our prom was canceled, just outright. And then graduation, we just had an online ceremony because I went to boarding school. So it's not like everyone lived in the town and was quarantining there. So we just did an online celebration.

Madison Morris 2:19

Yeah. So during that time, did you also go to work at all?

Sophia Press 2:24

No, I didn't work during the pandemic. I just stayed at home.

Madison Morris 2:27

Did your family?

Sophia Press 2:28

Yes. My dad continued to actually go to his job in person once um- He's in management, so that was essential. But and so like, he continued to go in person, and then my mom started to work from home.

Madison Morris 2:43

Yeah. So how did your family react to the pandemic in general? Like when they first-

Sophia Press 2:47

Yeah.

Madison Morris 2:48

- found out about it with you guys?

Sophia Press 2:49

At first, everyone was very freaked out. I think this is pretty universal. People were wiping down their groceries and packages, and just very careful seeing nobody except for the family. And that kind of started to like, loosen as time passed, and it just became more of a reality. But yeah, my older sister actually like, moved home from New York City so that like she would have room and not be stuck in her apartment. And yeah, we all kind of just tried to make the most of it.

Madison Morris 3:24

Yeah. So you said you were from New Jersey. So were there a lot of differing opinions around like in your town and stuff about the pandemic?

Sophia Press 3:32

Um, well, so my county, Bergen County, was like, probably the worst county in New Jersey very early on. Um, tons of cases, like people wouldn't wear masks and like, everyone was getting sick. And then, just after a while, it started to get a lot better. And our numbers like, got so much better, because everybody like, realized the severity of the situation. And so like, yeah, at first, there definitely were differing opinions, and people kind of didn't take it seriously. But eventually, I think that most people in my area really tried to like, actually wear masks and be careful.

Madison Morris 4:15

Yeah. So how do you feel in general about New Jersey's response?

Sophia Press 4:19

I think the New Jersey did have a good response just because, you know, like, since, as I said, we were so bad in the beginning, everybody didn't want to go back to that, like quarantine, like, curfew and all that stuff. Nobody wanted that. So I think that the response was good, because yeah, the state really got it under control.

Madison Morris 4:39

Yeah. So now since we're coming back to school, and we're at Northeastern here, how do you feel about returning to school and how does your family feel about it?

Sophia Press 4:49

My family definitely- they were a little skeptical. Also, my sister like just had a baby. So we have to be really careful.

Madison Morris 4:58

Oh my gosh.

Sophia Press 4:59

Yeah, because of the newborn. So, like my family, like, specifically is very careful because of that. But I just wanted to come to school and try to like, continue on with my life. And like, it

makes me a little anxious just because I don't want to get sick. But at the same time, I think that Northeastern is like doing a really good job of, you know, enforcing mask and social distancing and testing. So...

Madison Morris 5:25

Yeah, so how do you think that the pandemic is gonna affect your life going forward, like in college, and even after college?

Sophia Press 5:33

I think it'll affect every aspect of our lives. I mean, our generations going to be, I mean, like, just this- no one understands; no one- no one other than our generation would like, we had our senior year of high school taken away, essentially the end, and then now we're starting college, and it's already tough. And now we're in the middle of a global pandemic. So I don't know, I think that- that life will change like, the technology has advanced with like, being able to work from home and all that stuff. And yeah, I just think that every aspect of life will be different.

Madison Morris 6:12

Yeah. So do you think we'll ever turn to normalcy? Or do you think we'll always just be in that different stage?

Sophia Press 6:18

I think that will return to a new normalcy. I mean, we still call it normalcy, so we're- we're trying to get back there. But, you know, we'll probably never be able to do all of the same things just because everything's changed.

Madison Morris 6:35

Yeah. All right. So Sophia, thank you so much for speaking to me today. Have a great day.

Sophia Press 6:40

Thanks. You, too.