

Transcript of Oral History with Presley McBride by Kayla N. Phillips

Interviewee: Presley McBride

Interviewer: Kayla N. Phillips

Date: 4/3/21

Location (Interviewee): Round Rock, TX

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Transcriber: This transcript was created using Otter.AI and double checked for accuracy by Kayla Phillips, URE, ASU.

Abstract: This is an interview with Presley McBride about how Corona Culture has affected her personal life and United States Society. Presley first describes any pandemic-related purchases or activities she has participated in and also highlights how her favorite Youtube personalities have incorporated COVID crafts into their shows. She also includes reflections on the impact of plexiglass shields and sanitization on human interaction and socialization. Presley also touches upon the political divide caused by a sense of shame that people in society feel when they are pressured to get vaccinated or wear a mask. Presley includes a description of how businesses have been using more packaging to protect their products since the start of the pandemic. Finally, Presley shares her insights on the negative effects of the stay-at-home mentality on U.S. mental health and culture. Contributed by Kayla Phillips, URE, for Arizona State University for the #CoronaCulture, #HST494, #ASU, #Texas #OralHistories collections.

KP: My name is Kayla Phillips and today I'm speaking with Presley McBride. Today's date is April 3, 2021. I will be speaking with Presley about COVID-19 effect on the United States culture. Could you introduce yourself what state you in, your age, and where you go to school?

PM: Yes, I live in Texas. My name is Presley McBride and I'm 20 years old.

KP: Okay. First, I'm going to ask you questions about Corona culture's effect on your life. What is one Corona theme purchase that you've made?

PM: Probably masks.

KP: Okay, what color masks did you get? Did you get ones with different designs? Or did you buy them off the internet?

PM: We've gotten several. We have some packs that are just blacks they go with everything. And then we got some recently some spring themed ones with flowers on them and pastel colors. So that's nice.

KP: Okay, have you participated in any COVID inspired crafts?

PM: I don't think so.

KP: Okay, have you read any of the Dr. Fauci books that have come out?

PM: No.

KP: Okay. How has your favorite social media or YouTube personality incorporated elements of COVID into their posts or show?

PM: Well, I can't say I have just one favorite, but I do watch The Daily Show with Trevor Noah, for a lot of my news. So, I've been watching him more often. And a lot of my favorite YouTubers, even the vintage fashion ones that I like, have made like COVID themed or like medical themed videos.

KP: Okay, what are some of the things that your, your crafters have--Or your, your favorite YouTube vintage personalities--What kinds of ways did they incorporated COVID into their shows? Do they make COVID clothing or, or something like that?

PM: Well, a lot of them made masks in the beginning of the pandemic [clears throat], sort of tutorials on how to make them. And I think a few of them made health care worker uniforms. One of them is an actual health care worker.

KP: Okay. Now, I'm going to ask you about Corona culture's effect on U.S. society. Have you seen businesses or social events respond creatively to COVID?

PM: Definitely, with the more use of delivery services, and the packaging and more sanitizing surfaces, making sure everything is as clean and sanitized as possible.

KP: What about the packaging on boxes and things have you noticed is different than in previous times?

PM: Well, there's just more packaging [clears throat]. Not only boxes, but it's taped and in bags.

KP: Okay, what impact does the use of plexiglass shields have on society?

PM: Well, I think it makes it harder to hear people through the glass. I'm not sure. Some places don't really have it anymore.

KP: Okay, do you think it kind of creates more walls and maybe it contributes to people feeling more isolated?

PM: Maybe, I mean, you can see through it, so I don't really see it as much of a difference.

KP: Okay. How has the emphasis on sanitation affected people's behavior?

PM: Well, it's made a lot people more conscious of the pandemic and how germs and viruses are spread. I was already pretty health conscious and kind of a germaphobe. But now I'm even more so. I make sure that I have sanitizer with me everywhere. I always wear masks outside the house; you have to remember those things. And even though I was already careful before, I always make sure you know, try not to touch doorknobs, or other people, or surfaces. And I always wash my hands afterwards if I do.

KP: Okay. How has the sense of social pressure and shame affected society if some people don't want to be vaccinated or wear a mask?

PM: Sorry could you repeat that, please?

KP: How has the sense of social pressure and shame affected society if some people don't want to be vaccinated or wear a mask?

PM: Well, I think it has definitely separated people even more. Especially Trump supporters who tend to not wear masks or care about social distancing and the pandemic in general. And they don't take science seriously. Because he set that example. But even anyone just not wearing a mask and trying to go into stores will often be turned away, because the stores have policies now that you have to wear a mask and social distance. So I think it's definitely become more of an issue now.

KP: Okay, how do you think it specifically affects people that maybe are afraid to be vaccinated or don't trust the vaccine enough yet to be vaccinated, they may feel pressure to be vaccinated when they're not ready.

PM: There's definitely more pressure, especially with older generations and within families, they want everyone to get the vaccine so that we can all be protected and see each other again, which I understand. However, there's not a lot of information about the vaccine out there available to everyone. And there are different vaccines, and it's not really clear what's in each vaccine. So I think a lot of people are still very confused about it. And it wasn't even tested, a lot of them weren't tested fully, like other vaccines should be. So, I think that definitely makes people more tentative to get it if they're [chuckles] not sure what's in it or the side effects.

KP: Okay, how has the use of Corona themed vocabulary such as "social distancing" "we're all in this together", "unprecedented", and others affected U.S. culture?

PM: Well, they're definitely used more often than they were...Could you give some examples?

KP: For example, how does the frequent use of all these phrases, especially by so many people in society telling everyone that they should do these things, How does that that kind of mentality affect the culture?

PM: Well, it definitely makes people more aware of their surroundings and how they present themselves, especially interactions with others.

KP: Okay, how has the emergence of the stay-at-home mentality changed U.S. culture?

PM: Well, it's definitely affected mental health. I know from experience [unintelligible].

PM: I mean, humans aren't supposed to be isolated from other humans or the world. It's just not natural. So obviously, that's going to affect mental health. Because we need that social interaction with people to keep our minds healthy.

KP: Okay. Have you known anyone who are--or do you wish that you could interact with others but you know that you can't at this point?

PM: Yes and no. I definitely yearned for more social interaction near the beginning and middle of the pandemic. Cuz I knew I couldn't have it at all. Now, it's a little more acceptable to go outside and see people even though there is still that social distancing expectation and wearing masks. But yes, it is much harder to see people than it used to be. So, I definitely missed that.

KP: [unintelligible].

KP: What was that?

PM: Especially seeing my family.

KP: Okay, this is our last question. Is there anything else you'd like to add that we haven't talked about?

PM: I can't think of anything.

KP: Okay, thank you very much for your time today Presley.

PM: Thank you.

