

Transcript of Oral History with an Anonymous Narrator by Kayla N. Phillips

Interviewee: Anonymous

Interviewer: Kayla N. Phillips

Date: 3/31/21

Location (Interviewee): Round Rock, TX

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Transcriber: Kayla Phillips, URE, ASU.

Abstract: This is an interview with an anonymous narrator about how Corona Culture has affected the narrator's personal life and United States Society. The narrator first describes any pandemic-related purchases or activities he/she has participated in and also highlights how his/her favorite Youtube personality has dealt with COVID on her show. The narrator also shares his/her perspective about COVID themed items that have appeared in U.S. consumer culture over the past few months and includes his/her assessment of Dr. Fauci and his work. The narrator includes a reflection on the impact of plexiglass shields and sanitization on human interaction and socialization. The narrator also emphasizes the potentially harmful effects of strong chemicals used to produce the various kinds of sanitizers used to disinfect surfaces in public. The narrator touches upon the sense of shame that people in society feel when they are pressured to get vaccinated or wear a mask and elaborates on how Corona vocabulary has affected U.S. social mores. Finally, the narrator shares his/her opinion about the effects of the stay-at-home mentality on U.S. culture. Contributed by Kayla Phillips, URE, for Arizona State University for the #CoronaCulture, #HST494, #ASU, #Texas #OralHistories collections.

Kayla Phillips 0:03

My name is Kayla Phillips, and today I'm speaking with an anonymous narrator. Today's date is March 31, 2021. I will be speaking to my narrator about COVID-19's effect on United States culture. Could you introduce yourself, what state you live, in your age, and where you go to school?

N 0:21

I'm homeschooled and I'm from Texas and I...What else did you say?

Kayla Phillips 0:32

What is your age.

N 0:34

Oh, I'm 17 years old.

Kayla Phillips 0:36

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

N 0:47

None.

Kayla Phillips 0:49

Okay. Have you seen any Corona themed products in the stores?

N 0:55

Yeah, they're very disturbing.

Kayla Phillips 0:57

What are they like?

N 1:00

People are just getting too into it, they need to stop it, they need to go back to doing what they were supposed to be doing before this. They don't need to be having these shirts that say, you know, stay home stay six feet away from me, that's not--that's not good. It's not the way we're supposed to be you're supposed to be. We're supposed to be people we're supposed to like herd animals, we're not solitary like wolves are--not not like wolves--like like like--big cats in the rain forest or something like that.

Kayla Phillips 1:32

Okay. Have you read any of the Dr. Fauci books that have come out?

N 1:36

No, those are gross. Don't read anything about Dr. Fauci,

Kayla Phillips 1:42

Can you expand on that please?

N 1:45

He's a bad guy. He just--He doesn't understand. He doesn't understand life. He thinks only about germs and more germs and germs.

Kayla Phillips 1:58

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

N 2:06

Well, the only person I really watch on YouTube is this barrel racer named Fallon Taylor and she's, she's had problems, like with going to rodeos because they've been canceled and stuff. But she still does stuff and she doesn't really get into you know all the gloom and doom stay home all that stuff. She just, she just dealt with it the way she can and now that Corona is not such a big deal anymore, she's going back to rodeos and everything's good again.

Kayla Phillips 2:36

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

N 2:46

No, they're all very uncreative, they're all virtual and terrible.

Kayla Phillips 2:52

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

N 2:58

It creates a wall in between people, they, they feel like--you know--they're separated. I mean if you put a wall between two people, they're going to feel separate. They're going to feel like they, they shouldn't be near each other. Just because it's clear, it doesn't mean that it's not there, you can tell it's there. And it makes you feel like you're like in jail or something.

Kayla Phillips 3:21

Okay. How has the emphasis on sensitization affected people's behavior?

N 3:27

Well, they they think they need to sanitize everything, and they don't sanitize it very well and they do it anyway. But it would just be better if they didn't sanitize as much stuff, because it's--you can't stop this thing, it's just everywhere. You can't, you can't sanitize everything, and also they often use too strong of stuff, especially at the beginning of a store or restaurant. So, when you walk in, You're like, you're, you're just surrounded by the smells of horrible chemicals and I'm starting to wonder if in like, 10 years, people are gonna get cancer because of this.

Kayla Phillips 4:04

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?

N 4:14

I don't think it's right. I don't think that people should be shamed for doing such things, I think it's a free country, they should be able to do what they want, if you don't want to be vaccinated for whatever reason, you don't have to be, I don't think that you should be forced if you don't want to wear a mask. Don't. Just don't [chuckles].

Kayla Phillips 4:33

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

N 4:44

Everybody thinks that you have to do exactly what those phrases, say, or you're a terrible person, and that's not true. Those phrases were one person's opinion more than likely and somehow, they were catapulted into the culture.

Kayla Phillips 4:58

Okay, So, how does it--how do you think it affects people when they hear those kinds of phrases?

N 5:05

Well, just like I said, they think that if they don't do what the phrase says like stay home-- if they don't stay home, then they're a bad person. If they go out to a party, or they go out with their friends, or something like that, but that's not the case, that's normal. People are supposed to socialize their supposed to go out and have fun. You only live one life; you have to live it.

Kayla Phillips 5:27

Okay. How has the emergence of the stay-at-home mentality changed U.S. culture?

N 5:34

It's caused people to be very divided, and very, very separated. It's caused them to not really want to be around each other and that's bad. Not only--like,--something I'm thinking about right now is that, if, if you don't--a long time ago people would share stories, not by writing it down but telling it to people, If we don't share our traditions and our history with each other, non-Corona related ones, then our history and our cultures will be lost. And that's kind of sad.

Kayla Phillips 6:12

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

N 6:20

Not really, it's just people are making this a big deal. You don't, you don't need to make this a big deal. I mean just think a whole year of people's lives was wasted on worry and fear. We need to stop being worried and fearful. There are so much worse things that could happen to us. I mean, if you were to die tomorrow, next week, next month, would you be happy, how you lived

your life towards the end, I don't think anybody would be. And so you've got to, you've got to realize that.

Kayla Phillips 6:52

Okay. At the beginning of 2021 people were all excited because they believe that things were gonna finally start winding down with Corona, do you think that people's hopes have been realized or that they've been put on hold?

N 7:07

I think that, for some reason people thought it would be different and then you know all the higher up people the news and everything they're like, "No! it's not going to be different, you haven't got your vaccine yet" or bla bla bla. People want change, but they want the higher up people to tell them that everything's okay. And those people are never going to tell them that, so they just need to do what they were supposed to do before this.

Kayla Phillips 7:35

Okay, thank you very much for your time today.

N 7:38

Oh, you're welcome. I love to give my opinion to people.