

Transcript of Oral History Interview with Gordie Koshien

Interviewee: Gordie Koshien

Interviewer: Lydia Rascher

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Location (Interviewer): Boston, Massachusetts

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Abstract: Lydia Rascher interviews a fellow Bostonian she had never met before about his life during the pandemic.

Lydia Rascher 00:00

Okay, hello, my name is Lydia Rascher, I'm 19 years old, I'm from Wakefield, Mass. and today I'll be interviewing Gordie.

Gordie Koshien 00:09

I'm Gordie Koshien from Groton, Connecticut. I'm 18 years old.

Lydia Rascher 00:14

Nice. So, before we get started, do you consent to being recorded and put on the COVID-19 archive?

Gordie Koshien 00:21

Yes, I do.

Lydia Rascher 00:23

Okay, what's the date and time?

Gordie Koshien 00:24

It is 2:35 on September 18th.

Lydia Rascher 00:28

Okay, awesome. Cool. So, first question, where were you in school for shutdown?

Gordie Koshien 00:36

So, this is kind of, like, it was a little bit more extreme for me because I went to boarding school. So, it was like, actually like going home. And I remember, they just like, like, the week before our spring break, like things kind of played out, like in the beginning of the week. So, I got like Corona was kind of concerning, like, you know, maybe it's going to be a bad thing. And like, as that week played out, by the end was like, we—I remember Thursday getting called into a meeting and being like, so yeah, you might want to bring, like, all the stuff you need from your room, because like, we don't really know when you're gonna be back. If you're going to be back. We think you will, but who knows? And I was like, Oh, yeah, so that's never good. Um, and then yeah, just went home on spring break and never came back. Pretty wild.

Lydia Rascher 01:14

Yeah, that's well, I went to boarding school too. So, it was just like, really weird. Not seeing anybody ever again.

Gordie Koshien 01:23

So you're very harsh, like break. Like, it's just like, the last night in the dorm was so weird and sad. Just like so you weren't seen as being like, expected to have like a month's like, winding down to like, you know, moving on from like, four years at the same school, but like, it just ended. It was crazy.

Lydia Rascher 01:40

Was everybody like super sad, and like all saying goodbye and everything?

Gordie Koshien 01:44

Yeah, like, yeah, like I remember, Friday, like, just kid like one kid after another left. And just like everyone's just out in the hallway, just like saying their goodbyes. Like, it was crazy.

Lydia Rascher 01:54

Yeah, it's tough. Okay, so. Okay, so was there a moment when you realized, like, how bad the pandemic was?

Gordie Koshien 02:03

Yeah. So, I think once I got home, and like, you know, it hadn't really hit the US yet. It was more just like we knew like it was coming, I guess. And I remember, like, so we like I went to the grocery store right after home and then didn't go back for like two weeks. And in those two weeks, like all the Corona restrictions that come in like, and it just I remember the first time walking in the grocery store just being like, Nah, like, literally masks like signs to walk down like the aisles the right way to manage being like, Oh my god, like I'm messing up everything, like, not walking down the right aisles. Just being like, this is so surreal. Like, I feel like I'm just like, in another world, like, it was crazy. I did not want to go back. I'm like, I really don't need to do you ever again. Like it was just like, stressful? Like, I just wanted to just like, not be a thing, I guess. And now it's just like masks are like every day. It's just normal. It's wild.

Lydia Rascher 02:51

Do you think like 10 years from now you're still gonna see people wearing masks?

Gordie Koshien 02:55

I don't know. I mean, my biggest hope is like when I go back home, like next summer, I'll like find masks and be like, I remember when I had to use. But like, I mean, I don't think culturally like I think people will probably wear masks like for the foreseeable future. Like, I think it'll, it's more like, kind of normal, I guess. We'll see. I mean, if the pandemic goes away, then hopefully masks will go away.

Lydia Rascher 03:24

And so how did just your daily life change in the first month and then?

Gordie Koshien 03:30

Yeah, so, I mean, when I first got home, I was on break. So, nothing really changed. So much. Like it just was like a normal break. But then, like, once we like went back to classes. Like It was just crazy. Like, it was such a different time in my life, because so I live in like a, like a summer town. And basically, all of us moved there in June. But like instead, we all moved in in March. And it was just like, I didn't have any zoom classes. I just had, like, the asynchronous stuff. So, like, I just have to do work ever. Like I just did not do anything with the whole springs was just like the spring became summer and it just was like weird. It was like this great feeling of like, being with like, my favorite people, like for way longer than expected. But also like, the reasoning was a pandemic. So, it's like, things are good. But things are also like stressful at the same time. Yeah, make sense?

Lydia Rascher 04:19

You didn't have any Zoom classes?

Gordie Koshien 04:21

No, like no, we literally just got homework assignments at the beginning of the week. And like, most of them were due on Sunday. So, it could be wanting to just grind on Saturday, like he could just grind on Saturday and not do anything. The whole week.

Lydia Rascher 04:31

Did you have to email teachers?

Gordie Koshien 04:33

Yeah, I mean, like if you had questions or whatever, but it was like, just like submit everything online. And that's how you just work until like 10 in the morning just get over like 30 work for like an hour and a half and then just have my whole day. Yeah, so like and senior spring so you're already not really doing anything. Like just my system was like, kind of made to be abused, I guess. I don't know who thought it was a good idea.

Lydia Rascher 04:59

Okay, so, what are your opinions on how the government has handled all of this?

Gordie Koshien 05:05

I mean, I think that we've not have a pandemic, if we actually paid attention in March, or even February. I think that like, there, there wasn't a big window to like, make this right. But if the right moves have been made in that window, like, we could be completely fine. So, like, I understand a little bit that like, it's hard to make, like the right decisions, like quickly, but at the same time, like I think it was pretty obvious from a scientific perspective, like what we needed to do and our government was just like, not good. So, and like just put like, just politicizing the whole thing is like, why, why does this have to be a political thing? Like, can we just like, all suffering together? Why do we need this but, welcome to the US of A.

Lydia Rascher 05:52

So, what's your opinion on the tapes that have been released about how Trump knew how bad this was going to be?

Gordie Koshien 05:58

I mean, I can't imagine he didn't know like, I feel it. I mean, I knew I was, you know, just random. 18-year-old so like, I think, like, it looks really bad for him like that these tapes have come out, but like, I'm not especially surprised. Like it his actions match up with those words, like.

Lydia Rascher 06:20

Okay, and last question. Have there been any positives that you've seen in the past few months?

Gordie Koshien 06:26

Yeah. So well, very, on a very personal level, like, you know, I got to reconnect with my family, like in a kind of a cool way. Like usually it's just like breaks we're together. But to have like, an extended period of time together again, was fun. We got a puppy, which was like very unplanned, but it's like were all just home so we might as well like train this thing. Yeah. Yeah. I think that's really like it for me. Like, it's just like, my home life because I got to be home again like, I think we kind of all like reconnected a little bit, which is nice. Yeah, and then but like, generally, I don't think there's that many positives at all.

Lydia Rascher 07:02

No, I understand that.

Gordie Koshien 07:05

There's little victories, but it's really within a larger sort of failure.

Lydia Rascher 07:11

I guess the positives are, you know, what make us go through every day. So just trying to find all of those. Okay. That's it. Okay.