

Cassidy Paulk 0:00

Do I have your permission to record this interview?

- **We included this because we knew it was a requirement to receive verbal consent when recording someone in an interview.**

Kate Rashevich 0:02

Yes, you do have my permission.

Cassidy Paulk 0:05

What is your full name and major at Butler University?

- **We chose this question because we felt it would be an adequate way for the interviewee to introduce themselves.**

Kate Rashevich 0:08

My name is Kate Rashevich, and I am a senior political science major with two minors in history and International Studies.

Cassidy Paulk 0:18

What was attending school like for you during the pandemic?

- **We chose this question because we were in high school at the height of the severity of the pandemic. Thus our experience attending school was greatly affected.**

Kate Rashevich 0:22

I remember when we were told we would not be back to school for two weeks. I was so aloof about the whole Covid-19 pandemic. I quite literally had no idea what that was until the day that they told us we would be going out of school for two weeks, so I was ushered out of school without knowing what was going on at all. I found out then that the rest of my junior year would be online. Much of it was not taught via Zoom. It was all asynchronous, which really stunk. My senior year we started to adjust back to Zoom, which was nice. Then at least, I was able to learn with my teachers and my classmates. Learning asynchronously was like having a snow day every day. I hated it. While academics- my academics- did not necessarily take a hit, I began developing a loss in focus that I continue to struggle with; That was kind of the start of me developing ADHD, and it just like, exacerbated a lot of those issues. But thankfully, my school moved to hybrid learning partway through my senior year, which made things easier. During the last two weeks of my senior year, we were also given the opportunity to be in school together, which was very nice. I was very fortunate for that. And I think the pandemic caused me to lose a good portion of friendships, unfortunately, that I probably would have been able to foster had we not been stuck in virtual or hybrid learning.

Cassidy Paulk 1:56

I see. What was one of the most challenging parts of the pandemic for you?

- **We chose to ask this question because it allows the interviewee to discuss their unique experience of surviving the pandemic.**

Kate Rashevich 2:01

I think one of the most difficult parts of the pandemic for me was adjusting socially. I am pretty introverted, so in a lot of ways, I did thrive in quarantine because my social anxiety was not always on, like the most extreme level, but it was readjusting to the "real world", I would call it, as we came out of the worst parts of the pandemic that proved very, very, very challenging for me, because I had gotten so used to only spending time with myself and my family. So, I had to raise all the dosages of my medications, which were pretty numerous at the time, and I spent a lot of time not being in class, like I was in the school bathroom or the nurse's office. And while I can say that to my knowledge, I did not necessarily ever have Covid-19, I like the physical distress that my body went through during the pandemic was so substantial, and the effects of that situation continue to take a mental toll on me.

Cassidy Paulk 3:04

Could you please describe your quarantine situation, such as where you were, who you lived with, or what you did?

- **We chose to ask this question because remaining in quarantine and quarantining yourself when infected with the virus was a large part of combating the pandemic. Thus, we felt it was essential to include when collecting information about living through the Covid-19 pandemic.**

Kate Rashevich 3:11

During quarantine, I was fortunate enough to be able to remain in my own household in Fort Wayne, Indiana. I lived alongside my mother and my two younger brothers, one which was in high school with me. We were two years apart, and the other one was in middle school. My mom had previously been given a remote working job months prior to the pandemic, which was the most random thing, but it allowed us to live fairly similarly to the way that we had been before, which was some somewhat nice in our, you know, little bubble of a home, at least, that was pretty similar. I did, I will say, spend a good portion of my time outside of school, painting, writing, doing puzzles, playing video games, TV. I also took up baking and cooking, all very good things. I really appreciate how I ended up spending some of that time despite how bad the outside world was. I also feel like my relationships with my immediate family were very strengthened during Covid to our due to our proximity, which was very nice, but I would never, never want to do that again. So never again.

Cassidy Paulk 4:27

Although the pandemic was not a positive experience, was there anything good that came out of it?

- **We chose this question because, as we discussed in class, there are still positive effects that can come from every situation. Just as the plague affected the world in somewhat positive ways, Covid had that potential as well. Moreover, in light of a topic that is very difficult for people to talk about, we wanted to remind others that even in the absence of goodness, there is always hope. We wanted to demonstrate a full range of feelings surrounding the pandemic.**

Kate Rashevich 4:31

Yeah, I think one of the things that came out of the pandemic that was positive for me was the social distancing. I'm not a very touchy person, and prior to the pandemic, I think that most experiences in buildings or with others were too up close, personal, crammed, not my- not my thing. The pandemic forced people to space out, and in some ways, had that has carried on past. You know, the peak. The crisis, I enjoyed the fact that I can get hand sanitizer anywhere, which is wonderful, because I think I put it on at least eight times a day still, which is a little much, but frankly, I don't care. People are less likely to, you know, touch me in public, get in my space. So I'm glad that as much as those practices have changed a little bit, because they were pretty extreme during the pandemic. I'm glad some of that stuff is still carried over, because the whole public health thing just needed to be like reevaluated.

Cassidy Paulk 5:30

What, if anything, do you remember about the first few weeks of the Covid pandemic, and has your perspective changed in the pandemic since then?

- **We chose this question because the pandemic was not a short period of time. Its effects continue today, even if the United States is no longer at the peak of its issues. Following the beginning/height of the pandemic, we are no longer the same people that we were. We are older and more experienced. We have been through a lot. This question reflects that shift.**

Kate Rashevich 5:38

Yeah, so I feel like the first weeks of the pandemic were pretty much a blur, but I do remember the paranoia and fear that I felt during the time, and that I know my family felt and my friends. We weren't really sure, or certain to what extent the virus would transmit, because, you know, we were being fed a lot of fake news. We weren't sure what actually, you know, could be trusted. And even when certain scientific studies came out, you know, it was all very new, so not necessarily, like, built up proof that certain things were accurate. So, my family was very overly cautious. I remember we went through a period where my mom wouldn't let us touch any cardboard boxes, whether it was, you know, the pizza box came to my house, or the box that my cereal was in because she thought we'd get sick. We didn't leave the house unless it was to get groceries for the same reasons. Looking back, I do think it's really interesting to see how the information we were told has changed. So, my family, you know that we grew out of, you know, being afraid to touch cardboard, and we learned not to touch our masks. So, the paranoia turned

into, like, less fear, because we were more self-assured, but I think that's the biggest thing that I've seen change in my perspective.

Kate Rashevich 6:56

Do I have your permission to record this interview?

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Cassidy Paulk 7:00

Yes, you have my permission to record this interview.

Kate Rashevich 7:05

What is your full name and major at Butler University?

- **We chose this question because we felt it would be an adequate way for the interviewee to introduce themselves.**

Cassidy Paulk 7:08

My name is Cassidy Paulk, and I'm a history and Spanish major with an anthropology minor.

Kate Rashevich 7:14

What was attending school like for you during the pandemic?

- **We chose this question because we were in high school at the height of the severity of the pandemic. Thus our experience attending school was greatly affected.**

Cassidy Paulk 7:17

When the pandemic hit, I was told we'd be back in two weeks, and now that I know that was very far from the truth. After we were sent home, obviously we didn't come back for a long time. The rest of my junior year was completely online. Most of my teachers would just take videos of themselves, and if you needed help, they had certain hours where they could help you with the lesson, but that was really hard already, and when they did teach class, the materials we were supposed to cover were either simplified, shortened, or just not taught altogether. I know a lot of books in my English class, we didn't end up reading them at all. My teacher just threw something together, and that was the end of our junior year. My teachers really struggled to understand how to transform their lessons plans into online courses, and a lot of students, because of that, struggled to grasp the material, and some of them, full on, abandoned doing their schoolwork because they didn't have the structure they usually would have gotten at school.

Kate Rashevich 8:15

What was one of the most challenging parts of the pandemic for you?

- **We chose to ask this question because it allows the interviewee to discuss their unique experience of surviving the pandemic.**

Cassidy Paulk 8:20

For me, it was staying healthy, physically and mentally. I really did not like doing schoolwork online, and at times it was really confusing for me trying to learn math, biology and physics without being able to work one-on-one with my teachers, because I went to such a small school, so I was very used to getting that one-on-one attention when I needed help, and so without it, it was a really hard adjustment. I felt that I was done a disservice having to learn like that. I'm not blaming my teachers, but it was, it was just not a great thing for my education. For example, I had been studying to take the AP Biology exam my whole time my junior year, and then once Covid hit, we had to take the exam online, and that was an absolute nightmare. It, the format, was nothing like what we prepared for, so I was not, I was not ready for it. I was I was ready for multiple choice questions, all of these things, and it was just turned out to be something completely different. Then, because I live out in the country, my Wi Fi was super, super slow, so the amount of time I had to complete my exam was even shorter because I had to submit it early, so that I would know that it would submit in time before the window closed, because it had to load and upload. It was it was terrible. And then, because of this academic struggle, I really hold myself to a high standard. If I'm not doing well in school and I feel like I'm failing, it makes me really sad. And so my mental health kind of declined, along with the fact that I couldn't do the things that I used to be able to do that made me happy, like school activities, going outside, seeing my friends, and I felt really isolated, and I really struggled to find happiness and stay healthy, mentally and physically, because I straight up couldn't move and I couldn't do the things that made me happy.

Kate Rashevich 9:51

Could you please describe your quarantine situation, such as where you were, who you lived with and what you did?

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Cassidy Paulk 9:59

During quarantine, I lived between my family home, with my immediate family, and with a family friend in Avon, Indiana, which was about two-hour drive from where I'm from, which is Kouts, Indiana. It's north, very close to the Lake Michigan. At home, it was my mother, my father, my younger brother, who is just starting middle school, I believe he was in seventh grade. And while we were attending school, we stayed at our family home. And then once the school year ended, my brother and I went to our family friends house, we can quarantine with our two childhood best friends as well, who are almost the same age as us, they have a younger son, same age as my brother, they have an older daughter, same age as me. And we also did it for the safety

of my mother. My mom had cancer probably two years before then, and obviously, after you go through so much surgery like that, and you're on medicines to keep the cancer from coming back, and all the other stuff that happens with getting such major surgery, she was immunocompromised, so we were really afraid that somehow we would manage to infect her from whatever we needed to do, and so we went there, and we spent the rest of the summer there. When I was living at home, before the end of the school year, I spent my time sleeping. As I hate to admit, I got really depressed being there. I know, I know so many other people got that way too. I- when- I wasn't sleeping for like 12 hours at a time, I was playing video games, working on schoolwork. I repainted my room, but I was, I was a teenager, so I was pretty, I was pretty dramatic, too, with the with all the hormones and stuff, but I would just lay on my floor listening to music, thinking about life like that. That that dramatic. But yeah, I really struggled with my mental health,

Kate Rashevich 11:36

Although the pandemic was not a positive experience, was there anything good that came out of it?

- **We chose this question because, as we discussed in class, there are still positive effects that can come from every situation. Just as the plague affected the world in somewhat positive ways, Covid had that potential as well. Moreover, in light of a topic that is very difficult for people to talk about, we wanted to remind others that even in the absence of goodness, there is always hope. We wanted to demonstrate a full range of feelings surrounding the pandemic.**

Cassidy Paulk 11:41

I do think one good thing that came out of it was, not everyone I think really understands this, but I think that people understood the importance now of vaccines and the seriousness of the spread of illnesses. Before, Covid, I didn't even think about how I go to school sick. I might get someone else's grandma sick when they go home like you don't think about that before this happened. I just it, wasn't taught to us like that. That's just not something that was well known among everyone. I also remember before Covid, being sick was not taken seriously, and at times it was penalized at school. I remember in elementary school, middle school, high school, when I would have to go to school sick, no mask, because, of course, that wasn't something normal, and that's probably how other people got sick too. It's probably how I got sick in the first place. And now I see a change in how illnesses are taken, like or at least college, because I'm not in high school anymore, but that they're like, "You know what? Stay home. We don't want you getting other people sick." So, I'm glad about that change, at least. But who knows if it'll last?

Kate Rashevich 12:40

What, if anything, do you remember about the first few weeks of the Covid-19 pandemic, and how has your perspective changed on the pandemic since then?

- **We chose this question because the pandemic was not a short period of time. Its effects continue today, even if the United States is no longer at the peak of its issues. Following the beginning/height of the pandemic, we are no longer the same people that we were. We are older and more experienced. We have been through a lot. This question reflects that shift.**

Cassidy Paulk 12:50

The first few weeks, they weren't super bad for me. I knew about the disease. I know it was spreading from the East into Europe, and that it was going around the world, and I figured it would make its way to the United States, but again, I was a teenager. And I knew it was coming, but I did not understand the severity of it. I, in fact, I remember going to stores with my friends, and we were taking pictures with the empty shelves because we thought these people were overreacting. But as time went on, I realized how wrong I was. I watched as people in my community died, were in the hospital for several weeks, and people my age lost their relatives to this awful disease. And it was, it was heartbreaking. I remember a friend of mine, she lost her father, and her dad was the same age as my father. You could have pre-existing health conditions, or sometimes you can just hit you really hard, and that, that was, that was really scary. My mom, I was terrified after people started dying like that around me, and I never let her leave the house. I was actually the only one who really left the house ever to go get groceries or anything else we needed. And my little brother, he couldn't drive at the time. Like I said, my mom was immunocompromised, and I love my dad, but I really knew there was a high chance of him accidentally infecting himself because he forgot about a restriction or didn't wear his mask, right, so I was just like, "I'm going to do it." And towards the "end" - and I say end with quotes towards like, when the pandemic became less severe, because I know it's still happening - with vaccines being created, restrictions being dropped, I see now how much the world has changed. Even now I still see stickers or have to rip off stickers in the ground that say, "Stay six feet apart." And I don't feel as afraid of the disease, because I know I'm vaccinated, almost everyone else is vaccinated, but I do fear what would happen if it came back around or if a new pandemic hit. Would we learn from our past mistakes, or would the same thing happen all over again, with the fake news being spreading, people not believing in science, and unfortunately, the rise of xenophobia?