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Final Oral Transcript: With Mary Kate

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J.G: Hello, my name is Jaidalinh Garcia. Today is March 27th of 2021. And we are here in San Antonio, Texas. Today we will be discussing the experiences of people during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Uhm - and I am here interviewing...

M.R: Mary Kate Ruiz.

J.G: Yay! Okay, so, uuh, when were you born, Mary Kate Ruiz?

M.R: I was born - where? *laughs* When?

J.G: Yes. *laughs*

M.R: December 1st, 2002.

J.G: December 1st, 2002, oh, that's a good year.

M.R: A great year.

J.G: And where were you born?

M.R: I was born in Victoria, Texas.

J.G: So if you're from Victoria, Texas, why did you come to San Antonio?

M.R: I came here for - um - my dad's job, he got a job here. When I was two.

J.G: When you were two. So, you were raised here, but you were just born there.

M.R: Yes. Correct.

J.G: You know I moved here around the same time, like when I was like two or three so -

M.R: It was a good year. *laughs* It was a good year. They got two pop stars.

J.G: *laughs* Two beautiful pop stars, yes, love that. Okay, umm, and how many major historical events would you say you lived through in your life?

M.R: Dos, two.

J.G: Two, okay. And what would those two be?

M.R: The pandemic that's still happening and the winter storm that happened back when was this? Two months ago?

J.G: Like February. Yeah.

M.R: Yeah.

J.G: So those are both still pretty recent. One is still going on. Umm. You bring up the pandemic. When did you initially hear about this and what were your thoughts on it?

M.R: So it was spring break, junior year, and I was so ready to not be at school anymore. And then we got a call from school that we were going to be gone for another week. And then that week turned into the rest of the year so my thoughts initially were like oh my god, yes, I don't have to go to school anymore because school is such a stressful thing for me. So, I was like, yeah this is a good thing and then it just dragged on and it's not a good - still not good but you know. *laughs* yeah.

J.G: *laughs* Wel, umm, here we are a year later like you said umm how would you say the event of the pandemic impacted you though, like in negatively or positively or kind of both?

M.R: I think it, it's a little bit of both, but it's mostly negatively because I'm already an introvert. I already don't like talking to people so being in my house for all this time has kind of killed my social skills. I have this doubt every time I go out that I can't talk to people. Umm - or - umm feeling isolated, you know dealing with anxiety, dealing with depression taking a toll on me umm being home a lot and yeah. And then, but I guess positively, umm, the mask and being more cautious in public and not being so close to people, and just hand sanitizer. You realize people don't wash their hands, so that's a positive thing I think people are like more aware of. Also, blowing umm candles on cakes. Why did we do that? I don't know why. *laughs* Yeah I guess that's a positive thing now we know that that's not a good thing, yeah.

J.G: Yeah, I forget that we blow candles out. All our spit going on the cake.

M.R: Exactly.

J.G: Oh that's so gross. Luckily, I don't like cake so I never really ate it. I was the ice cream in the side type of person.

M.R: Yeah, but -

J.G: You say that you been in your home a lot, like during the pandemic, which hasn't helped with your social skills.

M.R:mhhmmm

J.G: So what is your occupation, is it just student or do you have a job or are you a full time student?

M.R: I'm - I'm a high school student so I'm just home, chillin'.

J.G: Okay, that's good, so what year are you in?

M.R: I am a senior.

J.G: Senior, are you ready to graduate?

M.R: I am ready to graduate. I am ready and over high school. Yeah.

J.G: Yeah. How are they, how are they doing the graduation? Are they having it in person? Or...

M.R: They are doing it in person, they are going to do it at the Alamodome. We just have to wear masks and take all those precautions. Six feet apart, I am sure. And I'm not sure how they're going to do seating or how we are going to walk the stage but I know we are going to be doing this.

J.G: I remember last year, at mine, just three people were allowed.

M.R: I think that's so stupid, just because like it's much worse now, like it's not any better. You know in the beginning, I think we took all those precautions and I think that those precautions should still be happening now. But people are letting loose because of you know regulations have been lifted. Umm so I think that's really unfair. Yeah.

J.G: Yeah, I agree. Umm, can you, also, explain how you would like the corona virus has affected your friends and family? Like the people around you?

M.R: Umm, so my immediate family, like the people I live with, haven't been infected but I had some loss at the beginning of quarantine. Umm, a lot of family in Mexico got infected. Two people died and so that was pretty upsetting. I didn't really know them, wasn't really close to them, but they are still family. Umm, I think one of the hardest things was my grandpa passing away over the quarantine. And his funeral wasn't as, umm, I don't know, it wasn't normal. It was just really weird. It was like we couldn't, it was really small and we weren't there for very long. It kind of felt like they were just pushing us out and like getting over the service really fast cause of I guess, I don't know, but I think it was just precautions they were taking. Like not a lot of people could go, it had to be quick, kind of, it was horrible. I had some aunts who got infected and got sick pretty bad. Umm, but yeah, I guess like that family like distant family have gotten sick, immediate family hasn't. Umm, but yeah.

J.G: I'm really sorry to hear about your grandpa, because I don't think a lot of like us younger people we realize cause I feel like tend to be the ones that are let's go out, or kind of like middle kind of like middle age too, they're like let's go out it's not really a affected us. Unless, you have a weak immune system where you can see it. You know. Cause we - we can have it and be

asymptomatic and we won't know. But we can pass it to someone who's older in our family if we like live with them and can cause them to die.

M.R: yeah.

J.G: that's why we should continue to take it more seriously. Umm, mmm, so you did tell me how you knew people who were infected with the virus. Were there any of your friends who were infected with the virus? Umm..

M.R: No, not any friends.

J.G: Do - is it the people you are around, are they pretty precautious in where they-

M.R: Oh yeah! I only hang out with like three people.

Ummm, and all of us, I would say are pretty careful. Uhh, we don't really go out a lot or when we do put the mask - six feet apart - you know all of that. So yeah, I would say they're pretty, they're safe. And their families too, they have had people infected as well.

J.G: Kay, so currently, we are in this pandemic, how would you say this diversifies from the beginning for you personally? I know you kind of got into a little in the beginning, but like, is there anything specific you would say at the beginning of the pandemic that you were doing versus what you are doing now?

M.R: so in the beginning, I felt like I was - umm I don't know, I had this motivation, I had this drive I was like I'm going to take this time to work on myself, workout, eat good like eat healthier, umm, idk like focus on my mental health. It felt like good time because I was home. I was like I can't not do anything, I need to do something. Distract myself, whatever. And I felt happy, I think I felt pretty happy in the beginning, umm, and then it just dragged out and now that motivation kind of gone and not really working out, not eating good. It kind of just went downhill, umm after a while because it was just like it just got so stressful to be here umm umm for so long, yeah.

J.G: So, carrying on to that, how would you say being home, would you say that affected your like working like school-wise? Like academics? Because I know that's a big thing among students, it either pushes them or it brings them down completely.

M.R: Umm, I think for school I've always been not the greatest student, ummm, and I had oop owe. And I had some you know like with anxiety with school or like I have fibro so I missed school a lot because of flare ups and pain. So I had really bad attendance, I had no motivation for school and I thought about doing online school like for a little while. I was like I need to switch

to online school and maybe that would help. And you know I never did, and now that's all I do is school online and I just realized it's kind of - it's really hard. It's not an easy thing because you're on yourself, you need have motivation, you need to be on top of your work. No one is here to tell you what to do. You're not on a schedule, you have to like create your own schedule. And I kind of find- found that to be a little bit difficult and I would say I - I don't know I can take initiative and tell myself when to do things. I have a hard time, but I feel like it's not that different. Like in school I was not the best, here, I'm not the best. It's kind of like a, I don't know. I think it's good I don't have to be in a classroom and be anxious with people in like a school environment. I can work on my own time and be at home and I'm comfortable. I think that's better for me, honestly. So I like working at home, but it's just a little bit hard to push myself, but yeah.

J.G: So there's like pros and cons because it helps with your mental health but it you still got to be like hey Mary Kate, you know.

M.R: You need to do your stuff girl, you're kind of a little bit behind, yeah.

J.G: Okay umm, yeah, okay, this brings me to - well it doesn't really bring me - I noticed in the beginning you said that you lived through the Texas Winter storm. So, you being a Texan, me being a Texan, umm, when we were hit earlier this February umm with the winter storm, did you think about the virus at all? Because those two things were happ - they were happening at the same time. So, you know, the virus, the winter storm, any connection, anything there.

M.R: Umm, no, honestly, just cause it was a big thing and a lot of people were affected by it pretty harshly - they were hit hard by it and with the storm you were like at home or you were like somewhere and you were stuck there. So it wasn't like people were going out and doing things. So like the pandemic was kind of not really on my mind it was just the winter storm. It was crazy, it was a big thing that happened. So that's what was really on my mind at the time, yeah.

J.G: I'm glad that you were okay during the winter storm, you know. Some people who didn't have water, lights for days.

M.R: Yeah, I heard like a lot of horrible stories that people's pipes were busting and their roofs were falling in, so yeah.

J.G: Yeah. Or like all their food went bad. They lost all of that. That's horrible. Umm, and so, you know how you were saying that people weren't really going and all of that. Well now

recently, Governor Abbott, he lifted the mask mandate in Texas as it's been almost a year and you know he already wants to start opening everything back up and I believe. And in my opinion, most things were kind of already open back up.

M.R: Yeah.

J.G: Open everything further up as he has already lifted the mask mandate. What are your thoughts on either of those? Do you think we should be cautious? Do you think what he's doing is okay? Or do you think he should be completely open everything? Like yeah.

M.R: Definitely not open any - everything up. But I agree with you though because everything seems like it was already open. I think some places I think we're closing a little earlier or like capacity was shorter or smaller. But like, everything was kind of open to the public already. So why on top of that lift the mask mandate, it didn't make any sense to me. Especially, because it's not a hard thing to do, but a lot of people wanted to say it's their right and you know being all this stuff into it. And say that it's not healthy or whatever and this and that. But it's not a big deal and it's overall helping people and I think that people need to do it. And when I see people not wearing them in public I'm just kind of like give them a dirty look, kind of like girlll what are you doing like, do you not care? Like it's just really selfish I think. Umm so what he did was pretty - is kind of adding to that fuel of people saying it's not working, it's not doing anything, you know all of those people that were - even like I've heard like mask - anti-maskers were like attacking people for wearing masks. You know, like coming for them and telling them things. And it's like that's, what are you doing? You know you're not making the situation any better lifting the m-mandate causes more problems I think. So continue to mask, keep distance, keep taking all those precautions. I think that's important. So what he did was pretty stupid and selfish I think.

J.G: I completely agree. I know there are some people that are like there are vaccines that are out, but also at the same time, I hear that the anti-maskers are also anti-vaccine. So it's kind of like where do we go from there?

M.R: Yeah. And it doesn't make any sense because it's like why would you want to like keep it here like? Like doing - doing all these things like not getting vaccinated or not wearing a mask is just going to keep the virus here for a longer time. So if you're really that upset and want to go back to the life that we had or whatever, like go back to normal. Wouldn't you want to aid in helping, like just bringing the virus down you know just doing the things you need to do in order

for it to go away. Or you know, not have so many cases. You would think that people want to help, but you know, people are going to do what benefits them. I think they're selfish, so yeah.

laughs

J.G: Wow! You are not for these anti-mask people at all.

M.R: No, no, no. No, no, no.

J.G: They're not in our fandom, nothing. I don't know why I said that. Okay, and last question I have for you here would be, would you tell future generations about the pandemic? Like your kids or just random kids you see on the street.

M.R: Hey dude, did you hear about this? Let me tell you about this time I went through. I would definitely tell people, younger generations that are coming about this because it's crazy. And it's like, wow, you live through that? And I'll be eighty-five years old and be like, yeah I lived through this pandemic and it was crazy and I did all of this. You know. I think it's important to share and they're probably going to learn about it in school too, you know. And by then I hope that people are more umm, I don't know, what's it called? Uhhh, hygiene! They have hygiene, they're cleaner, they're washing their hands more and not breathing on people. You know, I hope they learn from this also. Yeah I would definitely tell other generations, younger generations about it.

J.G: Is there anything you would like to say to anyone who may be watching from the future about -

M.R: *gasp*

J.G: Or anything like that?

M.R: That's so much - I don't know. Hi guys, what's up?! I don't know. Umm I hope you are watching this and thinking wow this is crazy or laughing at us. Or just you know having a good time listening to this conversation about this horrible things that has happened. We are living through still. Yeah, good vibes only. Stay safe.

J.G: Okay, well thank you miss Mary Kate Ruiz. It was a pleasure interviewing you and hearing your thoughts on the pandemic and what you and all of us are still going through. I appreciate you being here so -

M.R: Thank you, I had a good time.

J.G: Well byyyeee!

M.R: Byeee!

