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Capturing Quarantine: Student Pandemic Experience Journal

Angela Sheridan

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Pandemic Timeline March 2020 – August 2021

March 6 - 9, 2020: "Allisu's Gram Parsons 50th Birthday Spectacular 2020." A great celebration for a special friend, we traveled to and from Palm Springs and Joshua Tree, CA. Allison "Allisu" Gerlach's Gram Parson's themed 50th birthday in the desert of Joshua Tree was all it should be and more. A trip to the hot springs, wading in the pools; and Pioneer Town were also unforgettable.

There was a slight concern of the Coronavirus lingering in the air. There was an older, weathered-looking white man wearing a mask hanging out at the "Inn". A friend of mine, Janice was really concerned about the virus that made its way from Wuhan, China to the U.S. Adolfo read tweets that mentioned a cruise ship with people sick with the virus were being docked in California.

I am bewildered that there are others talking about the virus. I recall thinking that if it was something to worry about, we wouldn't have been allowed to get on an airplane and our flights would've been canceled. I convince myself there is nothing to worry about. People are just fear mongering.



The second to last day of our trip we drove thru and explored Joshua Tree National Forest. It was cool and breezy in the shade, but the sun was hot. At dusk we headed towards Palm Springs.

We didn't think it'd be too difficult to find a room that evening, but you never know. We grab some burritos and scope out some hotels online. We arrived at a hotel just after dark. There was no one in the lobby and there was no wait at the front desk, but the phone was ringing off the hook. Two men were working. We both expect that the place must be booked but figure we should at least gather more intel. A man apologizes we had to wait.

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He tells us there's no problem accommodating us because of all the cancelations. Adolfo asks if it is because of the virus and the man says he's not sure, but that many events in the area have been canceled. He tells us that he was just hired last week because the hotel anticipated they'd be busy and needed some seasonal staff.

When we get to our room, there is a note that says the room has been extra cleaned and sanitized for our safety. I am starting to feel naïve that I don't know more about the news around the virus. We get settled into our room and I notice that it's not very clean. There are water rings, still wet, and something sticky on the night table. I immediately begin wiping clean the room's surfaces with wet wipes.

On our last morning of our trip we took the Tram over Palm Springs and it was stunning. We spent the day in the mountains and had lunch. We saw hand sanitizer dispensers everywhere.



We land safely back in Chicago and take a Lyft from the airport.

March 13, 2020: “An Eventful Day”: Trump Declares COVID-19 a National Emergency

It's been a week filled with coming off a vacation high and catching up on depressing local news and events. The city of Chicago, and the college have been sending updates and possible scenarios if COVID-19 becomes a threat to our community. That afternoon the

school issues an emergency alert sending students, faculty, and staff home.

When I get home, I turn on the news and every network is broadcasting a press conference at the White House. I see and hear for the first time from Dr. Fauci. President Trump is also speaking. I needed Trump to admit it before I thought the virus was a

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problem. I sense tension between Fauci and Trump and it makes me uneasy with what Trump is saying. I sense he is downplaying the virus and decide I can't watch anymore.

March 15, 2020 “Everything is Canceled”: CDC announces Americans should cancel gatherings of 50 or more for next two months. I am not as concerned as I should be for me or my loved ones. We will all just retreat to our homes while the world “disinfects” and “sanitizes.” The news reports that the city of New York is cleaning and sanitizing the subway and busses and I'm optimistic about the fresh, clean start that I feel this dirty world needs. I've been following Fauci and feel confident in his role and what he has been saying. I decide I have “faith in Fauci” and need to remain calm, but why is everyone panic buying and posting memes about toilet paper on social media? I'm confused with how people are reacting and why I don't seem to feel as worried.

March 16 - April 4, 2020 “The Beginning of Remote Everything” Columbia College Chicago class instruction is suspended; faculty and staff work remotely. I brought my laptop and things to work from home, but as the weeks pass I'm remembering what I left at the office, like frozen meals in my mini fridge, my yoga ball chair, my extra monitors, my favorite teas, etc. My mind starts to wander a bit and I find myself thinking about what campus is like right now, the people I work with and the others part of the college community. I think about having lunch and taking a walk in the Loop. I think about things that make work and school more enjoyable. Yet again I'm optimistic. I'm beginning to like working and meeting remotely. I suspect that the expectations at work will surely be more relaxed with all the chaos. With each week though, demands and tensions increase instead.

We are approaching mid-terms, but classes have been put on-hold and students were told not to move forth with homework, assignments, projects, etc. Later we'll learn it's because resources are not equally accessible.

April 6, 2020 “Remote Learning”: Columbia College Chicago class instruction resumes online/ remote; faculty and staff continue working remotely. I feel under the weather on a regular basis. Is it Covid? Flu? Allergies? A Hangover? Depression? The list of questions are the same every day. Online working and learning immediately has taken its toll.

April 10, 2020 “Why Am I So Emotional?”: At this point it has been hard to be engaged in anything and I'm almost immediately becoming anti-social, introverted, and more comfortable living in a bubble.

My first virtual event since the pandemic is a Career Talk with ABC News Editor and Colum Alum Ann Servedio followed by a Meet-and-Greet with Big Shoulders VP and Colum Alum Frank Hanes. Students seem obligated to attend, not entirely engaged, and uneasy. I feel compelled to have a heart-to-heart and address the students with the uncertainty happening as career seeking students and adapting to remote learning, job searching, and interviewing. I become emotional and cry!

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April - May, 2020 “Virtual Happy Hours”: My first virtual happy hour with friends would be over the Houseparty app with “Ladycation” friends from Portland and LA. We share experiences, stories, and laughs. We have the best of intentions to meet weekly on Fridays and most of us do, for a few weeks. It quickly fizzles as we express having other obligations or just becoming burnt out from so much screen time.

“Euchre with my Michigan Girls” would be my first time getting together virtually with girlfriends for drinks and an online euchre game over the Houseparty app and game/Euchre app.

Getting together virtually from Chicago with my girlfriends all over the country has been a lot of fun! It’s not the same as being together in person annually or a couple times a year at most, but we all seem to want to make the best of it and share how experiences early-on in the pandemic.

May 1, 2020 “If the Virus Doesn’t Get Us Something Else Will”: Gun rights activists and supporters across the nation protest COVID-19 restrictions. Gun owning citizens of my home state of Michigan are an embarrassment as they threaten to kidnap Gov. Whitmer.

We take a drive to Chicago’s Bridgeport neighborhood to Henry C. Palmisano Nature Park. Getting out of the apartment, unplugging, even if briefly becomes imperative to my mental state. I begin to realize that being outside and doing more outdoors will be key in the coming summer as we head into another season during a pandemic.



May 11 - 15 “A Semester of Remote Learning During a Pandemic”: Classes come to an end, and I work with two student groups collaborating on, submitting and presenting our final projects – completely virtual. It’s been a mad dash to the finish and although we’ve done our best to meet and work together virtually around our schedules, we’ve not talked a lot about personal challenges and kept our focus on completing our courses. For my Developing a Marketing Plan class we submit a plan for Pet Smart that we’ve adapted to include health and wellness food ordering and delivery services through trending

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services and apps such as GrubHub and UberEats. For my Branded Entertainment class we present a campaign to be used internally to promote to employees “United Airlines New Uniforms.” Students also participate in the “Manifest Rises 2020,” Columbia’s completely virtual senior showcase. History is in the making.

The relief of the semester ending would be short-lived, as I develop anxiety about the violence increasing throughout Chicago and my neighborhood. I no longer feel safe even during the day-time hours stepping outside for a walk. I start to move throughout the day and evening clinging to those times where there’s something to break up the monotony. Adolfo and I start a ritual where he picks me up after work and he drives me around to pick-up groceries, get something to eat, or just to get out of the apartment. I liken myself to a dog, who’s so excited to see their master when they come home, and driving around with my head out the window taking in the scents and sounds of the city.

May 19 - 31, 2020 “Reopening and BLM Protests; the World is in Turmoil”: 43 states begin some sort of reopening after COVID-19 shutdowns. We plan a short road trip to Indiana to shop in retail stores. Masks are optional, but stores racks and shelves are depleted, and merchandise is slim pickings. What felt like a chance to do something “normal” was a complete let down.

Memorial Day would be spent in Lawton, MI. Masks are now required in this state at most stores and retail businesses but, it feels more relaxed nonetheless because of the outdoors. We spend a weekend on the lake fishing and grilling. I return feeling productive and able to get on the computer and look at screens again. Never have I felt as recharged as I did from that short break.

Protests caused by the murder of George Floyd break out across hundreds of cities in the U.S. and around the world. We want justice for Breonna Taylor. We want white women harming her dog and accusing a birdwatcher in Central Park to be held accountable for racially profiling and exploiting her power. We want change and communities rally and unite in protests all over the country.

Helicopters hover and circle the city of Chicago. The city is burning with tension and unrest and we want nothing more than to get away even if for another short day retreat.

We visit friends in South Bend for a backyard party and stay overnight. Its ends up feeling unnerving to be away from home, but also not wanting to go back to the violence and crime in Chicago, we feel in limbo. We are sitting around the yard the next morning when we realize that overnight we’ve all received emergency alerts and social media shows the city has meanwhile been in an uproar and surging with rage. Curfews are being enforced, so we head back before the highway exits close and bridges go up. As we leave Indiana towards home, stores and businesses are closing and preparing for looting and destruction. As we get closer to the city, plumes of smoke are rising up into the sky, highway exits are literally being blocked off as we approach, and sirens can be heard everywhere.

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June 2020 “Racially Divided”: Somehow the Pandemic has come to represent and mean something more than a contagious infection taking the lives of thousands of people on our planet. Especially in America, people of color, documented, and undocumented immigrants are at an overwhelming disadvantage as Trump and his supporters continue to fuel fires around race, defunding the police, mask mandates, and several divisive issues. At a time, I recognize as being crucial for coming together as a country and a world to battle the Pandemic, I feel helpless to the other issues these communities are facing.

The True Chicago organization hosts the “ZOOM OPEN HOUSE RACIAL INJUSTICE IN AMERICA”. Four creatives were supposed to share their thoughts on what George Floyd’s death means to them, the creative community, and our country. Instead, the event is Zoom bombed by racist, online event hackers. I sit on my balcony and watch from my laptop mortified reading the uncontrollable vitriol coming thru the chat.

I also attend the event “Supporting International Students with Job Searching.” This is a discussion where DACA is a big topic. Race and discrimination are prevalent in the conversation, and overall, I feel job searching becomes less of the priority for advising international students at the current time. Personally, I begin further research on resources but also still feeling I wish to do more. As I take appointments with international students, they share their challenges with me and how some are stuck in Chicago, or in their home country because of the pandemic and employment seems overwhelmingly difficult.

We plan our first camping trip during the Pandemic around the “Distant Disco with Lady D - Chicago Style.” At Woodhaven Lakes, IL. This is my first virtual DJ event, and rather than experiencing it from home, we create an outdoor venue. As part of the promotion, we received a disco light, which inspired us to light up our entire site.

Our small Covid-free crew had so much fun camping we reunite for Trolls at the Morton Arboretum. A We didn’t think to bring water



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or snacks. And we didn't realize we could drive to see many of the trolls. It was a scorching 85 degrees! It was as if extra planning to be safe and compliant during the Pandemic was impacting our capacity to properly prepare for outings like this.

July 4 - 5, 2020 "Covid Schmovid": Independence Day weekend in Michigan with family and friends was a ruse. A lot of the weekend we talked about the differences in our states and cities as rules and mandates were still in place. No one talked about a vaccine but mostly expressed having a right to get together safely on their own terms. Surprisingly, gun rights were also part of the conversation. There was a prevailing thought that Michigan gun owners have every right to legally bear arms and that Chicago is different because we have gangs and the guns they have are illegal.

These were often uncomfortable conversations but there was an appreciation for being able to talk about the issues as intelligent and informed adults. We almost forgot about Covid. It was an interesting way to spend the holiday and little did I know, the last time I would see Michigan friends and family for a year.

July 5, 2020 "R.I.P. Cousin Kristie Fader": The loss of my cousin Kristie was sad and also a significant reminder of what we could and couldn't do during Covid. Around this time, it was very much about being grateful for our health, and not getting sick. Kristie lived most of her life with MS and was a resident in an assisted living home in Michigan when Covid struck. Despite her declining health, visitation was limited and family and loved ones weren't permitted to see her. Along with the rest of my family, at the time, I looked forward to getting thru the Pandemic and seeing her at Christmas to catch up. I thought of her and how lonely it must be lately. Then she suddenly passed from heart problems. It was disheartening to know she did not have visitors in the last weeks of her life. I would not have the chance to say goodbye.

Aug. 6 - 9, 2020 "Annual Girls Weekend is a Bust": This girls' weekend at Camp Merlot in Johannesburg, MI would be the most dramatic girls weekend in our Michigan girls weekend trip history. Being able to travel to see one another, eat, drink, and party

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as long and loud as we want was a disaster in the making. We had been getting together annually for 15 years and come away with the greatest of memories. But something was different this year. I believe some were perhaps carrying side effects of working remote and either not having the discipline, or being stressed from working remote, had led to abusing alcohol and prescriptions on a more regular basis. By the time we got together for this weekend, it became obvious some were losing grip and passive aggressive remarks among the girls soon became all out honest anger about past and present issues some have had against one another. I tend to avoid confrontation at all costs and found myself trying to step-up and salvage the weekend by mediating. In the end it wouldn't be the last girls weekend, but some members would be cast out, there would be no apologies, and some friendships came to a sad end.

Aug. 12, 2020 “Happy 70th Birthday Uncle Hank”: Our family surprised my Uncle Hank with a Zoom 70th Birthday get together. Due to social distancing, some groups of family members joined from all over the country. It was painful, but also comical at times to watch the older guests struggling with the technology. It was clunky but what matters was we made it happen. What I remember most is that I could see my parents in Michigan, I could see my sister and niece and nephews in Windsor, Canada and having a moment of foreshadowing that this may be the only way we can see each other for a long time. My parents couldn't see or hear everyone and didn't seem to be getting the hang of it. I was pretty concerned because Pat, my stepfather can be old school and expressed how they didn't like Zoom and would rather get together in person. He is the type to worry about privacy and security and didn't want a webcam. The event put me into problem solving mode and how I would be able to convince my parents getting on board with some sort of remote technology was essential to keeping us connected.

Sept. 2020 “Another Season of Remote Everything” Learning, Working, and Connecting: We head into the new semester with a mix of online and hybrid class options and I'm okay with it. Being an older, returning student, this format is suiting me and I'm looking forward to the experience as being an opportunity and hoping will be optional in the future as I continue my education.

Oct. 7, 2020 “Career Center's Virtual Internship and Career Fair”: Our first large-scale remote career event is poorly attended. Our staff and employers are disappointed and take it as no more than students are becoming Zoom fatigued. And frankly I am too. We are talking about it, we are acknowledging it, we understand it, yet we are still exhausting our resources to put on virtual events with little turnout. I feel badly for everyone involved. The empathy I have for students is causing so much anxiety.

Oct. 16, 2020 “Cousin Ashley and Steve's Wedding”: A live broadcast from a church in Michigan, I attended during my lunch on a Friday afternoon and it's bittersweet. I can

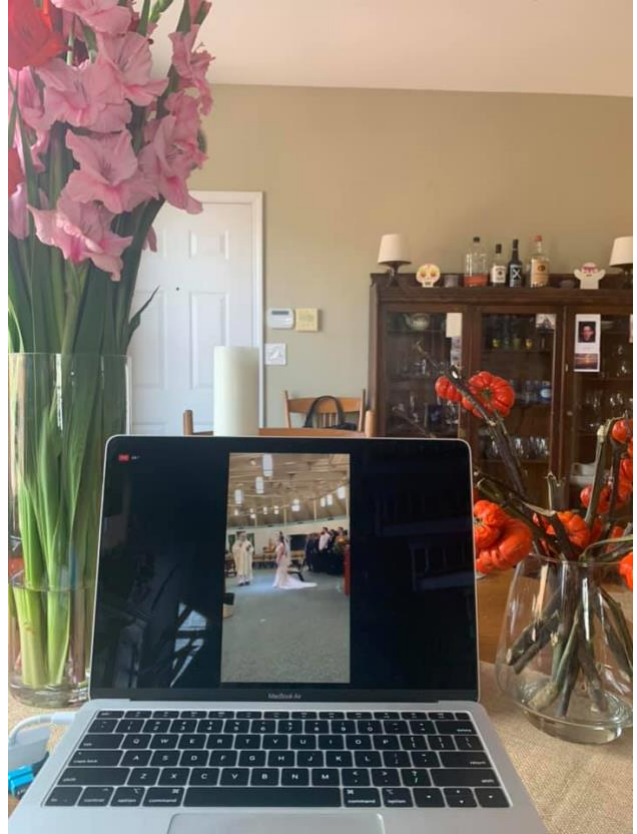
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see about 30 people in the church, some with and without masks. This really does feel like the next best thing to attending an out-of-town wedding. There may not have been dinner and an open bar, and getting together to see family, but I also didn't have to take off any time from work.

Oct. 31, 2020 "It's All About the Kids":

The next best thing to working during a pandemic is to be able to do it outside on a beautiful day. We volunteered for the Arts in the Dark UPSIDE DOWN Halloween Parade in Washington Park, Chicago, IL. We dressed up as Oompah Loompah's to show the kids that Halloween could still be celebrated safely and from a distance. A parade of vehicles, including Mayor Lori Lightfoot drove thru the park to see Halloween themed artists and creative organizations performing and at the end each kid in the vehicle got a bag of candy.



Masking up outdoors never felt so good.

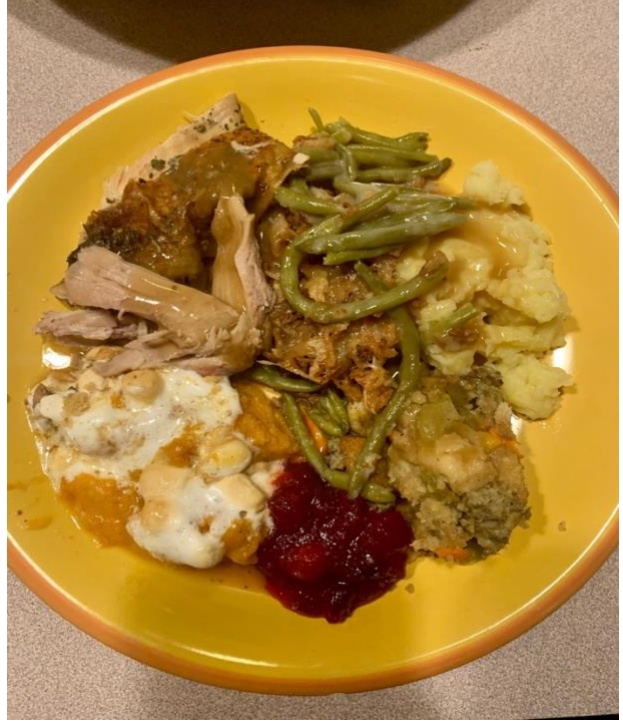
Nov. 26, 2020 "Thanksgiving Our Way":

Unfortunately, the past three Thanksgiving holidays I wasn't able to see my family because of work and school obligations, and this year during Covid also prevented that. Adolfo comes from a Mexican family and doesn't do a traditional turkey or anything remotely like a traditional holiday meal. It was also around this time that we had learned that his sister and some of his family had not been honest about having contracted Covid and possibly exposing us to the virus. With hopes of seeing my own family for the upcoming holidays, we were being more vigilant than ever to be careful not to get sick. It was at first a great disappointment to hear of this irresponsible behavior, but we turned lemons into lemonade and made our own traditional turkey dinner with all the fixin's. Go Lions!

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Dec. 24 - 31, 2020 “The Holidays, Covid-Style”: My parents sent a Christmas card breaking the news that they would regretfully be spending the holidays alone without visitors this year. I guess it was to be expected but it was still heartbreaking. Traditionally we would get together on Christmas Eve with my Stepdad Pat’s side of the family, one of the Fader families would host and after mass we all would get together for dinner and sing Christmas Carols. My Aunt Cindy plays the zither, and our singing is actually really terrible. But nonetheless I was really missing having been away from my family for this long. We organized a family Zoom on Christmas Eve and some of the older folks were better with the technology. Even over Zoom it was obvious there was a family member missing and that was Cousin Kristie. Kristie, my



Mom, Cousin Henry, and Uncle Mark all have birthdays on Christmas Eve so it’s a big celebration for them as well. Obviously it just wasn’t the same, but we did manage to sing a carol or two and happy birthday to everyone including my Cousin Kristie in heaven.



Dec. 27, 2020 “Farewell Ruby”: I sold my car and it was another bittersweet goodbye. I had gone across the country from Chicago to California and back in that car and made the most incredible memories. The day reminds me that life is a journey. Ruby had her own journey and was about to embark on her second life. I said farewell to my longtime friend. Truly my ride-or-die the last 15 years. Oh the places we would go! Goodbye Ruby. So long 2020.

Jan. 2021 “The Truth Comes Out”: One evening I’m on the phone with my parents. To vax or not to vax? That is the question. Pat says Mom is strongly considering it. As someone who moved from her home country of Thailand in the 70’s she was immunized and took vaccines in England and the States. He on the other hand is concerned about long-term effects especially for kids and young adults and their reproduction organs. It

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was developed too fast... What will this mean if we, or my niece or nephews have children? I admit I share the same concerns, but I have trouble wrapping my head around alternatives to moving forward in a pandemic. Surprisingly, Pat, the “anti-vaxxer” will receive the vaccine a few weeks later.



New year new what? A new president, VP, and administration. Same virus, same situations, same fleeting feelings shifting between hopelessness and hopefulness.

My sister and I text back and forth the day of the attack on the Capitol. We exchange thoughts on media outlets and I realize we have different POVs. I never had the nerve to outright ask her if she is a Trump supporter. She seems appalled by what’s happening, as am I, and in the past never explicitly naming him and not expressly coming across as supportive for his agendas. I’m baffled by everything that is happening and with what I’m coming to know.

Feb. 2021 “A Birthday, a Break, but Not Really”: Beautiful flowers from my friend Allison brighten my day and remind me how blessed I am to have beautiful friendships. This will be as eventful as my birthday proper gets. Truthfully, it becomes a blur as the next semester starts and it is again, all online.

A discreet weekend trip up North Michigan with the girls will be my first time traveling out of the city and getting on planes since March of 2020. I’m excited and anxious all at the same time. Other than this small group of girls, I’m keeping it under the radar. I have



intentions to quarantine, but don’t want to be judged otherwise. I’m taking an online Entertainment Marketing class and homework is due Mon. Can I pull this off? Amy gets me there via her air miles – once again, a generous and blessed friend. She’ll be getting the first dose of the vaccine the day before she swoops me up from the airport and we head North to Tanya’s cottage in Charlevoix, MI.

The O’Hare and Flint airports, and travelers don’t really intimidate me. The plane is small, and everyone is masked – until I arrive in Flint and a mother appears angry and shouting into her phone. Neither her nor her kid are

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masked. I've already texted Amy earlier in the morning and find it a little odd she didn't respond. I retrieve my luggage and call her. I can tell by her voice that she just woke up. No biggie, I wait in the airport and do homework. She's groggy when she picks me up and I can see she is progressively not feeling great. The vaccine wipes her out with flu symptoms most of the weekend.

We laugh and giggle our faces off at Boyne Mountain tubing in the snow. I "hide" in pictures but am so happy to share the experience with my girls.

Between eating, drinking, dancing, singing, and partying at the cottage I complete and submit 3 hours worth of homework. A much-needed break was not really a break but worth sacrificing the time.

Work hard play hard becomes my motto at this point in my life and throughout the rest of the year.



March 2021 “One Pandemic Year Later”: At work, online presentations and requests that I virtually meet with film and TV classes to talk about everything from career development to reel reviews are building momentum. Never have I felt so “in demand.” Students aren't entirely engaged or participating, but those who are seem genuinely determined to come out of the Pandemic prepared and optimistic about finding a job in the industry. Throughout the

rest of the semester, several students follow-up with me directly and I feel good about the work I do.

At this point in the Pandemic, I do reflect on the past year and how far we've come and not come. I'm still not sure about the vaccine but I'm doing a lot of research and remaining as informed as I can be. I know I'll be making a choice, or forced to make a choice sooner or later.

April 2021 “Stuff's Getting Real”: A chance for new beginnings is what I usually feel around Easter. But lack of a Spring Break and the exhaustion that's come with living, working, and school during a pandemic is taking its toll on my state-of-mind.

Pictures and posts of vaccine takers are flooding my social media feed. An invitation to my friend Denise's birthday party turns from an eager, “YES!” to regretfully, I can't make it when the realization sets in that there will be a mix of vaccinated and non-vaccinated

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attendees. The party has a Chinese theme, and I don't quite put it together at first, but learn that the hosts are also celebrating the end of the "Chinese virus"! I'm shocked, disappointed, and not ready for this kind of social situation.

May 2021 "Is this what "Normal" Feels Like?" A Kentucky Derby party on the first Saturday in May brings a sense of normalcy. The Derby is something I celebrate every



year. We spend the afternoon with fellow Derby-loving friends and bet on the ponies from a backyard in the city. It felt good to wear my Derby hat again and sip mint juleps.

I may not have got to visit yet with my Mom, but on Mother's Day we head down to the United Center and get the J-n-J vaccine. Easy, peasy, and almost instantly feeling a sense of security. Unexpectedly, this sense of safety is almost overwhelming. In the coming days and weeks, I will gleefully be maskless in public in grocery and retail stores. I feel the eyes of others still behind the mask observing me exuding freedom. At this point in the Pandemic I become aware of how it feels to wear and not wear a mask in public. It's a false sense of security knowing that there are unvaccinated people not wearing masks. It's not even about being fair, or their own safety that gets to me, but the dishonesty.

June 2021 "We Gotta Get Outta This Place": And so we do. We take a week-long road trip to the Outer Banks of North Carolina to Ocracoke Island. We stop in Mayking, KY. Our host and friend Christina takes us to her little town bar with live music and nary a masked person in sight. Coming from the city, we are greeted and treated as if we are celebrities. We spend a night in the holler and hit the road to NC the next morning.

After the longest drive, and a 2-hour delay in traffic we almost make it to the East Coast. We stay a night on the mainland so we can see the beach in the morning in all its glory. It's been a relief to feel the sun on our entire faces and go in and out of places of business without a mask. Tourists and citizens alike seem to be more friendly and beaming with positivity. I'm loving this sense of freedom and hoping it carries out into July for the real celebration of freedom on the 4th of July.

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We drive to the Southwest end of the Outer Banks, NC and take a ferry to Ocracoke Island. We camp on the beach and tool around the most quirky and unusual place I've ever been. We eat the most delicious seafood and the casual vibes are refreshing. The days and nights are spectacular.

On the way back we visit the Warm Springs State Park, WV. I take a dip in George Washington's bathtub and spend the day wading in the springs. The history is interesting but also in awe with how old the place is and that these pools still exist.

The last day of our trip is spent in Hocking Hills, OH. We take mini hikes through the park and see magnificent waterfalls and grottos. An afternoon storm rolls in and we have one last hike we want to see. We decide to wait it out and 20 minutes later the storm breaks and we hit the trail. The land looks, smells, and feels fresh and clean. The falls are in full effect because of the rain. We see the Devil's Bathtub and call it a day.

As we reach Northern Indiana we stop for gas. It was short-lived and masks are now a thing again.



July 2021 "Sweet Freedom": My first trip back to Michigan in over a year to see family is short and sweet over the Independence Day holiday break (which was one extra day). Mom and Pat shower us with hospitality and Mom makes all our favorite Thai foods and cooks up a feast almost daily. We spend one night in the backyard watching fireworks explode around the neighboring lakes. We spend a day on my friends' Jen and Brandon's

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lake for 4th of July shenanigans. Since the pandemic, we've not seen each other for our annual get togethers and trying to remember if it was a year or two before the last time. We laugh when we find pics confirming it was a year ago, and that it feels so much longer!

As I work on this timeline project, I'm reminded that a year ago the conversations were about guns, and the right to wear a mask or not, and shutdowns. I'm learning from myself and others how different our values and beliefs can be yet we can still remain connected and get along despite these differences.

I rendezvous in New Buffalo, MI at the beach with girlfriends and some of their kids. It's another much needed trip to see friends in real life, but I'm neck deep in starting my first summer class ever. I again sacrifice the time and do my best to submit the first-week's assignments. Work hard, play hard.



As if July hasn't been eventful enough, I spend another weekend at the beach in Michigan City, IN. The summer class can't stop me from getting together in real life with friends I've not seen in over a year. Most all of us are working at some point throughout the weekend. We all do our best to catch up and bring everyone up-to-date. Conversations take place around politics and the vaccine, and despite the differences it's okay.

The effects of the wildfires in Canada can be seen in the hazy skies. Before we know it, the weekend is over.

Reflecting on my timeline for living thru a Pandemic has been interesting. As the days, weeks, months, seasons, and over a year has passed, I was conscious of living in the moment and not knowing what tomorrow would hold. I see where it feels we've come so far, and we have, but I also feel that depending on events, sometimes it feels time [passes quickly and time passes slowly.

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