

Hist 715 Oral History Alexis

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SPEAKERS

Alexis Ingrebretsen, Emily Demler

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- E** Emily Demler 00:01
So what is your name? And then Can you spell it for the record?
- A** Alexis Ingrebretsen 00:04
Yes. My name is Alexis engebretson. And you spell it a l e x i s and then the last name Ingrebretsen is i n g e b r e t s e n.
- E** Emily Demler 00:22
All right. And then where are you from?
- A** Alexis Ingrebretsen 00:24
I am from crane Lake, Minnesota, which is like five miles south of Canada.
- E** Emily Demler 00:32
What year were you in school when the pandemic hit?
- A** Alexis Ingrebretsen 00:36

20 Oh, say 2020. No, I was a senior. but I'm a super senior now.

E

Emily Demler 00:44

And then mentally How are you doing with a pandemic?

A

Alexis Ingrebretsen 00:47

I've gotten used to it in the beginning I wasn't doing great, but now I'm fine.

E

Emily Demler 00:53

How do you think your experience during the pandemic is different Then others?

A

Alexis Ingrebretsen 01:00

Well The fact that they kicked me out of my housing and forced me to like move back in a very short period of time and moving back requires like driving nine hours back home with all of my stuff that's a little different than some people who had their own apartments who could Just stay there and live there the whole entire time so I was forced to go home and go back to my childhood and do schoolwork In the presence of my parents and whatnot, so that's a little different.

E

Emily Demler 01:33

What about your experience has felt universal?

A

Alexis Ingrebretsen 01:38

Like Like,

E

Emily Demler 01:40

yeah like how is it Similar to other people's experiences?

A

Alexis Ingrebretsen 01:45

it's similar in a way because I haven't been able to do anything and nobody's been able to do anything and we have all just been like paused In our lives, I feel like I think this

semester was okay because people weren't getting the hang of it, but for the first, you know, last semester in the semester before that when the pandemic was at its peak and stuff, everybody was just paused and they were just struggling. Feel it was a collective shared experience between everyone.

E Emily Demler 02:14
How have you survived, escaped, endured, dealt with or what was your guilty pleasure During the pandemic?

A Alexis Ingrebretsen 02:22
Watching movies and TV shows online because it couldn't really do anything else. So that was that was my escape. That was it. Although I did Start my diet because of the pandemic so that was new.

E Emily Demler 02:38
Has anything been delayed for you because of COVID?

A Alexis Ingrebretsen 02:43
Um delayed for me because of COVID... nothing's really been delayed in a sense it's just been different or not happened at all.

E Emily Demler 03:01
When did you first learn about COVID?

A Alexis Ingrebretsen 03:06
um when I first learned about it I was in my public health class. We're in lecture and she was Talking about How all there's a few people in China that have this new disease and what Not it probably won't be that big, famous last words. And we were just learning about it and then we start monitoring it through This public health class that I was taking And then The first time that our ever really affected me was when I was at work. I was at the Medical College being a fake patient for the med students To practice on me, and I got an email saying that like Milwaukee was going to be, you know, taking two weeks off and stuff like that. I'm like, Oh, okay.



Emily Demler 03:59

So was that the moment that you first realized that this is going to be a big deal or was there another moment besides that?



Alexis Ingrebretsen 04:05

that was the moment. That was the moment I realized that going to be a big deal at the college actually willingly delayed us coming back for two weeks and I'm like, this never happens.



Emily Demler 04:16

What were your initial thoughts at the news of housing closing and then going on to virtual classes?



Alexis Ingrebretsen 04:23

I understood it But I was upset because I don't live in a dorm. But I live through University Housing and that like, this is an apartment complex. I thought I would be able to continue living here but They forced us to move in a very short time period and I was already home for spring break, so I had to drive down back here. nine hours pack up everything and they told us to move out within two hours and I'm like, how are you supposed to do that? It's my whole entire life you want me to move out in two hours. So I'd pack up everything. My mom and I got done around midnight. And then we got a hotel room and then drove nine hours back home with all my stuff. Because we had to have two cars.



Emily Demler 05:09

So what do you say that the university did not handle?



Alexis Ingrebretsen 05:11

No, they didn't handle it well. They sent us an email saying University Housing will remain open. Don't worry, who? So I went home for spring break because I was like they said, University Housing was going to remain open. I'll go back and you know, do all that. A week later, they were like, you got to move out now and I'm like, Okay, well, that was a lie.



Emily Demler 05:37

How did you go about moving back home?

A

Alexis Ingrebretsen 05:42

angrily. I Well, like I said, I was back home, and they gave you sign up times to move out. So I was back home in Minnesota, and I signed up for a signup time, and I was like, okay, you know, it'll be fine. And then I started panicking. Because they were talking about like, Oh, this city will be locked down and stuff like that. And I didn't know what that meant. You know, I didn't know what they were gonna like, pull you over if you're Driving or something. So, my mom and I just quickly re changed my move out date to like that next morning that next evening and we just drove down really quickly and threw everything in bins and boxes with no rhyme or reason. Just wanted to pack it up, threw it in the car like jenga and then drove back home and it took me about like a month to go through like all of my stuff. and rearrange it to like put it where it's actually supposed to be. Not just like randomly thrown in there.

E

Emily Demler 06:57

So how did being home in online school affect your education?

A

Alexis Ingrebretsen 07:05

So it sucks. Like the main thing is it regardless what my grades tell you, my like my GPA is doing extremely well for doing online stuff but I haven't actually learned a lot. A lot of the professors I had, the classes I was taking we're supposed to be in person. They were like laboratory classes that could only be taught in person. So the fact that we were learning it online, it just wasn't happening like nobody was retaining Any information and all this stuff is really important for like our boards we have to take once we graduate so I would say the last year and a half has been, like terrible for my studying abilities and my learning abilities and like everything overall academic wise.

E

Emily Demler 07:57

How did the pandemic affect your move back to Milwaukee?

A

Alexis Ingrebretsen 08:04

Moving back to Milwaukee. I would say didn't - I moved back and how I normally would like every other year when I moved back to Milwaukee you know, I, my parents come down with me and they helped me move in and everything. It just the pandemic affected

in a way where normally I would go see friends right away, but I didn't know who they Hanging out with and I didn't know who I was hanging out with while moving in. So you know it was very limited amount of like Seeing people and going out and eating and stuff so I would say it was pretty depressing in a way because there wasn't a lot to do to begin with.

E Emily Demler 08:47

How has this year in Milwaukee been different than past years like not only just living in Milwaukee but also like school and stuff?

A Alexis Ingrebretsen 08:57

Well to begin with my major this year was already different for me because it was more focused on my internship and stuff like That regard like rather than classes So it was different for me Overall but um With COVID in effect, this this semester I haven't had any in person classes and last semester I just had one in person class. And that was my favorite class because I was like Finally I get to be in person for this one time. So What was the question?

E Emily Demler 09:29

Oh how is this year in Milwaukee been different than past years but then also like school wise?

A Alexis Ingrebretsen 09:35

So School wise it's been really weird. I've like barely been on campus. And like living in Milwaukee wise this past year has been... No cause like I still went out and did stuff I was wearing a mask and you had make reservations because they had like limited amount of seating so it just made me be more aware of what I was doing. I guess you can say and I had to plan out everything I was doing because most places required reservations. So it made me be aware but also made me realize that I just didn't want to be around People because I didn't want to get sick.

E Emily Demler 10:21

So how do you think UWM handled like Adjusting back to school but in a pandemic?



Alexis Ingrebretsen 10:28

Well, As Somebody who worked At the Milwaukee Public Health department that processed, UWM's COVID samples I gotta say that UWM they definitely wanted to be on top of it. But there was an excess amount of testing. I want to feel like that they forced people to like get tested every week and stuff and I mean over I would say Oh, that's a good thing. But as somebody who had to like do the actual work behind the testing and like process it, I'm like, Oh my gosh, I've seen this name 30 times already. Yeah. I feel like they were Fine, they were actually compared to like other schools and stuff. They had like really low COVID cases, so I feel like they did something right.



Emily Demler 11:22

What has frustrated you most about the pandemic?



Alexis Ingrebretsen 11:25

um What has frustrated me most is the people who didn't take it seriously just the people who are against masks and are against the vaccine and they're just like, well, let's just go back to they way it was. I'm like, yeah, it's not going to go back to the way it was If you're going to like continue to Fight against like people trying to get it back to the way it was, you know, just just wear a mask indoors. It's you're not dying, you're not sufficating to death it's just a piece of cloth. You know?



Emily Demler 12:00

So I know I know what your major is, but just state for the record and then how you think like, your classes and like everything you learned from being in your major, how that has changed You're like input on the pandemic.



Alexis Ingrebretsen 12:14

So state my major?



Emily Demler 12:18

Yeah.



Alexis Ingrebretsen 12:18

My major is biomedical science with an emphasis in public health, microbiology. So I guess you could say that even before this pandemic happened, this was right up my alley. My classes didn't change my view point on this or anything because my classes are scientific in nature we study this to begin with, so we were just like yeah, this is like a pandemic. This is what happens you know, my classes weren't like political about it or anything. It was like this is the science behind it. Let's learn about it. You know

E Emily Demler 12:57
How has the pandemic altered your plans?

A Alexis Ingrebretsen 13:01
altered my plans?

E Emily Demler 13:01
Yes.

A Alexis Ingrebretsen 13:04
So it made me be stuck in place. I had plans to like visit my sister. I had plans to travel Yeah, that Didn't happen It altered plans, I was, I Definitely. Oh the main thing is that I was Supposed to be in Milwaukee over the summer like last summer And take summer classes and live in Milwaukee and like live in Kenilworth because of COVID that didn't happen. So the main thing is that it forced me to go back home and be back home and take summer classes and be around Those people who didn't want to wear masks.

E Emily Demler 13:54
If you could go back to march 2020 Prior to like, I think March 13th is like the big date that everybody remembers as Like the first like, oh shit moment regarding the pandemic, what would you tell yourself?

A Alexis Ingrebretsen 14:12
I would tell myself two things. So at the time Like I stated before I was working at MCW as like a practice patient for the med students to practice with and half the time they were doing breast exams. So I was making a lot of money cause they were just like feeling me up and I and you like you signed up for these slots and stuff and like it happened right in

the middle so they cut like half of the times like they got rid of half that time slots because they're like oh COVID's a thing that we can't continue you know, I want to tell myself to sign up for more before that happens, so I could have made More money and I would tell myself Be prepared for Your parents to Question Why you are awake at one A.M. getting food during finals week. I think that was like a shocker because normally when I go home I'm like on a regular sleeping schedule because I'm not in class anymore. So I was home for several months doing coursework and they were they were pretty cool about it there was just a few times when they're like, why is your sleep schedule out of whack? And I'm like Why do you think?

E

Emily Demler 15:36

Has the pandemic had any silver linings for you?

A

Alexis Ingrebretsen 15:40

The one silver lining is that if I didn't go home and like experience this like certain event with my parents like I wouldn't have started my diet. So I've actually because of This pandemic I've actually lost 55 pounds, which is the opposite of what's happening to most people. So I guess I could be grateful for that part is that I never would have started it on my own and I was also too able to like just go home and get like a breath of fresh air because the apartment I lived in before and the two roommates I lived with before we're starting we're starting to get like very sufficating and I wasn't really happy with my life so I was able to go home Be with my parents who I love and Start my diet so I guess that was a good thing About the pandemic.

E

Emily Demler 16:36

What do you hope changes once again the pandemic is over? Like either in your life or in like society?

A

Alexis Ingrebretsen 16:42

In society I hope people start taking being sick seriously because like the US way of doing things is just like if you're sick but you're not in the hospital you still gotta work yourself To the bone and I feel like that's just You go to the - Then you go to work and you get everybody sick At work, you know, and it's not helping at all. I feel like People should be take being sick more seriously. You know?



Emily Demler 17:15

What do you hope remains the same?



Alexis Ingrebretsen 17:24

Like remains the same like before the pandemic happened?



Emily Demler 17:28

like What has changed in the pandemic that you hope remains the same afterwards?



Alexis Ingrebretsen 17:35

that people are - that People won't like look at you funny if you wear a mask while you're sick and like you're out and about because I know like a lot of like Asian countries, they were masks if they're sick you know, but like in the US they're like "why are you wearing that" I feel like it should be a more common practice. Because it overall will help people in the long run.



Emily Demler 18:00

So couple question Regarding vaccinations.



Alexis Ingrebretsen 18:03

yes.



Emily Demler 18:03

What were your thoughts when you first Realized that you were eligible to be vaccinated?



Alexis Ingrebretsen 18:08

Whoo. I was surprised because I got my vaccine like really early on compared to most people and that was solely Because I worked at the health department, so I was able to get vaccine - vaccinated in January. And I was Happy I mean I know a lot of people were like, oh this, like scared of the vaccine and stuff like that. But like if you continue to do nothing that wouldn't be great. And plus, like, I never got COVID during this whole entire, entire pandemic. I wanted to keep it that way. So I was like, give me that vaccine. Please.

E Emily Demler 18:53
So you're always planned to get the vaccine when it eventually came out. Yes. What was your like a vaccination experience like like which one do get? any side effects?

A Alexis Ingrebretsen 19:03
I got the Pfizer both doses. Um, I got the second dose exactly 21 days after I got the first dose. First, like the first shot, I got Zero symptoms, nothing- nota. second Shot I Got. I wasn't sick at all. It just felt like Somebody's like, hit my arm with a baseball bat really hard. But other then That I was fine.

E Emily Demler 19:34
What would you say to people that like, are nervous about getting the vaccine or haven't gotten it yet?

A Alexis Ingrebretsen 19:41
In the wise words of Shiloh, what is his name, shilah shy...

E Emily Demler 19:47
Shia Labeouf?

A Alexis Ingrebretsen 19:48
Is it shilah or shilou?

E Emily Demler 19:50
I think it's Shia Labeouf.

A Alexis Ingrebretsen 19:52
If it's Shia Labeouf or whatever. Just do it. Um There, I would put it in perspective like this. If you're scared of being sick from the vaccine, people are only sick for like one day I would take being sick with like fatigue and stuff like that for one day over having COVID and being sick for extended period of period of time my dad got COVID and he got COVID in October. And I still don't think he has taste like he's still he's gone months

without taste and that's terrifying in my mind because I love taste so.

E Emily Demler 20:35

What's the first thing you're gonna do when like this is over like not just kind of like the semi state of being kind of open but with COVID regulations but like it officially being like, we can go back to some type of like real normalcy, normalcy.

A Alexis Ingrebretsen 20:49

Wow, I have not thought that far in advance. Because in my mind I'm like this is gonna go on forever um Like I I really Want to go like this is something that I probably shouldn't do But I really want to go to like a theme park. But like also at the same time, they'll probably be a lot of people that want to go and I'm like, No, I just don't want to deal with people but I really want to go to a theme park. I want to like I want to do something again like this Chicago trip I've planned I'm so excited to go to the Shedd Aquarium like I haven't like bought a ticket for something in so long I feel like it's just the act of like actually going to do something And buy a ticket for it's exciting. Travel. obviously I want to do that.

E Emily Demler 21:43

any places in mind?

A Alexis Ingrebretsen 21:47

Preferably not the US but I don't have the money for that. So I just got a job so I don't I got to be able to do that.

E Emily Demler 21:57

Knowing what you know Now what would you have done differently During like at the beginning of the pandemic or anything in between?

A Alexis Ingrebretsen 22:16

Well, So When I was home I didn't like leave the like small town of Crane Lake for like three months. So I feel like I could've knowing what I know now and like how that affected my mental health. I feel like I should have gone for like more walks and just like in the woods and stuff like that it's a very like rural like woodsy place. I feel like I should have just like gone out and done more but I was like, Oh, I have to stay in the house Stranger

Danger, you know I could have gone to the woods, you know, I could have went out and did a few more things I could have, I should have like talked with some friends some more and stuff. We're all pretty busy, but I feel like that would have helped to is just like keeping in touch with people a little bit more

E Emily Demler 23:15

What do you wish that either you did differently or wait I guess, I guess Just realize that was phrased weirdly Like what do you wish that we like America or even just like broadly the world did differently?

A Alexis Ingrebretsen 23:33

It's a funny question. Where do I start? I wish it would have been taken more seriously to begin with I wish there was more I wish the US was more unified because every state has their own laws. Like, like I want to say like every state had their own like law And regulations regarding like Keep like masks and all that kind stuff and like social distancing, and everything. So like every single state you could go to it would be different. Some states like lead up earlier and they were like, Oh, you can go out again without a mask and then they had like a giant outbreak again and people were like, funny. Who would have thought, you know? So I felt like early on Like other countries had low cases because there was one country they have one government the US is like divided into 15 million parts and everyone can like regulate everything. So the US just had like an insane amount of cases compared to everybody else. So I wish there was more unified front, but also at the same time Because the US was struggling so much and other countries were like haha we're superior we don't have a lot of cases now now we're gonna like lead up on the regulations and then their cases sky rockined again. I'm just like, I feel like you should have just like locked down it Like, kept it locked down, you know not just been like, Oh, it's been two weeks.

E Emily Demler 25:07

Like New Zealand?

A Alexis Ingrebretsen 25:08

Yeah, New Zealand that was a good good case of like what they Did right i mean granted New Zealand is an island and they Like, but they like locked down in the sense where like they didn't let anybody in you know they didn't let anyone out the US still let People like in and out and like we still went over to other countries like I feel like that should have been

just like stopped. I know it Stopped for a little bit but then they Let it back up again and people are traveling right Now too and I'm like Stop



Emily Demler 25:39

How did Minnesota handle Like the pandemic differently then like Milwaukee or like Broadly Wisconsin?



Alexis Ingrebretsen 25:50

So the Minnesota lockdown 10 times more than Wisconsin, I think they did, like, in general, because I remember like my parents bitching about it. But Minnesota kept on putting more more and more regulations and more like it's so hard to keep up with trends Minnesota put like a lot of regulations on compared to Wisconsin, Wisconsin was more like lacks, I guess you could say. But then Wisconsin sort of became like a hub for COVID cases. And Minnesota wasn't but then Minnesota started getting more COVID cases. It's hard to keep up with the trends, but I don't know what they did. Right. I don't know what they did wrong.



Emily Demler 26:37

Well that's all the questions I have. You answered them very well.