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Belonging and Solidarity

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Belonging and Solidarity

By Natalie Lafferty, Anne Lim, Michael Schultz

Introduction

The goal of this exhibit is to capture how belonging and solidarity within the Carleton community and the broader world were impacted by the 2020 Coronavirus pandemic. Each member of the group initially started with a particular area in mind which they tried to concentrate on gathering their items from. This exhibit is trying to capture these individuals' stories and show how these stories and images display a sense of belonging and solidarity, however, these items also show strangeness has evolved and destroyed some individual's sense of belonging as well as a limiting sense of solidarity.

Family and Solidarity

Family

These items discuss family life during quarantine, touching on both positive and negative moments. Some of the individuals interviewed feel grateful for the time with their families, but at the same time, many are balancing feelings of loneliness, being separated from the Carleton community. Not all of the items or interviews are directly connected to Carleton, giving insight into a mother-child relationship and a grandmother's Mother's Day celebration in a nursing home away from her family.

This current sophomore at Carleton reflects on her privilege, living with a family that supports her and that lets her be independent. She touches on specific family members such as her sister, graduating from high school, and her father, an infectious disease doctor, and the heightened struggles they have been dealing with, whether it be missing out on senior year of high school or having a job that is so crucial in this time.

Current Carleton Student
May 9th, 2020

“Well I think, mostly, only the last week I’ve kind of been feeling really sad about not being back at school. Just the little things like walking to Burton with people and walking to the arb and the rec and hanging out with people--just the little stuff--like leaving class. Here, I leave class and hang up my Zoom call and then I walk to the kitchen, whereas there [at school], I would walk out of Leighton and then go see people in Sayles or something. And so it’s just those

Current Student's Deep Reflections on Life During and After the Pandemic



Mother's Day Celebration in Nursing Home

This nursing home in Richmond, Virginia is bringing families together via letters, posters, and pictures. Residents' families were allowed to send something in for Mother's Day and was revealed to the residents during a Mother's Day celebration. This is an example of a lady receiving her card, clearly happy that she is able to remain connected to her family. Overall, this item reflects nursing home staffs' attempts at keep families in touch during the pandemic.

This interview between a current Carleton student and a teenage nursing home assistant provides an example of how nursing homes are keeping residents happy, connected with their families, and social with each other, despite social distancing requirements. This document touches on blood related families, but also the families and communities that exist within the nursing home.

May 8th, 2020

High schooler/Nursing home staff

“...it has probably affected my job the most at the nursing home, obviously, since the older people are the ones that are most affected. They are all pretty much stuck in their rooms and they can't leave, so we have to bring all of their meals to them. They have to stay in their rooms, they can't leave, which also leads them to be pretty lonely a lot. So, we have mainly been trying to go

Experiences of a Teenage Nursing Home Assistant

This transcribed interview between a current Carleton student and a New Jersey mother highlights the pandemic's impact on intimate family relationships. This mother is very grateful that she has had more time to spend with her young son as she has worked from home due to COVID-19. In addition, she reflects on her growing relationship between her and her sisters, despite social isolation. In the end, she admits it is hard to block out her worries and anxiety during this pandemic.

Response: "The biggest positive for me because I work full-time, I'm a working mom,...has been the quality time I've been able to spend with my son. Normally, I would not have that time, I would be at work five days a week, always busy. So, being here everyday, for seven days [a week] and getting to spend just such wonderful quality time with my son, for me, has been time that I will never get back. And honestly, for me, [it] has been the biggest silver lining of this

Positives and Negatives: A Mom's Experience in Quarantine

This document is a testimony from a current Carleton student that happens to be an only child. They admit they are used to a lack of social interaction being alone quite frequently, yet explaining how it has been more difficult than ever before only seeing their parents every day. Without Carleton friends around, and not able to physically see grandparents or other family, this student explains social isolation during this pandemic. Even though they are with their family, being a part of a smaller immediate family can be difficult for a child, no matter what age.

"In general, I am an only child so I'm a little bit more used to being alone like growing up and stuff. So, it's a little bit less of an adjustment to be alone kind of a lot, especially since I would spend a lot of my summers like that. But, then like not having that break in between to see my friends is like just even longer stretches of being alone and it's kind of like an extended [time] when I move to a new location.

Carleton Student's Experience Being An Only Child In Quarantine

In this testimony, a student still on campus reflects on his relationship with his family members as they are so far apart during this global pandemic. He explains how he really misses his family, causing him much anxiety and stress, often failing to call his family because it makes him miss them even more. He feels guilty not being home, but he knows remaining on campus was the right decision for him.

Well, my situation is quite a bit different, given that I'm still on campus. I will say that there are times when I just really really want to be at home just because I feel like my family's in a more precarious situation. You know, we live in Washington, and it's pretty bad there and yea sometimes I just feel kinda guilty, you know, that I'm not there to, you know, go through all of this with them, but I also realize that out of my best interest and for my family's best interest, the best idea was for me to stay. In terms of, I

Testimony From a Student Still On Campus

In this testimony, a Carleton student explains her family situation during the pandemic, explaining her father's compromised medical state and her mother's strengthened relationship with her brother in France.

So I guess starting with my immediate family...well it's been interesting having me and my brother home with both of my parents, all day long. It's definitely kind of strange to all of a sudden be like locked with our family. In a way, it's like kind of nice, especially with a dog, so it's like kind of, I guess in a way I'm thankful for like having time to spend with my family like since I'm going to graduate next year, it's kind

A Carleton Student's Story

Solidarity

These items reflect solidarity within different communities. Some central themes are displaying support and appreciation for first-responders, promoting hope and positivity, and celebrating the class of 2020. Using lots of creativity, these items display how communities attempted to remain hopeful and grateful despite a pandemic.



Chalk art has been popping up all over suburban neighborhoods. This specific driveway sends a message of hope, love, mental strength, and health, promoting solidarity between neighbors.

"Be Well, Stay Strong": Chalk Art

These signs outside of a nursing home in Naperville, Illinois demonstrate solidarity as they support all nursing home workers in the country, exclaiming that they are "heroes." These signs also have the dual purpose of promoting job applications, hopefully attracting more applicants as the nursing home outwardly shows its respect for and solidarity within the healthcare and residential living communities.

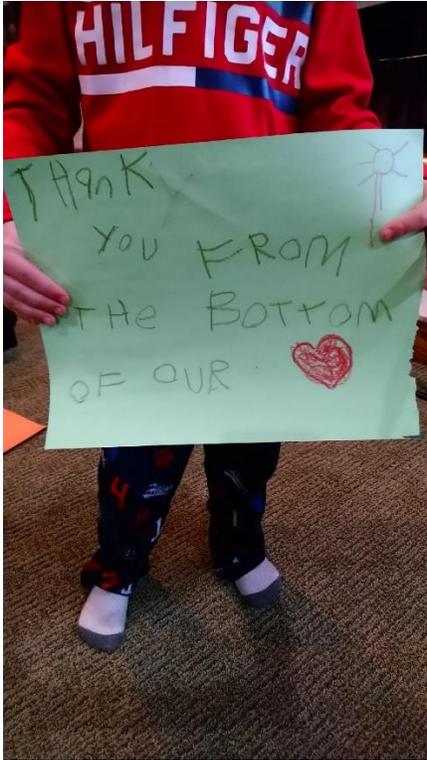


Heroes Work Here!

This sign outside of Metea Valley High School in Aurora, Illinois aims to encourage solidarity within the Metea community, asking each individual to do their part to stop the spread of COVID-19, working together to keep their area safe. Also, by displaying congratulatory messages for the class of 2020 on their sign, Metea fosters a sense of unity and positivity, virtually bringing the seniors together to celebrate their accomplishments, despite social isolation.



Celebrations and Reminders: A High School Sign



This child created some posters to show how his community supports the first responders! He refers to the medical community as his heroes, further promoting this heartfelt message from a young boy.

Art as Support!

A family used chalk to show their appreciation for all their community has done to keep them safe, including images of a stethoscope, mask, and heart.



Family Chalk Art

A community magazine promotes solidarity within their neighborhood, asking people to place candles and other lights outside of their front doors to show their support and appreciation for the first responders.



Community Magazine Promoting the Support of First Responders

Being Away From the Carleton Community You Belong To

These items contain reflections by Carleton students on the challenges of being unable to be physically part of the Carleton community due to the pandemic.

This current Carleton sophomore reflects on her experience at home, apart from all her friends at school. She addresses how it has been difficult to stay in touch with newer friends and continue relatively new relationships online if the foundation was just developing sophomore year.

Response: "So I think for me kind of a positive has been I'm really lucky to be really close with my family, so it has been nice to be able to see them more than I usually would during the school year. So in that sense, it's been really nice to be at home. In the sense of friends from school, it definitely has been hard just because at school you kind of seem to interact with a wide variety of people like going to dinner and stuff and right now it's definitely a more narrow scope of people."

Student's Experience Being Away From Friends and Campus Life

This current senior, although still living in Northfield, has had to accept that spring term was not what she wanted or expected it to be. Even though she is still near campus, she is removed from what would have been if students were still at Carleton. She does touch on her relationships with her housemates, her immediate Carleton community, but she still feels separated from the people she was "supposed" to be with and the things she was "supposed" to do if it was the senior spring term she expected.

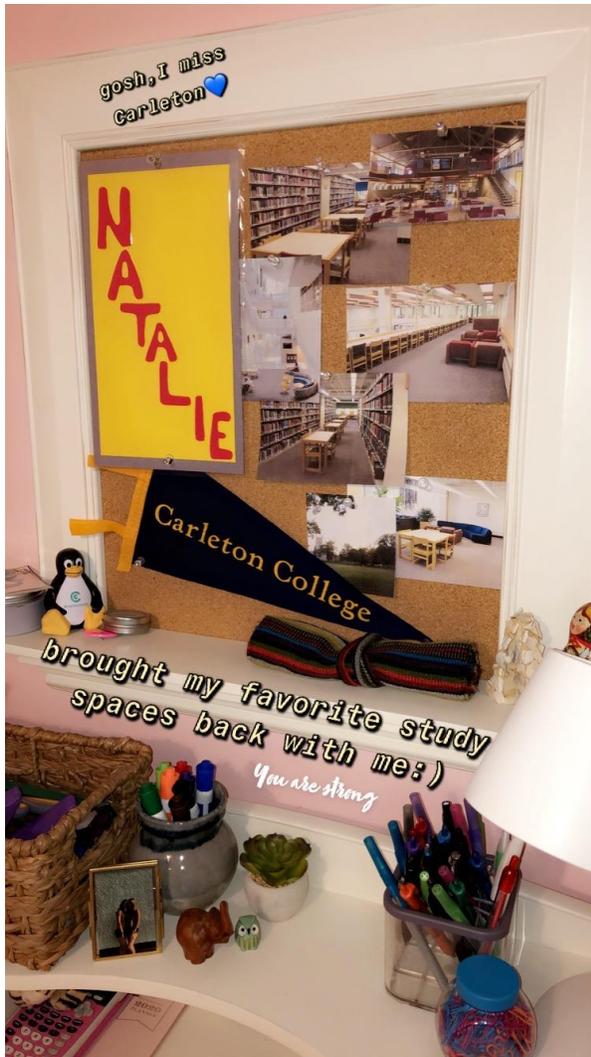
“...overall, this has been really difficult and hard, but I guess if I’m just trying to think of things that are positive that are coming out of it [this]...in some ways I’ve connected more with people who I don’t usually [connect with]. I’ve really gotten back in touch a lot more with one of my really good friends from high school...we are really close when we see each other, but just don’t

Spring Term as a Senior in Quarantine

This first year explains how being removed from the "Carleton bubble" has resulted in her and her friends reverting back to their life before Carleton. As they did not have a full year together, many first years are feeling conflicted, in between two worlds.

“I think in terms of academic life, it [the pandemic] has made me realize how valuable being in a classroom setting is with other peers. In terms of socializing and learning, I found that it’s really hard to focus when I’m on a computer...and in a household atmosphere. And also, just the

First Year Cut Short: A Carleton Student's Experience



This image is a collage that a Carleton sophomore designed for her room, sitting right above her desk, to make Carleton seem less distant. It consists of pictures of her favorite study spaces on campus, making her feel like she is still at school and that she is not forced to do work alone. It has helped her feel like she is still connected with her community at school by envisioning herself on campus!

Bringing Carleton Back Home With Me

This Carleton student reflects on the social aspect that she took for granted at school. Realizing that she had such a broad network at school has made her appreciate Carleton and campus life more than ever. Being home, she stays in touch most frequently with the swim team, grateful for such a large built in support group, but misses out on the smaller day to day interactions with people she is not as close with but still considers her friends. Overall, she explains how it is hard to stay in touch with everyone because there is a layer of intimacy over Zoom or FaceTime calls.

“Originally, I was watching it [the pandemic] happen [spread] internationally and I was like ‘oh it’s not going to affect the United States’...You always watch other countries have crises and you’re like ‘oh, but I’m safe.’ And then I watched all the other colleges in the US cancel classes, but I was like ‘Carleton isn’t going to,’ and then they did. And I was like ‘okay... well we’ll

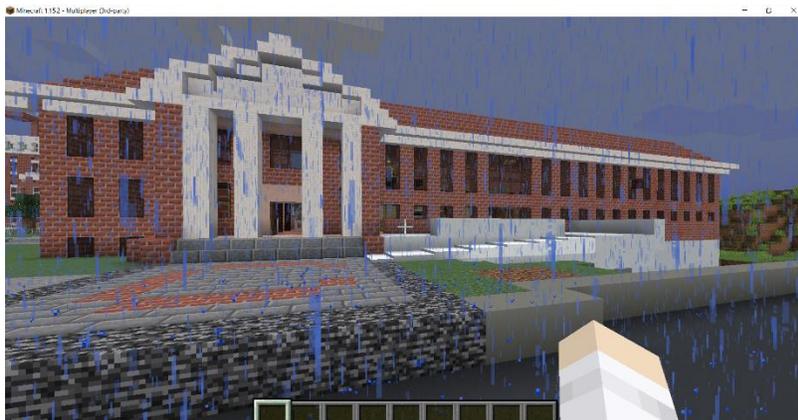
"Carleton Isn't Going To, And Then They Did"

This Carleton alum graduated after winter term 2020 when she found out Carleton most likely would not be back on campus in the spring. Being apart from her community of four years, she is able to appreciate relationships and reflect on what she learned. She explains the solidarity within the senior class toward the end of winter term, spending the most time together that they possibly could, realizing it might be their last few days together. She is grateful for the time she took out of studying to be with her friends, but she wishes she would not have waited for spring term to really connect with her friends, but rather live in the moment and enjoy each other.

“In some ways it’s been a good thing, spending this time that we normally wouldn’t have got to spend together all under one roof. I think in some ways that’s been really fun. We’ve been playing a lot of card games...or [I’ve been] playing video games with my brothers. Our family

Having to Say Goodbye: Recent Carleton Graduate's Reflections

These items collected, show the work accomplished by the Carleton community to establish some semblance of a Carleton for those students who did not live on campus. The Minecraft server was created by Lucas Demetriades at the end of March 2020.



Carleton Minecraft Server: Sayles-Hill



Carleton Minecraft Server: Sayles-Hill Interior



Carleton Minecraft Server: Upper Sayles



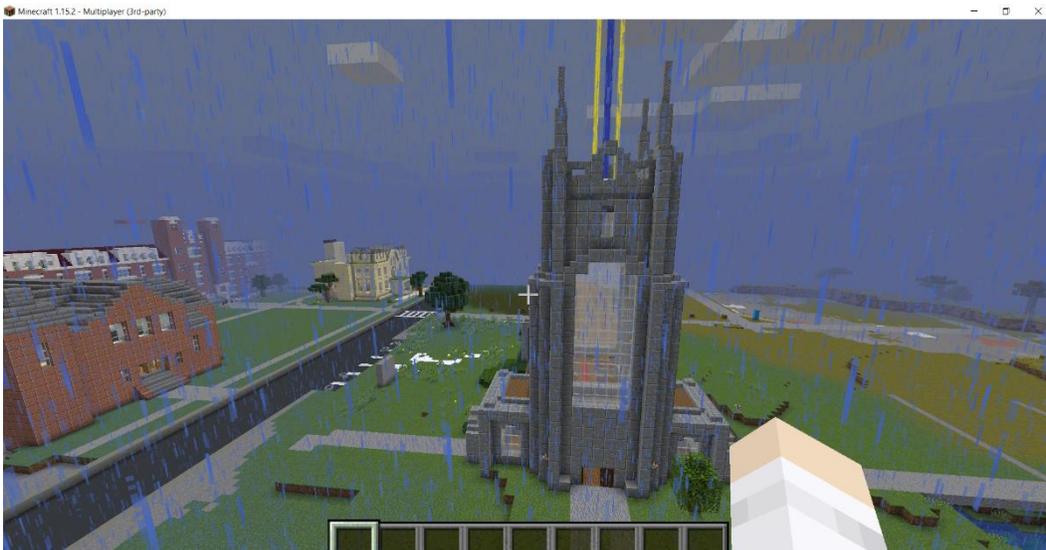
Carleton Minecraft Server: Mailboxes in Sayles-Hill



Carleton Minecraft Server: Scoville Hall



Carleton Minecraft Server: Interior of Skinner Memorial Chapel



Carleton Minecraft Server: Skinner Memorial Chapel

Lucas agreed to be interviewed about his experiences running and starting up the server and he describes the many difficulties and successes the server has experienced. Additionally, he describes the sense of community the server has created in the absence of many students living on campus. The server has brought the Carleton community together creating a space in which people can share their love of the campus.

I am very touched that people care so much about this server. I was shocked by the kindness and how many people to help build Carleton virtually. The builds on the server are incredible and I hope we can continue to make progress this summer. I cannot work on the server right now because school is

Lucas Demetriades Interview (Transcription)

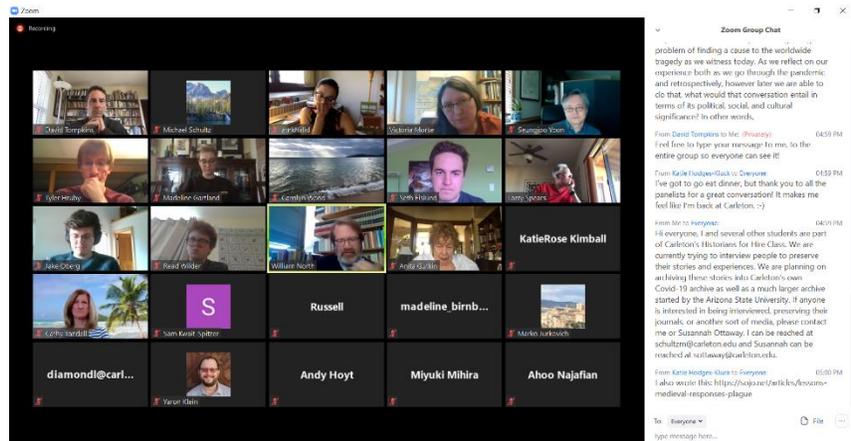


MARS Spring Symposium

Carleton continued to hold many departmental and center programs during the pandemic. These two examples of events are just a small representation of the events that took place and the people who participated. Events such as these helped members of the Carleton community connect together and still celebrate events and have interesting discussions that were not limited by distance. Some events that normally form a sense of community were cancelled for the term and could not occur because of the distance.

The Medieval Arts and Renaissance Studies Faculty and Minors held a Symposium celebrating the minors who had finished their capstones over the course of the term. Four students participated in a round table discussion of their projects.

The Center for Global and Regional Studies held a round table discussion over the history of pandemics and how people responded to them. The discussion was attended by 100 people and was well received. David Tompkins was the moderator of the discussion and the following professors participated in the event; Victoria Morse, on the Black Death and medieval responses to the plague, Amna Khalid, on the moral implication of plagues, past and present, Seungjoo Yoon, on the question of China and the interplay between epidemics and communication in East Asia, and Bill North on emergency management issues.



Virtual CGRS Roundtable

Strangers Between Worlds

Students reflect on struggling with belonging and feelings of displacement caused by the pandemic.

In this transcribed interview, an international student still on campus reflects on the meaning of nationality she used to emphasize to distinguish herself from others. The support she has received from Carleton makes her realize that her nationality would not prevent her from feeling connected and supported in the United States. At the same time, however, she sees a growing nationalistic sentiment and policy of the U.S. government that remind her of the inherent limitations in her status as a foreigner. These contradictory messages make her question whether she can genuinely belong to the States in a deeper sense. While she spends hard time navigating the sense of belonging, she continuously compares herself with less privileged others and feels obligated not to fail her classes.

I: Why did you choose to stay on campus?

P:I think there are many reasons. One, I really wanted to make sure that my studies are not disrupted. I wasn't sure how things would be like if I were to go home. I don't know how time zone difference would be managed, and I just felt like there were too much to risk especially we didn't know if the second half of spring term was going to be in-person. I couldn't risk my visa status as an international student. Another significant factor was that my other international

Interview with Win Wen Ooi (Transcription)

A sophomore international student staying with his family in Tokyo feels ambivalence toward his experiences in the United States. For the first two years at Carleton, he struggled with navigating westernized elite college system, learning cultural differences, and forging connections with domestic students. All these experiences were confusing and challenging, but he considers those as a valuable asset in his life. Carleton was not just a place where he could gain academic knowledge but also where he could personally grow. Although he appreciates his time with his family and friends in home, he likes to challenge himself further in the United States rather than "wasting time" in Japan.

Things in Japan are not very good, but I don't regret my decision because staying away from my family during this crisis is very sad and lonely. I can receive emotional support from my girlfriend and family. So I don't regret. I am happy that I made this decision.

Interview with Shinsuke Adachi (Transcription)

An international student at St. Olaf currently staying in South Korea talks about his changing views of his Korean nationality. He used to value the US citizenship as he thought that would give him more rights and benefits in the country. However, as he witnesses the way US has dealt with the pandemic and George Floyd's murder, he starts to feel proud of his nationality and citizenship. Although some international students feel guilty about coming back to their home nation for medical care only during this kind of time, he feels he deserves those benefits because he is going to perform mandatory military service for 2 years.

6. Why makes you decide to stay where you are currently at?

I decided to go back to my home in South Korea because I have a summer internship there. I was also afraid that I wouldn't be able to leave the US because of the pandemic.

Chankyung Jung Survey responses

An international student at University of Arts London talks about her unique struggles as an art major student. Most of her assignments and projects require spaces to work, frequent feedbacks from professors, and sufficient art materials. As she has to work alone in her small room and show her artwork to professor through online platforms, her learning experiences are significantly degraded. Even though she is supported by her school, she is acutely aware that she would need to rely on Korean government when the situation gets worse. In addition, it was her first year in London, and she just began to adopt herself to the new environment. As she suddenly had to stop everything that started to unfold in London, her "mind is still in UK."

5. Why makes you decide to stay where you are currently at?

My course was scheduled to be finished in June, but when Covid-19 broke out, I was worried that I might not be able to go back to Korea if UK government shut down the boarder. Also, UK health and medical system is unstable compared to Korea. If I were infected by the virus, it would be harder to get perfectly treated in UK. I thought if this worst case scenario happens, it would be better to go back to Korea to be treated in a better system.

Bo Min Kang Survey Responses

Personal Reflections

These items are personalized accounts and descriptions of the authors of the exhibit with the pandemic. Each member of the group to the best of their ability tried to answer the following questions.

1. How has the pandemic impacted you?
 - a. relationships?
 - b. future plans?

- c. lifestyle, habits, routines, etc.? What have you had to adapt to and what has changed?
 - d. Belonging?
2. What is something positive that has come out of this whole experience?
 - a. What is the most important lesson or meaningful experience you have gained from this project? Positive and Negative?
3. How has your college experience impacted your view of the pandemic?
4. What is something you think should be preserved in public memory about this time?

Group Member Responses

By itself, this pandemic and period of social isolation has been tough as it has challenged me to live in the present, not drowning in “what would have been” or “what could have happened.” On top of this, I have been struggling with the ending of a serious relationship, having to navigate these uncertain times without the person I have relied on for so long. For that reason, I feel like this term and subsequent transition home has been even more abrupt for me, as I quickly left school and a relationship behind all within a couple of days. I have been forced to process all this “ending” during quarantine and acknowledge how it has destroyed the spring term that I expected in terms of academics, social life, and relationships.

Natalie Lafferty's Final Reflections

The most challenging time for me was the last half of winter term when the virus had spread at breakneck speed in South Korea. Although I felt physically safe on campus, I was emotionally unstable as I was worried about my family and friends back at home. I had a sleep disorder as I stayed awake to check in with my family and get the latest information about a virus which directly affected my loved ones.

Anne Lim's Personal Reflection

I think a better question is how the pandemic has not impacted my life and who I am. I feel as if every facet of my being has been impacted by the pandemic in some way. The most obvious change is online schooling, which has made me appreciate in person teaching so much. I feel almost as a stranger some what to professors and friends who I have grown close to over these past two years. This strangeness has resulted in me feeling lonelier than I normally feel, however this is to be expected. Even though I regularly try to send texts, have zoom and discord calls with individuals from Carleton, it has only minorly helped me feel more comfortable.

Michael Schultz's Personal Reflection