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Carleton Students from Afar

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Carleton Students From Afar

By Marcella Lees, Miyuki Mihira, and Clara Posner

Note: This exhibit is primarily video clips, which are included as screenshots with links to the videos.

Introduction



The video above introduces the goals, collection process, and structure of the following exhibit.

From returning home to remaining on an empty campus to finding shelter in an unfamiliar location, students from Carleton College have undergone various challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, separating them from the traditional educational experience.

We wanted to share these student stories with the public.

Throughout the spring term of 2020, we interviewed over 60 students from Carleton College, collecting as many perspectives as possible. The following exhibit consists of synchronous and asynchronous segments, which are arranged based on the main questions we asked in each interview.

In the end, the goal of our exhibit is to verbally and visually represent the theme of displacement during the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on how physical and emotional separation has affected many Carleton Students.

Please watch the introduction video for more information about our collection and curation process.

Hopefully, this exhibit will contribute to the future understanding of educational and personal challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sincerely,

Marcella Lees, Miyuki Mihira, and Clara Posner

Where Students Are Staying

The map below displays the locations of the Carleton students we interviewed during the spring term of 2020.



A screenshot of an interactive map of interviewees' locations.

After virtually interviewing over 60 students across the country, we were presented with a diverse set of physical, mental, and emotional challenges due to separation from the traditional educational experience.

Home Sweet Home

For this remote term, some students went back to their childhood homes. Despite returning to the familiar, difficulties and feelings of displacement still pervaded. For others, their families had moved since they began college, and so while they were returning to their families, the location itself didn't feel like home.



Josh Isaacs '22 (he/him/his) is from and lived in San Jose, California for the remote spring term



Anna Schumacher '21 (she/her/hers) went back to her hometown of Detroit Lakes, Minnesota to live with her parents.

Isla Skinner '22 (she/her/hers) is from Laramie, Wyoming but stayed in Athens, Ohio with her parents who moved there the summer before her sophomore year.



Cherry Blossom Tree at Quincy D'Alessio's House

"My parents moved into this house during my freshman year at Carleton and I never realized this tree on our porch was a cherry blossom because I'd never been home when it bloomed before".

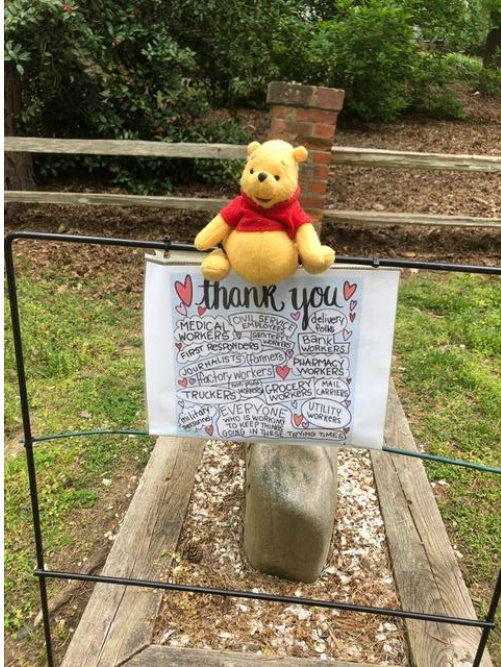


Photo from Quincy D'Alessio's Neighborhood



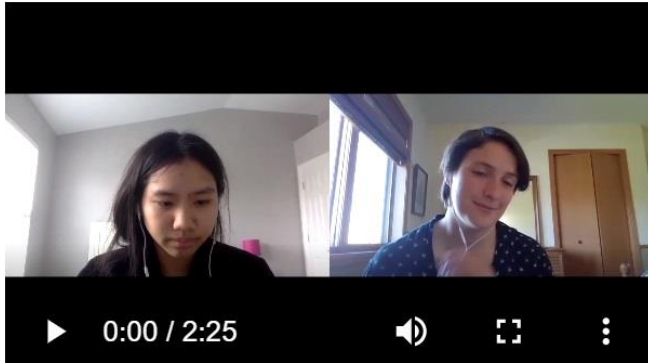
Photo from Quincy D'Alessio's Neighborhood



Photo from Quincy D'Alessio's Neighborhood

"These photos are of my neighborhood, and again it's about the fact that I don't know the place where I am supposed to be at home".

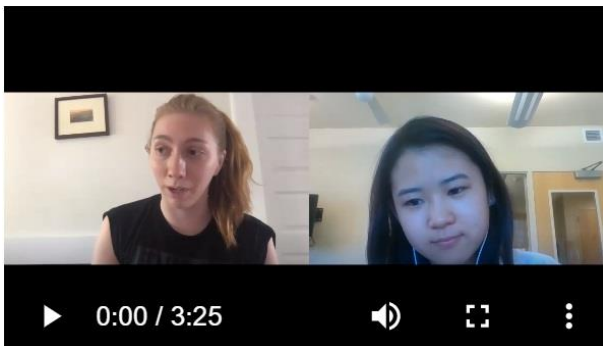
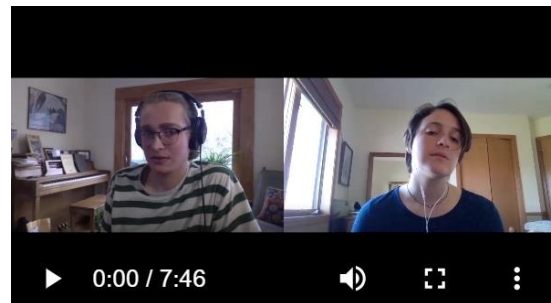
-Quincy D'Alessio '20 (she/her/hers) grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio but lived with her parents in Chapel Hill, North Carolina for spring term after graduating early due to covid.



Sarah '22 (she/her/hers) stayed at home in Glenview, Illinois with her parents who had been in the process of moving before the pandemic hit.

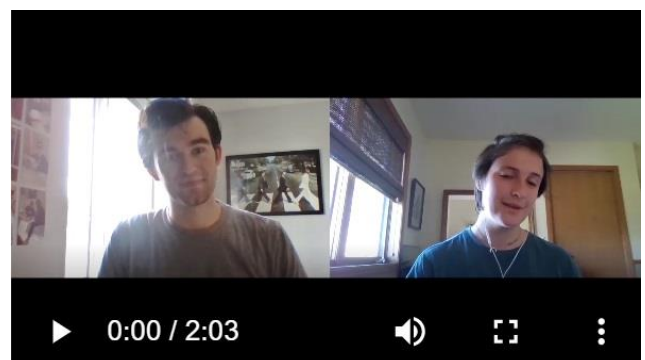
"The big change for me is that I've had to go back into the closet, which has been really difficult and unfortunate. My parents are not accepting of my identity, so I've reverted to being a "guy" and using my legal name for all interactions including my zoom classes this term. In addition, I've lost access to a lot of the GSC supports, especially the Gender Discussion Group, which had been important to me over the previous few terms on campus." -Anonymous Student Entry

Celia Ringrose '22 (she/her/hers or they/them/theirs) lived at home with her family in Minot, North Dakota.



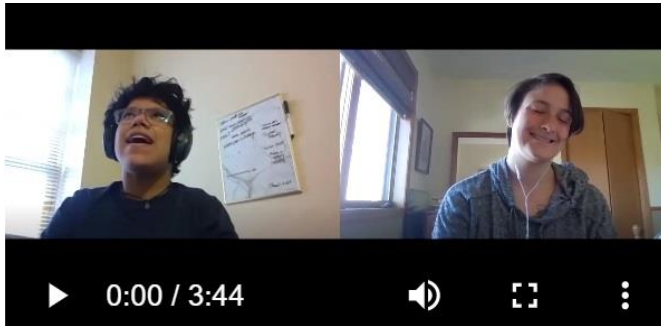
Grace Brindle '21 (she/her/hers) is from and stayed in Westfield, New Jersey. She talks about the experience of moving out of Carleton at the end of winter term.

Joey Silkknitter '22 (he/him/his) stayed at home with his family in Papillion, Nebraska.



An Empty Campus

For some students, returning home wasn't an option. Some of these students were approved to stay on campus through spring term. While in a familiar location, the now-empty campus felt anything but normal.



Maya Rogers '22 (she/her/hers) is from Tulsa, Oklahoma, but stayed on campus for spring term because her insurance is through Carleton.

Edgar Aguirre '22 (he/him/his) is from Bronx, New York, but stayed on campus due to safety concerns.



Anastasia Romanova '22 (she/her/hers) is from Kharkiv, Ukraine, but stayed on campus due to flight restrictions.

Walt Li '22 (he/him/his) is from Guangzhou, China but spent the first part of spring term in an AirBnB next to St. Olaf and the second part in an apartment in downtown Northfield.



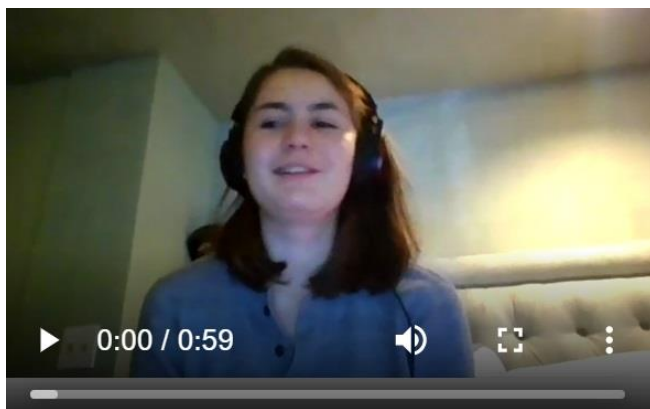
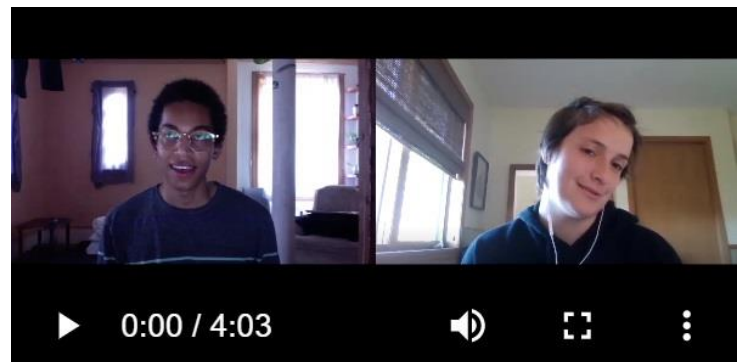
Shelter in an Unfamiliar Location

Some students couldn't go home but also were not approved to stay on campus. These individuals found other places to stay.



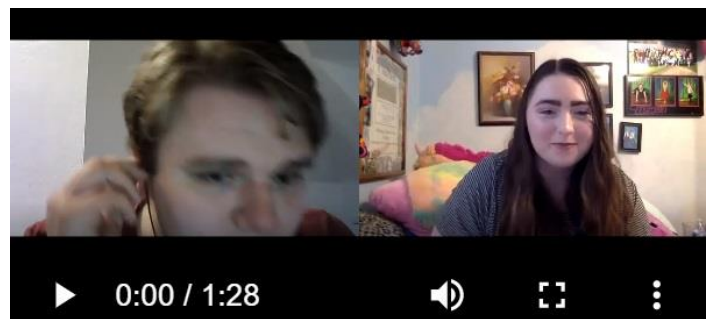
Zaya Vijil '22 (he/him/his) is from Shiprock, New Mexico, but spent the term with Carleton Alums in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Tyrell Floyd '21 (he/him/his) is from Salt Lake City, Utah, but stayed at a student's co-op in Minneapolis, Minnesota.



Dasha Palenova '22 (she/her/hers) is from Russia but spent Spring term with her boyfriend's family in Carlsbad, California.

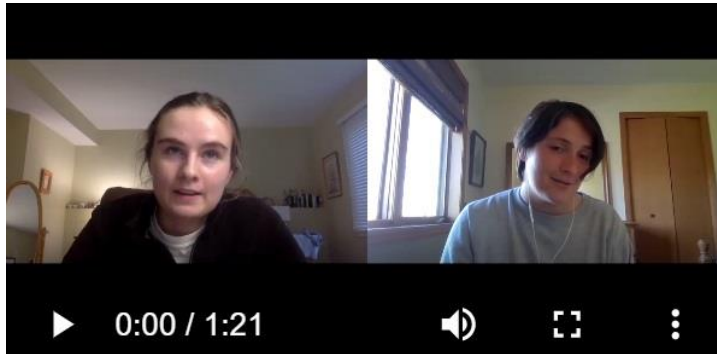
Max Bremer '20 (he/him/his) is from Chicago, Illinois, but for safety reasons his family moved to their cabin in Holland, Michigan.



Transition to Online Education

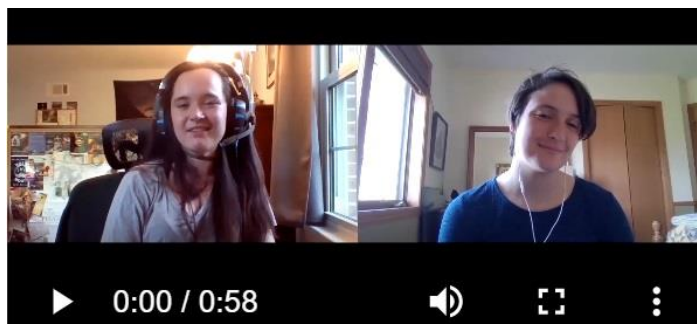
Changes in Academics

Transitioning to online education was quite a significant change that did not come without a number of hiccups and difficulties. Academically, standards were different and students weren't always able to work to the level they would have during a normal term.



Isla Skinner '22 (she/her/hers) is a Psychology major.

Maya Rogers '22 (she/her/hers) is also majoring in Psychology.



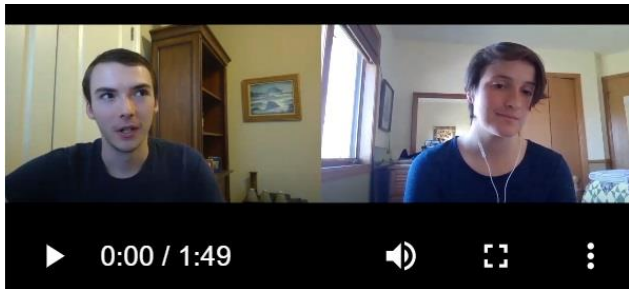
McKenna Wirth '22 (she/her/hers) is double majoring in Russian and Psychology.

Bryn Battani '23 (she/her/hers) is still undecided, but considering majoring in English and Music.



New Locations

For many students, the change in location had a significant impact on their educational experience.



Dan Ashurt '22 (he/him/his) is an Art History major.

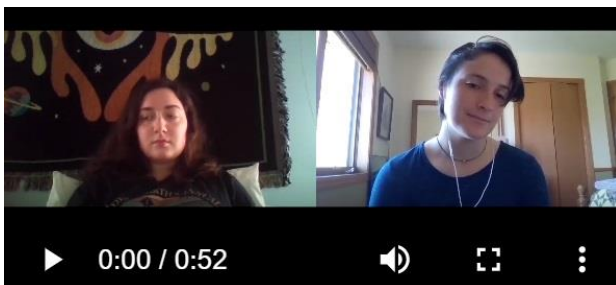
Dasha Palenova '22 (she/her/hers) is majoring in Physics.



Josh Isaacs '22 (he/him/his) is a Geology major.

Limited Resources

One big impact of the move online was a significant lessening of resources students had at their disposal. Some subjects, such as music or art or labs, were particularly hard hit.



Palina Buchanan '22 (she/her/hers) is double majoring in Music and American Studies.

Hisui Takeda '22 (she/her/hers) is double majoring in Music and Psychology.



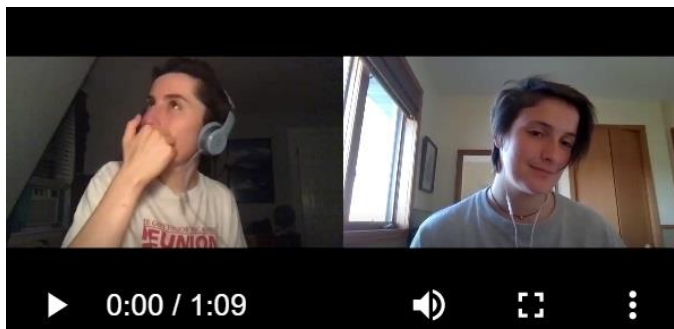
"I'm not affected severely, but I'm not studying things I want to study just because of the format. For example, for my Cinema and Media studies production class, we can't use the equipment and the computer lab, and I have to edit on my computer, so I can't use the Premiere Pro which I was hoping to get more comfortable with. Although they accommodate the editing application for free, my computer is not strong enough, so..." -Allison Hong '22 (she/her/hers) is a Cinema and Media Studies major



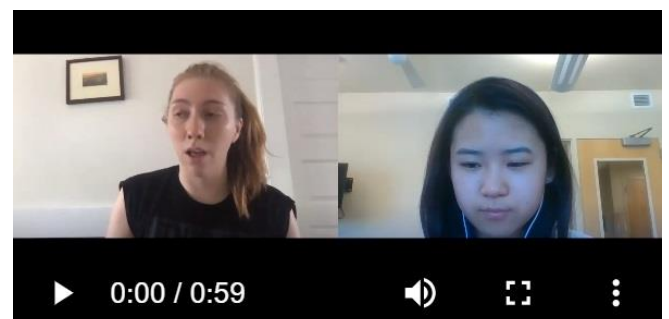
Zaya Vijil '22 (any pronouns) is a Studio Art major.

Employment During A Pandemic

Also significantly impacted by the pandemic was work and internship plans and opportunities.

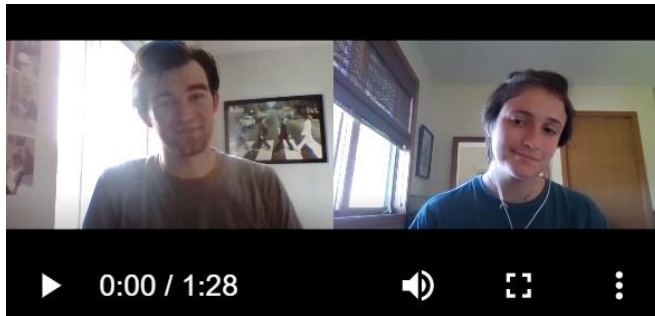


Grace Brindle '21 (she/her/hers) is a History major with a minor in Digital Arts & Humanities.



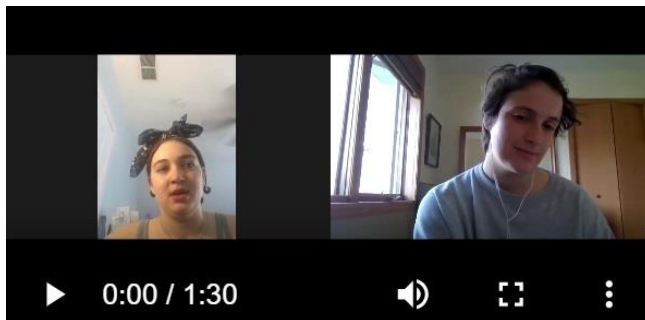
Changes in Social Life

Social aspects were some of the most hard hit by the move to remote learning.



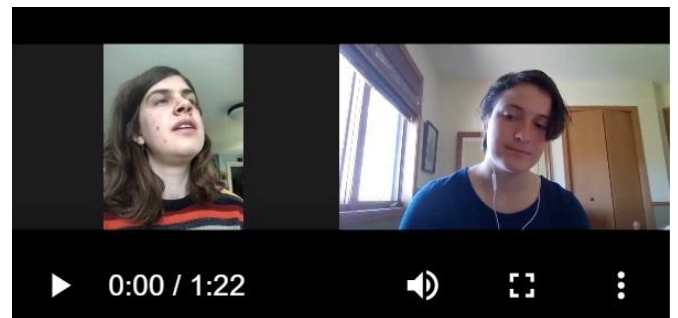
Joey Silkknitter '22 (he/him/his) is an American Studies major.

Lucas Sass '22 (he/him/his) is majoring in Linguistics.



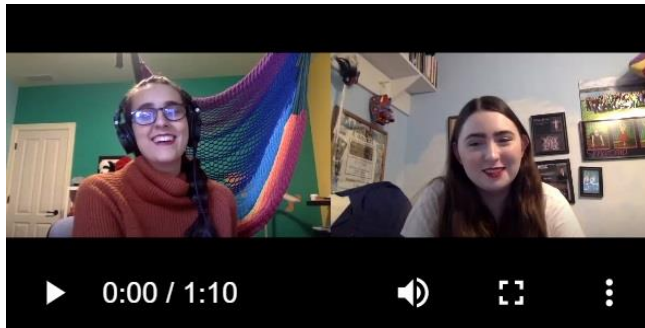
Keyra English '22 (she/her/hers) is a Cinema and Media Studies major.

Gray Harrison '21 (she/her/hers) is an English major.



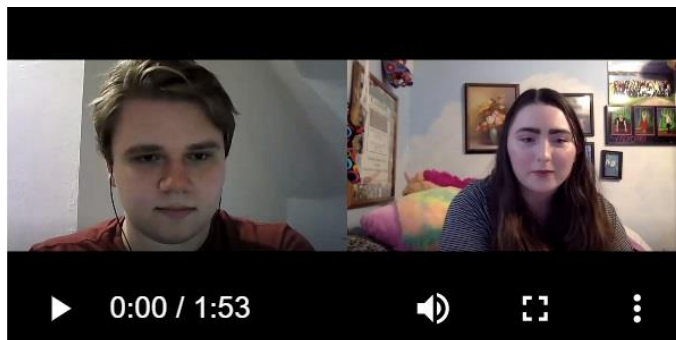
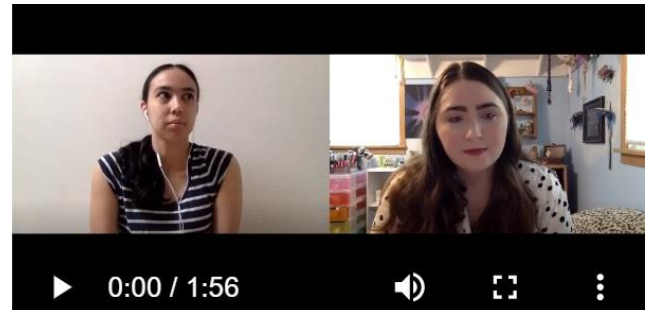
Senior Spring Online

For seniors, it was particularly difficult to be losing their last term at Carleton and to find ways to transition their comps online.



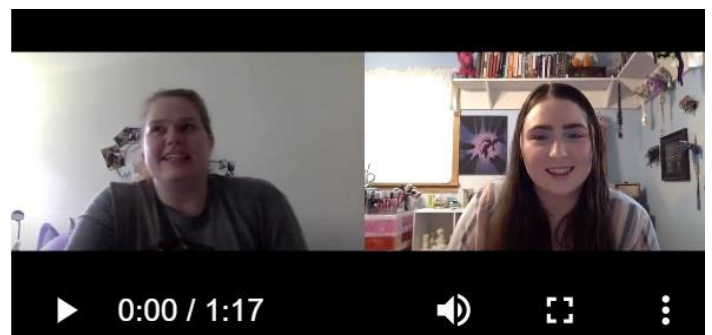
Skyelar Ginsberg '20 (she/her/hers) majored in Music.

Nicole Connell '20 (she/her/hers) majored in History with minors in Classics and Digital Arts and Humanities.



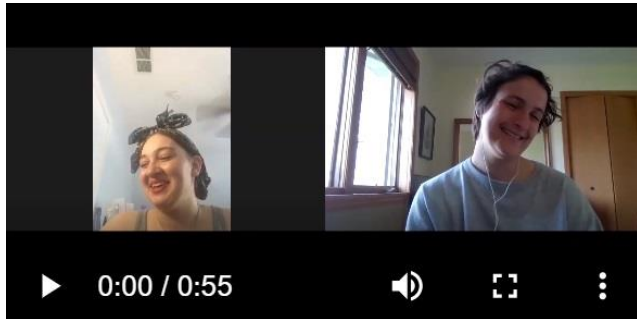
Max Bremer '20 (he/him/his) majored in Computer Science.

Quincy D'Alessio '20 (she/her/hers) majored in Psychology.

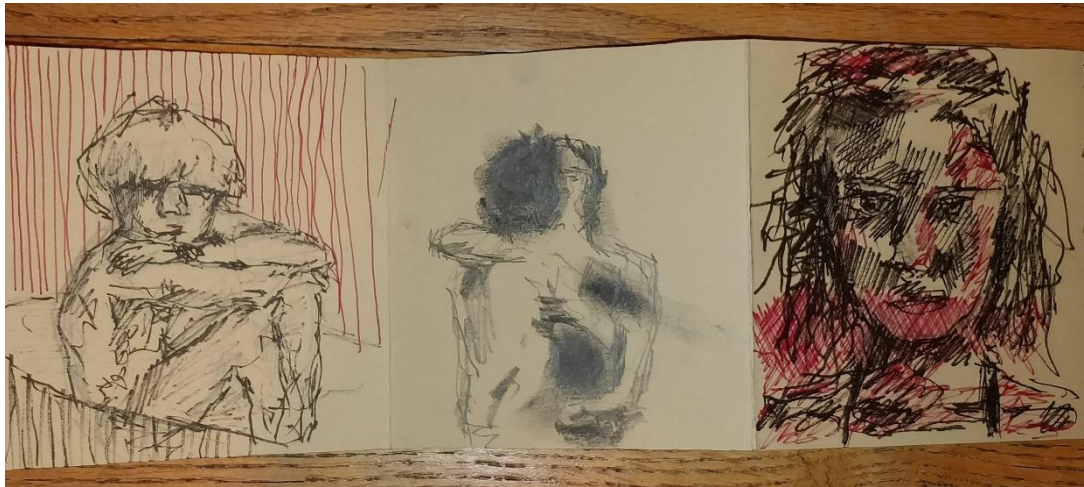


New Habits and Practices

From learning new instruments to writing in daily journals, students developed various new practices and habits to help adjust to their new realities.



Keyra English '22 (she/her/hers) kept herself busy mixing art with cost-efficient fashion by making lipstick from crayons.



Mashnoon Ibtesum '21 (He/Him/His) spent the extra time the remote term gave him working on his art.



Dima Rentel '22 (He/Him/His) talks about how he is already dropping and losing motivation for the habits he picked up at the beginning of the pandemic and how for him having people to share activities with is what makes them worthwhile.

"I've been cooking a lot, as I have a lot of time, not much else to do, and because I'm immunocompromised I'm trying to avoid all public places as much as possible." - Maya Rogers '22 (She/Her/Hers)



Quarantine Food by Maya Rogers



Quarantine Food by Maya Rogers

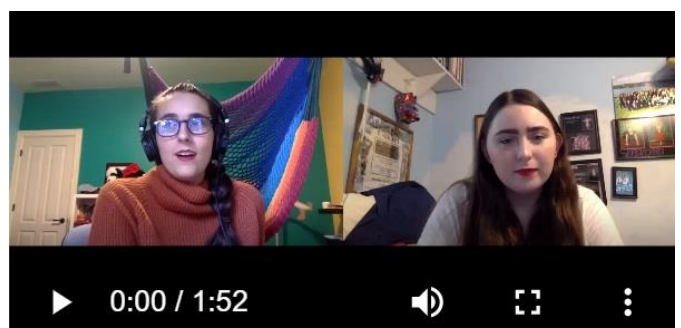


Quarantine Food by Maya Rogers



Maya Rogers '22 (She/Her/Hers) kept herself busy with the extra time and talks about using hobbies, particularly cooking, as a way to have some control in her life.

Skyelar Ginsberg '20 (she/her/hers) talks about some of the positive and negative hobbies she picked up during her quarantine.



"I have been doing many projects during quarantine to keep myself busy. Pictured here - dried herbs from our garden!"

-Skyelar Ginsberg '20
(She/Her/Hers)



Indigo Bistrup-Peterson '23 (She/Her/Hers)
talks about how she's been trying to
manage her new environment.

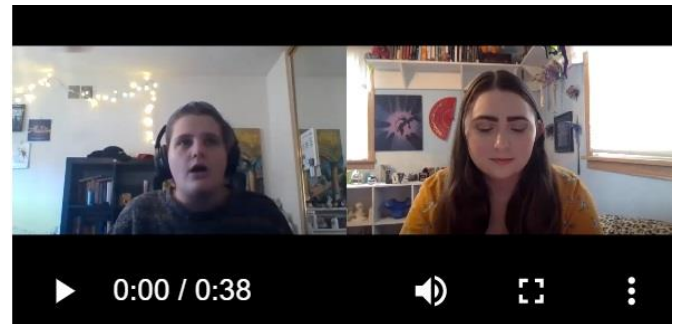
Gray Harrison '21 (She/Her/Hers) talks about waking
up to see the sunrise.





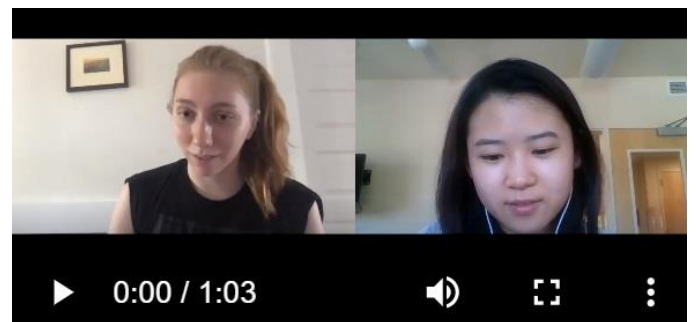
Without the variety of places to go she would normally have on campus, Isla Skinner '22 (She/Her/Hers) prioritized not going in her bed other than to sleep to ensure there was no anxiety tied to it.

Gaby Lazo '23 (She/Her/Hers) used her sister to help keep her accountable while she was at home.



Nicole Collins '20 (She/Her/Hers) adopted a daily morning facetime call with a friend in order to keep some normalcy in her life and to maintain some casual interaction.

As a history major, Grace Brindle '21 (She/Her/Hers) felt it was important to journal and ended up finding the reflection helpful.



Darius Goodman '23 (He/Him/His) talks about his employment at a grocery store.

Feeling of Displacement Among Carleton Students

One of our key themes going into these interviews was to try to capture feelings of displacement amongst Carleton students. While there was the odd student out who said they didn't feel displaced, the vast majority felt this quite a bit be it through physical distance from their family or friend, being in a new environment, or just having to complete an academic term in abnormal conditions.

"Looking at my camera roll, the lack of pictures, particularly pictures of people, is an accurate depiction of what is being missed during the pandemic. I live a few miles outside of the Black Hills National Forest so hiking has been a reprieve from being in my house constantly. I don't see many people outside of my immediate family and my dog and I spend a lot of time hanging out in my backyard (by myself) when the weather is nice enough. It's hard to believe that we have been away from Carleton so long, but looking at my recent photos, I have very little evidence of other humans, which makes it clear just how long it has been. My pictures are exclusively of my dog and of the landscape from hikes I have gone on. It feels very strange to be separated from the community of people that I have been so connected to for almost three years." - Karah Haug '21 (she/her/hers)



Photo from a hike by Karah Haug '21

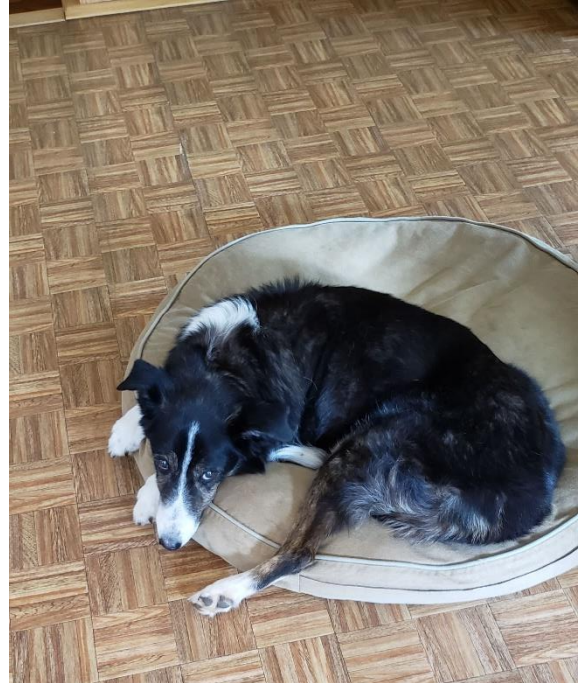


Photo of her dog by Karah Haug '21



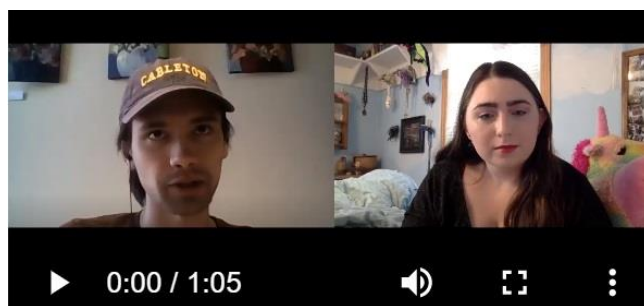
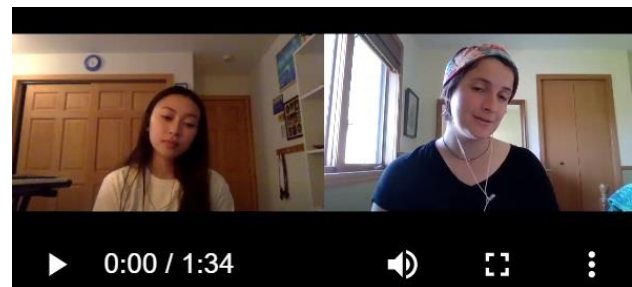
Zaya Vijil '22 (any pronouns) had their petition to remain on campus for spring term denied and had to live with a host family.

Armira Nace '22 (she/her/hers) says that while Carleton is not perfect, it is for her a safe place with people who understand her.



Nicole Connell '20 (she/her/hers) is painfully aware of how much she missed with this being her senior year and realizes she'll never get to be at Carleton as a student again.

Yuki Nagaoka '22 (she/her/hers) talks about the importance of being part of a community, especially during this difficult time.



Joseph Luther '20 (he/him/his) is a bit bitter that his last memories of Carleton are now tainted.

"A few days ago I was walking around campus with a friend, one of my closest friends freshman year who has remained a good friend, one last time before she moved home. We'd been sitting behind Evans looking out at Bell Field and talking. As we were about to walk up the steps behind Evans, we saw, at the top of the steps, my freshman year roommate and her family, who had returned to campus to pick up her belongings. It was such a serendipitous moment, and also highlighted everything we had lost. A goodbye with my roommate is one of the many goodbyes I did not have a chance to say before leaving at the end of winter. We took a socially-distanced picture, waved by one more time, and continued our respective strolls around the deserted, locked, familiar-yet-alien-feeling campus."
 - Sarah Newsham '20 (she/her/hers)

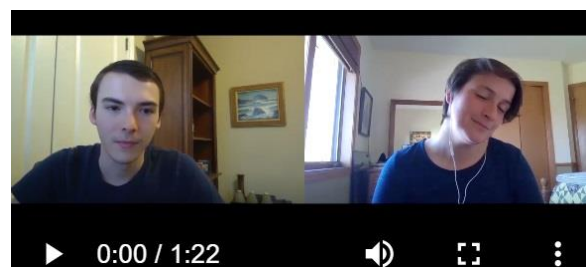


Sarah Newsham's Socially Distanced Photo



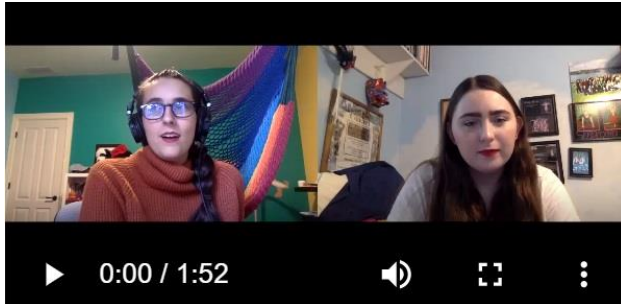
Gaby Lazo '23 (she/her/hers) mentions issues due to the time zone difference which make her feel not real as well as the weirdness of living without her roommate.

Daniel Ashurst '22 (he/him/his) talks about how strange it is to not be able to see his best friend who lives 10 minutes away.



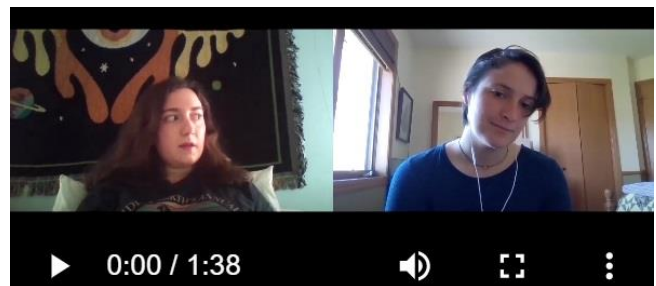
Gray Harrison '21 (she/her/hers) talks about the performative part of zoom calls that makes it anxiety-inducing.

"Texting and phone calls make me anxious - when I see a text, I always want to respond, but then I overthink what I should say, put it off until later, and end up forgetting to respond for a week or so. I've done some zoom calls with my friends, but it still doesn't feel the same." - Nicolas Bell '23 (he/him/his)

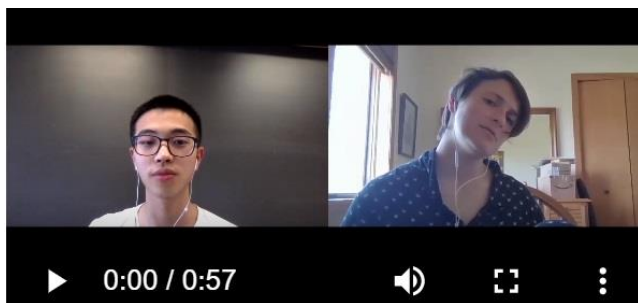


Skyelar Ginsberg '20 (she/her/hers) says that it doesn't feel real to do school work at home and talks about the difficulty of managing school and family obligations at the same time.

Palina Buchanan '22 (she/her/hers) talks about the strangeness of staying at someone else's home and missing her own.



"Yeah, it feels so weird, because everyone left the campus and like most international students live here but because we don't know when we're gonna be able to go home and I've heard people booking six or seven tickets just in case and most of them got cancelled, and there's also Visa thing we don't know about and everything is very unsure. Because usually we book a ticket beforehand and we know when to expect to go home and see our family. And everything is very unsure, so when I'm doing the zoom classes, most american students are at home and they have the homey background and when we are discussing in a group, it would be like "oh sorry my mom is chopping something, so sorry for the background noise" and I just feel like oh I hope that I would be able to be sorry about that too, but I don't even know when I'll be able to see my parents again. So it definitely makes me feel displaced." - Alison Hong '22 (she/her/hers)

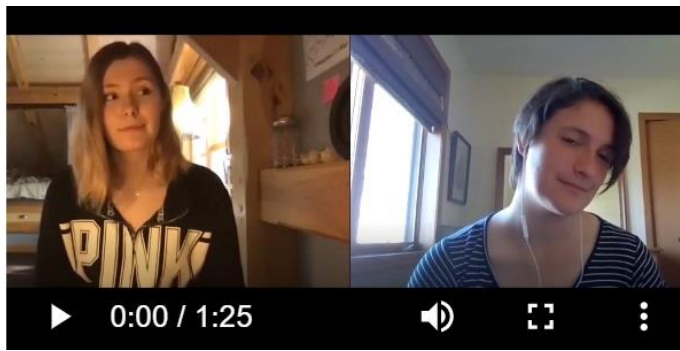


Walt Li '22 (he/him/his) talks about how uncomfortable and out of place he feels right now.

"I don't really have a feeling of displacement or missing during this Covid-19 time. My life has always been on a move and I believe that there is no exact place where I should be. At the end of the day, a

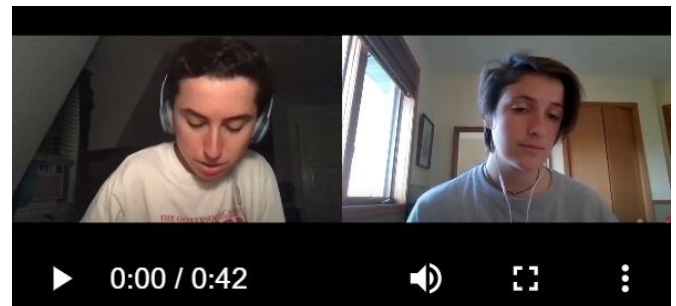
person has to live one's life by oneself. Other people and something else on which a person depends only offer a temporary escapism or comfort. Eventually, one has to decide and deal with one's life and problem by oneself." - Sally Chen '21 (she/her/hers)

Joey Silkknitter '22 (he/him/his) brings up how his siblings' are having a significantly different experience from him.



Indigo Bistrup-Peterson '23 (she/her/hers) gives an anecdote about how awkward even grocery shopping is right now.

Jeremiah Mackin-Alonzi '22 (he/him/his) talks about how he will never get this term back.



"I think the feeling that has been most strongly exacerbated by the pandemic is nostalgia. Of course, I'm worried about my family's health, I'm feeling increasingly defeatist about the future, all those standard things. But on a day-to-day basis I feel acutely the loss of a past life that I didn't think I would have to call a "past life" just yet. I've spent a lot of this spring term thinking things like "today would have been the MIAC track meet" or "I remember how close I got with my history class last spring" or even just looking at the weather forecast in Northfield and longing for those first breaths of warm air. I'm a junior, so I still have hope of another year of Carleton life. Chances are, though, it won't be that Carleton life. It'll be a different one, if anything." - Ellie Zimmerman '21 (she/her/hers)

On The Bright Side: Positive Thoughts During Challenging Times

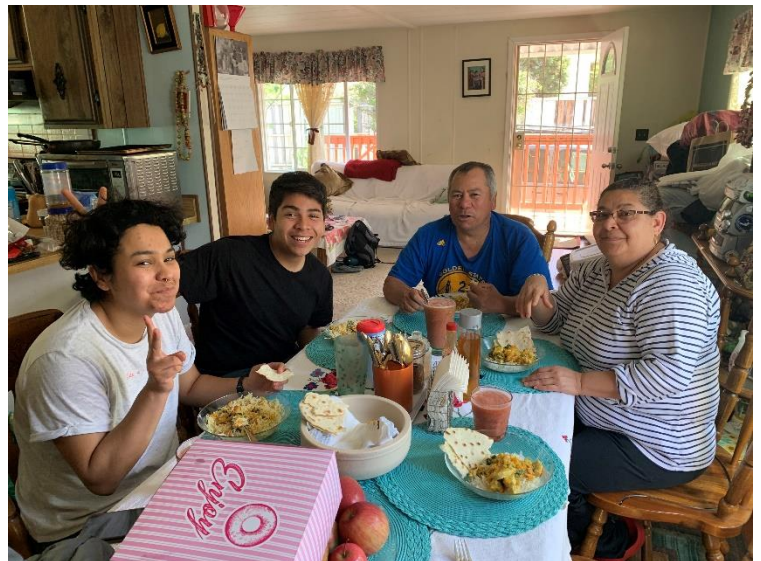
Family

For many students, extra time with and appreciation for their families was a positive of this pandemic.



Clarissa Guzman '22 (she/her/hers) was thankful for the family time she wouldn't have otherwise gotten.

"One of the pictures is of my family, right before we were about to eat homemade curry, rice, and naan. Since we've been on lockdown, my family has been able to spend a little more time together, eat meals together, and try out new recipes". -Clarissa Guzman '22



Clarissa Guzman was able to spend more time with family.



Josh Isaacs '22 (he/him/his) was glad for the time to spend with his family as an adult.

Joey Silkknitter '22 (he/him/his) appreciated the extra time with his siblings as one of the sacrifices of going to school farther away from home has been not getting to see them grow up to the extent that he would like.



"Once when I called my sister, who is two years younger than me, I almost burst into tears when my sister was the one begging me not to end the call after an hour into it. She used to be more unwilling to communicate, and I was already accustomed to begging her not to end video calls before the

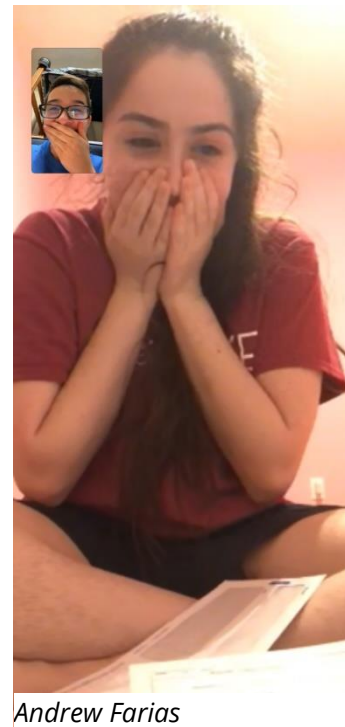


pandemic. Now she could understand my loneliness and fear, or she also misses me more than before. This

- ▼
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- reminds me of how much I love her, how much I miss her, and how much I need the support of family when facing all the uncontrollable things alone and far away from home." -Shaw Qin '22 (she/her/hers)

Shaw Qin and her sister.

"FaceTiming with my sister and finding out I had jury duty two months ago." -Andrew Farias '21 (he/him/his)



Andrew Farias

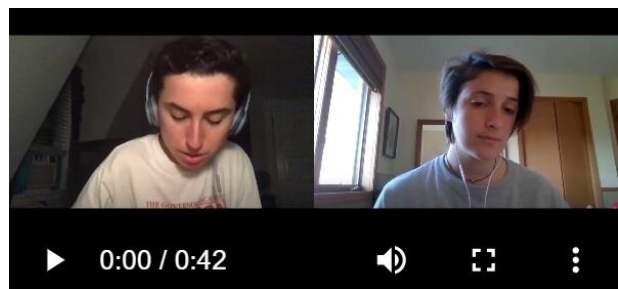
Little Joys

Despite less than ideal circumstances, students still managed to find small things that brought them happiness.



Nicolas Bell '23 (he/him/his) was excited to get to see his puppy grow up in person.

Jeremiah Mackin-Alonzi '22 (he/him/his) talks about a Birthday celebration they had for a friend of his over zoom.



"Empty bowls without my best friend, so I drew her in" -Andrew Farias '21 (he/him/his)



"This picture is of my childhood friend and I going on a walk and staying 6 feet apart from each other :(it's really hard to not get to hug her" -Gray Harrison '22 (she/her/hers)



"[These are] all the letters I have received while in quarantine. It is so nice to have that connection with people, and although I cannot see them or talk to them in person, receiving letters from friends is a little bit of joy in my day, and makes me feel that they are still with me somehow". -Gray Harrison '22



Darius Goodman '23 (he/him/his) was thankful for his longboard giving him some sense of freedom.



"Socially distanced Thai food car circle party with some friends"
- Yuki Nagaoka '22 (she/her/hers)



Aubrey Thurman '22 (she/her/hers) was thankful for less work at her job due to not being on campus.

Other Positives... or Lack Thereof

From humorous to profound, students had a lot to say about positives during this trying time.



Darius Goodman '23 (he/him/his) was glad for less recreational mouth use.

Jordan Navarro '22 (he/him/his) couldn't think of anything positive to come out of this experience.



Palina Buchanan '22 (she/her/hers) believes this pandemic has exposed many of the broken systems in this country and hopes this inspires change.

Tyrell Floyd '21 (he/him/his) was thankful for the refund he got from Carleton due to the move online.



Reflection

Many students expressed being thankful for the extra time and space for reflection this remote term gave them.

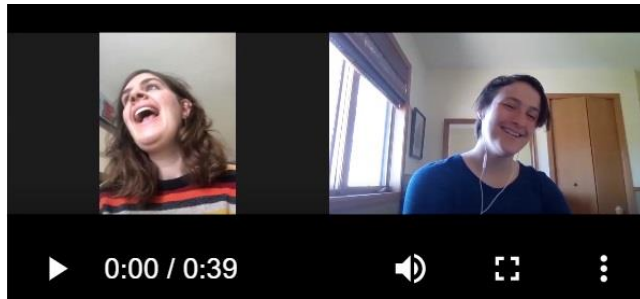


Anastasia Romanova '22 (she/her/hers) talks about learning to be alone.

Bryn Battani '22 (she/her/hers) discusses how much more she values in person connections now as well as the unexpected ways this experience has helped her to bond with people.



Indigo Bistrup-Peterson '23 (she/her/hers) realized through this experience that she actually isn't as introverted as she thought.



Gray Harrison '21 (she/her/hers) valued the extra time the remote term gave her allowing her freedom for creativity and talks about how people being forced to stay at home has led to reflection as well as been good for the environment.

I feel that the best thing is that we don't have to worry about the GPA which usually stressed me out. So I usually spend those times being stressed and anxious about the exam tomorrow and I don't really have time to think about my... it's kind of stupid to say this, but my future. -Alison Hong '22 (she/her/hers)

Isla Skinner '22 (she/her/hers) talks about how the lack of motivation has actually been beneficial to her.



Katie Taylor '22 (she/her/hers) felt that the pass/fail system helped her to reorganize her priorities.

Notes to Future Historians

Our intention behind these interviews was the desire to record the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of people during this worldwide crisis for future historians. To this end, we asked each of our interviewees for something they thought should be preserved in public memory about this time.



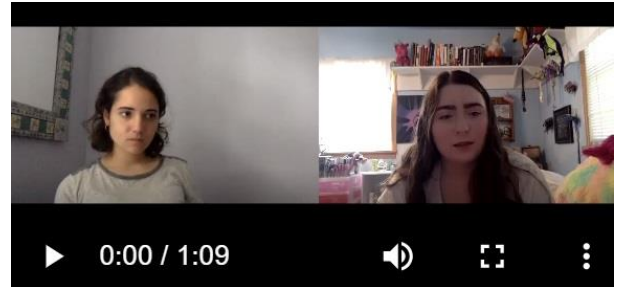
Andrew Farias '21 (he/him/his)



Adam Ickler '22 (they/them/theirs)



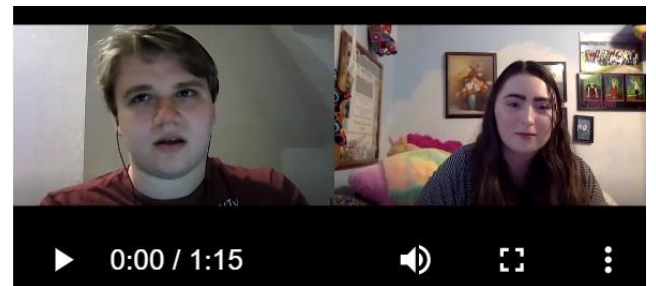
Indigo Bistrup-Peterson '23 (she/her/hers)



Ellie Zimmerman '21 (she/her/hers)



Gaby Lazo '23 (she/her/hers)



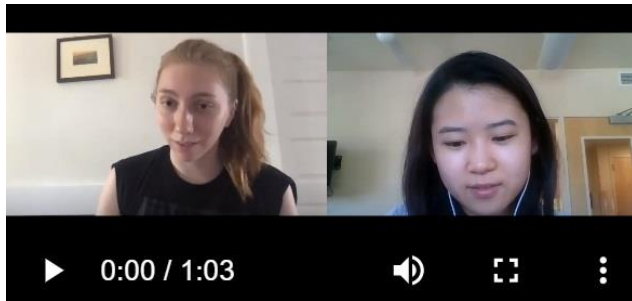
Max Bremer '20 (he/him/his)



Jordan Navarro '22 (he/him/his)



Dima Rentel '22 (he/him/his)



Grace Brindle '21 (she/her/hers)



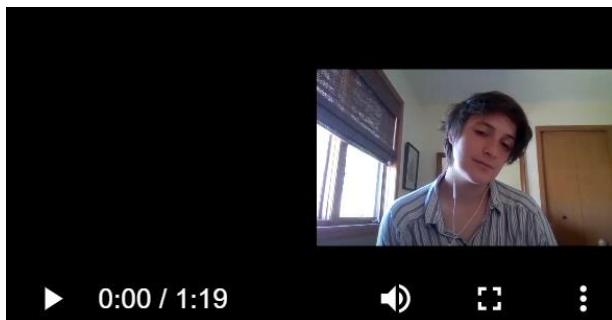
Palina Buchanan '22 (she/her/hers)



McKenna Wirth '22 (she/her/hers)



Celia Ringrose '22 (she/her/hers or they/them/theirs)



Armira Nance '22 (she/her/hers)



Tyrell Floyd '21 (he/him/his)



Maya Rogers '22 (she/her/hers)

Reflections From The Interviewers



Clara Posner Reflection Interview

The first reflection interview is with Clara Posner who stayed with a host family in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota the entire term due to family health problems.

The second reflection interview is with Marcella Lees who lived with her family in South Dakota for the entire term.



Marcella Lees Reflection Interview



Miyuki Mihira Reflection Interview

The third reflection interview is with Miyuki Mihira who remained on campus for the entire term due to flight restrictions.