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Generational Disparities

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Generational Disparities

By Jacob Bransky, Rebecca Hicks, McLain Sidmore

Introduction

Our exhibit engages in the issues and disparity of experiences along generational lines, with particular emphasis on children, elders, and schools and communities. While news stories at the outset of the pandemic often highlighted tropes of endangered and isolated seniors and elders, while pointing to children or young adults as unwary, or even dismissive Coronavirus spreaders, this disease has affected people of all ages and we set out to preserve this full range of impacts in our collection.

We came to this project from very different areas that, inadvertently, became a major influence on the character of our collection and stories that define our work. Jacob came to us from Gay Mills, Wisconsin, a rural community with an aging population that gave him insight into the ways the pandemic affected various generations disparately in the upper Mid-West. Rebecca was working from her home in rural West Virginia with a particular interest in the ways in which various family structures, nuclear families and multigenerational households, changed conversations and dynamics during the pandemic, particularly in rural Appalachia. McLain was working from her home in Juneau, Alaska, a comparatively small town with a strong ethos of intergenerational learning and a recognition of elders as the backbone of the community.

These circumstances allowed for an in-depth examination of the ways in which the pandemic has affected communities in rural or isolated regions across the country, exploring the unique circumstances of these often underexplored areas, and the ways in which age has impacted experiences during this spring. We were by no means always successful. The voices of children and elders have always been underrepresented in archival records and in a moment when these groups are being disproportionately impacted by illness, isolation, poverty, and lack of technology, these silences have only been exacerbated. Through our work, we have tried to capture the realities of this period for these people, from sweeping policies affecting the education of children, down to the individual reactions of students and elders in a few areas around the country, which we hope will offer some sliver of memory from these people in this time for future generations.

Students & Children

Schooling during the Coronavirus pandemic has been tough and huge change. It has exacerbated the learning gap among students in tougher home situations. Students who have the necessary support are still learning while those who don't have it are falling behind their peers. This will have lasting impacts on their learning and can widen divides already seen in attainment based on factors such as race and income. It has also led to many students becoming isolated socially. This loss of social situations among peers can make it tough for children to interact with others and support each other. Students have expressed boredom and often talk about spending a lot of time looking at screens to game, watch videos or check social media. Students have responded talking about the ways they are staying entertained and how they are feeling during this difficult time.

Many students are experiencing a period of mourning, without their teachers and friends, and the loss of significant milestones such as graduations or end of year activities. Others are facing far more serious problems of hunger, neglect, and trauma amidst economic crises and a lack of school interventions. In the virtual classrooms we observed this term, student attendance, particularly for younger students was very low, often less than half the class, and many students did not have the

ability or the motivation to continue their school work during closures. For this reason, many of our student submissions will offer a skewed perspective toward those students who had the materials, internet, and home environment necessary to complete this assignment, and they were completed at the prompting of both teachers and parents. Schools have responded across the country in attempts to bridge these gaps, offering creative curriculums and new methods of instruction such as television or paper packets.



AT-HOME LEARNING BROADCAST SCHEDULE - WEEK OF APRIL 20, 2020					
TIME	MONDAY, 4/20	TUESDAY, 4/21	WEDNESDAY, 4/22	THURSDAY, 4/23	FRIDAY, 4/24
8:00am	Wild Kratts (STEM)	Wild Kratts (STEM)	Wild Kratts (STEM)	Wild Kratts (STEM)	Wild Kratts (STEM)
8:30am	Molly of Denali (ELA/Literacy)	Molly of Denali (ELA/Literacy)	Molly of Denali (ELA/Literacy)	Molly of Denali (ELA/Literacy)	Molly of Denali (ELA/Literacy)
9:00am	Xavier Riddle & Secret Museum (Social Studies & Social/Emotional)	Xavier Riddle & Secret Museum (Social Studies & Social/Emotional)	Xavier Riddle & Secret Museum (Social Studies & Social/Emotional)	Xavier Riddle & Secret Museum (Social Studies & Social/Emotional)	Xavier Riddle & Secret Museum (Social Studies & Social/Emotional)
9:30am	Let's Go Luna (Social Studies/Visual & Performing Arts)	Let's Go Luna (Social Studies/Visual & Performing Arts)	Let's Go Luna (Social Studies/Visual & Performing Arts)	Let's Go Luna (Social Studies/Visual & Performing Arts)	Let's Go Luna (Social Studies/Visual & Performing Arts)
10:00am	Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood (Social/Emotional Learning)	Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood (Social/Emotional Learning)	Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood (Social/Emotional Learning)	Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood (Social/Emotional Learning)	Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood (Social/Emotional Learning)
10:30am	Sesame Street (Social/Emotional Learning)	Sesame Street (Social/Emotional Learning)	Sesame Street (Social/Emotional Learning)	Sesame Street (Social/Emotional Learning)	Sesame Street (Social/Emotional Learning)
11:00am	Pinkalicious (Social Studies/Visual & Performing Arts)	Pinkalicious (Social Studies/Visual & Performing Arts)	Pinkalicious (Social Studies/Visual & Performing Arts)	Pinkalicious (Social Studies/Visual & Performing Arts)	Pinkalicious (Social Studies/Visual & Performing Arts)
11:30am	Dinosaur Train (STEM)	Dinosaur Train (STEM)	Dinosaur Train (STEM)	Dinosaur Train (STEM)	Dinosaur Train (STEM)
12:00pm	Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That (STEM)	Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That (STEM)	Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That (STEM)	Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That (STEM)	Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That (STEM)
12:30pm	History Detectives: Photograph of African American in Confederate Uniform (Social Studies)	History in a Nutshell (Social Studies)	Reconnecting Roots: Dashes to Dot Cams (Social Studies/STEAM)	Between the Waters (Social Studies)	The Rockies: Kingdom of the Sky (Science/Social Studies)
1:00pm			By the River: Robert Hicks (ELA/CTE)	Charlie's Place (Social Studies/Visual & Performing Arts)	
1:30pm					
2:00pm	Nova: Media Strike (Science)	Penn Center: A Legacy of Change (Social Studies)	Sea Change (Science/Social Studies)	Riverbanks Zoo Roundup: Ecoadventure w/ Philippe Costeau & Animal Survival Tactics (Science/Math/Social Studies)	Nova: Lethal Seas (Science)
2:30pm		Web of Water (Science)		Science Experiments (Science/Math)	
3:00pm	Breakthrough Ideas that Changed the World: The Smartphone (Math/Science/CTE)	Carolina Classrooms: STEAM Episode (STEAM)	South Carolinians in World War II: The Island War (Social Studies)	A True Likeness: Richard Roberts' Legacy (Social Studies/Visual & Perf. Arts)	Climate Change: The Facts (Science)
3:30pm		Dizzie Gillespie: From the Be to the Bop (Social Studies/Visual and Performing Arts)		WomenVision SC (ELA/Social Studies/CTE)	
4:00pm				Karen Alexander, Justice Jean Toel, & Inez Tenebaum	
4:30pm	The Roosevelts: An Intimate History Ep. 4 of 7 (Social Studies)	Congressmen John Lewis & Andrew Aydin Independent Lens: Tell Them We are Rising, the Story of Black Colleges & Universities (Social Studies/CTE)	Latino Americans: Pride and Prejudice (Social Studies)	H2o: The Molecule that Made Us (Social Studies)	Shakespeare Live from the RSC (ELA)
5:00pm			Latino Americans: Peril and Promise (Social Studies)	Nova: Killer Foods (Science)	
5:30pm					

PRE-K - 5: 8am - 1pm

SC Content (6 - 12th): 1pm - 6pm

National Content (6 - 12th): 1 - 6pm

Find supplemental learning activities/resources at scetv.org/athomelearning

South Carolina Educational Television At Home Learning Schedule. A broadcast schedule from South Carolina Educational Television that outlines educational programming for the week. This was one effort to provide educational materials to students who may

Supportive Messages for Students and Teachers at Sayeik: Gastineau Elementary School, Juneau, Alaska



Messages for Students and Teachers at Sayeik: Gastineau Elementary School, Juneau, Alaska



Messages for Students and Teachers at Sayeik: Gastineau Elementary School, Juneau, Alaska

Parents & Elders

While COVID-19 impacted everyone, elderly people experienced a unique challenge due to their decreased access to and understanding of technology. The silences received from the elderly population as we attempted to record their experiences speaks volumes by illustrating their inability to connect with others. While everyone was advised to isolate and quarantine, many people were able to remain virtually engaged and connected with peers. This was often not the case for the elderly. Parents, though, also faced the unique challenge of trying to keep their children engaged from home. This resulted in a lot of chaotic times and confusion from what felt like suddenly being thrown into a homeschooling environment where there was no transition time.

While seniors and families have struggled due to isolation, and at times increased poverty or food insecurity due to the economic crisis, they are also dealing with a loss of important intergenerational connections. Families that rely on grandparents for child care may no longer have that option, and multi-generational households are at a higher risk for exposing vulnerable family members to the disease. With schools closed parents have had to adapt to teaching without the aid of educators, but also without the assistance and wisdom of elders who are often instrumental in teaching and caring for young children in particular.

Amid food supply chain concerns, tribal governments request emergency hunts

By Elizabeth Jenkins, Alaska's Energy Desk - Juneau - April 15, 2020



A Sitka black-tailed deer. (Creative Commons photo by Kenneth Cole Schneider)


As uncertainty about COVID-19 continues to mount, tribal governments and remote communities across the state are concerned about disruptions in the food supply chain.

Alaskan Requests for Emergency Hunts to combat food shortages in spring 2020

Administration & Community

Covid-19 and social distancing have left indelible impacts on communities. As schools close for in-person instruction, state and local governments scramble to provide services to families while children cope with the separation from friends, teachers, and other school support. Communities seek to bridge a growing divide between generations suddenly kept apart in order to mitigate

spread, and outbreaks in nursing homes led to widespread no-visitor policies that furthered this separation. Many parents face the challenges of educating their children, continuing their own work, and caring for aging parents, often distantly. Numerous schools and districts have responded with new curricula and flexible schedules that encourage family activities, care of siblings and elders, and practicing skills such as cooking that teach academic concepts while focusing on care and cohesion of families.



Continuing student learning at home

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Finding a routine at home

Students and families should keep their brains active while they are at home. They should also stay:

- physically active;
- connected; and
- social while practising physical distancing.

Supporting learning at home

Many different learning activities can take place from home, and students could focus on:

- adjusting to the new normal;
- developing and following home routines;
- developing emotional and self-regulation strategies; or
- practising everyday skills, such as tying shoes, cooking or simple household chores.

It's important to ensure children feel safe, loved and supported. Families should encourage children to stick with a regular routine and help maintain a sense of normalcy and stability.

Last updated: April 22, 2020

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Suggestions for continuing student learning at home in ways that prioritize student wellbeing

Conclusion

As we bring this project to its end in June, 2020, we remain in the midst of the pandemic and many unanswered questions about the future. While we wrestle with the day to day challenges of the pandemic and a national reckoning with racism and police violence, many are beginning to think about the long term effects of this year and consider how this year may alter our national path. For students, some of these changes are already appearing as colleges and universities begin to discuss closing their doors for good and school districts across the country are enduring massive budget cuts in the wake of the economic crisis. As school years end across the country, there are questions about when or if students will return in the Fall and what classes might look like when they do come back. With over 110,000 deaths in the United States alone at this time, we remain unsure when this pandemic will end, or how the lives of children, elders, teachers, families, and community members will have changed when it does.



PETER SEGALL | JUNEAU EMPIRE

The University of Alaska Southeast campus on Monday, June 1, 2020. UAS could be merged with one of the other schools in the UA system, but that's just one of many options facing the University of Alaska Board of Regents at its meeting Thursday and Friday.

Regents considering several options for university system restructuring

There are other changes besides a merger, but they're also significant

BY PETER SEGALL
Juneau Empire

Merging the University of Alaska Southeast with one of the other two universities in the University of Alaska system is only one of several options being considered by the UA Board of Regents this

Want to weigh in?

To participate in Tuesday's public comment period call: 1-866-726-0757

Written comment can be submitted at any time to: ua-bor@alaska.edu.

during a press conference last week, options being considered include ending 50 degree programs system wide and merging UAS with one of the other two schools in the system. The Regents will meet Thursday and Friday but there's no guarantee they'll make a definitive decision just yet, according to Johnsen.

Johnsen presented multiple cost-cutting measures in a May 13 presentation to the Regents.

made in light of massive reductions in revenue and funding cuts on the horizon

The Future of the University of Alaska Southeast. For many institutions of higher education, the pandemic, its economic consequences, and future uncertainty have left them scrambling for new ways forward.