

Carleton College

Carleton Digital Commons

[Covid-19 Archive: Documents](#)

[Covid-19 Archive: Items](#)

5-20-2020

Interview with Shinsuke Adachi (Transcription)

Shinsuke Adachi

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.carleton.edu/covid19archive_documents

Recommended Citation

Adachi, Shinsuke, "Interview with Shinsuke Adachi (Transcription)" (2020). *Covid-19 Archive: Documents*. 65.

https://digitalcommons.carleton.edu/covid19archive_documents/65

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Covid-19 Archive: Items at Carleton Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Covid-19 Archive: Documents by an authorized administrator of Carleton Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons.group@carleton.edu.

20 May 2020

I – Interviewer, P – Participant

I: Tell me about you.

My name is Shinsuke Adachi, a sophomore at Carleton. I am from Japan.

I: How has pandemic impacted you and your family?

P: My father is self-employed. My mom works at kindergarten, and she can just go to work when she wants because children are not coming. Their earnings are reduced. Also, April is when school starts in Japan, so my parents have to pay for my sister's and brother's tuition, so I have to give my scholarship, which I got refunded from Carleton, to my parents. Still, I think my family is economically stable compared to other workers in Japan.

I don't see my friends in Japan. I still see my girlfriend, but I can't use public transportation. I must use a car, which is more inconvenient.

I: Why did you decide to go back to Japan?

P: When I heard the announcement about campus shutting-down, I decided to go back to Japan. The main reason why I came back is that I have a problem with my respiratory system, so it will be really bad if I get infected in the U.S. If I get treated in the US, it will be very expensive. The lung surgery I got in Minnesota last winter was very expensive. If I get infected in Japan, I can be hospitalized in Japan, which is much cheaper and better.

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.

I: What are some drawbacks of online classes?

P: First of all, I changed all my classes to STEM courses so I don't have to wake up in the middle of night for discussion. I can just watch recorded lecture when I want. I don't really have any struggles with time-zone differences.

I: What are some good aspects about online classes?

P: I can skip the lecture [laughing]. Every time I see the lecture video, I increase the speed so that I can save my time. I also skip all the unimportant parts and get into the important parts right away. Other than that, I don't see any values of online classes. Studying on campus is better because you can meet your friends and get motivated. You can go to office hours, writing center, and prefect session and always ask for help. Even though we do have a prefect session and office hour online, it takes more courage to go to those. I am not encouraged to go to office hour. It's like ... a lot of work to go to office hour compared to when you are staying on campus. When you are on campus, you can just walk in and show up.

I: For me, office hours are usually held in the middle of night in my time zone, so it's just impossible for me to go to their office hours.

P: Yes, that's exactly why I don't go to office hour.

I: Who do you get help from if you do not go to office hour?

P: I just figure out on my own. For CS, I just ask my girlfriend because she is a CS major. Other than that, I just give up. It's just pass or fail this term. I don't have to commit myself to it.

I: What do you think about international student?

P: I personally have a stereotype that international students have socially and financially privileged background. At the same time, there are many vulnerable students. Some international students went to international high school, so they fully understand what American culture looks like. Some people, including me, went to a normal high school outside of the U.S., so they don't really have a good sense of American culture and what American people think and value. Sometimes, I feel like American people will never understand me. I can never be connected to them in a deeper sense.

I: You chose to come back to Japan for better medical treatment, and you are not socially connected to Americans due to the cultural difference you see between yourself and them. I think your unpleasant experience at the Minnesota hospital and your interaction with Americans made you think how you can never be integrated into American society. How has your relationship with the United States changed after you came back home in Japan?

I don't feel as strong connection as I had before I came back to Japan. When you are on campus, you can constantly see so many people. I don't see anyone now. I sometimes check-in with my friends, but other than that, I don't see anyone. I feel like I just came back to the life of Japan as one of the Japanese people, as I did back in my high school.

I: Are you motivated to go back to Carleton?

P: I got accepted to Emory, so I am motivated to go there because there are so many things I can look forward to. I also don't want to stay in Japan for a long time because the living situation here is not an ideal and it's also kinda boring here. That makes me want to go back to the States.

To be honest, I might wish to stay at Carleton if I stayed on campus for the spring term because things were starting to work out at Carleton. After two years at Carleton, I started building a stronger connection and finding a right place there. I was consolidating my identity through the experience at Carleton. So, compared to the connection I had in my first-year in the States, it got much stronger as I study at Carleton for a longer time. Now, it is getting weaker because of physical distance as well as the lack of connection with the people at Carleton.

I: What makes you feel bored in Japan?

P: I don't have a good relationship with my parents. We are good, but they are kinda lame. They are very typical Asian parents. They are very stereotyped about America and people there. They are the elitist, so ...

I: It is very interesting to hear that you do not want to stay in Japan although you are not culturally attached to the United States.

P: I was struggling to find my place in Carleton and feeling that I am isolated from American people. I think that was a part of my growth. Actually, that was what I sought for. [Navigating cultural differences] are the part of the studying abroad, and it helped me grow as a person. Yes,

it's very tough to study in the United States, but at the same time, it helps me grow. It's not only 100% negative experience.

I: Do you have any other things to add on?

P: Japan is a very good country, but staying in Japan ... I feel like I am wasting my time. There is not much I can learn from the relationship of the people in Japan. That was why I decided to study abroad in an American college, and now I am spending my time in Japan which I stayed for 18 years.

I: I think I understand where you are at. My first few years in the United States were also very difficult. I hated everything about the United States [laughing]. But at the same time, I saw how I could grow from the experience. I was depressed, but I knew these experiences were going to be such a great asset. That is why I could endure those challenging times. You appreciate that you can be emotionally stable as you are staying with your family during this hard time, but you also question, "Is it worth of my time?" Compared to your time at Carleton, you are not challenged enough—you don't have to speak English, you don't have to deal with cultural differences ... Because you know that suffering would eventually translate into your improvements, you are still motivated to leave home. In fact, you were starting to find your place at Carleton as you stay longer in the United States.

P: That's exactly what I wanted to say. At Carleton, I was growing, growing, growing... but now everything stopped.

I: The more stable you are, the less you learn.

P: Yes, exactly.