

Interview keywords/topics: Ireland and Appalachia, Community

Interviewer: PS

Interviewee: JS

This interview is part of an Oral History project for WRC 2202, a Spring 2024 course about Ireland and Appalachia. This semester we discussed different ways of using and understanding historical information, and we are creating our own historical documents in this project.

PS ([00:00](#)):

Um, okay. I think it's on.

JS ([00:04](#)):

Yeah, it's, it's recording. Okay. Alright.

PS ([00:08](#)):

My name is PS . I am interviewing,

JS ([00:16](#)):

Oh, my name's JS .

PS ([00:20](#)):

Here we go.

JS ([00:21](#)):

Here we go!

PS ([00:22](#)):

Okay. So who are you?

JS ([00:24](#)):

Um, well, as I stated previously, my name is JS. I go to App State. Um, what do you really mean by, who are you, like, just

PS ([00:37](#)):

Like, how would you describe yourself? What type of person are you? who are you?

JS ([00:42](#)):

Okay. I am someone who loves the outdoors, who loves animals, who loves just observing. I really like, just like watching people and watching things. That sounds weird, but I, I do like, but like, yeah, you learn so much and like, it's just silent observation. It's nice. I'm someone who really loves their friends and I don't know, I just like seeing people and being around people.

PS ([01:11](#)):

Interview keywords/topics: Ireland and Appalachia, Community

I love that. So you like being outside and stuff? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And you're at, app State as you previously said. Clearly. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Um, why are you here?

JS (01:22):

Um, so I'm actually from Ohio, so I'm out of state and I was gonna go to like Ohio State, [00:01:30] and I just, every time I went to those schools, I was like, this is not for me. Like, I'm not gonna like it here. And so I applied to App State super late after one of my friends sent me pictures of him touring here, and then I decided like, oh, I have to go. And I didn't even like tour the campus or anything. I just committed. And then I came here and I, I just fell in love with it. I think, um, just how, how many opportunities there are to be outside and like, like-minded people that are, I feel like I say at least my friends and the people I've met. Everyone here is such big hearts. Like people really care here and it's like nice to be surrounded by that.

PS (02:13):

Yeah. So it sounds like you're happy and glad you came

JS (02:16):

Here. Oh yeah, for sure.

PS (02:18):

Yeah. Um, what are you majoring in?

JS (02:21):

Psychology. And I'm minoring in social work.

PS (02:25):

What would you plan to do with that?

JS (02:27):

Um, so right now, because school's expensive and I, um, have to pay for it, <laugh>, um, so I am, I'm gonna go to grad school and I want to just do therapy until I can like, get a PhD. And then I want to go into research and like, I don't know, I think there's so many things that can be solved through people like understanding and like, I don't know, I don't know how to put it, but I really wanna re go into psychological research and like understand the brain better and [00:03:00] to like, help other people understand their brains better and to like kind of get rid of like the disparities, even though that's a big, big task. Yeah. But like, it's a goal. We can have farfetched goals. Right?

PS (03:13):

Yeah. So talking about goals and like disparities and stuff, looking back, coming back to the school, what are your thoughts on what's going on right now? Are chancellors just stepped down and like the L-G-B-T-Q issues, all that stuff?

JS (03:31):

Interview keywords/topics: Ireland and Appalachia, Community

Yeah. I think it's really, it's disgusting and it's like I'm, uh, I'm, I identify as like a straight woman and I'm white, so I have like privilege and like with that. And it's just like seeing my friends who aren't, who don't have the same privileges as me, and like in the institution where they're supposed to feel safe and accepted and where like they're not, there's not like, them not allowing drag shows on university grounds and like, taking away the expression tunnels and like the art building. It kind of, it really shows that like, creativity is all is muted. Creativity isn't something that's like often celebrated. And I thought app when I came here was doing a good job at celebrating diversity and creativity, but they're muting it and I think it's really sad and it, it's like, I love going here, but like, I don't know, hating on people or discriminating against others that are different. Like, is that the name that they want for this university because they're not really doing anything to like, stop it or fix it.

PS (04:37):

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. So do you think you've changed since you've come here?

JS (04:44):

Yeah, I've changed so much in a good way. In the best of ways. I think, I don't know, I was.. I feel like I was really sad especially, I don't know, junior and senior high year of high school. I feel like everyone's pretty sad. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Um, and I don't know, I just like things were going on in my life that weren't like the best and I just like wanted to get away and then I got away and I don't know, the education here and like the classes I'm taking, like have really opened my eyes into like real world problems and like how we can advocate for others, like in a more positive way that like actually gives them a space to speak. And I, I don't know, my classes have really done a great job at like, opening my eyes and like making my knowledge definitely a lot larger.

PS (05:33):

What, what class have, what class did you like the most?

JS (05:39):

Hmm. Last year I was, or last semester I had really good classes. Um, I took an online intro to L-G-B-T-Q studies class. And then I took, um, a social work class. I'm forgetting the name, but it was with Dr. Auten and she was, I'm taking her again next semester. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Um, but one of the things I learned in, uh, professor Dr. Auden's class was like about cultural competency and like advocating for others who can't, like, who don't have the same power or like same voice as you. And like putting, it's like putting yourself at risk and discomfort for someone else's comfort that like can't speak. And I think, I don't know, the way she just like put everything and like we talked about things like, I don't know, they really connected with me and like, I definitely felt like a lot more empathy towards like, other groups that I hadn't before. And it's like also going back to cultural competency. It's just like dedicating your life to like, understanding people and like understanding their disadvantages and advantages. So I don't know. Yeah.

PS (06:50):

So you wanna, you really want to just understand and like

JS (06:54):

Interview keywords/topics: Ireland and Appalachia, Community

Yeah. 'cause I, I feel like I don't understand anything. Yeah. Like I do, but I don't, it's like everything makes me so upset and like sad, like things that are going on in our world. And then, I don't know, I just wanna understand. That's for sure.

PS (07:09):

Yeah. Well, what brings you joy?

JS (07:10):

Well, um, I, like I said previously, like going outside. Like yesterday I went for a hike with a few of my friends and like just sat on the rock and looked out at Linville Gorge and it was like, every single time I'm like, sad. I just, I like need to go outside and just like appreciate what is around us and like the little things, even though the mountains are pretty, pretty big, but I don't know. Um, I like, I I love my cat. I have a really cute cat named Zeplin. He's so adorable. I love my cat, but that sounds like weird, but I genuinely do. Yeah. He's my zep. I love Zep.

PS (07:51):

Yeah, he's the best.

JS (07:52):

and I love my friends. I do. I love my friends.

PS (07:55):

Yeah. Um, did you have good friends in high school? Like what was high school like?

JS (08:02):

Mm. Um, so in high school I moved to Ohio my freshman year and then, um, so I didn't really know anyone. And then I ran all throughout middle school and I was, I was pretty decent at it. So like I joined the high school cross country, uh, indoor and outdoor track teams. And I did that year round for four years. And then I met a lot of friends through, uh, running that. I still talk to some of them. And then two of my best, or three of my best friends go to school in North Carolina from high school. And one of them I'm living with next year. So I've, I feel like I've always been a quality over quantity type of person with friends. Like, I don't, I don't need a lot of friends. I just need like, good ones. I don't know. Like, and I'm, I also feel like I'm extroverted, but I'm also like a little bit, I'm introverted in the way where I like, I don't know. I like, just like having my, my close little inner circle. I don't know. I like really have just been rambling. I'm rambling today. Yeah.

PS (09:09):

Um, what was covid like?

JS (09:12):

Um, so I remember when we first heard about Covid, I was at track practice and we had two weeks off and everyone was like, woo hoo, this is so great and we're still gonna be able to run and like, compete. And we were really excited for the outdoor season because we had just, um, got third in indoor states for

Interview keywords/topics: Ireland and Appalachia, Community

the four by eight. So like, we were excited to like, keep getting better and maybe get a state championship, which we didn't 'cause track got canceled. And, um, I, I don't know if we can talk about this, but like, I felt like I drank a lot during Covid. Yeah. It was, yeah. And I didn't like that.

PS (09:51):

no. I feel like a lot of people that makes sense. 'cause just like, yeah. Shut inside. Like where you gonna do

JS (09:57):

And like, I don't learn well online. Like normally like I just don't, um, I don't know, like just, I, my grandpa died during Covid, so I don't know, COVID was like a really hard time for me. And I honestly feel like I don't think about it a lot because like, it sucked. Yeah. I don't know. I felt like I, I like lost myself during Covid, but I didn't understand why. But now, like, looking back at like all the statistics and like understanding what Covid did with like, isolation, like now it makes sense, but like in the time I was just like, get, I'm sad.

PS (10:31):

What would you tell past you? Like, would you rather talk to talk to past you or talk to future you?

JS (10:39):

Mm. Okay. I'm gonna, I, I would talk to past me in like a vain way and would be like, don't dye your hair. Okay. But, but other than that, if we're moving past vanity, I would say I'd probably talk, I would want to talk to my future self. Yeah. And I, I don't know what I would say to her. I would probably tell her she's a baddie.

PS (11:01):

A baddie. Yeah.

JS (11:05):

Yeah. I would say, I don't know, I'd be like, hopefully you're happy <laugh>. Yeah. Or do what makes you happy. Yeah. Which is so cliché, but like, what else can you say? Yeah.

PS (11:15):

Just be happy. What, what's the biggest lesson you've learned?

JS (11:20):

Um, the biggest lesson I've learned, I feel like don't be afraid to let people go. That like, I don't, I feel like when I was ] younger I had bad friends. Like for some of my life, like I had bad friends that weren't that nice to me, but I would stick around because hey, they were my friends. But like, I don't know. Something I've really realized through high school and especially college, is like, don't surround yourself with people you don't like to please them because it's like unfair for them. It's unfair for you. And it's just like, why are you promoting a relationship of like fakeness? Like why aren't you promoting a relationship of like reciprocation and like love? I don't know. That's definitely, I'm really glad I came up with that. 'cause that's definitely like the biggest lesson I've learned. I think that's sad. No. Is that sad?

Interview keywords/topics: Ireland and Appalachia, Community

PS ([12:09](#)):

No.

JS ([12:10](#)):

Maybe that's self growth.

PS ([12:11](#)):

Yeah. What, um, what's one wish you have for yourself?

JS ([12:16](#)):

Hmm. One wish I have for myself

PS ([12:18](#)):

Or just like

JS ([12:19](#)):

That I can financially support myself and not be and enjoy life outside of work. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> because like, yeah, I wanna enjoy work, but I also want to experience the world. Like being able to experience the world is my wish without it being a financial burden.

PS ([12:42](#)):

Hmm. Are you proud of yourself?

JS ([12:46](#)):

Hmm. Sometimes I think like 60/ 40 maybe. Maybe 70/30. I think I do a lot of good things and I do some bad things, but I think the good, my, the good things about me are better than the bad I would hope. I don't know. I like my work ethic and like, I don't know my ability to be pretty, like, what's the word? Self-sufficient. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Yeah. I don't know.

PS ([13:19](#)):

I think I like that. <laugh>. Yeah. Um, and then what are some of your achievements?

JS ([13:26](#)):

Hmm. Some of my achievements. Um, well, getting in here I got, I got some money off for like having good grades and like being varsity all four years and uh, like tracking cross country. Um, uh, I don't, I don't know, I really like pride myself on like my schoolwork and work ethic, but I think that was also like ingrained into my brain as like a child. So I guess think thank the parents for that<laugh>. Maybe thank my free will. I don't know. Yeah. I like my free will. I love free will.

PS ([14:08](#)):

Jolly choose.

JS ([14:09](#)):

Interview keywords/topics: Ireland and Appalachia, Community

Jolly choose. I was like, this is off topic, but I was arguing with M. the other day and he was like, why are you doing that? And I was like, free will. And he really didn't like that

PS ([14:18](#)):

Freewill.

JS ([14:19](#)):

Yeah. Because I can. Exactly.

PS ([14:22](#)):

Is there anything else you wanna say?

JS ([14:24](#)):

Um, I don't know. I, okay. I'll just say with, 'cause if they're ever looked at, if this recording's ever looked at, I hope appstate, um, becomes a more inclusive environment and, um, I hope people are happy here and continue to be able to be happy. That's all. That's all I have to say.

PS ([14:52](#)):

Okay. And I think we are done.