Interview keywords/topics: Ireland and Appalachia, Community

Interviewer: GC
Interviewee: MC

GC (00:00):

<silence> Hey, so this is GC interviewing MC for Dr. Martell's WRC 2202, uh, project, which is ending off with a project on oral history as part of our Final for, an Irish and Appalachian history course. Um, so we are interviewing today in the Belk Library, um, and we're gonna discuss different ways [00:00:30] of using it and understanding historical information or put that into practice, I guess, more accurately. Um, so we'll just jump right in, um, and kind of talk about good life questions. So

MC (00:41):

Go straight to the deep traumatic stuff,

GC (00:43):

Yeah you know, what do you think are <laugh> are the broad social perceptions of our generation, which is Generation Z, and are you aware of any other stereotypes or perception of this generation that ones of older generations have assigned for us? When you kind of think about the valid validity [00:01:00] of those stereotypes.

MC (01:03):

I'm sorry. I was getting a phone call from God knows where. No, you're right. Um, I had to make sure it wasn't some another stabbing. Okay. <laugh>, continuing, <laugh>. Um, so like a lot from when I was young, I saw a generation like being put as like very lazy to attach to technology a lot. And like, yeah, we do spend a lot of technology, but the technology was literally made to hold our attention. Like the way websites and everything make money is by [00:01:30] holding our attention. Yeah. And it is. Yeah. No, it's slightly our fault, but I feel like it's more the fault of people who designed the technology to be like this.

GC (01:38):

Yeah. Which Wasn't us. 'cause we grew up With it. <laugh>.

MC (01:40):

Yeah, exactly. And also the lazy part. If you can go back hundreds of years and every older generation calls the younger generation lazy.

GC (01:50):

That is true. That is true. Good points, good points

MC (01:51):

We are a flawed generation. Every generation is flawed as hell, but not exactly the most [00:02:00] attached, you know?

GC (02:04):

Yeah. Yeah. That's fair.

MC (02:06):

Every generation's different than the generation before. It's just conditions change in which we grow up in and what we're like, we're one of the generations that does now have easy access to the internet, to an absurd level. Like we now have, um, what do they call it? Like iPad kids?

GC (02:24):

Yeah. <laugh>

MC (02:27):

iPad kids. Now I kind of feel bad about Gen Alpha that's coming in and all [00:02:30] the heat they're getting right now. Yeah. But yeah, it's, it's interesting.

GC (02:35):

Yeah. Interesting enough. We were also one of the generations to live through COVID-19. Um, and kind of grow up with that. How did that impact you? How did it change you? When did, what did you learn about yourself and kind of those around you?

MC (02:47):

So a little bit of a traumatized <laugh>

GC (02:50):

<laugh>.

MC (02:51):

Um, one of the worst periods of my life, not 'cause of the COVID-19 pandemic, because my main friend group just fell apart. My [00:03:00] childhood friend had become a bully of a friend I was close with and I was like dealing with that. Do I just like get rid of them? And the troubles with that. And uh, just as it started hitting my mom kind of had a crisis of being like, oh God, death is real. And pulled all like whole entire, none of y'all are leaving the house. You had to file, like follow this strict procedure. With like interacting things. It's like about like a few months in like going outside and stuff. And it was [00:03:30] stressful. I did not like, like I, yes, I would mourn her if she died. <laugh> I care about my mother, but yeah, no COVID-19 serious. It's just the point of where you cry and hold onto your child and go, do you want me to die? That's a little far. Little too much. Yeah. I don't, yeah.

GC (03:52):

So y'all like, you literally stayed in the house all time, like did you even go outside?

MC (03:55):

Uh, we, yeah, we, uh, we're in a neighborhood. Oh. Like we have had access to a greenway [00:04:00] nearby. Okay. But like it was tense if we went outside. 'cause my mom would be like, oh, you want me to die? And it was like mother <laugh> <laugh> and that, come on. Yeah. But yeah, no, I understand the fear of death. It is very much a presence.

GC (04:20):

Now you talk about the greenway and kind of your neighborhood. How does that fit into more your hometown, home community?

MC (04:25):

Uh, I'm gonna be honest, I was, uh, homeschooled. Barely [00:04:30] attached to my community. I knew the local neighborhood kids and that's where we got our friend group from. And like we played for a while. Like we were close to the park and everything. But like, it started falling apart 'cause a bunch of us started getting older. And all of us went to different schools or didn't go to a school. So it just, yeah. I knew all my local neighbors. We knew each other. We talked like once every other month. Like there was no like attachment really. Yeah. I'm more attached to the land around my house than the people, if that makes sense. So

GC (04:58):

Did you do like a co-op or anything? [00:05:00] Or you literally just did blunt homeschooling, like you stayed home?

MC (05:04):

Uh, we would go out and like go with other groups sometimes if there's a, a class nearby or something. Yeah. Uh, I was the third child to be homeschooled. My mom was incredibly lazy with it. I have to haul my ass sometimes to learn things she never taught me. So a little salty about that. You can see I have some mommy issues. Yeah, that's okay. That's okay. Um, so who doesn't

GC (05:26):

Yeah, that's okay. That's okay. Um, so <laugh> What are the main current events or political topics [00:05:30] of 2024 that you're interested in?

MC (05:33):

I mean, election year, like the whole terror for sure. There are so many things going right now. The eroding rights of so many people. Just straight up a genocide happening in like other countries. It's great. So great. Um, yeah. No, it's terrifying, but you gotta ignore it or else it'll drag your mental health down <laugh>, but then you also have to pay attention to it enough that you can help fix it. But it's like, like paying attention enough that you actually know [00:06:00] relevant information and can help out with it, but at the same time not too much that you won't like, um, you know, no longer be here. <laugh>. Because like if you pay attention to like global warming, it's a little terrifying. So I hate how that's even a political topic that

GC (06:16):

Yeah. Yeah.

MC (06:19):

I'm an environmental science related major.

GC (06:23):

Is that one of your like top issues on how you navigate the political Environment?

MC (06:28):

Uh, mostly [00:06:30] my two main ones are the rights of like people. 90% of my friends or people at current, like I have like half my friends are at least are like trans. And like you, you've seen local laws between North Carolina. It's getting more dangerous for them. I'm scared for my friends. And like, yeah. And also environmental stuff is it's going.

GC (06:51):

Yeah.

MC (06:51):

Yeah. If it goes worst route, uh, and humans don't make it, life will survive. Just

GC (06:57):

Not with us. <laugh>.

MC (06:57):

We don't know

GC (06:58):

<laugh>. Yeah.

MC (07:00):

[00:07:00] Oh it's great.

GC (07:02):

Yeah. So kind of hard turn, but what are your opinions Yeah. And beliefs about going to college. Where is the value in that? Um, how have you seen that play out kind of in your own life?

MC (07:13):

I believe it is important to like go to college to like, college is a very interesting thing socially, like helps like develop first socially. It's a very changing event in someone's life. And it also gives 'em like education, like the field they're going into. I am a little concerned, but more [00:07:30] than a little concerned of how expensive it's gotten for sure. Because now it's pretty much like if you want to get a job above minimum wage, you need a college education. Or you need to go to trade school or

GC (07:40):

Something. Yeah.

MC (07:42):

And it is absurdly expensive. How much was, I think one semester now is like 20,000?

GC (07:47):

I don't know. I get a lot of financial aid <laugh>.

MC (07:51):

So fair it's very expensive. Yeah. Um, and it's growing quite quickly. My brother's my, he's my oldest brother [00:08:00] born first. His college was much cheaper than mine and he went to NC State, but it's 'cause he went 10 years ago. There's a gap.

GC (08:05):

So interesting. Yeah. How did, like being homeschooled, was there always the plan for y'all to go to college or was that something y'all made on the individual decision?

MC (08:15):

Yeah, the plan was there. The, main reason we were homeschooled is because, um, when my sister, she originally like was in kindergarten, so yeah, they were going to make her redo kindergarten 'cause she had dyslexia and couldn't read yet. And my mom was like, hell no. And they weren't [00:08:30] listening to her. So my mom took her back to homeschooled her and was like, I'm homeschooling one. Might as well homeschool the rest.

GC (08:35):

Yeah, that makes sense. That makes sense. Um, so kind of with college, can you describe like the first few weeks of your undergrad experience, um, how was that transition from home to college?

MC (08:46):

Freeing and stressful as hell. So as I've already mentioned already, I have issues with my mother. So it was great for being like out of a roost and be able to do whatever the hell I wanted. Um, but at the same time people [00:09:00] stress me the hell out. Just so unpredictable. And I <laugh> peoples decisions make and it stresses me out.

GC (09:10):

I literally just had a conversation with a friend at lunch about another one of our friends and I was like, I don't understand <laugh>. I was like, every time I think I know what they're gonna do, I don't know what they're gonna do. <laugh>,

MC (09:21):

I literally got hives my first week on my right arm. Yeah. 'cause people stress me out that much. That's crazy. Actually, I wasn't fully homeschooled. I did, I'd go to [00:09:30] kindergarten like, 'cause my mom believes like it's just good to go to kindergarten and stuff. And my first week in kindergarten I got covered head to toe hives as well. So people stress me the hell out to the point that it physically manifests. It's great. But like I, it was nice. It was nice being here. It wasn't entirely stressful. I wish I had handled it a little better, but you can't change the past.

GC (09:54):

That is true. And kind of a campus, how do you feel about the climate of campus? Have you seen it change at all? Do you wanna see it change?

MC (10:00):

[00:10:00] Uh, I'm honestly not super involved in campus, but I am concerned with some of the stuff that's been going down. Like the shutting down free expression tunnels. Like reducing like, sorry, I'm getting over a cold. But, um, God. Okay. <laugh> body. Lemme talk.

GC (10:20):

You're good. You're good.

MC (10:21):

Anyways. Uh, like the firing of this LGBTQ plus people like with no warning. Yeah. Uh, changing the event of like pride [00:10:30] week to spring week, which is a little weird. In general all of the, and it was a little nice to see Sherry getting fired over some of this like, tension on campus. Well, not fired, she stepped down. Yeah. But it felt kind of,

GC (10:46):

It felt like there was, this was the effect as the causes have played out. Yeah. Even if she said it was for poor health,

MC (10:53):

I, I feel like it was <laugh>. People have been very negative towards her for a while. I feel like it's a general college [00:11:00] thing. I don't know if you have any friends at other colleges

GC (11:03):

like I agree. I hear everybody Complains.

MC (11:04):

Everyone hates their Chancellor.

GC (11:04):

You gotta have someone to direct the hate it. Yeah, exactly. Yeah.

MC (11:09):

It's great. Yeah.

GC (11:10):

Um, so kind of gearing towards this semester, what lessons have you learned, um, about understanding or interpreting history?

MC (11:19):

So like, before this class, I kind of was like dreading this class. To be honest, I, I don't really like learning about

GC (11:25):

History, so I didn't know what I signed up for. Like <laugh>,

MC (11:29):

Same here. [00:11:30] Honestly, I really liked how it played out. It was cool you go Ireland and Appalachia. I was kind of dreading this class beforehand though because I, I don't really like history to be honest. I was never really taught to me in like an interesting manner in the slightest. It was like, memorize these dates and these are people who did things. Yeah. And I feel like this brought up lot, a lot more of like the interesting events that happened and like actual consequences and why people learn history and like, I don't know, history concerns be more wild than you [00:12:00] think it is. Yeah. Some of the stuff people have done is just absurd. Yeah. And just the way like it's interesting understanding like old tensions to understand modern tensions, if that makes sense.

GC (12:11):

Yeah. Do you think getting taught in like a Watauga class made it more interesting or like,

MC (12:16):

I honestly prefer Watauga classes I've taking one or two non-watagan classes for like my gen eds. And um, honestly, Wagan classes are just a lot more open, a lot more like also the homework's like way easier for me to conceptually understand [00:12:30] because sometimes they'll put the weirdest, like for non Watauga classes, they'll put the weirdest rules slash explanations and you have to go to office hours to be like, what do you want me to do. There's nothing laid out here. You just say do this thing and I, I need to know what to do.

GC (12:51):

Yeah. Agreed.

MC (12:51):

Like and also all our professors, they're all so kind. I love all the Wataugan professors. They're great.

GC (12:57):

And the bonus of it being a residential college Yeah. And they actually care [00:13:00] about us is nice.

MC (13:00):

Don't even have to leave the, like if you live in the dorm, you don't even have to leave the building to go Yeah. Classes. It's nice.

GC (13:05):

So tell me more, what is that like living and learning and eating in the LLC?

MC (13:09):

Honestly, I'm not that involved in Watauga. I am a Watugan. But like my first year, as I said, I got panicked by people and I didn't really get involved then <laugh>. And now I'm just too nervous to get involved now. So I like, I'll occasionally go to the events and enjoy it with like my roommate, like my friend group and stuff. But like I'm more [00:13:30] involved in other campus stuff. Like I'm involved in the geology department so I'm like, I go to the club events. I have some geology friends, but like, I'm not that connected to Watauga. It's nice having the honest benefits. I like the professors. It's nice to take the

classes. I wish I had been more involved, but I wasn't so too nervous to change it at this point. I'm too, involved in things

GC (13:50):

You're Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. That makes sense.

MC (13:53):

Involved in things that might affect my future 'cause Yes. Being involved in your department's Nice. Get good connections.

GC (13:59):

For sure. [00:14:00] Um, yes. That kind of leads me to your last question because I think I skipped it earlier. What is your program of studies? We've kind of talked about it a few times, but, but not as much.

MC (14:12):

Oh yeah, So I'm a geology major. I love rocks straight up like from what I could do first, like move around properly. My parents could not pull me away from rocks

GC (14:21):

Really? So this has been like a lifelong thing?

MC (14:23):

Yeah. But they'd take me to the beach and I'd just be like, sand. And they couldn't pull me away from the sand. They'd show me a cool shell or something and be like, nah. But yeah, no, it's really, I really do like being a geology major. Like actually, I got accepted into NC State and I chose App state over NC State. Because I looked at the two different geology departments and the one here just felt a lot more alive. If that makes sense. And like we actually like get to talk to our professors. The classes are a lot more involved. It's nice just like actually learning about rocks now and being able to comprehend the past through rocks. [00:15:00] The distortion of time that comes with being a geology major. <laugh>. Yeah, it's great.

GC (15:12):

Thanks for the interview.