Interview keywords/topics: Ireland and Appalachia, Community

Interviewer: CH
Interviewee: FM

CH (00:01):

All right. This is CH and I'm interviewing

FM (00:03):

FM.

CH (00:04):

This interview is being conducted in the Belk Library on November 6th, 2024, as a part of our oral history project for WRC 2202 of Fall 2024 history course. This semester we discussed different ways of using and understanding historical information and we are creating our own historical documents in this project. Alright, without further ado,

FM (00:26):

Let's get started.

CH (00:27):

The first question is, where are you from and how did it affect your life?

FM (00:31):

So, I'm kind of from all over the place. Um, I was born in California. My dad, he was military, so, um, I was born in California and then I moved to Okinawa when I was very little, um, which is where my mom is from. And then we moved to the States. I lived in Virginia and I had lived in North Carolina for 10 years. And so whenever people ask me where I'm from, I kind of just say I'm from North Carolina 'cause I've been here the longest. Um, it affected my life because I was constantly moving to new schools and new houses and having to meet new people. And it's like once you make friends, you're already having to make new friends and I was constantly having to adjust to that. Um, but I kind of got used to it, <laugh>.

CH (01:26):

Cool. And with your mom being from Japan, are you a Japanese citizen?

FM (01:29):

So I was a Japanese citizen. Um, I lost my citizenship when I was 18, but I would definitely like to get it back. I was supposed to go back in 2020, but obviously with Covid I was unable to do that. But I would love to go back. Hopefully we're going back this summer.

CH (01:47):

Cool. Cool. For the next question we got, how and why did you choose upstate and what is your program of study and why did you choose it?

FM (01:54):

So I chose upstate, um, because I don't know if like everyone, uh, chose upstate for this reason, but I just really like the mountain. It's a very beautiful campus. Like I said, I kind of, um, grew up like in California and North Carolina, Virginia and Okinawa by the beach my whole life. And I don't know, I kind of just got sick of the beach. Um, not the Okinawa beach just 'cause they're beautiful, but I just wanted to change. And I have family that lives in Rutgers, Virginia, which is in the Appalachian Mountains and I just really like it. We go there, um, every Thanksgiving and I don't know, I just, I really liked it. It was so beautiful and I was like, you know what? I think this is where I want to go. And initially all my friends were planning on going here, but that didn't really happen.

FM (02:39):

They all decided to go to Chapel Hill. Um, but I'm happy regardless. And my program of study is psychology and I chose it because I have always been so fascinated by how the human brain works. And my dad is also a psychology major and I initially wanted to be an education major because I wanted to teach kids in English, but I don't know, I just decided that I probably wasn't, not really for me. But yeah, I don't know if I wanna be like a therapist or a psychiatrist or what I wanted to do exactly, but I know that I definitely wanted to go into that field.

CH (03:17):

Cool. Cool. Alright, next question I have is, how did COVID-19 affect your life and what did you learn from it?

FM (03:24):

Um, so <laugh> COVID-19 affected my family because at the time, uh, when I was living with my dad, uh, he lost his job as a result of Covid, which really impacted our family. My mom ended up having to get a job and it was, it was just a, it was, it was quite a change. And obviously, you know, um, it was really scary 'cause we didn't know, you know, anything about the virus. It was new and people were like, oh, it's gonna, it's gonna kill people. And everyone was masking up and buying all the toilet paper <laugh>. That was my mom. My mom was the one that bought all the toilet paper and the hand sanitizer. Um, but yeah, it was, it was really just, you know, I feel like I have a new perspective because I definitely, you know, when I get sick I definitely like to sanitize and social distance and all that really fun stuff. Yeah,

CH (04:22):

For sure.

FM (04:22):

And yeah, <laugh>.

CH (04:24):

Alright. Uh, next question is, how would you describe your identity and how has it changed throughout your life?

FM (04:29):

So I, like I said, I would describe myself as half Japanese, specifically half Okinawa and half white. Technically I'm German, but <laugh>, uh, I don't, I don't know. I don't really identify with my German

side, but, like I said, I lived in Okinawa and I used, I used to frequently visit my OK and Allen family. And obviously I'm in America, so I don't really get to talk to 'em as much, but I used to speak Japanese fluently, kind of lost it over the years. I took a Japanese class, but it's just not as good as it used to be. But we like to integrate a lot of the Japanese culture into my house. So a lot of cooking. Um, and just like a lot of the traditions that we used to celebrate. Uh, yeah, I de I definitely, I, I will say I, I do miss my mom's cooking. I don't really get to cook as much Japanese food because I'm a broke college student and there are no Asian markets around here, which kind of sucks, but, um,

CH (05:29):

Well I would say what, what's your favorite Japanese food?

FM (05:32):

Oh my God. Um, there's a lot. I would say definitely Okinawa, soba. Oh, my mom makes fantastic Okinawa soba, um, rice balls, uh, what is it called? Have you ever heard of like a Bento box?

CH (05:48):

Mm-Hmm.

FM (05:49):

<affirmative>. Yeah. Um, bento boxes. I really like Bento boxes, sushi. I don't know if sushi is from Okinawa though. Um, ramen pretty much anything. I really like. Anything from Okinawa. Yeah.

CH (06:03):

Alright. Next question is how have you changed since arriving at app?

FM (06:10):

So, you know, like I said, I grew up my whole life, um, having to constantly move schools and meet new people. But, you know, once I got really comfortable, um, at my school and in my hometown, 'cause it's like, you know, you have that group of friends, so you don't really have to meet new people. Um, it was, it was kind of difficult for me, especially because my, um, my friends don't really go here. Um, having to meet new people was scary and it was like being a kid all over again and having to meet new people. But that was super scary. And, which is kind of funny because I used to work as a server at Denny's, so I was constantly meeting new people. But, sorry, what was the question? I kind of just started,

CH (07:00):

Yeah, <laugh> <laugh>. How have you changed since you arrived at App?

FM (07:03):

Oh. Um, but yeah, I don't know. I guess meeting new people and it's, it's different because when I, whenever I worked as a server, it's, it's like you meet people and then they go and it's like, you know, this,

CH (07:13):

You're not going to see them very much again

FM (07:14):

Again. Yeah. But now it's like I'm having to, um, you know, make new relationships and I feel like that has been kind of the most difficult part, I would say.

CH (07:24):

All right. Uh, the next question I have is, what has been the most challenging aspect of App for you so far?

FM (07:32):

Most challenging aspect? Um, I would definitely say meeting new people and also kind of learning how to be independent because I, uh, lived with my dad, um, before I came here. And obviously, and I had a job. That is another thing I would say. Uh, so he would kind of like, you know, make me food. I would also cook. And, um, you know, I guess learning how to be independent and, you know, having to take responsibility. Um, <laugh> I've gotten several speeding tickets. So <laugh> I've been having to take responsibility for that. And it's been, it's been really great. And obviously, you know, it's, it's like a whole new routine that you have to adjust to.

CH (08:17):

Yeah, yeah,

CH (08:18):

For sure.

CH (08:18):

Yeah. To learn how to do everything yourself

FM (08:20):

Exactly.

CH (08:21):

With no crutches.

FM (08:22):

Yeah. No, yeah.

CH (08:23):

To Carry you for sure. All right. Uh, the next question I have is, if there was one thing you could change about app, what would it be?

FM (08:31):

Um, hmm. If there was one thing I could change about app, I would say, first of all, probably like, this gonna sound dumb, but probably the parking, because <laugh>, I brought my car up here thinking that I would just, you know, find a parking spot. Uh, but I, that did not happen. I ended up parking, in this like, abandoned building. and yeah, I, I didn't wanna pay $800 because I'm a broke college student and I just

can't really afford that. So, um, my car almost got towed a few days ago, which is really exciting. So definitely more parking spots. Um, also <laugh>, I would say the dining hall food is something to really get used to because, my, my friends who are, um, a year older than me, they were like telling me about how the, the dining hall food is so terrible. And I was like, okay, it can't really be that bad.

FM (09:30):

Um, and the first two weeks it was pretty good and everyone was like, oh yeah, no, I don't know what everyone's talking about. It's really good. And then it slowly kind of just started getting worse and worse and I just wasn't enjoying it as much. And so that is another reason why I would definitely like to start cooking again. And it kind of really makes you homesick. And I, I miss my mom's cooking and I miss cooking, and I also miss my dad's cooking, but my dad's cooking isn't as great, but, you know, it's, he would make like brauts and hamburgers and hot dogs. But I do miss that. Um,

CH (10:09):

You think that's something definitely that, uh, app state's missing is like a wide variety of food. It's all

FM (10:13):

No,

CH (10:13):

Very American

FM (10:14):

Food. Yeah. Yeah. And that's the thing, it's, they have that little, um, state, well, so they will always have chicken tenders and burgers and

CH (10:22):

Pizza

FM (10:22):

And pizza. Like that's a guaranteed thing. But that, I will say that's like another thing. I wish it was more diverse. They don't have any Asian markets around here, which, I mean, they're like an hour away, but I really wish there were certain more Asian markets, but

CH (10:34):

No, yeah, for sure. For sure

FM (10:35):

Yeah. Yeah.

CH (10:37):

Can agree on that. Um, the next question is, what are the current, main events and political topics that interest you, especially today being the day after the election?

FM (10:45):

So, yeah, uh, day after election day yesterday was really rough. I feel like everyone was kind of on edge, constantly refreshing their phone to see what the election results were. Um, I would definitely say the hurricane is a, we'll play a big part. Um, 'cause it wasn't, it wasn't really a thing that we were expecting. It was kind of, it kind of just happened. And I don't think, I mean, at least um, here, we haven't experienced a hurricane or flood since what, like 1940?

CH (11:17):

Yeah.

FM (11:18):

So I don't know. Yeah, that was, that was definitely pretty huge. Um, and there were supposed to be two more hurricanes. Um, I don't think they were gonna hit here specifically, but I would definitely say that's, um, as a result of climate change. And obviously with, I don't know how this election is gonna go. I'm assuming Trump is gonna win. Um, but like he doesn't believe in climate change, which is very interesting. I don't really understand, but you know, that's going to affect, you know, future if we have hurricanes. And

CH (11:53):

Yeah. Building on that, how'd the hurricane affect you here at app and how go day by day basis?

FM (12:00):

Yeah.

CH (12:01):

Changing.

FM (12:01):

Um, so I lived on the coast, like I said, and so there we would get frequent hurricanes and it all, you know, it was like, whatever. But, um, even though I live by the coast, I will say I don't think I've ever been impacted this severely at least App state. 'cause everything, oh my gosh, I remember everything was completely flooded. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And I personally, like in my dorm, nothing really got too damaged there. But I don't know, it was just really funny. Um, seeing people like on kayaks, I don't know if you saw people were on kayaks and it was, I don't know. It was, it was kind of funny, but it, it was, it was so insane. And then we lost power, obviously, and I thought it was, I think that was like the main highlight of the hurricane was, uh, going to the, the dining hall and there was no power and everyone was like in their raincoats and they were serving sandwiches and and whatnot. And that was, yeah.

CH (13:01):

Mm-Hmm, <affirmative>. Yeah. For sure. For sure. Uh, one more question here I have is, where do you see the world going in the next 10 years? And how do you think this will affect you? Another thing kind of political?

FM (13:14):

Yeah, no. Yeah. Um, you know, I don't really know. Uh, I wasn't expecting the really anything that happened this year, I wasn't expecting it. I wasn't expecting, um, the country to go in the direction that it is currently going in. And I feel like it is just really unpredictable. I mean, I don't think anyone could have predicted covid.

CH (13:38):

No,

FM (13:38):

Really. Um, so I don't know, maybe, maybe we will have a new virus. I mean, technologically I think that we're advancing. Maybe there will be self-driving cars, who knows? But I don't know. I, I worry for the future generation

FM (13:53):

I feel like people aren't, are gonna rely on,

CH (13:55):

I think we're definitely more suited if there is another virus. But like, where, where do you see like yourself in 10 years?

FM (14:02):

Myself in 10 years? Oh. Um, I don't know. I mean, hopefully I'll, I'll I will have graduated and <laugh> hopefully, I mean, um, with a psychology degree of some sort. And you know, like I said, I don't know if I want to become a, a psychiatrist or a therapist or a child psychologist, but, um, or a forensic psychologist. I mean, really I'm kind of open to anything I'm still kind of discovering, you know? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> what I'm into. But right now I feel like I'm kind of digging child psychology. So maybe, maybe I'll be a child psychologist, who knows? Maybe I'll have kids. And

CH (14:43):

It's close to that, education stuff that you were talking about

FM (14:44):

It's kind of scary to that education stuff that you were think about. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Definitely scary to think about <laugh>.

CH (14:49):

No, for sure. Alright, uh, that's all the questions I

FM (14:52):

Have. Was it really? So

CH (14:53):

Yeah. Oh,

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FM (14:54):
Dang.

CH (14:55):
Thank you very much.