Interview keywords/topics: Ireland and Appalachia, Community

Interviewer: CW
Interviewee: SJ

CW: (00:01):

All right. This interview conducted in Belk Library on 11/6/2024 is a part of an oral history project for WRC 2202, a fall 2024 history course. This semester, we discuss different ways of using and understanding historical information, and we are creating our own historical documents in this project. This is CW interviewing SJ.

SJ: (00:22):

This is SJ interviewing CW. [Note: SJ is being interviewed in this document.]

CW:

Uh, what's your year and major?

SJ:

My year is a sophomore, and I'm majoring in recreation management.

CW: (00:33):

Alright, so getting into the first question, how were you impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic? How did it change you? What did you learn about yourself and those around you, and is it still impacting you?

SJ: (00:42):

Uh, yes, it is. Uh, the COVID-19, uh, pandemic basically involved me to make deeper connections, uh, with my family members since, since I was so isolated from the general public world, it, it made me think of, uh, the care needed to, uh, think about my family as well as my friends in such an isolated, uh, in such an isolated perspective. Even though the COVID-19 pandemic, uh, caused so many deaths, it is so heartbreaking to see, uh, a sudden illness come outta nowhere and take the lives of so many innocent people.

CW: (01:40):

Yeah, no, I definitely agree with you. Do you feel like, um, how do you feel like your connections deepened?

SJ: (01:48):

I feel like with the isolation of society, I've been able to learn more about myself, my personalities, and not have to worry about the world around me, focus about my being, my beliefs and my, and what I think about, um, myself and my family as a whole. It still saddened me to see so many dead from the pandemic, but we can learn to take extra precautions for the next time if there's another pandemic.

CW: (02:27):

A hundred percent no, I think the COVID-19 pandemic was just such a universal learning experience. Um, speaking of other current events, what are the main current events or political topics of 2024 that you're invested in? Uh, these could be local, campus, national, global, what have you.

SJ: (02:45):

Uh, in 2024, some current events included. Uh, the hurricane that tore itself through Boone and the just recently, uh, election. Yeah. That came out. Uh, not what I wanted it to be.

CW: (03:09):

I think we should bite our tongues. I think it'll be interesting to see how this election plays out. I, maybe it's hopeless optimism, but in my opinion, I it's not over till it's really over. And I think it's, we're in the early stages of it being over. Um, what do you feel, what are, what are your thoughts on Helene going through specifically the mountain area? Like what are what, um, I, I just that, what are your thoughts on it? Going through the mountain area,

SJ: (03:37):

Uh, within the mountain area, we weren't expecting to see such a catastrophic storm come through there. We were originally thinking it would be only going towards Florida and some of Alabama, Mississippi, and all that, but the presence of climate change might've determined its path up north

CW: (04:03):

Something, something, chaos theory, something something. Um, why do you think it's important for people of the future to hear about your experiences of the events of 2024?

SJ: (04:13):

Because it would make a meaningful impact for events of the future. It would determine the future as well as how hmm, how certain things will play out in later times.

CW:

Do you think history repeats itself?

SJ:

Indeed, it does.

CW:

There you go.

SJ:

With that being said, Hmm. Uh, I didn't really figure out, uh, the results of the election until now.

CW: (04:49)

Yeah. Yeah. I mean, we'll see. We'll see. How do you get your news about what's happening locally, statewide, nationally or globally? Uh, do you consider yourself to be well-informed about what's going on in these areas?

SJ: (05:03)

Yes, indeed. Uh, I figure that I put myself more, uh, nationally, uh, globally, statewide and locally. It is best to stay informed with all of the, of the current events going on so we can prepare ourselves to make sure we're ready for what's gonna happen.

CW (05:31)

You seem very future oriented. Do you consider yourself to be that?

SJ: (05:35)

Yes.

CW: (05:36)

There you go. Um, how do you get your news?

SJ: (05:37)

I get my news by, Hmm. Reading online articles, watching videos, and hearing people talk about what's going on.

CW:

So you just love a good variety, huh?

SJ:

Yes.

CW: (05:53)

Word. Word. So that sort of covers all the current events, uh, questions, pivoting on towards more, uh, focusing our on our campus. How and why did you decide to attend App State?

SJ: (06:05)

I attended the Decide App State because I was living on the beach for my whole entire life, but I wanted to change scenery and go up to the mountains to see what that was like. And good thing I did, because I really love those mountains, walking up those hills, seeing those views and exploring a different environment,

CW:

That's for sure. Which, uh, which beach were you from?

SJ:

Topal Beach. [Note: Topsail Beach, NC]

CW: (06:36)
I don't know where that is. I'm sorry. Where is that?

SJ:
It's near Wilmington.

CW: (06:42)
Mm. Okay, so you're still in state?

SJ: (06:44)
Yes.

CW: (06:45)
And so I, that's what I love about North Carolina so much is that we really do have every possible, uh, I guess biome would be the word. We got the beaches, we got the Piedmont, we got the mountains. I just love it all. Um, what advice would you give to next year's incoming students?

SJ: (07:00)
Hmm. What I would give them to them was, uh, uh, be prepared to work hard. Uh, you are gonna be challenged within your classes. Uh, the, the classes within Appalachian State are more complex and more detail oriented than high school classes. Do you agree?

CW: (07:28)
Oh, certainly. I mean, and it, and it sneaks up on you too, the difficulty, um, it, it sneaks up on you, <laugh>. What has been the most challenging aspect of your time at App State?

SJ: (07:44)
Hmm, And one more thing I would say that was gonna say,

CW:
Oh, sorry,

SJ:
For incoming students, uh, was, uh, just enjoy, uh, your time at app because, uh, it's gonna be four years and those four years fly by very fast. So take it day by day.

CW: (08:06)
Yeah. And if you keep wishing that the year's over, you're gonna wish your whole life away. Um, what, so what's been the most challenging time of your, uh, time at App State? Sorry, I didn't wanna cut you off earlier.

SJ: (08:19)

Uh, not really with academics, I've been getting, hmm, very good grades within my academic studies, but rather more about the house and environment, rather the constant growth in the house and environment, uh, not been bothering me, but concerning me for other students.

CW: (08:49)

Yeah. No, it is very interesting how small our town is, but how big they want to make it. Um, how have you changed since you arrived at App State? Are you the same person that you came in a year or you said you're a sophomore?

SJ: (09:06)

Yes, no, I, I thought I was more dependable on my parents before I got in App, but now I'm more independent. Uh, I do my, I do, uh, my work on my own as well as research opportunities in which I didn't do in the past.

CW: (09:35)

I'm with you there. I think independence is such a, you, you never know that you don't have it until you actually get it. And it makes me very happy that, I mean, I mean, sometimes you just gotta, I mean, the metaphor of like the mama bird pushing out its baby bird comes to mind. It's like sometimes you just have to fall and spread your wings. Um, what can you talk about for hours?

SJ: (10:00)

I can talk about, uh, how is the election going to influence or affect App state students.

CW: (10:12)

What are, give me, I mean, I, I know you just said you could talk for hours, but gimme just a little bit. What, what is your thought process regarding that?

SJ: (10:19)

Uh, like is, is the recent election outcome going to, uh, pulls students away from college careers, or is it gonna take students into college careers?

CW:

What do you think? Do you think it's gonna lean either way?

SJ: (10:39)

Mm. well, I don't really know just yet.

CW: (10:45)

It is hard to say, but I think that's a, that's very interesting. I didn't think about that. I didn't think about the impact on actual college admissions and college graduates that this presidency might have, but I think that's very reasonable to assume that it would have a noticeable effect.

SJ: (11:00)

And with that being said, I think the recent presidential election and its results, uh, might influence, uh, the way in which programs of study are manipulated and run by. What do you think about that?

CW: (11:28)

Oh, I agree with you. I think if it's been any evidence with how the Trump campaign has treated academia in the past, I mean, they're definitely going to, I mean, just the fact that it probably boils their blood that there is a gender and sexuality studies program at all. Um, and I think that's just a little bit of it. I think it, it will, it won't, it will spread far beyond what are considered the soft sciences. It will get into more broad, uh, physical sciences. It, I, I, I truly do believe that it will pervade, um, how we learn for the next four years.

SJ: (12:08)

Hmm. Do you expect any changes within majors or removal or addition of majors?

CW: (12:15)

Um, I can't expect, uh, the addition, but I, I would expect removal. I think, um, African American studies, ethnic studies, um, uh, like I just said, gender and sexuality studies. Um, I think if anything, the, um, my reasoning for thinking this is already the reaction to AP African-American Studies, um, with them trying to get it taken down. Um, but that's enough about me. That's enough about me. Uh, to finish up, you're a member of the WRC, right?

SJ: (12:47)

Yes.

CW: (12:47)

The Watauga residential college. Um, on that topic, what did the, uh, Watauga Residential College teach you about what a community looks like in practice? Um, or how should it be in practice?

SJ: (12:59)

Uh, the Watauga Residential College introduced me, uh, to a broad perspective of people in which I could socialize with rather than just stand there alone. Also, overtake a residential college influenced me to give back to the community, especially with their volunteer oriented goal setting.

CW: (13:24)

So as, uh, I guess what you would say, a regular student, I'm not too informed on the actual, like, workings of the Watauga Residential College. What can you tell me about what it offers and how your experience might differ from mine?

SJ: (13:39)

Uh, the Watauga Residential College has things called, uh, shared lunches, in which we get to have lunch together, uh, socialize and even have lunch with our professor-professors. That's

CW: (13:56)

Nice. So it's just, um, a little bit more structure, a little bit more community. Just injected into your average college experience, would you say?

SJ: (14:04)

Yes.

CW: (14:05)

Does, does it, does it go beyond that?

SJ: (14:07)

Yes, it does. Uh, how Watauga Residential College is gonna prepare me for the real world is that it's gonna, let me think outside of the box, just like what their model says. Its goal is to let people think outside of the box, make an impact on the university, and accept, uh, challenging scenarios within real life events.

CW: (14:37)

What's your dream, SJ?

SJ: (14:39)

Uh, my dream is to pursue a job in recreation management, either camp management or park management.

CW: (14:52)

That's a damn good dream, SJ. It's a damn good dream. All right. Well, this has been our interview, um, November 6th, 2024, WRC 2202. This has been SJ, or this has been CW. Sorry about that.

SJ:

And this has been SJ.

CW:

There you go.