Interview keywords/topics: Ireland and Appalachia, Community

Interviewer: Dr. Martell
Interviewee: AY

Dr. Martell (00:00):

Hello, I am Dr. Martell and I'm interviewing

AY (00:07)

AY.

Dr.Martell (00:08)

And this interview was conducted in the Belk Library. We're actually on the fourth floor in the special collections, um, research center in one of the reading rooms. We're, uh, conducting this interview on Wednesday, November 6th, as part of an oral history project for a class called, uh, Watauga Residential College 2202, which is a history course. This semester we've discussed different ways of using and understanding historical information and we're creating our own historical documents in this final project. All right. AY, are you ready?

AY (00:35)

Mm-Hmm

Dr.Martell (00:36)

So what is your name, age, year in college, and field of study or major?

AY (00:40):

Okay. My name's AY. I am 18 years old. I'm a freshman and my major is healthcare management.

Dr.Martell (00:49):

Great. That is great. So why did you choose that major?

AY (00:54):

Um, I've always been interested in healthcare, but I don't like blood <laugh>, so obviously that kind of, uh, takes me out of basically the entire field. Um, but healthcare management's more like the business side.

Dr.Martell (01:09):

I get it.

AY (01:10):

So you get like the behind-the-scenes look on everything.

Dr.Martell (01:13):

Alright. So you're still helping but you don't necessarily have to do the frontline <laugh>

AY (1:17)

Exactly.

Dr.Martell (1:18)

Triage bodily stuff.

AY (1:19)

Exactly.

Dr.Martell (1:20)

So, um, where are you from originally, and why did you choose to come to App State?

AY (01:22):

I'm from Denver, North Carolina, which is about, uh, 30 minutes outside of Charlotte. It's like Lake Norman area, if you know where that is. And I chose App [State] because, well, kind of a basic answer, but I do, the mountains are beautiful <laugh>, but also I got, um, a pretty good scholarship so that helped.

Dr.Martell (1:50)

Oh, that's great, congratulations.

AY (1:50)

Thank you.

Dr.Martell (01:51):

I think coming here for the landscape and the mountains is a really, I mean, there are many reasons to come places and so if you've got money and you love the place, then why not?

AY (02:00):

Yeah, exactly.

Dr.Martell (02:01):

So how do you think your hometown affected you or kinda shaped your path?

AY (02:07):

Well, I grew up in a very, uh, conservative town. It's Lincoln County if you know where that is. It is very, very red. So I was just looking for somewhere to spread my wings, you know, maybe get out of that a little bit 'cause I was just surrounded by it for so long. But yeah, how it shaped me, I don't really know because I moved around a lot whenever I was little. Um, I moved I think about like eight times. So I wasn't really in one place for too long to really call it my hometown.

Dr.Martell (02:49):

Do you think Boone is a, provides a very big contrast to where you're from, and what's that like for you? I mean, I know you're just here, you just got here, but what's it been like so far to have such a different environment?

AY (03:01):

It's been really nice. Um, I, I've genuinely enjoyed like speaking with everybody that I've met and just getting to know everybody and uh, such a wide variety of people as well. Um, because at my high school, I mean it was so just white everywhere, but just having diversity here makes it a lot better.

Dr.Martell(03:31):

Great. Um, yeah, that makes a lot of sense.

AY (03:35)

Yeah.

Dr.Martell(03:40)

So, um, the next question is, what do you think are broad stereotypes and customs of, I guess, your generation? Um, and what do you think makes them different from older generations?

AY (03:47):

Um, well I think the main one would probably be that we are like chronically online <laugh>, but I think that also stems from Covid. So I don't really think that's necessarily our fault.

Dr.Martell (04:00):

I think that's fair enough.

AY (04:02):

<laugh> So I mean, yeah, I do have TikTok and I do Doom scroll, but I mean, I will say the older generations have Facebook and there's reels on Facebook as well, so it's kind of like a similar scenario. So

Dr.Martell (04:23):

Yeah, it feels like my generation, um, the people my age are more like, have transitioned from Facebook to Instagram, which is like sort of a transition phase, I guess, into some of the other forms of social media.

AY (04:34)

Mm-Hmm.

Dr.Martell (04:35)

But it seems like generations have their kind of preferences, but that everyone has a similar, you know, obsession with being online and interacting with social media.

AY (04:40)

Yeah.

Dr.Martell (04:46)

Um, how do you, or what else do you wanna say about that to people in the distant future who might not know very much about what it's like to be growing up during this age of technology and connectivity?

AY(04:56):

Um, I feel like honestly it might be worse in the future because we're taking such a leap into like AI stuff and like we're going so towards technology that, and like even generations below me, um, they're raised on iPads for the most part. Not everybody does that, but a lot of kids are raised on iPads. So that like, I don't know, I think it kinda messes them up in the head a little bit <laugh> because I feel like having, you shouldn't be able to have access to social media whenever you're that young. 'cause social media is brutal.

Dr.Martell (05:42)

Yeah.

AY (05:43):

It's, it's brutal.

Dr.Martell (05:45)

Is there like an illustration or, or an example, maybe not with you, but like that you've heard about to illustrate that?

AY (05:51):

Well, Elliott actually said this on Monday. Um, she was like, back in like the eighties or whatever. Like you can, obviously you can communicate with people 'cause you have your landlines, but whenever you're not on the phone with someone, you're just like away from them. Like you don't have to see them or talk to them or anything. But having your phone with you twenty-four-seven, you're constantly talking to people and like your life, or not necessarily your life, but everything still going on around you. Even whenever you're going to bed and you wake up and the first thing you do is check your phone and yeah. I guess, yeah, that's it.

Dr.Martell (06:36):

This is actually a really good segue into Elliot's next question, which is, what are some current topics in 2024 that are really important, um, to you? Like political or social events that you keep up with?

AY (06:49):

well <laugh> Obviously it is November 6th.

Dr.Martell (06:49):

November 6th.

AY (06:50):

Yeah. The day after the election. Um, obviously it was a tough loss last night.

Dr.Martell (06:58)

Mm-Hmm.

AY (06:59)

But it's all right. Um, I'm sure we'll persevere through these next four years. We're, we're a strong nation. I'm sure we'll get through it, but yeah. Then, the election did happen, <laugh>.

Dr.MArtell (07:13):

It did, do you wanna say what, what the actual outcome was?

AAY (07:16):

Oh yeah. Trump, Trump won.

Dr.Martell (07:17):

Yeah. He beat Kamala Harris, um, pretty solidly.

AY (07:24):

Yeah, it was like Kind of a knockout. I was not expecting that.

Dr.Martell (07:27):

Yeah. It was very different from 2016 and 2020 for sure.

AY (07:30):

For Sure.

Dr.MArtell (07:31):

Yeah. Absolutely. And um, and also going back to that earlier point about connectivity, like I had to put, I put my phone on silent, like I silenced my notifications at nine and I went to bed at 10

AY (07:44)

mm-Hmm.

Dr.Martell (07:45)

And I was like, I don't know what's happening. I'm gonna wake up. Of course, I woke up like a hundred times in the middle of the night and I was like, go back to sleep.

AY (07:48):

Yeah.

Dr.Martell (07:49):

Um, so I finally got up at six this morning and I was like, oh, I had to really like check back in.

AY (07:52)

Mm-Hmm.

Dr.Martell (07:53)

open everything up, open my phone, and see all of the notifications. A lot of my, um, close friends are in Europe and so they knew in the middle of the night and had like, started messaging me. And so yeah, it was a lot to wake up to this morning. I'm, I don't know how you're feeling right now at this moment, but I'm a little bit exhausted.

AY (08:09)

Oh, me too.

Dr.MArtell (08:10)

And feeling a little strange.

AY (08:11):

Yeah, it definitely does feel weird. 'cause I feel like, especially being surrounded by so many people who vote blue, I feel like we were all just kind of expecting Kamala to just kind of pull through. But that did not happen.

Dr. Martell (08:27):

Yeah. Did you like her as a candidate?

AY (08:28)

I did, yeah.

Dr.Martell (08:29)

Are there like, particular ideas or I or aspects of her candidacy that you were excited about? It feels like a lot, a little bit painful to talk about

AY (08:38):

<laugh>. Yeah. It's okay. Uh, I, I don't really keep up with politics too much because I don't like whenever people fight, I hate conflict, so I try to stay away from it as much as possible. But I just obviously like the main thing was abortion. Yeah. So that's like the main reason why I voted for her. But yeah.

Dr.Martell (09:02):

For, the record, can you, do you mind sharing your stance and why that was important to you? What was, what was, was it about the Harris campaign that you agreed with?

AY (09:12):

Um, I, wait,

Dr.Martell (09:16):

Sorry. About abortion. What, what, what is your, do you mind sharing your stance on abortion?

AY (09:20):

Yeah, I think, I just don't think the government should have a say on what women do to their bodies, in my opinion. I feel like a lot of people agree with that too. I think, uh, an abortion ban is um, a little bit extreme. Um, and I don't know. I feel like it's, it's healthcare so we should have access to healthcare, you know?

Dr.Martell (09:48):

Yeah absolutely, yeah, we'll, we'll see that the next four years are gonna be, bring a lot of change I think to particularly women identifying

AY (09:57):

Mm-Hmm.

Dr.Martell (09:58):

People and their lives. So, let's see. So <laugh>, um, maybe we can switch over to for the next couple of minutes talking about your college experience. I guess you've just gotten here <laugh>. Yes. But, um, yeah, how has your college experience been, and has there been anything specific or an event that you wanna draw attention to so far?

AY (10:20):

Well um, for the recording, hurricane Helene <laugh> hit at the end of September and I got here mid-August, so I was only here for a month and a half. And then I had to go back home. Um, but we were out for what, like three weeks?

Dr.Martell (10:40):

Yeah.

AY (10:42)

Yeah. So that was really strange 'cause I had just gotten used to being at college and then immediately we went back home and it was literally like a covid break. I was so scared. I was like, if they put us online for the rest of the semester, I don't know. I don't know what I'm gonna do. Ugh. But it's okay because that didn't happen. We're here right now, so, but yeah, hurricane Helene was kind of crazy and I, I feel like a lot of people don't really know how bad it was in Western North Carolina especially 'cause I mean, I don't watch the news, but I mean, I watched TikTok <laugh>, but I feel like nobody really does it justice. 'cause Chimney Rock is a river now, so

Dr.Martell (11:32):

Yeah. There were so many communities in our region and you're like a western North Carolinian now. You've like moved west now and so this is your place.

AY (11:40):

Yeah.

Dr.Martell (11:40):

And to see it disrupted.

AY (11:41)

Yeah.

Dr.Martell (11:42)

Was it, was it a strange kind of contrast to go home where there was less damage?

AY (11:47)

Oh yeah.

Dr.Martell (11:48)

And then come back. What was that like?

AY (11:49):

It was, yeah, it was so weird because at my home, the hurricane, I mean there was rainstorms but it didn't actually like hit anything. There was a couple of trees down here and there, but it was just like after a bad thunderstorm. And I have a lot of friends who are, um, still in high school. So I went home and I was like, oh my goodness, let's hang out. I haven't seen you guys in so long, but they still had school. So I felt so like isolated because um, I did have people from my high school that came to App, but I wasn't really close with any of them. So I didn't have anybody to hang out with because all my friends from high school were still at college. And then all my friends who are still in high school were at school, so. Right. It was, it was, it was a weird feeling for sure. It definitely brought me back to 2020 and I was like, I cannot do this again.

Dr.Martell (12:46):

What aspects of the pandemic years from COVID-19, the COVID-19 pandemic, did you feel like you were either worried about going back to or felt familiar again?

AY (12:54):

Um, the fact that app kept pushing back classes, that felt very similar because we started with the two weeks in 2020 and then they were like, oh, well actually for the rest of the year you guys are gonna be online. And I really like for a hot minute, I thought that's exactly what was gonna happen.

Dr.Martell (13:15):

And it sounds like you did not like being online.

AY (13:17):

No, I don't like being online. I like being in person. I learn better whenever I'm in person. Online work stresses me out because I feel like I can't grasp what the teacher or the professor wants me to do as well whenever it's online versus in person.

Dr.Martell (13:37):

Right. That makes sense. Well, maybe, um, just to shift to, so again, future people will know how disruptive our semester has been <laugh>, there have been several, uh, local, regional, and national events that are, uh, there's a lot to talk about, but maybe we could, um, sort of move to a close by thinking about what your everyday life is like here at App State. Um, whether or not Elliot had some questions about like dorm life or how do you spend your time? Do you have extracurricular activities? What is it like to be a student at App kind of when you're off the clock per se?

AY (14:09):

<laugh> Yes. I actually really like it here. I didn't think I would like it as much as I would. 'cause App wasn't my first choice. UNCW was, which very vastly different

Dr.Martell (14:26)

the mountains to the ocean

AY (14:27)

Yeah, yeah. But, um, I, I like just dorm life. A lot of people don't like living in dorms and I'm sure I'll probably get sick of it, but I'm also in a suite, so that's kind of nice. I don't really have the typical freshman experience. But, um, I hang out with my suite like whenever I'm in the dorm and then I will walk to class and it's, the weather's been really nice recently, so just walking to class, taking in the vitamin D uh, it's so nice. Um, I going to the Solarium, that's my favorite study spot. The best place on App State's campus.

Dr.Martell (15:17):

Can you describe the solarium for people who maybe have not seen it or don't know what it is?

AY (15:21):

Yes. So the Solarium is a beautiful room in our student union with lots of, lots of windows letting in so much natural light and there are trees and there's a waterfall and there's a piano that people like to play. So yeah, it's very nice. Classical music while you're trying to study actually works.

Dr.Martell (15:42):

I bet, I only hear it. I don't spend as much time in the solarium and now you're inspiring me to go check it out myself. But I do walk through the union twice a day when I'm going in between classes on Mondays and Wednesdays this semester, and I always hear piano music coming and it is a little happy moment that reminds me that there's something else to interrupt my, you know, this is my workplace. It probably feels in some ways like that as to be a student here too. It's also a kind of living space and a study space and a workspace.

AY (16:13)

Yeah.

Dr.Martell (16:14)

And so we get, I at least I can't speak for everybody, get so obsessed and involved with my work that it, it's the moment in which I'm invited to pick up my head and think about something else besides work. It's very nice.

AY (16:22):

Yeah.

Dr.Martell (16:23):

Yeah. I think our student union is really lovely.

AY (16:26):

Oh, I love that Space. It's huge. It's so nice. Like there's so much seating literally everywhere. You can walk 10 feet and there will be another table on chairs. It's so nice and everybody hangs out there and there's Cascades and what's it Crossroads, right? That coffee shop? Ugh. So good. And the bookstore is great too. Yeah.

Dr.Martell (16:50):

Bookstore gym, coffee shop, like Little Cafe.

AY (16:54):

Oh yeah. I forgot about the gym in there. It's kind of nice. I love our student union, it's great.

Dr.Martell (16:57):

The, uh, gym is where um, my husband and I showered during the pandemic, so we didn't have water for 10 days.

AY (17:06)

Oh my gosh.

Dr.Martell (17:07)

So we came and showered here on campus.

AY (17:08):

That's so crazy.

Dr.Martell(17:08):

So we didn't have water and so we hauled, um, we bought a bunch of five-gallon buckets and drove our truck and like filled up our water buckets in the union and in my office building to take home. Um, yeah, the hurricane has been quite, quite an event for everything. But anyway, um, but yeah, I do, the student union was very comforting at that time. It was nice to have it open and available to the community. App State did a nice job with um, trying to open the facilities for people who really needed it. 'cause we genuinely were in need and so it was nice to be able to come here and get away from the mess. That was our house and our living situation.

AY (17:45):

Yeah.

Dr.Martell (17:45):

So, um, so maybe we'll wrap up here. How are we on time? Oh my gosh, we're at like 18 minutes, so.

AY (17:51):

Oh wow.

Dr.Martell (17:51):

What do you think is important for future generations who are gonna come to App State to know so far as a freshman? What is your wisdom or hot take, <laugh>?

AY (18:01):

Uh, I don't know. I think you should just make the most of it. I mean, you're only a freshman in college once, so you gotta branch out, be a little extroverted, make friends, and explore your new living space. 'cause you're gonna be here for four years so you might as well get used to it.

Dr.Martell (18:26):

I think that's a perfect place to end with uh, Really good advice. <laugh>. Well, thank you so much, AY.

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AY (18:30)
Yes. Thank you.