

Patrick Fontes, PhD  
[patrick.fontes@cloviscollege.edu](mailto:patrick.fontes@cloviscollege.edu)  
559.724.1757

## Hindsight is 2020, a COVID 19 Project

### Final Paper, Instructions

Professor Fontes, COVID 19 Oral History Project, 100 points.

Assignment shall be uploaded to Canvas (details on upload are forthcoming in an announcement)

All communication concerning this final paper shall be announced in Canvas

#### **DUE:**

1. Final paper, including the interview transcript, an Introduction and Conclusion
2. Consent Form
3. Audio of the interview, from start to finish

In 2020 Americans have lived through unprecedented times, experiencing multiple catastrophic phenomena at once. What started as an epidemic in China in 2019, by March 2020 spread globally as a pandemic, causing widespread economic, social and health dilemmas. State and local governments, fearing the spread of the airborne virus, shut down businesses for weeks, then months, often times opening and closing again adding to anxiety among citizens, and causing the highest levels of unemployment since the Great Depression. From elementary schools to universities, campuses closed their doors, pushing students into solitary lockdown away from the physical presence of teachers and peers. Affecting the lives of people of all ages, and from all walks of life, the COVID crisis provided a foundation of anxiety, fear and mistrust, when police officer Derek Chauvin killed a Minneapolis African American resident named George Floyd, knelling on Floyd's neck until he died. Floyd's death sparked outrage across the nation, as protestors took to the streets demanding justice, not only for Floyd but other African Americans who police in recent years have murdered. Racial divisions latent throughout society were made manifest as tensions rose to heights not seen on so widespread a scale for several decades. To compound the crisis, the summer of 2020 witnessed one of the worst fire seasons in recorded history on the West Coast, burning millions of acres of wilderness from Los Angeles all the way to Washington State, as thousands lost their homes, whole communities burned to ash, and many losing their lives. All the above hitting America hard during one of the most contentious presidential election years in all US History.

As the US entered 2021 COVID cases surged across the nation and world. Here, in Fresno County, the region suffered one of the highest COVID rates in the nation, and as of February 2021 the Fresno County jail reported the highest rates of infection out of any jail or prison in all of the US. As nations around the world scramble to provide vaccines to their citizens, a shortage of doses has millions of Americans frustrated as they wait in lines for hours, only to be turned away.

#### **Objectives:**

- The paper should reflect the culmination of practice and implementation of feedback on small writing assignments throughout the semester.
- That students present a polished paper, grammatically-sound, and relatively free from spelling

errors, and overall marked improvement in writing over the course of 18 weeks.

- That students articulate their grasp of history over time and how their neighbors, grandparents and themselves fit into the larger American tapestry.
- That students exhibit the ability to weave an average American's life into major events like the Civil Rights movement, the Cold War, the Vietnam War, the War on Terror, and the COVID outbreak.
- That students' investigative, interpretative and reporting tools as a historian are showcased – tools they are able to carry on to future courses and careers.
- That students present a well-crafted oral history transcript for future students and scholars to utilize as research.

**Assignment:**

You will choose to interview someone about their experience during the COVID quarantine. Your interviewee may be anyone of mature age who is living through this historical moment and crisis in American History.

You are supplied the questions to ask. Please see below. Do not add or take away from the set of questions.

Since we are living through the quarantine during this course, a phone call is the best way to conduct the interview.

Your final paper will consist of the main body of interview, plus Introduction and Conclusion pages.

Both your Introduction and Conclusion pages MUST be at least 1 page minimum each in length. An excellent paper will consist of Intro and Conclusions pages 2 pages in length each.

The body of the paper will consist of question and answer format, the questions written out exactly as your interviewee stated, verbatim.

Since the questions and answers must be typed exactly as stated, and your audio file is due along with your paper and transcript, it is highly recommended you download an audio recording app. You may also use Zoom to record your interview and separate out the audio to turn in. The audio is mandatory to turn in.

**MLA Format:**

- Typed, double-spaced, in Times font, font size 12 with one-inch margins. 7-20 pages.
- Everyone MUST turn in the Release Consent Form, uploaded to Canvas.
- Each interview MUST include the release permission question at the beginning of the interview.
- Papers must be 7 pages minimum, at least. Of course I would like to see a longer paper.
- Your paper must include a one-page minimum Introduction, with a minimum of 5 interview pages within the body, and a one-page minimum conclusion. That is the basic minimum.
- DO NOT add additional questions, nor delete any questions. All questions are mandatory.

**Rubric:**

	Good	Better	Excellent
Introduction Page	1 page. interviewee	1-2 pages. interviewee	2 full pages. interviewee

	introduced	introduced, how they fit into American history	introduced, how they fit into American history, brief examination of the COVID historical moment and the importance of recording American experiences
Interview	5 pages, 20 questions answered	5—7 pages, 20 questions answered. Answers are more reflective and reveal the care and patience of the student interviewer.	5—10 pages+, 20 questions answered. Answers are more reflective and reveal the care and patience of the student interviewer.
Conclusion Page	1 page. The interview summed up.	1+ pages. The interview summed up. Key points in the interview are analyzed.	2+ full pages. The interview summed up. Key points in the interview are analyzed. Exploration and argument on the importance of the interview as part of American history.

- If your paper does not meet the minimum 7 pages, your paper will drop 10 points.
- If your paper does not have an Introduction page and Conclusion page, your paper will drop 10-20 points.
- If your paper has egregious spelling and grammatical errors in your Introduction and Conclusion pages, your paper will drop 10-20 points. Of course, this does not apply to the body of the interview since I want you to type out the answers verbatim.

**Mandatory Questions** (the Consent Form plus the following first answer of consent must be included):

1. Q: This interview may be deposited in an archive for the use of future students and scholars and, may be used for any educational purposes in all forms and media including but not limited to scholarly research and publications, library and public presentations, audio or video documentaries, and history exhibits.

Do you, \_\_\_\_\_(write the interviewee's name)\_\_\_\_\_hereby release, give and convey to Dr. George Patrick Fontes and Clovis Community College (SCCCD) to record and use this, your oral history interview conducted by history student and scholar interviewer, \_\_\_\_\_(write your name, the interviewer)\_\_\_\_\_?

A: "Yes, I do"

Please state your name, age, place of birth and where you currently reside.

2. Describe your household. How many people are living in your household. What are their ages, genders and professions? Are there any students in your home?
3. Describe the community where you live. What is the economic and racial makeup of your

neighborhood?

4. When did you first learn about the coronavirus? What were your initial reactions?
5. What impact did the virus and quarantine initially have on you personally, during the initial months of the crisis, starting in March 2020, either mentally, spiritually, and economically?
6. Have you or someone in your household become unemployed or laid off during the Quarantine? At the time of this interview have you gone back to work? If not, what does the immediate future hold for you and your family, in terms of income, resources, and mental health?
7. Describe any events you witnessed that capture your or your community's response to the virus. (example: a trip to the store, school closing, a conversation with friends)
8. How has the quarantine affected your most closest personal relationships, either with your parents, spouse or significant others? If you are a college student, how has the quarantine affected your relationship with peers and close friends?
9. How has the isolation in particular, imposed by the quarantine, affected you?
10. Have you or anyone in your family contracted COVID? Please recount the experience.
11. How did your community respond to the virus? Did they implement any business/social/educational/financial closures or restrictions? What do you think, or how do you feel about the restrictions implemented by your local community?
12. If there are children, teenagers or college students in your household, how has the quarantine affected them on a mental and physical level? Please describe what it has been like for the students in your home going to school online? What challenges have arisen with online schooling? How are the students coping mentally and physically?
13. In what ways has the virus impacted your city, county and state since the outbreak?
14. In what ways has the virus impacted America since the outbreak?
15. How do you think the virus will impact and affect America in the long term?
16. What are your thoughts on how the government—from local to federal— has responded to the COVID outbreak?
17. How have you personally adapted to the outbreak, from the beginning of the quarantine in March 2020, to the present?
18. How has the COVID experience transformed you as a person? If you think back on your life before the crisis, and who you are now, how has your life changed, or you on a personal level?

19. What defines America during the pandemic crisis?

20. Do you have any final thoughts?