

# Life in the Time of COVID-19



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to a Stop, We Carried On



**Kayla Carlson**

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During a Pandemic



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# Introduction

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## *How now? / Even so quickly may one catch the plague?*

—Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, Act 1, Scene 5

At the end of Act 1 of *Twelfth Night*, Olivia uses *plague* as a metaphor for the sudden onset of love, and Shakespeare’s audiences would have understood the comparison, living as they did under constant threat of a literal plague—an uninvited, life-altering experience that could happen very quickly and over which they had very little, if any, control. A lot like love. A lot like COVID-19.

In a normal year, each student in the PRE 3450—Publication Design class produces an individual document demonstrating the skills they have learned during the semester. This year, the students have collaborated, via Canvas, to produce a collective document presenting their individual reflections on the coronavirus pandemic and its effects on their lives. Each two-page spread that follows was created by an individual student, constrained only by some common typographical and design specifications imposed by their instructor to ensure a degree of consistency throughout. So this document was produced by people working in isolation, connected only by computers, all striving to achieve a common goal—a pretty good metaphor for the way life has been for most of us over the past few months. We hope you find the results enlightening.

Sara Oswald, Instructor  
May 2020

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<i>Shaniya Bethel is from Fayetteville, NC, but currently resides in Lumberton, NC. She majors in English with an emphasis in professional writing. She will graduate in December 2020 with her bachelor’s degree. Her biggest take-away from this course is the complexity of designing publications, a set of skills she will surely take into her future career.</i>	
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<i>Kayla Carlson is a senior majoring in mass communication with a concentration in broadcasting and a minor in public relations. Kayla was born and raised in Chicago, IL, but currently resides in Greenville, NC. Kayla is hoping to take the skills that she learned in this course and apply them in her career.</i>	
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<i>Austin Christoff is from Jacksonville, NC. He is majoring in Journalism and is set to graduate in the Spring of 2021. Austin took this Publication Design class because he needed another class during registration. He thought it would be cool to build those skills on the computer so he chose this class.</i>	
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<i>Jayla Coley is a sophomore from Rocky Mount, NC. She is a mass communication major with a concentration in broadcasting. Jayla enrolled in this course to strengthen her skills with Adobe software. She also enrolled in this course to learn transferable skills that can be taken into the profession of mass communications. This course is a great résumé builder that will allow for her to stand out from other prospective candidates in any given work position.</i>	

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**Rebekah Crosson**, originally from the small town of Burgaw, NC, located north of Wilmington, is the youngest of three children. She is in her junior year, majoring in English with an emphasis in professional writing as well as a minor in public relations. When Rebekah is not in class, she works as a receptionist at the Pembroke Fitness Center of Southeastern Regional Medical Center.

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**Taylor Davis** is 21 years old and a junior. She is majoring in English with a professional writing emphasis and hoping to minor in public relations. She is from Robeson County, NC. Taylor took Publication Design because she thought that she could learn how to design different publications and put her experience from this class on her résumé. Taylor learned exactly what she thought she was going to. She was able to gain experience and participate in creating two books of poems from elementary school students. Taylor plans to use the lessons and skills she gained from Ms. Oswald and her class when she is applying for jobs and on her job when needed.

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**Octavia Johnson** is from Alexandria, VA. Her major is mass communication with a concentration in journalism and a minor in creative writing. Before receiving her degree in the spring of 2020, Johnson took Publication Design to gain more experience in InDesign. She wanted to enhance her skills to present herself as more marketable for any online or print news media careers. She learned about properly using InDesign to ensure high quality of work.

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**Megan Munroe** is a senior at UNCP, studying English with an emphasis in professional writing and a minor in creative writing. She plans to move to Denver, CO, to kick-start her career and hopes to one day publish novels.

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**Demetria Redmond** is currently finishing her Bachelor of Arts in mass communication and hopes to intern in a online marketing department in the near future. At UNCP, Demetria learned the importance of graphic design and publication techniques to modern InDesign strategies from experts in the field, including her Publication Design professor, Ms. Sara Oswald.

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**Savanna Rudolph**, with her father in the Navy, lived in several different states over the course of growing up. She considers herself from New York having spent her middle school years and the first two years of high school there. After her father retired her family moved to North Carolina where she now attends college with a major in mass communication, with an interest in journalism. Savanna hopes to become a copy editor, where her lessons in inDesign will be of use.

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**Dazmon Tanner**, who is the middle child of her family, is from a small town called Lilesville, NC, and has dreams of publishing her first two novels. She is a senior at UNCP and is majoring in professional writing with a minor in creative writing. Dazmon wants to move to China to further her studies and hopes to publish novels in the near future.

# As the World Came to a Stop, We Carried On

By Shaniya Bethel



As COVID-19 forced the world to come to an unprecedented halt, many of us found ourselves continuing our (now very limited) lives. Before now, I didn't know what it was like to live through a major historic event. Sure, I was alive during 9/11—but I was also two years old. And, again, when Obama became the first Black president of the United States, I was alive—but frankly unsure of what it all meant at nine years old. Now, at 21, I've become painfully aware of what living through a major historical event is like. And it looks a lot like this:

**Disruption.** As UNCP began transitioning to online coursework, I can admit that I felt minimal relief. It seemed like an extended break that would dissipate as soon as it started. Riding off the highs of Spring Break, I relished the thought of not having to wake up early every day for school. However, that dream was killed instantly as information of the pandemic became a lot clearer: this was not a vacation. It was a cataclysm. And it would last for who knows how long.

**Mundanity.** Despite the growing tragedy the world now faced, life continued. Students around the world

were evicted from campus—many of which returning to unsafe or unfavorable conditions. Millions lost their jobs. And hundreds of thousands of people lost family members or their own lives due to the virus. During all of this, we were still expected to complete assignments on time. Essential workers were still expected to risk their lives, and the lives of their loved ones, in order to go to work. With no end in sight, many people are storming the streets in protest of the quarantine, demanding for things to go back to “normal.”

**Time.** Time is an abundant resource now because of the virus. Whenever I have a break from my many assignments, I like to pick up old hobbies. I read, I write, I paint, I take pictures. Somehow, creating masks for my loved ones has weaved into my free time. It's interesting how the pandemic has shaped us. Even leisure time spent away from worrying about the news or work depends on doing something else regarding the pandemic.



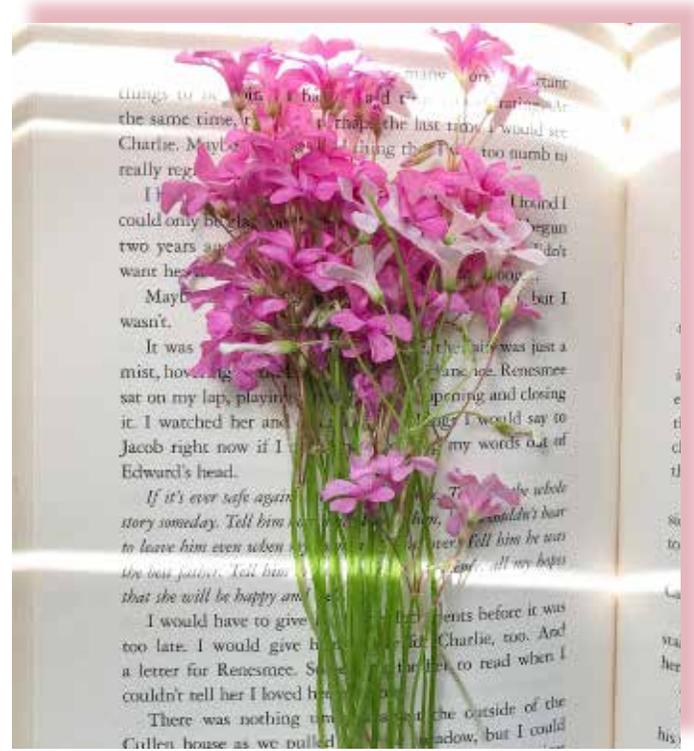
It feels senseless to talk about what my favorite thing to do is so far during quarantine, especially when so many people are dying. I'm not sure if I even enjoy the things I busy myself with. It all feels sour now, to read or paint. I would argue that this is a sad by-product of our insisted resilience.

Social media are plagued by people shaming others for their unproductivity. Shakespeare allegedly wrote *King Lear* during his quarantine. I watched two straight seasons of *Gossip Girl* in my pajamas. Good for Shakespeare. *Gossip Girl* is my *King Lear*.

The point is, the world is going through a massive shock. We don't know how to be idle, and instead have begun spiraling into madness as we try to be the Best Isolation Winner. People are incessantly baking bread, implementing a diet and workout routine, writing *King Lear*, working day and night to become Tik-Tok famous—it's all an interesting spectacle to behold as the world crumbles beneath us.

We're very clearly scared of what might happen once we stop forcing productivity in the middle of a pandemic. Perhaps idleness is not our savior, but our enemy. The Devil and idle hands are old friends.

**Normalcy.** Though online classes are harder than ever, and the circumstances are not favorable, I have the privilege to access the internet and see what's hap-



pening. I have the privilege to still be able to afford rent, food, and other necessities. Many do not. What this pandemic has shown us is that the systems we have in place are not working. We cannot go back to a “normal” past after being disrupted this heavily. We see now that the one percent is not deserving, that “menial” jobs like grocery clerks, fast-food workers, and other customer service jobs keep the world running. We see that the people in charge care more about political reputations than the people, and care more about large corporations than any of that combined. Normal is no longer an option for us.

But I'm afraid, from seeing everything continue with no hesitation, that the world can stop over and over and over again. We will always carry on.

**“The Devil finds work for idle hands.”  
-Henry David Thoreau**

# Hold That Thought: Putting Life on Pause During a Pandemic

By Kayla Carlson



Like many other Americans, I did not really think that the COVID-19 pandemic would have this great of an effect on our communities and temporarily put life on pause. During this tense and uncertain time, I have done my best to isolate and social distance myself from people, along with abiding by various other health and social recommendations. I know that others have suffered worse than I have during this pandemic, and I am so fortunate to not have been impacted greatly.

Throughout my time of isolation and social distancing, I have experienced several situations that I will continue to think about even after the pandemic and once normal life resumes. I first began to understand the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic once I had found out that my university had decided to make the transition to fully online learning. I remember the devastation and confusion I felt about the decision. In the back of mind, I knew that the university made this call to keep students and faculty safe, but I somehow felt cheated. It was my last year as an undergraduate

student at UNCP, and I felt that so many experiences and memories were being taken from me. I had so many things I had planned for my last semester but all of them came to a standstill. I knew that I wouldn't be able to have this experience again, and I hated the confusion there was throughout this time. I was angry at this virus that had caused so much heartache and grief for myself and others.

When the Governor of North Carolina issued stay at home orders I didn't forget the confusion that I felt. For some reason, I never thought it would get that far for our state; it didn't seem possible in my mind. I had seen so many different posts from outraged people on social media, many from people whose jobs would be affected because of the virus. Personally I was more worried about how long these orders would remain and what that meant for many aspects of my daily life. In a way, I felt selfish to be so concerned about trivial matters such as being able to run certain errands, rescheduling social events, and canceling recreational plans I had lined up.



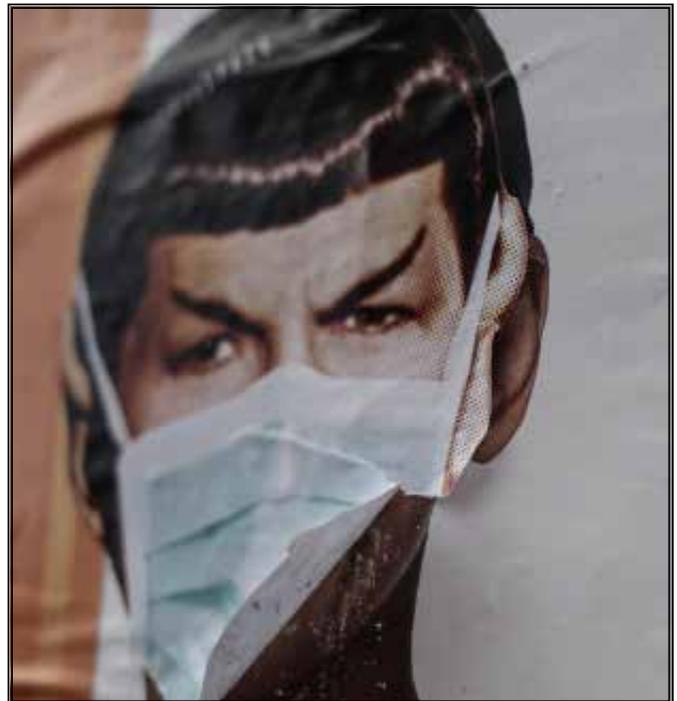


Going to the grocery store for the first time after the stay-at-home orders were issued was a very tense and stressful situation. I only needed an ingredient I had forgotten for dinner, yet it felt like chaos all around me. Officers and store employees were at the doors controlling the crowds; customers were crowding the aisles and hoarding items in their carts. I was worried and scared about the pandemic before, but this situation made me more fearful.

Two weeks later I went to the store again, and I remember feeling so odd with my homemade mask on, and even more strange when I saw others without any protective face gear on. It felt just as tense as my first grocery store visit during the pandemic. I felt that there was hostility radiating from various shoppers and silent judgment. It felt like people were just assuming you were carrying the virus and were acting more reserved. I could not necessarily blame anyone or get upset about it, but it just didn't sit right with me for some reason.

Although I went on walks twice a week and tried to limit my trips outside of my house I did my best to follow the suggestions given by authorities to keep people safe. I remember when I first saw people that I knew on social media posting pictures and videos of themselves at closed parks and beaches, blatantly ignoring the stay at home orders. I even knew people who still had their birthday party celebrations. I couldn't understand why it was so difficult to listen to others and stay at home. Especially if it meant keeping others safe. I still don't understand it.

I still have many mixed feelings about this pandemic and how it has affected many lives and how people have responded to it. I just hope in the next couple of weeks that life can slowly begin to resume and that people will continue to stay safe.



# Life in Quarantine

By Austin Christoff



Life in the midst of this CoronaVirus pandemic has been very difficult and frustrating at times. A lot of the goods and services we are used to being available to us are now out of commission until further notice. But even though this is a very difficult time for the entire world right now, we have to do our best to keep safe, and do what is needed to be done to keep this deadly virus from spreading. With that being said I would like to share a little bit about my life in quarantine.

My name is Austin Christoff. I am a 21 year old college student, studying journalism at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. When I first heard about the Coronavirus, I was not too concerned. Maybe I wasn't concerned out of selfishness that it hadn't come to the U.S. yet. But anyways, I wasn't too concerned when I first heard about it. Then I read that it was a deadly disease and had the potential to cause a world wide pandemic if spread. Still, I ignored it. Fast forward to the week before spring break, we here about the first confirmed case in North Carolina. I start to panic a little bit. Because at this point in terms of knowing about the

virus itself, experts didn't know where it came from, how it was transmitted, if it could affect animals, or even if there was a way to cure it. So I began to panic a little bit because it was in the state where I live, and it is known to spread easy and spread fast. So on the last day before spring break one of my professors warned us of the possibility of not coming back for the semester due to potential of a pandemic. And she turned out to be right. We have not been back to school since the last day of class before spring break, and ever since then, life as a whole pretty much changed as there was a stay at home order eventually issued not only to North carolina, but to other states as well. Life has been completely different and it has been very frustrating.

Where do I start. There is so much to talk about in terms of how life has changed. But here in particular we are going to address mine.

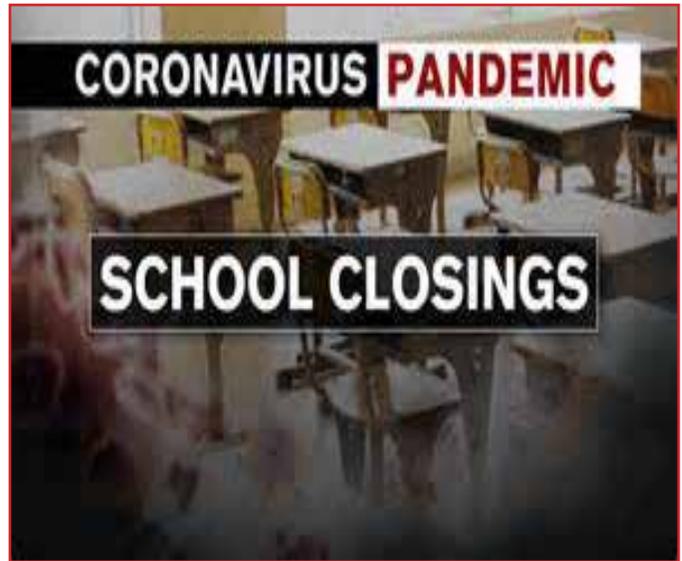
Lets start with the gym. if you know me, you know I am a gym rat. If I am not in class or sleeping, I am probably in the gym, working out, playing basketball, or training people. I love being in the gym. But due to the stay at home order, gyms are closed. I have not been able to go play basketball in a gym, or lift a weight in a gym. You know how frustrating that is. I am relying on what I have available to me and doing my best using my resources, but I miss the gym man. And what is really bad about the gym



being closed, is that I was in the middle of doing a training program for basketball. A three month training program. I got through the first four weeks, and then after week five, the stay at home went into effect, and then the gyms closed. So now my workout program has been on halt because I don't have the resources I need to do the stuff in the program. So that's frustrating. And now to play basketball I have to resort to an outside court. And outside courts are not good because they are concrete and that isn't good for your joints. So that is kind of frustrating, but we are making do.

The next thing is if you go out in a group with more than ten people, you have to go home. So let's say me and some of my friends decide to go play some football or basketball outside. We cannot have more than ten people outside playing with us at a time, and if you know basketball, to play a full game you need ten people, and to play seven on seven in football, you need 14. So right off the bat that is off limits. And yes, we have got sent home before because there was more than ten people out there at once.

The next thing is shopping. You can pretty much find what you need when you are shopping as most of the grocery stores and stuff are still opened. But I hope nobody ever needs toilet paper or hand sanitizer, because you will not find any. I have not



seen a roll of toilet paper in the grocery store, since the quarantine started. I am not exaggerating either. I am assuming you have to get up really early to get toilet paper or sanitizer, because I have yet to see any. Luckily I had went to sams club before spring break and got a ton of toilet paper, so I am still in good shape. You won't find any hand sanitizer either.

The next big thing that was effected was school. Schools all over went to all online courses. That is pretty frustrating, probably the most frustrating thing I have faced this quarantine. Some teachers really kicked up the workload as this pandemic swept through the U.S. And for me as a student, I have to see things be done by the teacher, or hear the teacher explain some things for me to get it. So a lot of things in my classes I had to go figure out for myself when they all went online. it surely was pretty annoying. But the semester is ending and I am in good standing with my grades, so I guess I did alright.

The last thing that was affected that I see everyday is fast food and restaurants. Some have completely closed down, and some are just drive thru only. I have had to sit in drive thru's sometimes for almost 45 minutes just waiting to order. That is beyond annoying.

I hate to sound like a brat, but this is just me observing the everyday things I see since the quarantine. But what matters most is that everybody stays safe and healthy with their families. We are all doing our best to maintain, and we will all get through this together.



# UNCP VS. COVID-19

By Jayla Coley



## Hearing the News

After finding out that students would not be returning to UNCP after Spring Break I was devastated. My sophomore year at UNCP had been enjoyable, and I was saddened to hear that it was ending abruptly. I was given a new job opportunity as a Resident Advisor. With this job opportunity, I was also able to make connections with many students around campus. These connections, in turn, allowed me to break out of my shell. Being an RA also allowed me to meet two friends that are now very close to me. We even had the idea of starting a YouTube channel which would help us to share our experiences with the world. Due to COVID-19, our plans were interrupted, and we never got the chance to edit the video and post the footage that we filmed.

During this school year, I started to become more engaged with my professors and students in my classes. I began to dive into my major courses which is something I had been looking forward to upon entering UNCP. I enjoyed my major classes and they have allowed me to gain a lot of hands-on experiences with the broadcasting field. My favorite class during this semester would have to be Broadcast Practicum. With that course, I was able to work with *Carolina News Today* as a camera operator. It felt good to be a part of a production that is aired on television for Pembroke and the surrounding areas to see.

I wish COVID-19 hadn't interrupted our school year. Despite this, the pandemic was a learning lesson for many.

## Lessons from Quarantine

Being in quarantine has taught me more about myself than I have ever known. Before entering quarantine, I understood that I was an avid procrastinator. Now I have become a "master procrastinator." I have learned to be proficient at completing multiple homework assignments from different classes in one day. I would never recommend this tactic, but it has taught me that some of my best work is created with the help of procrastination. With this skill, I have also learned that completing online classes at home isn't as easy as they may seem. When I am at home, I am in a relaxed environment free from worries. Then the panic sets in when I realize, at the last minute, that I have an assignment due within a few hours that I didn't even bother to look at. As stated, I don't recommend being a procrastinator. If procrastination was a Yelp Review, I would give it zero stars. Despite this, I have become appreciative of my friends at the university who were constantly pushing me to get assignments done early. I truly miss them and hope to see them in the Fall.

Being in quarantine has also allowed me to gain an interest in fitness. With the help of PED 1790, I have found work-out videos on YouTube that I enjoy. The videos involve dancing, which is not the normalized version of exercising. Despite this, the dance moves help shed pounds, and I have been enjoying my fitness journey.



## Moving Forward

Even though the university has closed its campus off for summer school I have been given a desk worker opportunity for Maymester, Summer I, and Summer II. This opportunity was only given to current Resident Advisors, and upon applying I was hired. I am excited to get back on campus even though school is not in session.. During this time, we will be planning our yearly RA training for Fall 2020. This job not only allows me to build my résumé, but it also allows me to work on my team-building skills which can be used in a professional work environment in the future.



## A Message for the Seniors

COVID- 19 was very unexpected, yet you persevered through tough online classes to get to where you are today. Four years ago, you all were just walking onto the campus of UNCP not knowing what to expect. You all had one goal in mind; to make your mark on the university in your way. You did just that! Whether it was joining a club, having an on-campus job, or just being a shoulder to cry on. You caused a great impact on the university. I know that college has been an amazing journey that you will never forget. I hope you feel proud of what you have accomplished despite this pandemic. Remember not all things in life come easy, but pressure makes diamonds, and all of you are shining bright. I wish each of you the happiness and success that the world has to offer. Live, make mistakes, have wonderful memories, and never second guess who you are. Congratulations, class of 2020, you did it!

## A Message for the Underclassmen

When we return for the Fall, we must continue practicing social distancing along with washing our hands. The school year may be different for us a well. We have to be able to adapt to this new normal until the virus dies down. If we work together, we can get through this!



## Until Fall 2020

Even though our time was limited, I enjoyed being in PRE 3450. It has allowed me to gain many skills that will aid me in my major. It was nice being in class with each one of you. I look forward to seeing you around campus!



# Staying In...

By Rebekah E. Crosson



During this time, my sleep schedule is non-existent. When I finally do wake up, the remainder of my day consists of homework, cooking and baking new recipes, communication with loved ones and Netflix. To avoid becoming overwhelmed with schoolwork and the news, I enjoy taking breaks to cook or bake and nurture my plants.

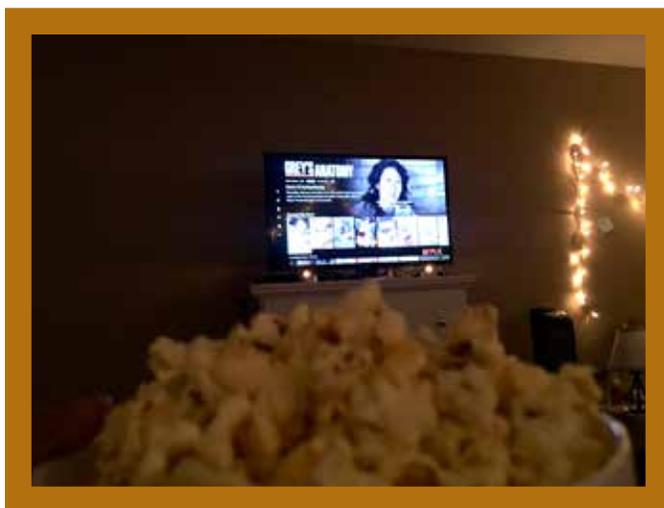
Being home all day without contact with your loved ones can take a toll on someone. That is why I believe baking and gardening to be therapeutic.



## Netflix and Quarantine

During the self-quarantine, I have been isolating herself from loved ones and keeping busy with schoolwork and catching up on *Netflix*! Below are some of my *Netflix* favorites and recommendations:

- YOU
- Lucifer
- Charmed
- How to Get Away with Murder
- All American
- Greenleaf



## Things I Miss

Keeping in touch with loved ones during this time is crucial. I rely on FaceTime, texting and calling those important. iMessage games are a fun way to stay in touch and still have fun with your closest friends as well!

Before the COVID outbreak, my favorite things to do were going to the gym, brunch dates with friends, spa/nail appointments and visiting family back home at the beach. I miss going to class on a regular basis, seeing my co-workers and shopping.

## School at UNCP

Since the outbreak, students and instructors have no choice but to continue education through online settings. The transition from in-person to on-line has been challenging.



Below is a French poem I read this semester for a literature course. I consider it a love poem and it reminds me of the time before self-quarantining where people could actually hold and kiss their loved ones.

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Kiss me again, rekiss me, and then kiss  
me again, with your richest, most succulent  
kiss; then adore me with another kiss, meant  
to stem out fourfold the very hottest hiss  
from my love-hot coals. Do I hear you moaning?  
This is my plan to soothe you: ten more kisses, sent  
just for your pleasure. Then, both sweetly bent  
on love, we'll enter joy through doubleness,  
and we'll each have two loving lives to tend:  
one in our single self, one in our friend.  
I'll tell you something honest now, my love:  
it's very bad for me to live apart.  
There's no way I can have a happy heart  
without some place outside myself to move.

- Louise Labé

## Work and Co-workers

I really love and appreciate my job as a fitness center receptionist, but because of the COVID outbreak, like many other places of work unfortunately, it has been closed to ensure the safety of their members and employees. I enjoy interacting with the members of the facility and my co-workers but one of my favorite things to do is spend time with the small children in the nursery. Because the fitness center is closed, I make sure to keep in touch with my co-workers and supervisors. Southeastern Health is also continuing to stay active within the community during this time by keeping local Urgent Cares available to the community and donating food.

Times like this make you realize how important the small things are in your life. I never thought I would miss being able to clock into work or visit my professors during office hours. I now regret avoiding social gatherings I was too lazy or afraid to attend. The smallest things, we take for granted as a society.



# "WHAT'S UP IN QUARANTINE?"

By Taylor Davis



Quarantine. I do not even know where to start. Although I have been under a curfew within my county, I have never been on lockdown, much less a quarantine. I was fortunate enough to be quarantined with my family, through which we have created many enjoyable memories that we will never forget—beginning with the creation of new routines and responsibilities for everyone. Along with creating and gaining new routines and responsibilities, we also have gained a new perspective on life and learned to not take your health, freedom, or your life for granted. Throughout quarantine, I was forced to tackle working a job, my schoolwork load, as well as being home with my family and maintaining my new and old responsibilities at home. It has not been an easy task, but I was able to push through and complete the semester. I learned to discipline myself and use my time wisely, through which I made sure to allot time for myself to make sure that I did not become too stressed and overwhelmed. While talking to my friends, peers, and professors I was quickly reminded that I was not alone in this quarantine and that we were all experiencing and feeling a little overwhelmed, which was comforting to know.

Establishing a routine within quarantine proved to be helpful and, in fact, enjoyable. I already

had established a routine for 'normal' school; I just added and changed it accordingly. On the days I did not work, I allowed myself to sleep until 9:30 am, a thirty-minute breakfast, and thirty minutes to get ready for the day. I was ready to start my day at 10:30 am. I forced myself not to do homework in bed because I knew that I would not do my best work. I have a desk in my room, so I used that to do my homework. (Even though I used it anyway, I used it more than I normally did during this quarantine.) I laid out all my homework and books on my bed and completed a To-Do List every week of the things that I needed to do that week. I made sure to complete my work Monday through Saturday, while dedicating Sundays as my rest day. I needed that day to rest from the previous week and gather my strength for the next week.

Aside from schoolwork and my job, I did spend time with my family. I helped cooked and clean. We watched movies together and exercised around the house together. My family and I also completed some yard work, in which we planted trees, bushes, and created food in a feeder to feed the hummingbirds. I learned hummingbirds were attracted to





the color red, which is the color I chose to use for their food. I tried clear food for them, but they did not seem to like the clear as much as they like the red. We also planted new grass throughout various parts of our yard where grass was struggling to grow. I am more appreciative of nature than I have ever been. I have really stopped and taken the time to enjoy the sunrise and sunset and the sun throughout the day. I gained more experience and knowledge of handling and planting plants, trees, and bushes, as well as the migration patterns of hummingbirds throughout United States.

Quarantine has also affected my social life in that I have been limited to talking with my friends, peers, as well as extended family through social media, text messaging, and video calls. I have not been able to go out and hang out with my friends, like we normally do, on the weekends. Our freedom to go and do different things within society, such as eating at restaurants, shopping at malls, going to the movies, etc., has been taken away. Our freedom that is granted and secured in the Constitution has been taken away by an unforeseeable and deadly virus. Everywhere I look online, especially in the pictures and videos on social media, I am presented by an image of a mask, people wearing masks, and the words "COVID-19" or "coronavirus." Masks and gloves have become the new popular accessories that everyone is buying and

wearing. The faces that I know oh so well have disappeared behind a hospital or custom-made mask. The pretty manicures that were once shown off have now been covered by different colored gloves.

After being in quarantine for over a month, I now know what it is like to be limited to only two or three places you can go, while being so afraid of actually going that you change your mind and stay at home where you know you are safe. It is crazy to think about in the sense that we are witnessing and experiencing history. What we have been through, what we have done, and what we are going to do in the future as a result of COVID-19 will be in textbooks for future generations to be able to learn and know what their ancestors had to go through, what they did to stop it, and how they overcame it. I have watched the world come to a halt but also come together because of a virus. It has humbled me and taught me to not take life or my health for granted. I have learned to not only enjoy life, but cherish life and my family while I am able to. I am eager to mingle and rejoin society as soon as it is safe to do so. My only hope for the future is that everyone keeps washing their hands and keep the germ-level at a low. It is time for everyone, including me, to embrace this new normal and remember the lessons that quarantine has taught us.



# Quarantined in University Courtyard Apartments

By Octavia Johnson



## Deciding to Stay at UNCP

The spring of 2020 was my last semester at The University of North Carolina at Pembroke (UNCP). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I spent my senior year in my apartment practicing social distancing.

All students were told by UNCP's Housing and Residence Life Office to return to their permanent homes during the quarantine. Only a few students, including myself, stayed on campus since we qualified for the exemptions.

My exemption was due to me being from Alexandria, VA, and my little sister having sickle cell disease.

Sickle cell is a disease that distorts red blood cells into a crescent shape at low oxygen levels; most of those cells die quickly.

During the call for the "stay-at-home" order from North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper, there was confusion about what people should wear to protect themselves. To avoid getting the coronavirus and possibly passing it to my sister, I stayed at UNCP.

If my sister was affected by the coronavirus, it would've been harder for her to recover. So, I stayed

in my building for the rest of the semester at the University Courtyard Apartments.

I stayed in contact with my family through a phone call, Facetime, and Zoom. My friends also stayed in contact as much as we could. With all of us being students, it was hard to maintain a social life with the workload we were all receiving.

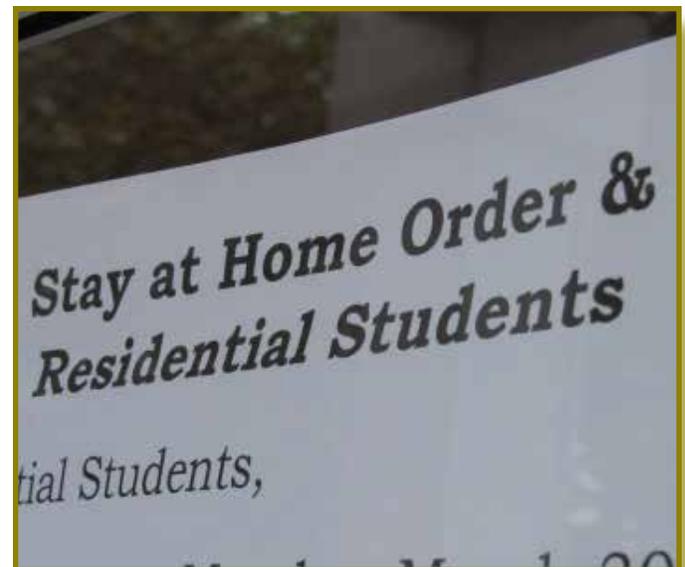
## Graduation Changes

I'll never forget when I scrolled through the Twitter feed and the UNC System called for the cancellation of all graduations in North Carolina.

My heart dropped because I didn't know what UNCP was going to decide to do for the 2020 spring commencement. The feeling of not being able to walk was depressing because I would be the first grandchild to graduate with a bachelor's degree in my family. There were also other students I saw on Twitter who expressed they'll be the first in their family to ever graduate from college.

I worked hard to maintain a 3.7 GPA throughout my undergraduate collegiate experience, and it hurt knowing that there was a possibility (still is a possibility) that the Spring class of 2020 will not be able to walk.

At first, I thought the worst but then I realized how proud I was to be able to receive a college degree.



I remember posting some encouraging words to the other seniors on my Twitter page and I stopped looking at posts about graduation.

Then sometime after, we all received emails that the spring undergraduate and graduate commencements will be moved to Aug. 8 and 9.

I also found out around the same time that I was accepted into the graduate school program at George Mason University.

### **Quarantine in Building 2000**

I don't remember seeing so many empty parking spaces on campus. After the Housing and Residence Life Department sent out the email about students having to leave campus, I saw a lot of people start to pack all their stuff. I didn't blame them; there was no way that the coronavirus spread was going to decrease anytime soon.

I also noticed a lot of students who did stay on campus were a part of student organizations that hold college leadership positions like the Student Government Association (SGA). A few of the students were athletes and international students who were not able to return home.

Being in the apartment by myself went better than I thought. At first, I thought I was going to lose my mind from being in my room all day, but I took the time to start doing projects that I didn't get to work on while I was taking classes face-to-face.

For example, I have a blog, and I was able to finish the new layout design of the home page. I also provided a schedule for myself to consistently post.

I naturally communicate by technology, so I had no problem with emailing professors, updating myself of the announcements, and turning in my work electronically. My organization skills were starting to sharpen, and I could tell. I didn't even have to go to the community building to print.

Since I live in an apartment, I have a kitchen, living room, washing machine, dryer, and balcony so I didn't have to go too far for basic needs.

### **UNCP's Campus**

It was great to see some students, faculty, and staff still make the most out of the quarantine situation. Honestly, I don't think anyone was prepared for

the switch from face-to-face and online courses.

I felt there could've been a lot more done as far as showing faculty members how to transition to online courses but then we would also have to look at the situation from a broader perspective.

We all didn't expect the virus to change everything, but it did. Instead of panicking and running around with our heads cut off, students decided to advocate for proper grading procedures, refunds, and graduation dates; faculty updated their students and provided them with flexible assignments; and some of the staff stayed on campus to plan for the future of UNCP.



There are still employees from Sodexo who are providing the students with food. The library is still open for students to get out of the residence halls to study.

I've seen workers who would handle the grounds of UNCP continue to build the new School of Business building and the new entrance near Dial Humanities building. Other projects are being worked on, like the remodeling of West Hall.

The more I stayed on the campus, the more I realized that I was going to miss being here. However, I'm glad I spent my four years here.

# How COVID-19 is Changing My Perspective

By Megan Munroe

**T**he coronavirus, or COVID-19, has shaken the majority of our lives. Many of us did not expect that the world would come to such a screeching halt and it has personally thrown me out of sync with my usual routine.

This year, I was finishing my degree in English and I was fully expecting to walk across the Graduation stage in May. But that's not something I'm able to do anymore. A week after graduation, I was going to move to Denver, Colorado to start the next phase of my life where I hoped to get a job in my field and kickstart my career. But that's not something that's going to be happening anytime soon. There is no telling when this virus will be over or when we can return to regularly scheduled programming. I'm trying to take it in stride, but it can be incredibly difficult.

I have been trying to look on the bright side of much of this. And though there are many negatives in this situation, I have come out of this situation with a few positives that I am trying to focus on. Having time at home has allowed me to

recuperate from the stress that I have accumulated throughout my college career. I have not had a break like this since I was in high school during summer vacation.

I have tried to work more on my creative endeavors during this time, such as painting and writing, and it has been fulfilling to do so. I never had the time or energy to do this while I was taking classes in person because they were mentally draining and required a lot of my time, especially for travel. The fact that I have been able to work on the things that inspire me and give me a sense of purpose has drastically increased my personal happiness. I forgot just how important it was to take the time for myself to work on the things I enjoy.

I have been trying to enjoy the things I do have now. Though I can't see them in person, I have friends that I can talk to whenever I feel low or overwhelmed, and for that, I am grateful. I have not been happy that I have had to indefinitely postpone my move, but I am don't want to focus on that as much. Instead, I am trying to look on the bright side. After all, the view from my window can be beautiful too.



But most importantly, because of COVID-19, I have been able to focus on my personal relationships more as well as myself and my mental and physical wellbeing.

The one relationship I have tried to focus on the most is the relationship I have with my dog, Loki.

For a while, I felt that I was neglecting quality time with him because of all of the work I had to do on campus, having 15 hours of classes and two on-campus jobs. I wasn't able to walk him as much as I wanted to and by the time I got home, I was too tired to play with him and just wanted to go to bed. This virus has allowed me to build and foster that relationship and it has proven to be beneficial to us both.

With all of this extra time, I have been taking him on walks more frequently and playing with him every day.



Not only has his overall happiness increased, but so has mine. Having him to focus on has allowed me to distract myself from the negative things that have come from this virus, and my mental health has been relieved because of it. My physical health has benefited as well, especially in a time where I have had less opportunity to focus on it as I usually would. Without Loki, I'm not so sure that I would be as physically well as I am now, and I am thankful for that, and for him.

Though COVID-19 has thrown me for a loop, I am happy to have my best friend with me to brave it with me, through it all.



And finally, here is a poem that I think I wrote during this time that I think summarizes how I've come to feel:

Take a deep breath,  
let it all go,  
find happiness in yourself.  
Don't go looking in all the wrong places,  
for people will leave you  
and never come back.  
And sometimes,  
you can be happy  
in your own company.

# STUDENT PERSPECTIVE ON COVID-19



By: Demetria Redmond

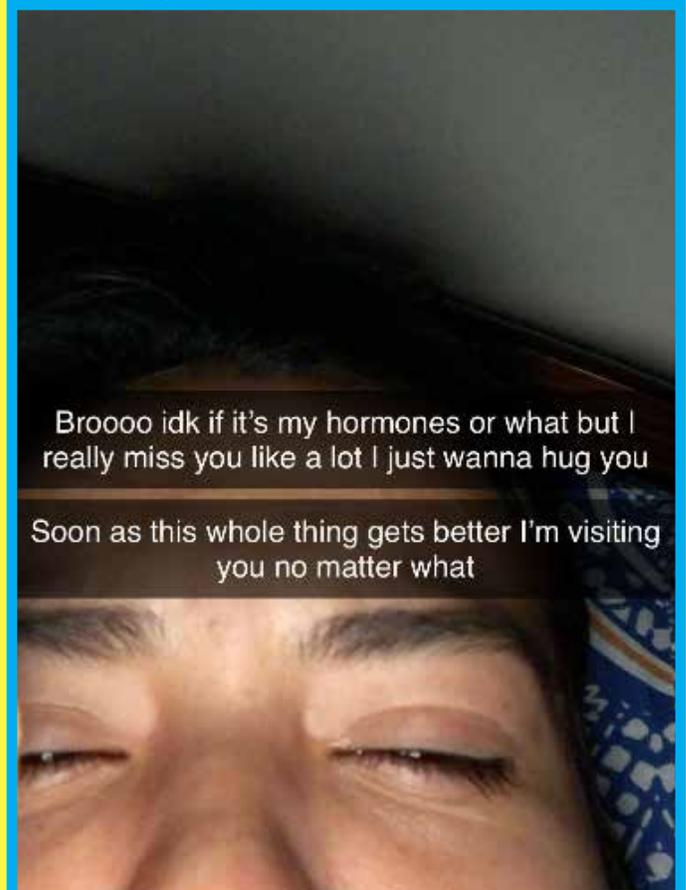
COVID-19 came so fast and out of nowhere, that my friends and I initially didn't take it seriously. It was halfway around the world in China, far from our lives at University of North Carolina at Pembroke. We thought the situation was heartbreaking but went about our day as most people did.

It's this kind of attitude that most of my generation poses. The news kept pushing that our generation wasn't at risk, we were safe for the moment. So, with spring break around the corner, we were ready to party on. When our school started emailing us, that eluded to the growing seriousness of the virus. When I first got the email explaining that classes would be remote until they figured everything out, I was excited. Three weeks of spring break?! I was going to spend almost every day at the beach, spending time with my friends and having fun. A few days later I got a message from one of my friends saying that graduation was canceled. I was in disbelief; Why would they cancel graduation? And classes were canceled until

May. Many of my friends are quite depressed at the fact that their senior year of college has ended early. The worst part is that this was all so sudden, and we were not prepared to leave so suddenly. When the announcement came, a storm of emotions flooded me. I was angry, disappointed, sad and guilty.

I have no motivation anymore so this transition has been particularly hard, especially during finals week when I need to focus. I have procrastinated so much. I feel like I am not truly learning anymore because my professors are not properly teaching the material as they would during actual class time, so I am basically teaching myself. Overall, my classes are pretty manageable, and I am pushing through.

However, I still can't believe that a vague situation from across the world turned into this massive life-threatening crisis. I'm worried about those who suffer from mental health issues like depression and anxiety. I'm also worried about those on the front lines combating this virus and the exhaustion they must feel. I guess all we can do now is wait as schools,



businesses, and relationships transition to an online setting, at stake is nothing less than the future of how we communicate. Institutions and individuals across the world are banking on Zoom, Skype, and other video conferencing tools to serve as seamless replacements for in-person, human interactions, and, if all goes smoothly, who is to say that we should ever physically return to classrooms and office buildings? The future looks so uncertain, I know that we will get through this somehow.

Whenever I feel the need to express my emotions, thoughts, or feelings without bothering anybody, I write an entry in my poetry journal. My recent entry is as follows,

*I've never felt this kind of love.  
It's as serene as it is thrilling.  
It's as insane as it is logical.  
It's 1 AM and I find myself reconsidering everything I  
thought I knew about love and I found a lot of poetry  
in watching you melt metal  
i was mesmerized  
it reminded me of that night I reveled myself I  
thought love should feel peaceful but I think there  
is legitimacy in chaos I thought love was rare but I  
think it depends on your story I thought love couldn't  
happen at first sight I was wrong I thought love was  
everyone's first priority  
I was wrong again I thought love should be easy or it  
isn't worth it and I'm still not sure on this one  
-Demetria Redmond*

Poetry is often used to explore the potential for change in the future, carrying with it the fears or hopes of the poet. Take "Still I Rise" by Maya Angelo for example, a poem which holds relevance currently in my life by uplifting my emotions.

*You may write me down in history  
With your bitter, twisted lies,  
You may tread me in the very dirt  
But still, like dust, I'll rise. Does my sassiness upset  
you?  
Why are you beset with gloom?  
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells  
Pumping in my living room.*

*Just like moons and like suns,  
With the certainty of tides,  
Just like hopes springing high,  
Still I'll rise.  
-Maya Angelou*







Maybe I'll keep an eye out for anything he could use as exercise equipment.

As I set up the camp fire I received a picture from my brother. He was visiting a friend's island today, the same friend who recommended the 'Deserted Island Getaway package' to us. It was a picture of them and one other at the beach. Filtered to look like an old photo; his friends were on both sides of the beach towel so he couldn't get off.

When we arrived, Timmy and Tommy took me to their boss, a big racoon who runs the company, Nook. He gives me a tent to set up somewhere on the island. As I walk around and scoping the area out, I realize I have no way to cross the river, meaning for now, the area where I can place my tent is limited.

It was quite funny with their fooling around, but it was about time I got some shut eye. It's a new day tomorrow after all, and I'm sure Nook has some ideas for the island. He is a business racoon after all, I'm sure he had something in mind when coming to this island.

### Day 1: End

Looking for a nice place to set up my tent, I run into a gorilla wearing a pink jumpsuit. A quick introduction took place as I learned their name: Rocket. She struck me as a big sister type, which is nice as I don't have an older sister, perhaps she and I will get along fine.

While at first there doesn't seem like there is a lot to do on a deserted island, that's a good thing. Right now people are stuck at home during the COVID-19 pandemic. Playing Animal Crossing people can slow down and enjoy the simple life they aren't able to these days.

While there wasn't a particular place I'd like to place my tent, I went ahead and placed it near Rocket's tent and what looked like what would become the town square.

Making friends and catching all sorts of critters on the island is only the start. There are many different animals out there, who will you meet?

After setting up, I went in search of branches to start making tools, five for a fishing rod and five for a net. Though they were flimsy, they should do for now to make some bells.

Nook said the package and all the extra stuff would cost 10,000 bells, currency he came up with for this island. By catching fish and bugs and gathering fruit I can sell them to Tommy. It was late at night by the time I gathered the bells, but I didn't mind.

Oh! I forgot to mention, I ran into another villager during my bug and fish hunting. A penguin was exercising on the beach, though he seemed to tire out rather easily. His name is Iggy and within moments I could tell he was rather sporty. I'm not much of a sport person myself, but if it makes him happy, who am I to stop him?



All Photos By Savanna and Jaret Rudolph

## How Things Have Changed During the Coronavirus

By Dazmon Tanner

It became a sad day in February, not only for students but for workers as well. That was when the virus, formally known as the coronavirus or covid-19 first hit the United States. From what I read from CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) it stated that in mid-March, that was all 50 states, the District of Columbia, New York City, and four U.S. territories had reported cases of COVID-19. It started in China, specifically in Wuhan, Hubei Province. It is well known that China had ways of having large sections of seafood and a live animal market, which had everyone suggesting animal-to-human spread of the virus. It was not such a huge deal at the time when it first came out because it wasn't close to my home or my school, but it did cause worry. UNCP decided to close down for the safety of their students and faculty.

Although students knew why they couldn't go on campus, they still lost the courage and energy to keep doing their work when it switched online. They're stuck at home and feel like it's no need to keep doing it, especially if they're already failing the class. For me, I was one of those students. I became unmotivated to do almost none of my work. I can't do my work at home, especially when I don't have

the time nor the support system to give me the boost I needed. My stay with my mom and younger sister. Everytime when I had an assignment that needed to be done, I would tell her, thinking that she understood that I had to do it in order to pass my class. She would say okay but later would yell at me for not caring or wanting to help out around the house. I got to the point where I would get off the video call with my teacher and classmate in fear of making my mom upset at me. I'm afraid of failing my classes because I can't focus on the work that I need to do, then I ended up missing the day when it is supposed to be turned in. I don't want to fail my classes but I don't want to be told that I am disrespecting. I am and was at a complete loss of what to do. I was mostly blamed for not wanting to do work around the house when I said I had school work to do. Which just caused more stress than on me I don't need as a senior. Most were more worried about getting sick than their grades



because the grades were not more important than their health. People who worked also had to stay home and couldn't make money. Since then, more cases of COVID-19 as occurred in the United States. The images I have is from ABC News, The Express Tribune and The Times.

The government ordered everyone to stay home for a while to see how they can get it under control without spreading. The virus is easily spread by coughing and sneezing. Now it can be spread by a simple touch. People are saying different things, that you can die instantly and that it takes 14 days to enter and leave or that you can die within four hours. Many people ignored the stay at home rule and still went out and because of that, more and more cases broke out. It will continue to worsen and worse if people keep ignoring this rule. For many places, they're starting to clear up more but here in the United States, since most people like going out more cases keep showing up. For example, while I was out buying necessities I would see people out



just walking or standing by store talking with people when they should have been home. Frankly, I'm a little disappointed. To those who keep going out, not because they need things at home but because they're tired at being home. It seems that they're not worried about it or worried about giving it to others. People are breaking the law by speeding on highways because there are no police around to give them tickets. To me, that is not how you are supposed to behave. That just goes to show that this world would be in utter chaos if there were no rules to follow.

For your safety, friends, family and strangers, please stay at home and only go out to get what is necessary. When going out, please wear your mask and gloves. Please think about others and yourself and use protection.

