Like a known painful killer it ravages through lives and leaves pain and suffering, the pandemic of Covid-19 has ravaged through lives and those who are living similar to what the flu, smallpox, syphilis and other diseases that human beings have endured throughout history. The pandemic that we are living through is one in which has killed millions of people, and left them living in different states of either panic, ignorance, uncertainty or economic disaster. My name is Ginnella Patterna, I am a undergraduate history major senior at UCLA. Although I feel very blessed to not have directly been impacted by someone in my immediate circle having contracted the Covid-19, we have been impacted with emotional and economic disasters. My family and myself immediately placed ourselves in quarantine wherein we didn't see each other for approximately two months. Like my son who is a junior in high school and was placed on remote learning, we've both faced a new challenges with a new and perhaps normal way of completing our educational goals. Currently because of all the stay at home orders and closures, we have lost our form of income, which forced us to move out of our rental to avoid backed up rent and any further debt. I've recently made the decision to move in with my sister and her husband who live in Palmdale, CA. Although it is a temporarily move, it has caused great uncertainty has to where we will reside in the future as it is challenging to rent during the pandemic.
As the pandemic wave hit the state of California in mid March, the excitement of not having to drive thirty miles to UCLA quickly faded away as this illness was something that may potentially affect my mother who has diabetes and was drastically changing the way we go about our lives and business. I have never experienced taking online classes, and honestly I have always avoided them. Personally I feel they are less engaging as they are less personal and can lead to disconnection since there is no real human face to face interaction. Yet we are all adjusting and doing our best to continue and accomplish our educational goals. For my son being born in the time of online navigation and communication it was not as difficult to adjust, since his generation grew up learning how to navigate and use technology. A good lesson that I’ve had to teach him is; email etiquette and how and when to communicate to his teachers, while reminding him that they are still there in some distant room in their home ready to assist. Cancelling in person classes although as unfortunate and inconvenient that it is, has been one of the best decisions schools could have made for the slowing of the pandemic in our communities. Undoubtedly it does leave a lot of uncertainty for the future, in regards to looking for a job as an undergraduate, a graduate, and for the young students graduating high school.

As a nontraditional undergraduate student I fear the job outlook for my future and my family due the record high job loss since the Great Depression that the pandemic has caused. It sets many new doubts, fears and insecurities for the outlook of a future graduate student. One can only imagine the fears, doubts and insecurities that Native People, such the Aztecs and Mayans would of gone through has their family and friends were wiped out from plagues that they had no immunity to. Alas, is what we are going
through having no immunity to Covid-19, it places us in a state of fear of the unknown. Every day the number of deaths rise and those affected by the disease. Just as the Spaniards brought small pox and syphilis and Amerindians suffer everyday thereon with deaths and displacement from the plague.

I know it is not only me and family that is undergoing the fears of displacement as we loose our jobs, and collect unemployment which does not suffice to cover the bills. Recently, as of three days now we had to move out of rental because of the loose of income that has affected us. I feel blessed to be able to stay with my sister and her husband, but recent the loss of income due to the pandemic that has placed us in such predicament. In a historical perspective similarly Amerindians were forced into displacement from their lands was inexorably exacerbated by the ultimately fateful dreadful plagues. To ameliorate currently the federal government is giving out stimulus checks to help to assist, but unfortunately $1,200, is just not enough is areas such as Los Angeles were rent is $2,000 and above. This is a clear indicator that the economy needs to drastically change. It simply is not working where the minority is the majority who sustains the economy, yet makes less than the top one ten percent of the countries wealthiest. One thing is for certain that unfortunately the pandemic is clearly further highlighting the drastic disparities between the rich and the poor.

Unquestionably it is seen in the numbers in the news the ones that get affected the most are the poor hard working people, especially those of color. Latinx and African Americans are the ones that are being hit the hardest in our country. Whether it is being killed by the disease, because of underlying conditions due to lower resources and not having access to healthier foods, or the fact that one has to work two to three
jobs to keep afloat, and or one is suffering from displacements and economic deprivation. The same can be said historically for those who have suffered the most from pandemics and plagues have been the marginalized and underrepresented groups. In Los Angeles for example the most impacted are the Latinx communities, due having no insurance, less coverage in their insurance, sharing smaller spaces within larger concentrations of people who don't possess the luxury to stay home. Albeit highlighting a prolonging and destructive brutality of the issue over inequality and injustice in our society.

It is eye opening to witness first hand the devastating effects of income inequality during the pandemic that affect primarily the populace of color. I personally have been affected by the income inequality that the pandemic has brought out. As a single Latina parent I was stuck in low paying jobs before I made the decision to return back to school. In my efforts to break the toxic cycles of income inequality I am still in the low income category but now with no full time job to support my family. Therefore adding to the challenge of continuing school or work full time rhetoric. A rhetoric in which I am sure many single women of color know and are too familiar with. Although I have been actively looking for full time work, it has been challenging since jobs are very scarce and hard to come by at this time of so much uncertainty. At the end I am hopeful to come out victorious at the end on this trial, because for the poor community one has to be very creative in order to survive just as Amerindians needed to find ways to assimilate and create innovative ways to survive in a world that was ever changing just as it is now.
Some of the innovative ways that I personally had to overcome in order to ensure that I, my love ones and everyone I come in contact with survive is by improving our non-physical communication and improvising our display of affection. Personally coming from a Latinx family we are very expressive with our love, by giving hugs and kisses every time we meet, depart, and in between. After approximately two months of staying at home and not meeting with family it was challenging finally to see them for mother’s day, May, 10, 2020, without hugs and kisses. Yet we reminded each other that the hugs and kisses are metaphorically packed in the love we have for each other by protecting each other from the unknown. Some in my family such as my brother were suffering from the denial and ignorance that many of us have seen in the news and media. My brother believed it was a sort of hoax just to keep the populace under control. After educating my brother on the many facets of the disease and why we should be staying at home to protect those with underlying conditions and to slow down the influx of hospitalizations, he reluctantly but enlightened agreed that it is imperative for each to do their part in keeping safe and well in order to slow down the transmission. Other than the traditional contact that had to be readjusted, I already went through creatively rationing food and resources for myself in order to provide for my son as a single parent.

Growing and living through poverty or perhaps in a humble manner, indeed makes you extremely resourceful and creative. One cannot survive if creativity is not part of one’s daily life. Something that many of my friends and fellow co students are learning to adapt to in order to survive. Such as not being able to travel or visit the regular hang out places, having access to endless materials shopping, toilet paper,
foods, beauty salons, barber shops, etc. As someone that has faced very challenging times, I feel I can adjust to the non essential things fairly easily. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic I served in the military and know how to survive without the many privilege amenities that we have. Moreover I grew up in a very humble home where we often had to ration food, therefore when I was a single parent it was not difficult for me to ration my food and goods in order for my son to have the best that I can give him. Now I find myself rationing again to make sure we have what we need in order to get through this turbulent and uncertain times ahead of us.

Lastly, pandemics as rare as they may seem they are not, humanity has survived smallpox, the black plague, the flu and now the Covid-19. We are resilient and have endure with unknown diseases, oppression, land dispositions, wars, economic deprivation, segregation, and discrimination we can surely survive this pandemic. As the pandemic takes its toll surely we will suffer it’s rage, but we will develop immunity’s and with human innovation we will develop a vaccine with time. As of now we all have to do our part to lower the transmission therefore lowering the deaths and the toxicity that it leaves behind. The toxicity of food insecurity, displacement, death and suffering.