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History 129A: Social History of Spain and Portugal

Paper #2: (4) WE WOULD ALLOW A SIX PAGE PAPER ON YOUR REFLECTIONS ON THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. HOW HAS IT AFFECTED YOU, YOUR FAMILY? WHAT DO YOU THINK THE FUTURE HOLDS? How does it connect with some of the things you have learned in this class? 6 PAGES.

I am a History major and will be completing my junior year at UCLA this Spring, 2020.

What does it mean to take something for granted? When I went over to my grandparents' house for dinner, enjoyed a delicious meal at a restaurant, or treasured the experience of attending my junior year at UCLA, I never took time to appreciate physical involvements. Not being able to go back to these moments and many others that I shared with due to the COVID-19 pandemic doesn't affect my physical, mental, social, and emotional stages temporarily, but permanently breaks the relationships I share with the world. Although protecting myself and others around from this virus is extremely important, the right to enjoy life should certainly still exist. There is no solution for isolation since setbacks are a government order, but finding happiness should still come easy. Saying this, everyone in my family including myself are negatively affected from this pandemic, yet, I am faithful that the future still holds fortunate opportunities.

Memories that took place before February 28th show me how easy things came. Throughout the past months of March and April, the environment my family and I had to surround ourselves in included lots of stress, pressure, and chaos. This is because we are constantly bumping into each other and blocking our outlooks towards nature, faith, and success. For example, on this year's Mother's Day, last Sunday, I realized my mother had mixed the fresh batch of doughnuts I had bought from Krispy Kreme, with another pastry that was drenched in a heavy amount of spices. When I came upon the bag, I suddenly attacked my mother and father verbally for what they had done. At the moment, I yelled so loud that the neighbors had to call my home to make sure everything was okay. My father retaliated, heavily, but after moments of breathing and walking away, I cooled down and thought "How sensitive was I and how pointless was my anger to such a meaningless act?" Why did I just ruin one of the most important days for my mom? This shows that barricading myself at home with my family creates unnecessary

tension and drama within me because now, I am the start to all problems. Instead of sitting with heat and rage, I started to expand my views on what matters the most, being, family and the importance of impacting the world in the right way. In another case, I was expecting to make a historical memory, to sit courtside next to LeBron James at a Laker game. On March 15, the Lakers were scheduled to play the Denver Nuggets which are my second favorite team. On March 12, the National Basketball Association announced that all further games would be postponed. Not knowing if fans will be allowed in stadiums for a while, my dream of meeting and getting a signed #23 jersey was halted.

Throughout this paper, I am reflecting on my visions and desires, however, there is a bigger picture. If I had to choose the second-best lesson I've learned during quarantine, after being grateful, it is to place myself in the shoes of others and quit being selfish. Financially, my family, and many others of course, has taken a hit because my father stands alone in bringing home an income. He and his brothers started a franchise of restaurants called Trimana, which had a successful amount of fifty-seven locations. Each of the brothers including my father are in charge of managing ten locations. Due to COVID-19, five of the stores permanently had to close down and all of the other stores are temporarily closed, not even for takeout or delivery. Now, I am here complaining about how my doughnuts were ruined and my chances of meeting a Laker legend is paused. Obviously, I have learned that there are others who are in a great need of support and comfort. With this mentality of bringing myself to less fortunate levels, I am able to carry out the special trait of being there for others and sympathizing with them.

In order to continue bettering myself, I always looked at having a strong relationship with religion to expose new openings. My way of being a creator starts by keeping up in daily attendances to temple because I consider myself to be religious and observant. Clearly, this

pandemic has suppressed my family, I, and the rest of the devoted community to attend services. As this suspension continued throughout the past months, my job to be thankful of every situation I exist in started to evaporate. For example, waking up every morning, breathing properly, and walking on two feet are primary daily-life essentials which we must all take into consideration. Connecting spiritually to Judaism is the only occurrence which can make thankful. Asides from whole-heartedly being appreciative, I am leaning towards the troubling side, where my eyes are constantly being addicted to a cell phone, leading to gossip, insecurity, and a total of a six-hour strolling period throughout five social media platforms per day. This list can go on forever! All of these acts violate the duties and principles Jewish people should carry out.

My plans over this summer were to enroll in a History seminar course at UCLA, in order to get closer to completing my major requirements and participate in Cedars-Sinai Surgical Research Opportunity since I am also pre-medical. First, I have tremendously improved on clearly speaking and presenting myself firmly when in public areas. An event which proves this is at Los Angeles County USC Medical Center, where I am able to assist and admit incoming patients to the hospital. My favorite encounter was when I was transporting a patient from one side of the hospital to another. Knowing that she solely spoke Spanish, I used my three years of High School Spanish-speaking courses to make myself verbally presentable. We came to an agreement and highlighting discussion that there is a plan for everything in life, as everything falls into place the way it should. Hearing this, I immediately ran back to spiritualizing myself to the most, which is why our connection was unbreakable. It is quite obvious that COVID-19 ruins my chances for continuing my stay at this hospital and additionally, for the surgical research opportunity too. Although this adds some time to getting closer to my goals, life isn't over, as I am slowly giving myself awareness to how successful we can all be.

Success can build from several areas in the world, but majorly in this capitalistic country of America. As jobs such as restaurant businesses or building offices start to open up on the dates which are legally assigned, positions increase which brings in a new wave of people. This is ideal because we are all “money hungry” to keep ourselves alive and sustainable. In addition to giving some workers their income back, the opposite will happen too, where sites such as Zoom or Microsoft Office Meeting break physical connections within corporations and institutions. For example, I predict several restaurant franchises will end their “dining in” option to the public because delivery systems will take over their business. This results to a massive loss of income. I might be pushing too far, but I believe university institutions all over America will turn to online meeting only because people are constantly surrounding themselves in a “Who is safe?” environment. For the safety and comfortability of the students, professors, and administrative workers, schools will be mainly virtualized. Implicit learning may be more beneficial to all because of the time it saves for travel and expense; it may also put us in danger because people have so much potential to work in public settings and cannot seclude themselves at home all day. Therefore, they won’t be able to exercise their full potential. This is evident in jobs such as construction where men and women are trained to use physical labor or athletes who devote their whole life to practice and train their bodies. As we see here, the players aren’t the only ones being affected. Due to the suspension of the NBA, MLB, and many other leagues, the entertainment industry is also put on hold. To envision and create a valued future, I learned that we must allow time and nature to take its course and then slowly use our possessions to pull us back up.

As nature takes its course, so do the species who are constantly growing in it. This COVID-19 pandemic can be compared to how smallpox has affected indigenous people.

Smallpox was derived from the Europeans who brought it to the Americas, specifically to Native land. This disease is believed to have arrived in the American semi-urban populations around 1520 coming from a Spanish boat which was sailing from Cuba. An African slave was also believed to have been carrying this virus which led on to the infection of other people. We see how this can relate to COVID because a form of “quarantine” existed where people were trying to physically distance themselves from others. The indigenous people during smallpox can relate to homeless populations now. In addition, homeless people today are suffering more than ever because they are living in the streets and crowding around areas like grocery stores, gas stations, and parks. There is a lack of sanitation in the majority of these areas and makes the public environment more affected. Existing shelters are setting back their will to provide but creating new ideas in other outdoor settings such as distant beds on the floor in isolated areas. Other important individuals who can be compared to the indigenous land of Native American people are elderly people today. An individual who is sixty-five years old or greater and placed at greater risks than younger people because of their body’s ability to fight with the virus. This situation is why my relationship with my grandparents have also come to a halt. Looking at a more philosophical view, the Catholic monarchs in the country of Spain such as Queen Isabella or Sanchez de Toledo can also be heavily affected by any virus similar to the Coronavirus. It is true that in the city of Avila, Jews, Conversos, and Muslims made up the majority of the population but having affluent power during a pandemic doesn’t save someone from becoming infected. We are all equal in the times where a plague or disease powers over the world which is a statement all people should recognize.

I have experienced and taught myself valuable, life-learning messages throughout the past months of quarantine. Although I have stated that my family and I have been negatively

impacted by the virus, there is still many worse problems we could be going through. In order to keep strong, I sympathize with those who are in need of greater help, use spirituality to control my unethical desires and place me on a successful path, and stress to my family how much I love them for everything they do. It is not just about me, but the entire world to make the decision of exiting this pandemic with positive mindsets and realistic new goals.