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Second Essay

Fourth Option: Covid-19 Reflection:

This pandemic has truly changed my perception and reality of the world I live in. I also believe that the implications will not only affect my livelihood going forward, it will also affect my country, and the international community. As the rest of the world eventually comes out of this experience, I strongly believe there will be necessary changes moving forward. Moreover, this is not an experience that the world has not encountered before. The international community has rebounded from similar experiences, such as smallpox in Americas, and the impact it had on indigenous populations. Although these are unprecedented times for my generation, I strongly believe these times will help prepare myself for the realities of the new world.

First, the pandemic has certainly affected my family in regard to how we prioritize our daily lives. Since I have older parents, the ages of 67, and 62, extreme caution has been extremely pertinent in how we live our daily lives as a family. For example, when our pantry, refrigerator, and freezer completely run out of food and are empty, it is not my parents that go food shopping or buy essential items, it is myself. I have to be the one that does these necessary errands because I am not in the lethal age range of the virus, not saying I am immune, but my survival rate is significantly higher than my parents. I would also like to note, my grandparents grew up during the Great

Depression. The way my grandparents lived their daily lives post-depression definitely translated into characteristics that are evident in my parents' actions. During the pandemic this was demonstrated when my parents had me go to Home Depot to buy a freezer. The reasoning behind this was they had me go to every grocery store within a 25-mile radius, and have me stockpile the freezer with chicken, and other meats to preserve the food as long as possible. Therefore, not making me go out for errands for the foreseeable future, or however long the meat lasts for. These events, and philosophies of my parents demonstrate how the pandemic has changed my current role in the family.

In addition, through the perspective of my parents' views, through their upbringing of their parents who experienced the Great Depression, they learned how to make necessities last as long as possible. Even before this pandemic, my parents installed my grandparents' philosophies into their livelihood. This was best illustrated with my mom stocking pasta boxes in our garage, or when we go out to eat, and constantly reusing the plastic containers so we would not have to be repurchasing plastic containers at grocery stores for our meals. Although this has been my reality for the last 22 years, and witnessing these actions from my parents, I believe the effects of this pandemic will be my parents' philosophy being practice by the rest of the world. This philosophy of practicing conservation of our resources. This philosophy of never knowing when the world is going to be put on hold, and always thinking "do I have three months' worth of supplies to live on?" Another method that may change the way we live our lives is thinking about the environment that surrounds us. In answering this question on a macro level, as the United States, we will continue as a society to question the status quo, and

we will continue to ask ourselves, “what do I actually need?” The perspective of my parents, and grandparents has helped shaped what this pandemic has meant for me.

Moreover, more than anything, this pandemic has helped shaped my perspective of reality. Since the pandemic required businesses to close, and you can no longer physically report to work; this put a strain on my family. My dad runs a law firm, practicing criminal defense, and transportation law. The effects of the pandemic were one of his legal assistants had to quit to take care of their parents. Therefore, the responsibilities laid on my shoulders. In a matter of weeks, I had to learn the nuances and duties of this role to help my father put food on the table and keep a roof over our heads. This virus taught me many things about perspective. Obviously, it is very important to have an education, and continue to be curious about the surrounding world, but that is not what’s important at the end of the day. What I learned is you must prioritize survival and create a hierarchy of needs. In this situation, what I ended up prioritizing was that I must learn these skills and attempt to learn how to write these legal documents to the best of my ability. If that meant having less time to study for my spring quarter at UCLA, while taking 19 units, that was fine because my biggest priority was helping my mother and father.

Next, I do believe the pandemic will have social, political, and economic implications. Since, the 1960s, and the Civil Rights Movement in America, we have really yet to challenge the status quo. I believe with the actions taken by the leaders of the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the United States, and other world leaders, as citizens we will now ask the question “how” and “why.” This is just my belief, but I do believe the CDC is the root of the problem for these social and political consequences that will

arise in the near future. Originally, the CDC claimed that wearing masks was not necessary for individuals unless you are an essential health worker. As we process this information from the CDC, as individuals if we practice metacognition, thinking about our thinking, we can start to ask the question why, and be defiant. What I mean by this is if the CDC was originally claiming that masks for civilians is not necessary, but necessary for health workers to prevent the spread, then their own logic is incredibly fallible. If you wanted to stop the spread, and you would want less people to transmit the disease, wouldn't you want society wearing some sort of cloth or mask? I believe this wrong notion by the CDC has trickled down into the politics of the United States. As illustrated with the leader of the free world and making inaccurate statements as more science has been discovered; we are continuing to question authority, and if the right decisions are being made. I believe it is clear, not just with the leaders of the United States, but across the globe, that mishaps regarding protective measures have occurred. Moreover, I do believe there is an agenda for such a late reaction by the international community regarding COVID-19. I believe this agenda was an economic motivated. I suspect that these world leaders were facing pressure from major lobbyists and companies that endorsed them. I assume these companies manipulated these leaders to keep their markets open. This pandemic suggests that individuals will no longer look for world leaders to make our decisions. We must research and educate ourselves on the choices that our leaders make. As well as practicing metacognition on the laws they create. Moreover, economic pressures have led to negative consequences in history before.

Consequently, as historians, we have witnessed economic expedition leading to political and social turmoil. Similarly, this pandemic that is occurring during 2020 has many traits of events that occurred in Spain and Portugal from 1479 to 1789. An event that illustrates an economic expedition leading to social turmoil were Christopher Columbus's voyages beginning in 1492. As stated by Professor Ruiz's Outline for week 5, "The second voyage described in the Chanca document was crucial as it became the first attempt to colonize the Caribbean. The indigenous people were decimated by the epidemic (smallpox, measles, etc.) and by work demands (Ruiz, Outline, April 22nd). Ruiz describes that in the second out of four trips by Columbus, in his attempt to reach Asia, he fortunately ran into the Bahamas. This mistake gave birth to the New World. By looking at history, we can draw comparisons between Columbus and the leaders of the international world. In focusing on Columbus, he was very persistent on expedition, and creating wealth. I do not perceive it as greed, but his motive for discovering new territories led to an eventual social turmoil. This social turmoil being that once he discovered the Bahamas, the Native Americans on these territories were infected by diseases that originated from the Old World. The similarity between the events that happened in 1492, and what is happening in today's world is the idea of economic expedition. This concept was illustrated in 1492 with smallpox when settlers attempted to colonize the New World. Additionally, this concept of economic expedition is demonstrated in regard with COVID-19 with world leaders not shutting down their economic markets until hundreds of thousands were dead. Through Columbus's voyage to the New World, and the lack of action by world leaders during this pandemic, this was a prime example of economic expedition leading to social and political turmoil.

All in all, although this paper was a reflection about a novel virus affecting my life, I believe there will be many implications once our daily lives resume. As I stated, I believe that we will have a different perspective moving forward. We will no longer want things we desire, but things we need. This will translate into society being more appreciative for the things they have. However, since our world leaders did not have the best plan of action against this virus, I do believe there will be social, political, and economic consequences moving forward. These consequences will create a more innovative, and curious society. Finally, although these were unprecedented times for my generation, a novel virus is nothing new for society. The world has overcome a virus before (smallpox), but it is how society comes out of this pandemic that will shape my generation moving forward.