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Documenting My Experiences

Reflection

In the beginning of the year 2020, the entire world broke out into a global pandemic known as the Coronavirus or COVID-19. In the video presentation I chose to document my experiences in this manner because in my personal opinion, it is the easiest for the audience to follow and also most meaningful. It sort of goes through chronological order of the pandemic from when it first started here in the United States, all the way to the present here today. This form of documentation becomes most meaningful as the audience is able to view all of the photos and videos throughout this time, but they are also able to listen to the person who is actually going through these experiences during this time. I figured being able to physically hear from the primary source itself. In this primary source I also made sure that whenever I would be talking, it was conversational. It is much easier for the intended audience to listen to understand when they are being spoken to and spoken with opposed to just being talked at. This is a primary source because it documents all of *my* real and personal experiences all captured by me. None of these moments were taken from anyone else, all of these experiences were all experiences of my own. I feel as if future researchers and students could learn a lot from this documentation. Especially the psychological effects that the pandemic has on people. In my specific instance, it came in different phases and waves which is sprinkled throughout the video if you follow along with the stories being told. They could also learn about social movements that continued to strive forward during these times, a forward moving stroke to a revolution for the Black community. This can also relate back to the historical work done by our HIST 172 course where we look at primary sources to understand what really happened in the past. Both written and visual primary sources are equally important. What they are both able to do is provide more context to what really went on back then. History books and other secondary sources do have a tendency to leave things out or they occasionally miss some really important details. This is why primary sources are so

important, they allow the intended audience to read between the lines in order to figure out the real and whole truth behind what happened in history. For example, as an extra credit assignment, our class had to watch a short video based on what was going on to the people in Honduras. The pieces that make that film a primary source was the video documentation of what was happening to their people, and also the voices of their people. This relates to my source as my primary source is also a video documentation of the past and what happened to me through the lens of my own personal perspective.

Past Present Analysis

Cuba takes a new response towards this past years pandemic COVID-19. Since the beginning of the pandemic, Cuba has taken a pretty extreme precaution and approach to this newfound disease, and they plan to continue to do their own research as they are depending on nothing from the United States or London. These issues also tie into relation with Cuba's past histories as they will be discussed throughout the text.

To begin, Cuba has taken several precautions on their people leading up to the Coronavirus pandemic. Their country takes their healthcare very seriously as it is universal. In the article "Behind Cuba's pandemic response" by Talha Burki, she explains how Cuba was already partially prepared for this pandemic to occur as, "The Country has comprehensive universal health care and one of the highest doctor to patient ratios in the world" (Burki). With this system in place, Cuba was already able to know exactly who was most at risk of contracting the viral disease. In this article, Burki also states how "Cuba developed the world's first meningococcal B vaccine" (Burki). This is a huge step for them as they are creating their own vaccine with their own doctors and subjects, and once it proves to be effective these vaccines will be shipped out to impoverished countries who cannot afford the vaccines from super countries such as the United States.

In continuation, even though Cuba is viewed as an outlier to the rest of the world, they're doing everything in their power to ensure that they do not need the assistance of other wealthy countries. In Jason Beaubien's, "Cuba's Dream: Come For A Vacation, Get A Homegrown Covid Vaccine he talks about the goals of Cuba facing this pandemic. He states how Cuba is "One of the last Communist countries in the post-Soviet era, And it's been an outlier in the COVID pandemic as well" (Beaubien). Cuba can be used as aa tool for so many countries to

learn from, especially other outlier countries or impoverished countries, Cuba can be utilized as a resource for them. Sovereignty is also a key player into what is going on in Cuba whilst handling this pandemic as they even name one of their vaccines “Soberana” and another vaccine named “Mambisa”, a vaccine administered as a nasal spray, is named after anti-colonists Cuban guerillas who fought Spain in the late 1800s”(Beaubien). Cuba remains revolutionary in this sense as they also refused to “sign up for the WHO-led COVAX dose sharing initiative” (Beaubien), as this initiative provides reduced or sometimes even free vaccine to countries who are low on resources and money. This is a revolutionary time for Cuba.

The processes in which Cuba is going through now can relate back in time to their old history. In Fidel Castro’s¹ speech, “History will Absolve Me” he explains how the “future generations and who are so badly treated and paid...the ten thousand young professional people: doctors, engineers, lawyers, veterinarians, school teachers, dentists, pharmacists..”(Castro). He wanted to see all of these people flourish in the future of Cuba and work in these professions in the future to better their country. Also in “The U.S Government Responds to Revolution”² the United States chooses to actively cut ties with Cuba, so much so Cuba is even seen as a pawn between Cuba and soviet Russia. This is an important note as Cuba now no longer does any business with the United States, let alone any of the other countries in the UN and their allies. Cuba was singled out and sort of just pushed out from the line of trade. They became an outlier. This ties into why it connects into how they are handling the COVID-19 pandemic. They refuse to work with the United States and to this day they are still seen to be an outlier from the rest of the world, hence them working to create their own vaccines for their people.

To conclude, Cuba is working in extreme precaution and testing to ensure that their country and that their people remain safe. They’ve created several safety nets to ensure that they are doing all of this in the right way and the most safe way. A lot of the revolutionary steps that they are taking now do have an linkage to the histories of Cuba and the legacy that these revolutions and histories leave behind.

¹ Fidel Castro, “History will Absolve Me” (1953), p. 1, *HIST 172 Primary Sources*, Spring 2021.

² Foreign Relations of the United States, “The US Government Responds to Revolution” p. 534, *HIST 172 Primary Sources*, Spring 2021.

Bibliography

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