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Professor Billitteri

ENG 206

28 April 2020

COVID 19

I have to look up at my computer to what the day is. Is it Monday? Is it Sunday? What difference does Thursday make from Tuesday? I mean I'm finishing up my classes, so I have to know when the day is Tuesday or Thursday, and it's been a bit challenging to try to get the motivation to complete my homework. I have only one week left of classes, and I feel like I've just been staring at my computer screen trying to get homework assignments done, this paper included. I am glad I can write this paper with less structure than an academic essay, but I'm still forced to get out of the thick fog my head feels it's been in and try to pretend all is well enough to even be doing this homework. In other words, I wonder what the future will bring? I'm nervous about where we're going to go from here, is this only the beginning of many more viruses like this to come?

I hesitate to say this, but I have actually been enjoying the time we have had to ourselves. I have been spending so much more time with my boyfriend, and our two cats. I think my cats are sick of seeing me. I have been taking long naps in the afternoon. I have been staying up into the late hours of the night. I can look out the window and pause moment, appreciating the beauty of the full moon light, without worrying I have to be up in a few hours, I must get to bed. I mean I normally am looking at the clock – what time is it? Now, never mind what “day” it is, what *time* is it? I don't even find myself looking at the clock anymore. What is a clock?

Although I am looking forward to returning to work in the near future, I imagine, I'm a bit nervous about if we see a spike in numbers, will we return to home? What sort of impact is this going to have on our economy? Are we going to be seeing the infrastructure of our society change to adapt to this new way of living? I almost think yes, yes is this answer to that because if nothing else, this time has made me become aware of just how fast your life can change. One minute it was okay to be selecting the apple in the bin at the grocery – maybe putting one back that you didn't think look too good, you maybe found a bruise, and now everyone is wearing mask and gloves and look at you like you're a zombie.

I went into the store the other day, and I was trying to find chips. The person behind me, younger person, was looking at me, and I was afraid because I was about to cough, and I didn't want to make a spectacle of myself. Of course, we should be wearing masks, but I feel judged unless I wear a mask in public. I think a mask can protect the person next to you as it keeps your breathing to yourself, but in terms of whether the mask is going to protect us, I think it's important to realize that we might be going to these great lengths of wearing a mask and gloves, but the moment we remove our gloves and touch our phone – that we had been touching previously- we have just sort of defeated the purpose of wearing the gloves to begin with.

I remember going into the grocery store when this all began, and this man approached us. He said, "why do you think everyone is buying all the toilet paper?" I wasn't sure what to say at that moment, but the more I pondered this question, the more I realized that I think people have this sort of herd mentality. What I mean by that is if one person is doing it – or many people are- than it's this false sense of security for the other people to be buying it. Now, I will say, I remember feeling absolutely terrible the other day when I saw this older woman using a wheelchair. She was in the cereal aisle, and I felt awful just thinking about what it must be like from her

perspective. I think it's important to realize those who are older, and it may not be as easy for them as us younger people. I remember standing in the long line outside of Walmart the other day, and I think it's awful that if the older people cannot make it in the store at the beginning of the day, then they're to wait in line behind us. I actually offered my spot that was closer to the door to the old man behind me because I felt bad. I now try to stay home when I'm able to, so my boyfriend just goes out to get the food so that we're one less person in the store for the other people to be able to go in.

I am excited for the warmer weather. I am excited to finish my classes and not have the responsibility of trying to get this work in. I ordered Stephan King's latest book, and I'm excited for it to arrive in the mail and be able to read it. I'm looking forward to not stressing about whether I'm editing the papers I'm writing correctly. At the beginning of break, I should have done more homework to alleviate this stress of this final stretch being nothing but hours all day spent writing, but it almost felt less real. I mean I'm not sure if I'm in denial about this virus right now. I am receiving the federal benefit, and I'm grateful I'm able to receive this and the unemployment because I wouldn't be able to pay my bills otherwise. But it almost feels like this is too good to be true, will I have taxes to pay on this? I am graduating, and will I have a job in the future? What does a future look like where I remember before this, we were talking about the new meatless burger, and I think this time sort of reflects where we were- and I hope continue to go be going, because I just think that the mess we're in is because we're so over populated on this earth. I think that this concept of "time" and the clock has been made up for many years, it's what we know, of course, and I just think that is we really look at reality, we can't really define it. I think we try so hard to search for the moon, or go to the moon, and other planets beyond us because we can't just be content with what is here now, but unfortunately I think if we are to be

honest with ourselves, I think beyond is a big black void. A void so big I can't even comprehend, but we're here. I am here – you are here, and it's important that we don't just keep looking outside ourselves. I mean I almost like the fact that this virus has sort of put us all together on the same page. I joked and said I almost feel like it's neat that I'm doing the same thing as this celebrity is doing – like Taylor Swift – we're doing the same thing: staying home and washing our hands, and I have just never seen anything like this before on a global level. It takes away the lines we have created that we call “countries”. We're not this country and that country, we're all humans, uncertain about the future, no one has the answer, and we're on this planet. I think a lot of people try to think they have the answer. My sister has been trying to get me to go to church with her, and I heard her pastor say, “this virus is because of the devil” and I just think that's the dumbest thing I have heard. Like when I remember reading the history about the black plague in the 1300's, people also thought it was the devil then... maybe we should take responsibility for the way we're living. I mean I'm not even sure how to say that because like I think we're all trying to do the best we can, and we just sort of forget about at large what everyone is doing. Like if I look at the distribution of wealth, it's insane how there's these few people that are able to get all this money. It seems laws don't apply to them. It's sickening to look at history and really understand where we have been. I think we have made a lot of progress, but I just think this virus just puts into perspective how vulnerable we are on this earth, how maybe we should think about respect more and what it means. We aren't made to just wake up in the morning and go to work and to bed. Like it makes me realize just how short my life is, and I've so much enjoyed the many long walks we have been on. I have been grateful I haven't had to ask someone, “can I go use the bathroom?” I mean I just think our privacy is really not respected at all in the society that we live in. I have sort of just accepted it. I look up at the store and I see

myself staring back at me through the camera, and I get it, we have all these things to keep the “bad people” from doing things, but it just seems we’re treated like the bad people, and I just wish we could live our lives in a way where there was more a feeling of community, but maybe people would say that sort of way of living is a cult. I don’t think we honestly know what the reason is we’re here, but we are, and it’s all sort of felt like a dream lately, but I’m trying to just float like a person might in water because I have found that if I start throwing my arms around and panicking, I’m much worse, and while floating I’m actually enjoying the views I’m seeing.