

Interview with
ADELLE BROWN

December 4, 2020

**THE PANDEMIC YEARS: COVID-19
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**
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ADELLE BROWN

Adelle Brown was interviewed by Whitley Johns on December 4, 2020 in Whitley's home in St. George, Washington County, Utah. She talked about what it was like being from the U.K. [United Kingdom], seeing how her family was being affected there, and how she was being affected in Utah during the [COVID-19] pandemic going on.

WJ: Okay, so can you state your name for me and spell it out?

AB: Adelle Brown. A-D-E-L-L-E B-R-O-W-N.

WJ: Okay, so I'm just going to get some, like, background on you first. So, where are you from?

AB: I am originally from the U.K. Born and raised in the U.K., but moved to America about six years ago because of my dad's job in the military. So, I've been living in the states for five and a half years.

WJ: And where do you currently live, now?

AB: I currently live in St. George, Utah, just because I'm going to school down here.

WJ: And does your family live here in St. George as well?

AB: They do not. My family live up in northern Nevada, in Fallon, a small hick town in the middle of nowhere. Just where the military base is there.

WJ: And do you still have family in England?

AB: I do. The rest of my family lives in the U.K., actually. It's only my parents, my brother, and I here. And then I have two older sisters who have their own lives back home. And then the rest of my extended family live all throughout the U.K.

WJ: So can you— never mind. So, you said you were going to school here in St. George. Are you going to the university and are you involved in any clubs or sports?

AB: Yeah. So— I go to Dixie [State University]. I am a sports management major. I currently am on the soccer team and I work within the athletic department here as an intern for Wendi Bulkley. It's been pretty hectic so far and soccer, I love it. I'm a transfer student, so I originally came from a junior college in Iowa. I transferred last year. Last year was an amazing year in soccer for a lot of us, I think, and this year, obviously we are just trying to get, get through it, to finally play a season. So, yeah.

WJ: Can you kind of tell me about the differences between last year's, like, school year and soccer season, and how it's changed now because of the pandemic?

AB: So obviously, last year we just kind of lived life pretty freely. This time last year, actually, we were at the NCAA tournament. The day before, a year ago today, actually, we were in Washington, went to play Texas women's, right, Texas women's at Western Washington. And that was an amazing, an amazing experience. I— I didn't even, I wouldn't have even thought that we'd be in the position that we are right now, not even being able to have a season. I think the worst thing was showing up and being so ready for it, and then being told that I see it going to be pushed to the spring. But, obviously we have to think about everything that's going on, and the people involved, and people who are getting really sick. But obviously, last year we were able to do whatever you want, go where everyone, be pretty free. We didn't have to wear a mask or anything like that. D— didn't really see any of this, kind of, coming. This year, we, obviously, we have to be pretty, pretty, pretty good at wearing a mask. I feel like a lot of people still aren't, but we have to be, especially on our sports teams this year. We've had to be pretty cautious with who we are around, where we go. We have to just kind of take care of each other and make sure that we don't spread it within our athletic department, and, you know, just keep all of us safe and ensure that we do have a season to come because we've all been waiting for it. And it, it, it sucks for all of us that we've had to push it back so far.

WJ: Did you feel like the athletic department and your team did a good job of, like, preventing COVID cases, and did your team have any positive COVID cases or anything like that?

AB: So, the athletic department, I think they did somewhat of a good job. I think the majority of teams have actually all had it so far, pretty much, which it's kind of bad to say. But as an athletic department, they're doing what they can and doing what they're told by the department of health and the CDC [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention], and just trying to follow all of those rules, and they can only do so much for their part. It's just kind of down to the athletes to do their part, too.

Within the soccer team, we only had two positive cases. Unfortunately, I was one of those people just because one of the interns I worked with also tested positive for it. And then the same day she told us, I found out that I also tested positive. So, I was alone for ten days in quarantine for me. But as far as that, I think everyone else on the team did what they could to prevent themselves from getting it. Especially, even those that have jobs and have to go out all the time. And I think, I think we all just tried to do our best to stay healthy and avoid getting it. And we were pretty, pretty pumped that we were one of the only teams that didn't get a high COVID-positive test rate. I guess we were pretty, we, we wanted to keep that as low as possible. So yeah, we're pretty, pretty ready to move into the next season, and again, trying to avoid any, any mishaps or positive tests, and just kind of stay safe and healthy during off-season that is to come.

WJ: So, you said that you had COVID and you had a quarantine for ten days. What was that like and what was kind of your mindset during that time? Was it hard to be there alone, or did you feel like it was a quick ten days?

AB: It felt like a pretty long ten days, to be honest with you. I unfortunately had to, because I tested positive. My roommate who was also on the team, she had to quarantine for fourteen days and that made me feel kind of bad because she didn't have it and she was able to, like, go out and stuff like that, but I kind of stopped her from being able to do that. And I'd say that we were both pretty social people and need kind of that social interaction every day. So, being stuck in our rooms was, was kind of rough. We'd find ourselves sitting at one end of the, the hall across from each other, just talking, you know, keeping that six feet distance. It was probably more than six feet, but we just tried to keep each other company as much as we could. It was a good time, I guess, for me to get some work done. But other than that, it kind of sucked. I wasn't able to go out anywhere. I wasn't able to get any food, you know, I wasn't able to just do basic things that I usually would as an able person. So, I guess it was kind of hard mentally, having to stay in there by yourself and not talk to anyone really, and you know, just, just kind of be by yourself. I tried to occupy myself as much as I could with, you know, Netflix, social media, just a little bit basic, basic things that I guess a young adult is obsessed with these days. So, I did what I could to stay, to stay sane.

WJ: And so, with some of your family here in the States and then in England as well, can you kind of tell me the differences that you kind of saw, how both places handled the pandemic and if you felt like one handled it better than the other?

AB: Well, right now both the U.K. and the U.S. are going through pretty similar things. I'd say people in both places are being pretty adamant against following the rules and saying that it's not a big deal and stuff like that, 'cause they're still going through it as well. There are actually places in the U.K. right now that are in lockdown. My sister is actually living in one of those places right now. Each kind of county, city, whatever, they have different, like, tiers obviously. And the place that my sister lives in, which is Birmingham, she, they're in tier three right now, which means they're on complete lockdown and no one's really allowed to go anywhere unless it's essential. And then, my parents and my other sister, actually, in the U.K. right now, too and they're only a tier two, so then they have to take precautions, but they don't have to stay inside. It's not like a complete lockdown. But, my sister actually just had a kidney transplant. My mum just gave my sister a kidney, so they've had to be super cautious. My parents flew over there at the beginning of October and they had to quarantine for fourteen days, and then they had to quarantine in front of the fourteen days before the surgery, and just take all the extra precautions that they possibly can because, obviously, my sister is in immune-compromised. And if my mom was to get COVID or anything like that, then it would just kind of push everything back, or kind of maybe potentially, mean my mom can't give my sister a kidney, you know. So they're at least taking the precautions and I feel like as long as they are taking the precautions, then it's fine. But, right now within the U.K. and the U.S., there are a lot of people that are just avoiding everything, and not really following any of the rules and thinking that they're better than the rules, I guess. So yeah, it's, it's pretty much the same right now.

WJ: Do you see that mindset of like, “I don’t want to follow the real rules and wear my mask,” especially in St. George, or do you kind of see it all over the U.S.? But I guess specifically in St. George, since you live here.

AB: Well, I, haven’t been a whole lot of places to be able to see whether that is necessarily true. All of the places aren’t following the rules. I just think that a lot of places are taking less precautions than other places. Like St. George right now, if you were driving around or walking around, I don’t think you would even know we were in a pandemic. People are obviously wearing their masks, but they’re just wearing it because they have to, you know, like to go into a store; they don’t really care about it. They’re just putting it on so they can go inside. People are still going out to eat at restaurants and stuff like that. Like, places that could be a huge kind of touchpoint, I guess, to, like, get COVID and, like, contract it in some way are still open. And I think especially the restaurant industry right now, like the amount of people that don’t know they’re sick and they’re still going to work and can still be spreading it onto everyone else. I feel like it’s kind of dangerous because, again, everyone reacts to it completely differently. And the older community is still coming out. I feel like St George’s is, has like an older community. And I currently work at Chili’s, so I kind of, I did a lot of, a lot of the older community come into Chili’s a lot, and in my mind there’s a few of us at Chili’s that have had COVID, and in my mind I’m like, we could have passed anything along, even though in the restaurant industry we are trying to take precautions in there too, but you can only do so much because there are those people that do not take the precautions or follow the rules completely. You know?

So, I think, I think that everywhere could be doing a lot better. I know that North Utah and, like Logan, it’s the same kind of thing. Although the cases are super, super high right now in Logan, people are still going out, like, again, you wouldn’t even know that we were in a pandemic. So, I think that everyone is taking their own kind of take on this whole thing. Each state is doing what they can, but people are still gonna do what they want to do.

WJ: You mentioned the older community and how they’re kind of going out. Do you feel like it’s up to them and people who are more susceptible to getting COVID that they need to take more precautions to staying inside? Or do you think it’s more the younger generation here who need to be more careful? Do you think it’s, like, both?

AB: I definitely think it’s both. I mean, there are, if they know that they are more susceptible to getting COVID, then you would think that they would take more precautions to avoid it. But at the same time, like, if they do choose to leave their houses, if they do choose to go shopping, if they do choose to sit in a restaurant, anything like that, like, it’s also up to the rest of us to help avoid the whole situation, whole situation altogether, and just kind of walk together in that sense, I guess. Like, if they’re going to come out and they’re going to wear a mask and do what they can to stay safe on their own, then it’s, it’s also down to us younger people, as well, to do the exact same thing and just, you know, keep each other safe.

WJ: Do you think St. George can do a better job of that? Because I feel like here everything's open and besides mask-wearing, that's really the only thing that's changed. So, do you feel like you've seen more changes or you think we need to be doing more?

AB: There's been zero change, I'd say, from when we first have to start wearing masks, the—like two weeks ago, three weeks ago, the governor sent out another, like, mandate, but nothing really changed on that, than what was already, like, put in place. And there's no, like, there's no really any consequences to going against those rules. Like, it's very easy to get away with hanging out with more than ten people, you know, or going from household to household, that kind of thing. There's nothing really, really stopping us from doing that. There's no, really enforcing any of the rules. Like across the street right now, people are playing in the park with, like 50-plus people, are playing in the park together. Like, there's nothing really holding us from going out and doing the things that we want to do. I think that things like the mandates are just words to people. They don't, they didn't really care for them, or want to listen to them, especially if they don't believe that COVID is a thing or that it's that big of a deal, you know? So, we definitely could be doing a lot more; masks are only doing so much.

WJ: And do you feel like your family has kind of seen the exact same things in England as well, of there're changes being made, but more needs to be done? Because you said that one of your sisters is in complete lockdown, and I feel like living in Utah, you don't really hear of any places in lockdown here in the U.S. So, do you think that needs to be more of a thing here?

AB: Again, people are going to do whatever they want regardless. I think the thing they've done back home to avoid people actually leaving during lockdown, unless it's like an essential reason, is they're just giving out fines. Like, they give out fines for people who aren't following the rules and things like that. And I think over here, if we were to go back into lockdown, people will rebel against it because that's what happened in March or whenever it first started happening, you know, people were out on the streets kind of protesting having to wear a mask and they were taking away their freedom, you know, and all of that. And I just think that if that were to happen again, the same thing would happen. People would, just don't care at this point. I feel like most people now that we're this far into it, are just like, let everyone get it. Like, it just, everyone just needs to get it at this point. You know, like we're not— we'd much rather everyone get it than, like, stay inside and keep everyone safe, or even the people that are at more risk safe.

WJ: You talked about the, a little bit about protests. Have you seen a lot of that in St. George and has it been just about COVID or have there been other protests that have kind of gone on here?

AB: As far as I know that like, especially in March around that time, when everyone was mandated to wear a mask, there was, there was a protest, I believe, like outside the city building, just kind of, you know, people standing there with signs and saying that their having to wear masks is taking away their first amendment, right, or something like that, you know. That was the first protest I heard of. I don't know if there has been any more

since then, just because I haven't really kept up on it or been a part of it. Other than that, I know that, even while we've been in this pandemic, there has been the whole Black Lives Matter issue that has taken place, and I know that there has been protests due to that, and protesters against that, I guess, that have taken place in St. George on Main Street. Again, I wasn't a part of it, so I'm not able to, like, say what happened or how it took place, but it was definitely something on the news, and then in the news articles, so—.

WJ: The Black Lives Matter issues, obviously, have been like a huge thing this year after a couple incidents. Has your family seen changes in England as well, with kind of that going on, or do you feel like it's more of a United States kind of issue?

AB: Yeah, so once everything happened over here, I feel like a lot of different countries kind of followed the same suit, and there was a lot of protests in both the U.S. and the U.K., and even France and other places in Europe as well. Just kind of all trying to, like, bond together to fight against a cause that they believe in, and just kind of build a sense of community in that way. And then again, there were people who were against that and who came out to support against that. And, you know, everyone has their own side and I think that both sides kind of came out and then everyone that didn't really know what to do just kind of, like, get away from it, which is, I think it's fine. You don't necessarily have to speak out about something to support it. I think in this time, speaking out was something that everyone wanted to happen, just because they felt like if you didn't speak out, then you didn't truly support it, or if you didn't speak out, then you weren't helping, or, you know. Like, if ever they just wanted change to happen and I think in some places change did happen, but we're still going through somewhat of the same thing right now. I even think that right now, still during this pandemic, that people are protesting the same thing. You just don't really see as much of it anymore because it's no longer relevant in the media. I feel like that's why so many people are, like, blind to the fact that it's still going on, because the media are no longer talking about it.

WJ: At the beginning of, like, the Black Lives Matter protest and everything, they, there was a lot of things on the news that were showing violent protests and protests that were kind of getting out of hand. Did you see that in St. George, and did you see that, or did your family tell you about stuff like that that was happening in England? And for any cause, do you think there should be a right for people to be violent when they're trying to make a statement?

AB: I think first and foremost, violence should never be tolerated towards anything or anyone, especially in the case like this. Like, the whole reason why this happened was because of violence, you know? Why would you want to inflict more violence on a situation that doesn't need violence? I think there's two sides to the Black Lives movement, especially in the U.S. I think there are those people that genuinely want to help support a cause and really make change, and those are the people that are peacefully protesting; and then there are those people that are just kind of jumping on the bandwagon and escalating a situation that doesn't need to be escalated, and are going out and looting and burning buildings down and, and all of that stuff. I don't think that should be tolerated in any way. And I think that, again, the media has been a very negative force in this whole situation,

just because they've portrayed a lot of things in just kind of twisted things and portrayed them in ways that they shouldn't be portrayed, as the media does, I guess. But nothing, nothing should be solved with more violence, and obviously we've seen again on the news and in the media that, you know, troops have been sent into the streets and, like, police and SWAT teams and stuff, and there's just been a lot of negativity against the police too. And I would, I wouldn't be able to give you my opinion on it, but I'm not educated enough to give my opinion on it. I think there are positives and negatives on both sides of the spectrum. But again, the violence should never happen, the looting. Like, people's businesses have been destroyed by this, and it's just because people have been selfish because they want to join in and, you know, send a message of some kind. But burning down businesses and looting businesses and trashing places, just isn't going to get anyone anywhere or make any kind of noise about anything. It just kind of distracts from what truly is happening.

And I think the same thing has happened in the U.K. to here, in terms of just, like the protests and the looting and the, the violence and things like that. And again, there's the two sides of it. There are other people that do peacefully protest and are truly trying to make a change, and then there are the people that have been violent and looted and been aggressive and all of those things. And there's not much else to say, other than that it's not acceptable and it shouldn't be allowed. And I think there are the police that have been trying to stop, those people have, have been looked at negatively, but this, at the same time, like, if that was your business or was that, if that was your home or something like that, like, would you, would you want that to happen? Would you want people to try and stop it from happening? You know? So, I think that change is definitely something that needs to happen with this movement, however I think the way that a lot of people have gone around, gone about it is, is wrong.

WJ: To kind of wrap up the interview, 2020 has kind of been a crazy year, obviously. Do you think it's going to carry into 2021 the next year, or do you feel like the pandemic and the virus are kind of gonna get under control, and the fighting with the election and the racial injustices, that's all going to get under control? Or do you feel like it's just going to carry over and continue?

AB: Honestly, I feel like we're too late now in the year to be able to say that it's not going to carry over to 2021. I mean, it's what, December, middle of, almost middle of December, and we're still going through the pandemic, and people are still getting COVID, and, just, cases are still increasing. So, it's hard to say that in the next fifteen days anything is going to change, or how many days it is, 'cause I really don't think that it is, before the year ends, at least.

Again, I think that people are always seeking change as well, like for the Black Lives Matter movement and just kind of, like, any civil rights movements; people are always seeking change and things to improve and get better. So, I think that's also going to carry into the new year, because I don't think anyone, anything was completely resolved from everything that took place. And then, particularly, I, I think the election was a very underwhelming situation that took place. I think a lot of people expected Trump to win.

But on election day, I feel like it wasn't really election day because they continued after that to find out who actually won, you know, like it was just very underwhelming. And I guess we're going to see what happens in the next, in the new year in terms of politics and Joe Biden being the new president, because he finally gets sworn in on what, January, January 11th or something like that. Right?

WJ: The 20th.

AB: The 20th, well see you know that. And I guess we'll see what he has to say and do about everything taking place as the new president. But yeah, I think everything's pretty much going to go into the new year. Hopefully, it will be a better one, but we'll see. We'll see. And with the new vaccine, that's now been announced too, hopefully that gets sent out everywhere as soon as possible and then we can get this pandemic over and done with. That's not necessarily how it works, so we will see. We can only wait and, to find out.

WJ: Okay, well thank you for meeting with me and kind of giving me your opinion and experiences of this year.

AB: Well, thank you.

[END OF RECORDING. END OF INTERVIEW.]