

CourtneyMcMillian

📅 Thu, 7/16 3:24PM ⌚ 50:22

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

people, protest, pandemic, black, feel, literally, killed, georgia, neighborhood, winston salem, drug, public health, home, interview, justice, speaks, hear, issue, absolutely, food

SPEAKERS

Courtney McMillian, Jack Portman

C Courtney McMillian 00:44
Hello?

J Jack Portman 00:47
Yeah, can you hear me?

C Courtney McMillian 00:49
Oh yeah, yeah,

J Jack Portman 00:51
perfect.Okay, awesome. Are you ready? Yes. Perfect. Okay, um, see So first of all, can you Like verbally confirm that you are okay to do an interview.

C Courtney McMillian 01:03
Yes.

J Jack Portman 01:04

Okay, perfect. And do you mind if I record it?

C Courtney McMillian 01:07
I don't mind.

J Jack Portman 01:08
Awesome. Great. Thank you very much for taking time out of your day to do an interview. Um, so basically what the goal I guess of interview is is sort of like two pronged. I'd like to talk about generally just your experiences with Coronavirus, like when I first learned about it, and like how it sort of changed how you go about things. And then additionally, I'd like to talk about your experience organizing that protests that you held, and everything of that entailed. Okay.

C Courtney McMillian 01:52
Sounds good. Awesome. Let me know you're ready.

J Jack Portman 01:58
All right. Great. Yeah.Okay. So, when did you Oh, actually, when I get some biographical information first

C Courtney McMillian 02:11
I'm logged in all in research.

J Jack Portman 02:15
Yeah, absolutely. Okay. So are you from Winston Salem originally?

C Courtney McMillian 02:23
Yes, I am a native of Winston Salem, North Carolina.

J Jack Portman 02:33
Um,okay, what is your date of birth?



Courtney McMillian 02:35

I was born on May 8 1996. I'm 24 years old. Awesome. Okay. And



Jack Portman 02:45

your educational background I gleaned from your email signature that you just graduated from Winston Salem State?



Courtney McMillian 02:51

Yes, sir. I graduated from Winston Salem State spring 2019 with a BA in sociology Minor in public health.



Jack Portman 03:02

Oh, that's seems extremely relevant in that particular situation.



Courtney McMillian 03:07

Right.



Jack Portman 03:08

Wow. Okay, cool. Cool. Cool. Perfect. Um, so yes, going back to when to When did you first learn about the Coronavirus and like, what were your initial thoughts about it?



Courtney McMillian 03:24

Okay, I'm gonna tell you the uncut raw truth. Okay. So I first hear of the Coronavirus. It was like right before spring break of this year. I had a friend of mine who is in my car who was riding around in a car and they had told me there was like, you heard about the Coronavirus and I'm like, What? Like cuz, you know, like, in public have like we're always on things you know. So it's like, wait, what Talking about, like, if anyone heard of the current bars, I feel like I would have heard of it. Right. Okay. So, um, I was like, No, boom, March comes around, I'm like, You gotta be kidding me. For one I was, you know, I didn't know how to feel because I'm like, I don't know if this engineer or if this, you know, this is really this is really serious. And I know like, there's a lot of strife in the medical field. And I also know that a lot of things, especially with black and brown, people are engineered in a way of pretty much controlling their population, our population. So I was just sitting

thinking, having zooming ins with my colleagues. Talking about it and it was really hit and it was really hitting hard. I personally have had experiences with people knowing people who have, you know, been diagnosed with COVID-19. So it's just been it's been kind of like all over the place and I'm still kind of like stuck in like an all with all of this not really like having a pin pointed out like, Okay, this is what it is like, no, I feel like this is something so very new. This is something that even the medical professionals don't really know how to tackle. So this is kinda Yes, kinda ish. Right? Yeah.

J

Jack Portman 05:45

So, like, how have you kind of adapted to a new routine if that makes sense?

C

Courtney McMillian 05:53

Oh, gosh, I hate the mask. Um, and at first I was like, yo, like this is not healthy. This is an eye healthy breathing. They're like they're on oxygen for, you know, long periods of times and I have asthma. So I kind of, I kind of deal with it a little different leave and I guess, those who are able to just freely breathe on their own, because breathing has always kind of been an issue for me. So I just try to you know, stay safe, but I do feel like is this crazy with the gloves I totally disagree with like the usage of gloves, because it's like, you're trying to protect yourself from this virus but touching your phone, you're touching money, you're touching everything else that you're not supposed to be touching and you're not really caring about washing these gloves while you have them on or taking them off and replacing them. But I feel as though your bare hands you're gonna care much more like you're gonna blow Okay, like coronas going around. I need to stay sanitized. I need to keep washing my hands but if you haven't gloves Not caring about you just constantly transparent, contaminated high dose. Um, so yeah, I definitely don't agree with the gloves but the mask the masks are killing me I am struggling.

J

Jack Portman 07:14

Interesting. That's funny, and scary too honestly.

C

Courtney McMillian 07:20

Right.

J

Jack Portman 07:21

But So how has like work changed for you, um, you know pre and post pandemic,



Courtney McMillian 07:29

um, work is pretty much the same for me. Um like going into where is like this whole different setup of procedure now, where you know, you enter with the mass you keep your mask on the entire time during a shift. You have to read over like these whole guidelines which encompass the symptoms of Kobe and like it Even had like a cough in the last 24 hours like you're unable to work. Or if you've been around someone who's been diagnosed with COVID. Within the last two weeks, you're unable to work or if you had any symptom, chest pain, muscle aches, anything, you're unable to work. If you're honest about not experiencing any of those symptoms, then you will be unable to work. But as you and I both know, everyone is not that ethical. So, yeah, interesting. The dynamics of work has changed.



Jack Portman 08:36

Hmm, that's fascinating. Where do you work?



Courtney McMillian 08:40

I work at Ross, dress for less.



Jack Portman 08:43

gotcha. And has there been like a Have you seen any difference in terms of the amount of people that are going there? You know,



Courtney McMillian 08:50

yes, I'm definitely Yes the one I work at is at Hanes Mall. So up until last year. September, that was the only Ross and Winston and we had lots of traffic coming in and out, you know, the first week that we open out there COVID we opened and phase two. And like the first few days it was hectic because I mean of course we hit sales we had to get things out of the store. But out of that like the crowd start really dimming down and like we have to monitor the amount of people in the store I think we have a limit now I'm gonna say 140 or something I'm not really sure but I know we do have a limit. But we also are the one of the biggest Ross is square foot. So that allows like a lot of and we have markings on the ground. You know that will be speed margins and we also have directional markets where You go down this out, and you go down now but yeah. Is is different. Yeah. Like you know your neighborhood grocery stores, huh?

J Jack Portman 10:13
Yeah, gotcha. Interesting. Um All right. So yes. Okay, so you organized a protest in West End, right?

C Courtney McMillian 10:27
Yes.

J Jack Portman 10:27
Interesting. So can you walk me through like the process of like deciding that you're going to organize a protest and then like the actual procedural steps that that took, and then the actual event itself?

C Courtney McMillian 10:43
Okay, um, well, what happened leading up to it is of course of George Floyd. Death with been killed at the hands of state violence. So that, you know, that kinda initiated, but it's like we're literally fighting within a pandemic itself. So it's like we have two pandemics going on, as you know, the black race at one time and it's like, Okay, this is kinda, you know, this is kind of beat up, you know, like, wow, right now where the whole world is shut off. We're still getting killed because our phenotype, we're still been targeted because of how we how our tone, how we dress, how we look, if we look as a threat, then we're presumed to be a threat. So George Foy, then is spurred with Breanna Taylor, which she you know, she got killed before Jewish boy Ahmad armory. And so it was like okay, it was route enough, you know, like it was like a fire inside of us. In this like, okay, and like when will y'all learn? Do we have to turn into a riot in in lieu and for to get your attention to tell y'all we're hurt and we're tired of dying, we're tired of, you know, I'm saying being killed literally been killed just because our skin colour. And kind of kind of that kind of you know, shook me and it's mainly like okay, well as native and I know you know the injustices that goes on within once to save them. Like we have to we have to do something. And I was tired of the protests just been downtown. I was tired of East Winston which is predominantly black, predominantly minority, poor. And it's like, yo, like, we have to stop allowing these things to keep occurring because if they keep occurring, no one is gonna listen. No one is gonna understand us and There'll be no change. So I hit up a two colleagues of mine, Anea Carter and Frankie Gist. And we sat down literally, like, the march was on a Thursday that Wednesday, I hit a Frankie cuz he's a community organizer here. And onea is like my research partner. So I hit both of them off and I was like, Look, this is what this what needs to happen. I got this idea. I want to orchestrate this March.

And this is where I wanted to be. So there was like, you know, all four and I was like, Alright, we're gonna meet up at bodegas, he went downtown and met up ahead of us a good little smoothie, and it literally took us a lot to do not an hour, an hour, you know, because, you know, we all have a common a common struggle, you know. So just with our common fight for liberation, we went into bodega with that vision like, okay, we know we want change, but how are we gonna go about it? And you know, like, I have no, I have nothing against the ride in the loop. Because I feel like wherever black people heal from, they should make a loop Nicaragua, this country was stolen, like no one in this country can say, why are you stealing from these businesses and corporations when we were stolen? So that's just a whole nother story that I like actually getting into, but a lot of people feel a little uncomfortable, but we felt uncomfortable. Having a knee in our neck for almost nine minutes, saying that we can't breathe. But I digress. Um so we got that going. We ended up finding a way where we could create a flyer and within 24 hours, we got a rally of people to come In West End, and my goal for going to West and West, because we're tired of, you know, privileged people, white folks been at home and just watching their news about this, you know, I'm saying just talking about it and not actually being engaged not actually having to at their forefront, you know, and so I said, Let's make them uncomfortable. Let's get in their neighborhoods. They don't have to come out to the rallies, they don't have to do nothing. They can sit at home, they can watch TV, they can, you know, I'm saying not live a life in fear. Whereas my black and brown sisters and brothers has, so that's why I picked the West in we had a really good turnout. Um, and I'm missing something. Another question. Um,

J

Jack Portman 15:57

yeah, that's that's that's all great. What was Like, the day of like, were you surprised by how many people showed off? What was the atmosphere

C

Courtney McMillian 16:10

All right, the day when everybody showed up, I was extremely nervous, like a strain and nervous. I cannot believe myself that I was able to join, get all of these people, black, brown, white, all together disabled, like we like when I when I first got out there, I'm not sure if this woman made it to the end, but we have a woman out there literally in like, a wheelchair. And I you know, that's heartening for me because it's like, you know, I know able bodied persons who wouldn't even come out, you know, I'm saying, I know people who just you know And don't don't feel comfortable with Lou and and we're still in the midst of a pandemic. So that was just, you know, amazing to see the numbers to see the solidarity and unification in those people who actually want change. Like I had a professor from Salem State, be out there and you know, this person has helped condition serious

health conditions and risk risked their lives to walk in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement. And so to me, that was pure love. You know, I don't have any other word other than love you if you didn't have love out there, I can feel I can feel it, you know, and it's like, you know, you got to be a very good perpetrator to not have love to been out there because we walked and it was very hilly and you had to have For the movement, you had a head love for what we stood for when you were out there walking with us. And so I was very, very satisfied, very pleased with the outcome because I, I didn't really think I could have that big of outcome in 24 hours. So I was very shocked, but very filled with love and compassion for what I was doing. That's great. Um, I know, you touched on this a little bit, but, like something that I've thought about, um, you know, when I go to protests and I've seen footage of protests, it's one in this month in this pandemic period. There's this like, you're sort of negotiating the sort of public health considerations of it with like, extremely like timely, um, momentum of the black lives. Matter Movement right now. And what I feel like I'm seeing is like, so many people are acknowledging like that there's risks to themselves when they go to these pandemics, but they view the sort of implications of these protests as being more important, can you so can you kind of speak to like the relationship between the public health aspect of it, and the actual sort of meanings and values of the protest, if that makes sense? Yeah, definitely. Um Well, I will say I, I definitely iterated safety first. So we mandated that everyone come out there within mass. I feel like right now, in the state of the world, no one actually knows like, the saved is precautions to take when it comes to contract in COVID-19 so what we do know is come with mass and have it on at all times and stay six feet away from each other, which in a in a protest is kinda unrealistic. Because Yeah, it was no no such thing as a city out there. But I feel like the plight and what's going on around the entire world with black people right now, I feel that that issue which has been a perpetuate an issue for over 400 years, has definitely you know, highlight it beyond COVID-19. And so it's like, if not now then when, just because we're in the midst of a pandemic that could possibly kill each and every one of us out there at any of those protests. The fight for Black Lives is the biggest Minimum You know? So I feel like that's why I said you know it was compassion and love out there because everyone cares about themselves I feel like you know you're not gonna if you if you're gonna put yourself before you put someone she gave me and your health at that and and public health we always reiterate safety, safety safety safety precaution, proportion proportion, but in a time like this, how can we how can we scream safety, safety safety, when we're not even safe in our own skin? Like we're not even saying the people supposed to protect and serve us don't even make us feel safe. So even in the center of public health, how can we sit there and say, you know, safety first Safety First we're not even live in you know, I'm saying we have babies as young as seven years old. You know, I Yana Stanley Jones I'm not sure if you know of her but she was killed in a police raid in her own home. She's seven. She didn't even make it to this pandemic, you know, I'm saying so it's like, yeah, yeah, public health is there, but at the same time, so it's all laws. Right. And it's

at stake right now that, you know, just because of structural racism. We have to die off.
And so,

J

Jack Portman 22:24

as you mentioned earlier, the idea of sort of two pandemics on the one hand Coronavirus, and on the other the deeply rooted structural racism in the United States and I was looking at this report that came out I think like today regarding COVID-19 statistics from Forsyth County, that black and Latin x community members like in Windsor, I guess in Forsyth County, are like nine to 10 times more at risk of contracting Coronavirus, which speaks to your point that like, in a very literal sense, there's that like intersection of two extremely dire pandemics.

C

Courtney McMillian 23:14

All right. I, I looked at some statistics this morning as well. And it shows how black and brown people are four times as much affected than white people by this pandemic. And it's kind of crazy, you know, it's like, four times as much, which also brings me to a conversation that I had with my mentor a few weeks ago, I guess when the mayor of Georgia Keisha Bottoms that opened Atlanta, I mean, Georgia back up and how everyone almost like you know, and well, I don't know if you know or not, but in the black community, a lot of people was tired of going home you know, they wanted it. You know, this was meant for everyone. So, being told literally you can't go nowhere for 30 days, you know, that can drive someone crazy unless it's an emergency food gas was the boss. I took it as well think about it. The mayor of Georgia's opening Georgia up and thought it was cool. Mayor Jones here joins always kissing and stuff didn't open. North come on up until May 7, but Georgia was opened up I think. I know they were like one of the first ones. And I looked at him like okay, well, we all know that. In Atlanta, there's a big metropolitan area and a lot of black people are in Atlanta is heavily populated by black and brown people. And we also know that this pandemic is viruses affecting black and brown people the most. So putting it all together, yes. Open up Georgia. Why? Because it's heavily populated by black people. Also, we know that black people gonna go out they're gonna want to go to hair salons, they don't want to go to, you know, I'm saying the malls and stuff. That's that's us like that's the part of our culture. We like to, you know, go out have a good time, because it was a but none of the golf courses were open. None of the none of the what is it called country clubs were open, you know, and it's like, okay, so you can open up our malls, but you can't open up the country clubs. You can't open up the tennis courts. You can't open up the golf course. Why? Why won't you open up those same things that you notice? predominantly white people go after but you want to open up the salons, the boutiques that you know that predict that black people go out there. So it's like, it's all

in one institutionalized racism. And my mentor was like, Yo, I never thought I can think of it like that. Now mind you, this woman like she's she was also my my professors. And I'm like, Yeah, like they they're not slick like it's a tactic. It's all part of the tactic. And before you know it Georgia, Georgias in flames like they are actually going back to phase one, right. So it's like, yeah, it was it was all funny game. Florida opened up their beaches, and the numbers skyrocketed. North Carolina has skyrocketed want to know Tennessee has skyrocketed like you're getting In us access to go to these places, but you know, deep down we're gonna we're gonna suffer from it more than you wish also think about it. The United States healthcare system is trash, okay. Compared to like other other healthcare systems? No, I mean, not North Carolina, I'm sorry, the United States, I seen a chart where head Canada owns a Switzerland and it was somewhere else. And the United States was like two or three times higher in healthcare spending, but their mortality rates was also higher. So it's like, That makes no sense. How are we spending hella money for health care? We have the highest numbers of deaths. What's the real what's the real, you know, reasoning behind This there's no way we don't have a socialist program we don't have. We don't have a free access to all. We don't we don't have none of that. So why are we done the most? We spent all these big bucks to the pharmaceutical company, but we're not benefiting from it. Yeah. Which I'm noticing Corona has shown me is that when you get diagnosed with Coronavirus, you don't get you don't get a prescription, you don't get a certain drug. They tell you to quarantine for two weeks to stay by yourself to pretty much isolate from your entire world. If you live inside a home with someone they tell you to use the same I mean use a separate bathroom, if applicable or stay in a hotel. They give you no drugs. They do nothing. So I was like okay, bye also reminds me of Earth medicine. If you're sitting here telling people who are diagnosed with Coronavirus that their body will naturally fight this virus off in 14 days if they're isolated, um, and if not, I mean, I hope they have no conditions or don't have to go to like, you know, the emergency room or get hospitalized or wherever. But it's like, Okay, so this is really shame in the pharmaceutical industry. Because if you said, you don't have no drug out there in the world that can, you know, I'm saying, Well, we know it's no cure, but if you have no drug that can pretty much surface of that same for right now to keep me well, then what do you have? So then there's a whole holistic approach to it, and it's like, yo, we shouldn't have been relying on medicine from the state anyway. So it's just like That's a big flaw.



30:02

I remember reading there was like a drug company that had I think it was called like re meds or something something like that. It was not like a Coronavirus vaccine obviously but it was like a drug that was supposed to be like helpful and suppressing like the symptoms and they can't with this rug and obviously it was like crazy crazy expensive. But what I was thinking about is like the people that are overwhelmingly you know, being

exposed to Coronavirus are people who are working jobs that are like on the frontline. So stores and restaurants right now who may not be able to afford these crazy expensive Coronavirus rubs, which sort of speaks to your point how like these it's just pointless if no one can if the people that need it can't afford it. Then what is the health care system? Really do? Right.



Courtney McMillian 31:03

Yeah. So and that also speaks to I'm sorry, every time I hear something, it's like it connects to something else. Yeah. And that also speaks to us and how like people have to go out to restaurants they, you know, send contract in or coming in close contact with people who are, you know, who are documents with Coronavirus, and they're been exposed. Yeah, you also have to think about those individuals who are unable to cook at home who do have to go out and you know, since the world has, quote, unquote, opened back up, has to leave their children and you have to think about it. Now, a lot of daycares are not open for safety reasons. So you have that sector of, Okay, I'm a parent, but I'm also a worker, and I have bills and I don't have any assistance coming in. So I know that I have to go out and work I have to go out and be on those front lines. I have to go out make things happen or I lose what I have. And it's like I don't have a black woman, for instance, if a black woman has to go out and work she don't have if she works a nine to five, just give an example, which is also a part of reality. A black woman working a nine to five has children, go home for her children. She's probably tired. She hasn't been on her feet for eight hours working somewhere, right? Come home, can't cook for her children. Go get something fast to eat or whatever. That's not sustainable. Then you have even right here in Winston Salem were listed as a food desert area. You have an East Winston you have one, one full on right within 10 miles radius in the area code 27105 whereas 271 Four to 7103 to 7106 you have food lines you have neighborhood Walmart's you have fresh markets. You have Lowe's foods. You have Harris teeters you have Publix you know I'm saying all of which with are within a five miles radius literally on Robin Hood row. All of these stores are facing each other their competitors that you know I'm saying and they have of course a McDonald's you won't see a McDonald's on every block whereas in East Lansing you gotta met Donald's you got to Popeyes you got a Bojangles you got a Chinese restaurant you have a look a story gonna always say look a store in a black neighborhood. You see more liquor stores in the black neighborhood didn't see grocery stores. And so it's like, then the whole you know, food sustainability becomes an issue that we just like to sweep under the rug. And then when you look at the types of food As they put it on a bus, you give us food like, Okay, well, you're going food on and you see fresh, fresh produce for probably twice as much as you're going to see it somewhere else in the same store in the same food line on a different side of town. Right? And then all of that is all connected. Then you have, you know, women and men without transportation. All right, so they want to get their children

food, they want to feed themselves, they have to get on the transportation, which our system sucks. It takes two hours to get from East Winston to Hanes Mall. That's a 15 at most, that's a 15 minute drive in a car. So it's like, this is the the objective of my protest was surrounded by all of these areas. Like we're just not out here five And just because police has killed none of my fallen brothers and sisters, it's just not about the killing of state violence. It's about the perpetuate and pain that we felt for so long. That has been ignored for so long. That does not serve as an issue to the middle class. privileged, white folks. Right? Absolutely.



35:26

So how do you see, like, this momentum that we're seeing currently for the Black Lives Matter movement and the protests surrounding that? How do you see that like continuing beyond the pandemic and like, how does the momentum get sustained?



Courtney McMillian 35:47

I personally feel like it's always it's always been, I don't want to sound negative, but I am going to sound realistic. I feel like we Always have great momentum at the very beginning and then it just starts slowly drift in our way we started getting so many different distractions and it slowly started drifting away. We asked for justice they downtown pay and Moore's we don't care about goals. We don't care about that. Okay. We got an MLK Boulevard in every state in the US that still have it serves us any justice. We ask for justice. You say, okay, we're gonna put on Netflix Black Lives Matter so you can still watch us so you can still patronize with this. Okay, we're gonna put that Starbucks Black Lives Matter. Okay, we're gonna put everywhere you can see black lives matter so we can still get your black dollars, but you won't get justice you will never be as equal as us is very problematic. Beyond this pandemic, I feel that it could be suspect. I feel that it could be sustainable. Only if we continue to fight for a common goal. If we continue to not get distracted with other things that are serving as an inconvenience to us right now, I don't know if you know Nick Cannon recently been fired off of wildin out for an interview that he had, and in quotation marks called White people, animals and savages. which serves as an issue to me personally because it's a girl one day, one day to fire Nick Cannon. For his commentary, but we're on almost, we're approaching nearly the 200 day and Breanna Taylor murders are still walking free. Right? So it's like it's not okay for the black person to speak their truth. But it's okay for y'all to sweep someone's How do y'all even pass a wall that's named after someone that you have them that serve justice for you? Yeah, absolutely. So it's just it's, it's I just, I don't know, I personally don't feel like we will get justice unless we keep doing what we're doing.



Jack Portman 38:55

Right. Yeah. And I know like, I know what you're talking about. Earlier with the like, it seems like every city's painting murals in the streets, right? Even in the streets and then like, what you would see like on like Instagram or whatever, like every single like corporation or like brand new follows saying something that like sounds progressive just to like, you know, like virtue signaling. And yeah, use like performative and it's like that they'll they'll do like anything but provide like the actual substantive change that you want do anything else, but actually, like change the thing that matters. Right? that frustrates me a lot as well. Yeah, so And do you see yourself continuing to and being involved in advocacy, maybe organizing protests in the future?



39:54

Yes, definitely. This um, this was actually my first protest that I Organized but I've been like I grew up in a socially aware home. Like my, my parents. They allowed us to, you know, they didn't they never filtered anything. So I'm very thankful for that. And I've always been kind of conscious in my studies, my area of studies in school, my practices, you know, on my daily in my daily life, so it's not new, but what was new is actually getting out there and having my own protest. Interesting, interesting. And we're making we're making great progress here in North Carolina because literally every other protest after mine has been in a neighborhood has been more On the west side of Winston Salem, interested in hasmik downtown, so I'm very I'm very happy that I was able to, you know, spark a new flame. Yeah, definitely. Remember I was talking to another organizer who mentioned that like one of the issues he was seeing in Winston Salem organizing protests is that like, when you're you know, in downtown Winston Salem? Like, there's no one there because all the businesses are closed. So like, yeah, people because people are out of work, but there's also like, no one they're not like see it. Right. Like you move the space of it to residential area forces the message that makes right well, sometimes sometimes because I attended a protest that was organized by this guy. And he also brought it to our residential area by nota and it literally show how far we we've come, but it also showed how far we still have to go. Interesting. Um And I say that because here we are over nota wanna say to 7106 zip code area near Polo and this guy you know, he was he was doing doing it the right way like I was actually surprised that you know, traffic police had came out for my them because I didn't tell anyone like I didn't I didn't care to tell the traffic police because I don't need the police to, you know, feel like we're one because we're not you add them today you're doing your job and this is my wife style. So we were, I guess never see eye to eye on that. situation. However, when this guy organized his protest on the road, the cops, the traffic, police sat out there. And they pretty much told him what he could and what he couldn't do. And it kind of bothered me because they gave him a path. They gave him a

route in which he did and that wasn't his initial route. That's not what he wanted to do. And once like, while we were on the path, there was no visibility. So I was like, Here you are, again, want to know why there was no visibility? Why is that? Because they have blocked off all the roads on the route in which they told him to go. And so it was like, there is another issue. We try to be nice And I'm not gonna say we but I will say he tried to be nice by letting y'all know, look, this is what's going on because he didn't want the police to come out there feel as if we were being disruptive or as if we were causing issues because we're quote unquote. So he alerted the Salem police department and tell them what's going on. They take it upon themselves to block the roads off, so that no one will see nor hear our messages, our voices. So in a situation where our voices were supposed to be amplified, they solid us again. So this is it's kind of like a circle is like, we push we push this away, and he's just gonna like, oh, we're not gonna give you justice, but we will give This is just gonna keep on weighing us around and it's like, We want justice. Right? Who do you think you are to? dehumanize another person people don't oppress people it's not okay. It's never been okay So that's absolutely and that the story about the route being changed in the know that like I feel like I don't know I my instinct tells me that if you organized protests and like Boston Thurmond or something like they would they would have no problem they wouldn't change your your route at all. No, we care at all but you go into like a white neighborhood and they like block everything off and you know, yeah, you wouldn't have that experience elsewhere is is my sense. So yeah, you're saying they don't care like they make care about is in black neighborhoods is over policing them. That's all they care about. That's why you hear more crime. Cymbeline. It was, it makes no sense. It makes no sense. They love to say, black people are poor black people. There's people that it's more poor white people in America than their Plex. Hmm. It's like, come on, like your mate. Y'all make ourselves look, when people actually do their research when people actually, you know, I'm saying don't take things at surface level, they start unraveling a lot of untold secrets and start getting in ways which Nick Cannon got in and yeah, they barred his eyes off of national television. So it's like, you know, if you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything.



Jack Portman 46:53

Right. Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. So that answers all my questions. Is there anything That you like want to touch on or want to include that we just haven't gotten to.



Courtney McMillian 47:06

Um, I feel like maybe I've hit pretty much everything with the intersectional Yeah. structural racism. So like I've hit a lot of things.

J Jack Portman 47:22
Yeah, absolutely fantastic. Um, so I'll, I'll get back to you basically, they're gonna turn these interviews into a podcast. Like, have a production is going to be on the podcasts on but yes, no less. But I think like more so the idea is this is going to be like an archive for you know, people like 10 1520 years from now whatever in the future. You're, like looking back to study other people's experiences during the Coronavirus. Hopefully like these oral histories will, you know, kind of clarify what was going on. But I'll get back to you when I know like, because I think there's a post and like, I don't know, some website that the Office of Community and civic engagement puts up. So once I know like where this will be, I'll you know, get back to you and send you a link so you can check it out. asleep, naturally, pretty cool. But so basically, I'll send you right after this. A deed of gift, so you're going to just digitally sign that and that'll give weight, the permission to use it in their archives. And then also, if you could send over like a photo of yourself as well. That would go on the website. I think that would be great as well.

C Courtney McMillian 48:53
Okay, so just email that to you. Yeah. Okay. Not a problem. Awesome. Thanks

J Jack Portman 49:01
again so much for your time with me. It's no interview, and I'm holding my interview strategy. So hopefully, I'll get better and better.

C Courtney McMillian 49:14
Oh, it's okay. Trust me. I've been there. I do search all throughout my undergrad career. And when I started out, it was, it was it was rough because you know, it's something new. So you can't really, you can't really plan for something new. You just have to be yourself and let it flow and let things come to you. But it Yeah, I was definitely like, shy. People are gonna think this about me too.

J Jack Portman 49:45
But yeah, definitely. Absolutely. Absolutely.

C Courtney McMillian 49:50
All right. Yeah. It was good talking to you.



Jack Portman 49:52

Yeah, absolutely. I'll send you an email of bits with a deed of gifts and I'll let you know. I don't know when it'll be when they'll have the produced as a podcast, it could be like maybe towards the end of summer. Depends how fast they go on really now, but I'll get back to that at some point.



Courtney McMillian 50:08

Okay, well, thank you so much anything. Just let me know.



Jack Portman 50:12

No. Awesome. Thank you so much. Appreciate it.



Courtney McMillian 50:15

No problem. No problem.



Jack Portman 50:16

All right. Take care. All right.