

Basic Detail Report

Title Interview with Emmett McMullan

Date 2022 July 11

Medium born digital audio file

Description (a) Interview with Emmett McMullan. Interviewed by Peter Moran on

July 11, 2022 at New Haven Free Public Library Ives Branch, 133 Elm Street, New

Haven. (b) Photograph of Emmett McMullan taken at their interview. They were

interviewed as part of the Connecticut Historical Society's Community History

Project discussing their experience during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Emmett

McMullan is an employee of the New Haven Free Public Library. During 2020,

they were working for the U.S. Census in New Haven. On March 16th, the Census

told workers not to come into the office but kept paying salaries for one month.

Some employees were required to continue working in person. Emmett

remembers sanitizing groceries and takeout early in the pandemic. They spent a

lot of time watching TV shows and playing video games. Since before the

pandemic, Emmett's family had met weekly via Zoom to catch up with one

another. One specific challenge of the pandemic arose when a sibling had a

manic episode that led to treatment and eventual return home. The

combination of pandemic uncertainty and concern for a family member's

health was especially challenging. Emmett relied on the World Health

Organization for information about COVID-19, but also found themselves

“doomscrolling” about the pandemic and the Black Lives Matter protests. In

June of 2020, when the U.S. Census asked Emmett to return to in-person work,

Basic Detail Report

they quit. Temp work and eventually a job at the New Haven libraries followed.

Telehealth counseling was helpful for Emmett's mental health, as was an eventual disengagement with social media platforms. Regular virtual meetings with friends and family also helped. Creating music and building models were mentally helpful hobbies, and keeping a diary helped too. Emmett was raised in a family that didn't vaccinate, so they were an adult adopter of vaccination.

This built a large confidence in the COVID-19 vaccine, and a belief that this vaccine could make a huge difference. Emmett is also a supporter of mask mandates. They also believe that masks should be used more widely now and continuously until COVID is beaten. Emmett came out of the closet during the pandemic. They found dignity and despair. In one word, the pandemic meant Love to Emmett. The greatest lesson is to be generous with others regarding their intentions. Changes included better physical health, becoming more politically radical, and being more "who I think I am." Their advice for the future is not to listen to the cops, trust yourself, do your best, and understand how your life and choices ripples into others. They hope that the future sees an end to fascism and tyranny, and people generally feeling safer.

Dimensions Duration: 1 Hour, 27 Minutes, 36 Seconds