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## Interview with Laurie Bernadel

Laurie Bernadel

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**Interviewee:** Laurie Bernadel

**Interviewers:** Jackson Baker and Marley Dunford

**Date:** The first week of December, 2020

**Location:** Zoom

**Length:** 01:06:36

**Collection:** Auntie Sewing Squad Oral History Archive, SBS 112: Women and Social Change, From 1890s to the Present Day

**Overseen by:** Dr. Chrissy Yee Lau

**Bio:** Laurie Bernadel was born in Queens, New York and raised in North Carolina. Her parents are Haitian immigrants. She attended the University of North Carolina, Charlotte and is now a web developer. Bernadel is a Sewing and Caring Auntie in the Auntie Sewing Squad.

### **Summary of Interview:**

(00:00:00) Laurie Bernadel discusses her background in North Carolina. (00:10:04) She delves into how she joined the Auntie Sewing Squad. (00:21:21) She offers mentorship advice about college. (00:35:34) Bernadel relays her opinions about the newly elected cabinet. (00:42:12) She ends with a frank discussion about the politicization of the health crisis of COVID 19.

### **Interview Transcript**

**JB:** Hi Ms. Bernadel, I don't know what you'd like us to refer you as.

**LB:** You can just call me Laurie.

**JB:** OK, well, hello Laurie, I'm Jackson, that is Marley. We are students at Cal State University in Monterey Bay. And uh, well I am, she can say, I am a 3rd year I'm a kinesiology major here at the campus.

**MB:** And I'm a second year biology major on campus. Yeah, and we're just here to learn about you and learn about your perspective and your experience.

**LB:** Yeah so. I did see some of your questions, I didn't really look at all of them, really dad? He's like changing all the smoke detectors. So if you hear fire alarms, my house isn't burning down. Sorry.

**JB:** Good. That's a great thing. But it's not. But yeah...

**LB:** But anyway, I did see some of your questions, so let's get into it.

**JB:** How was your day to day?

**LB:** So far, so good, I can't complain. It's three hours ahead, so it's 2:00 p.m. now.

**JB:** I'm in Chicago, you know,

**MD:** I'm the only one in PST time, so far.

**LB:** All right, so do you live, Marley, do you live, are you from California? Do you just live there now?

**MD:** Yes, well, I live. I was born and raised in Southern California. I live maybe like forty five minutes from L.A.. So, you know, kind of a little L.A. girl here, but not really more of a suburb girl, kind of.

**LB:** Yeah, my cousin lives in Long Beach, so. Yeah, I haven't. I haven't been to that area yet, but I've been to San Francisco and that's about it. And it's chilly there. There it is, lots of hills. But I'll be right back, let me just open the blinds, get more light. OK. OK, should be better, a little.

**MD:** We're good, we can see perfectly.

**LB:** Yeah. Anyway, sorry.

**MD:** Jackson, would you like to start?

**JB:** Yeah, so our first question you'd want to ask you is pretty simple is how would you describe your life growing up in the school culture, in your home and personal life?

**[00:03:06.240]**

**LB:** Well, it's a loaded question there, so I mostly grew up in North Carolina. I've been here since 2003. And it was. I mean, I consider it fairly normal, I mean, I did go to predominantly white schools just because of where I live, but somehow managed to have a really diverse close friend group. So that's always nice. And. Forget the other part of the question, it was like three questions, what was the other part?

**JB:** The other part of the school culture, then the home and personal life at home.

**LB:** My school culture, I mean, again, like since I grew up in predominantly white, like there's not I grew up with a lot of like and then I was also in honors classes. And so I grew up with a lot of. Minimal exposure to the black community and other communities got called an Oreo, a just cause of my speech and pronunciation of things, my parents are immigrants and so, yeah, I mean, with that, I have a different outlook on lots of things and growing up in a predominantly white area, I didn't feel like I had exposure to enough different cultures, which is why I like to travel a lot just to get that experience, that cultural experience and. Trying to understand people in different perspectives, so do you see that a lot, and thankfully, my friends are all of different cultural backgrounds, so that helps and then my personal home life like my parents are fairly open minded. I mean, they do have they've always been a great example for me and my younger brother as far as like, pushing ourselves to be better and to succeed at our different goals. And so. I'm pretty fortunate to have them as a good support system, a good pair of role models in terms of relationships and just pretty much anything. So, yeah, they've been together for almost twenty

seven years. And so it's just nice to have them as an example. So they have also kind of changed their minds over time as far as some views like, as we challenge them on different things. So that's always nice that they're not super rigid in their views. There are some things that they still kind of struggle to understand. But we. We try to. Open their minds as much as possible and give them different viewpoints. So that's always. That's always been a positive point in their parenting, is that they're not entirely closed off to our views and trying to understand them. So. I do feel like my upbringing was fairly normal, and I think that having parents from immigrant parents was actually more beneficial to me just because I did grow up in a predominantly white area like. Having immigrant parents allowed me to view the world in a different way, so. So, yeah, I do find I do find that as a benefit, because had I not, I feel like I would have felt more disconnected from my identity as a person in terms of like racial and cultural identity.

**MD:** Yeah, I was going to actually ask because, like with my school life and family life, I had the same experience. I had a lot of predominantly white educational systems and like friends that way. I was wondering if maybe like after the beginning years, like high school and college, or did you have like a shift in culture, not like culture, but like a view on who you are and how you wanted to express yourself, because you were learning more about the cultures and you were getting more friends and you were opening up to the world more?

**[00:08:08.730]**

**LB:** Not so much in high school, I mean, in high school like I did...feel like I was growing into, like, my cultural identity a little bit, but more so in college just because the college campus was still predominantly white, but it was more diverse in terms of like. When I went to these classrooms, I saw more people that look like me or people that weren't white in general, even with the teachers, I had some I had a few different teachers, different races, female teachers, non binary teachers. So it was nice to have a different group of people to see every day, I think in high school of like two thousand kids, there were all I counted in the yearbook one day with my cousin because we went to the same school. But I think we counted like 30 black students out of the entire population. The school has like two thousand kids. So, I mean, not to say that there aren't any other ethnicities. That just happens to be the ratio of black people in school. So, yeah, I mean, I do think college allowed me to open up more in terms of identity in all different aspects to so. But I think college really allows that freedom to try to understand yourself more and being exposed to different people, so like the campus that I went to, because it does matter what campus you go to sometimes. So but yeah, I mean, I went to a campus that was close to the city, but not so I went to UNC- Charlotte in had I gone elsewhere, like other popular schools that some people were going to, I think it would have been a lot different in terms of like the racial populations and who am I seeing on campus and what am I exposed to.

**MD:** So, yeah. So that's good, did you want to ask a question Jackson?

**JB:** Yeah, sure. So really just OK, there's a more simple question, but what made you get into the Auntie Sewing Club and what really like...

**[00:10:46.970]**

**LB:** The Auntie Sewing Squad? I found the news article actually, so I just learned how to sew this year, like back in March, end of March, I started sewing because I had a lot of anxiety about this pandemic, as a lot of people have probably, and I kind of felt out of control. I wanted to help. Wanted to find well, first I started locally and then our, as our local stuff kind of fell apart towards Memorial Day weekend, those tents shut down and I'm like, well, where do I, where do I go now? Who do I help next? How can I find more people to help? So, and then I just came across this news article about the Auntie Sewing Squad, and then I just joined Facebook. So since then, I've been in the group and doing different things from sewing to mapmaking to now helping with the website a little bit, supply of stuff. So yeah. So there's lots of different ways you can help in the group, too, so it's always nice, you just kind of have to ask, I guess, or see where there's a need and, and see if you can pitch in there. So that's pretty much what I've been doing in the group. And I do like it because I feel like: A. I'm helping a wider variety of people that maybe I didn't know existed. No or not knew they existed, didn't know they needed help. And it's a countrywide effort, so I have a wider net to cast. And I don't feel like as alone. I know that there are. It has kind of kept my faith in humanity alive, so to speak, during this pandemic, because lots of people have been getting on my nerves a lot. Like I don't think I've been this annoyed at humans in a while. So. Yeah, I think I thank the Auntie Sewing Squad for keeping my faith in humanity alive. Everything that we do, like all the people that we're helping, The selflessness that exists in the group is just really amazing to see. And the numbers of masks that we've made by hand and turned out getting all these people involved from kids to adults, it's just really it's really awesome to see how we can connect people through technology as well. So. So, yeah, I really do feel like finding them was a blessing in. For the year, because it could have been different, could have had a different outlook on the year and been much more annoyed with people so, I do know that there are people out there, like sometimes I'm like, OK, am I making this pandemic up in my head or, you know, like because there's just so much drama with at all. And it's nice to have a group of people that can fall back on and be like, OK, what's it like where you live? Like our people just outright crazy or are they. Following the rules and things like that, so. It's reassuring to have other people that can share their opinions on where they stand, on what they see, where they live and how they feel about things, because we all do have different views as well. Like it's not like we're all one mind. We have a common goal. Yeah, but but when you start talking to people throughout the group, you notice like everybody is different and we have some varying opinions, even though we're all kind of on the same path essentially in terms of what our end goal is here in helping people.

**MD:** Definitely with that, we were both wondering when you were younger, were there any organizations that, like, affected your views on what you wanted to do when you're older, were there organizations that you joined that like a kick started where you were ending up now?

**[00:15:25.110]**

**LB:** No, not really. I mean, I was in Girl Scouts for, like a couple of years, and that didn't really. Changed my mind on anything, I did know that I was not going to be a salesperson from four. I hate selling things, but anyway, and then I ended up working at Banana Republic, so I guess that didn't really work, but I worked there for other reasons, I guess. Not now in particular, I didn't really have any. I did like lots of different sports when I was younger. When we lived in New Jersey, I did like African dance and tap. But when we moved here, there wasn't an outlet for that. There wasn't I didn't like hip hop, but it wasn't the same. So. Pretty much to find a source for that

creative aspect and swimming and soccer and things like that, so mostly sports organizations, but none of them really contributed to what I wanted to do. I've always wanted to be a pediatrician until I got to college, and then I realized I didn't want to help kids in that capacity anymore. So second, thankfully, I found that out freshman year, first semester, otherwise it would have been an interesting waste of time, but not really a waste. But anyway, I didn't like this bio class I was in because the teacher was really rude and kind of standoffish and like a know-it-all, but, hey, whatever, so then I ended up doing psychology and I didn't want to be a therapist and I didn't like research. So I was like, well, what do I do now? Yes, my path has been kind of all over the place. Then I worked with a pediatric eye doctor for two years, and then now I'm a web developer, so I'm kind of all over the place, in case you can't tell. My path is not really that defined anymore. I have a lot of different interests. And so there hasn't really been. Any group or club that has, like, pushed me towards a career path and I was never even in a science club or anything like that either. So. I did think that debate club in high school helped me discuss like more world views and things like that and kind of. Think about things from other people's perspective and like other people's situations, a little bit more like in a multicultural sense, instead of the American mindset, which I never really had because I have immigrant parents. And so. So, yeah, I did like the debate club for that reason, I just don't like debating. And public speaking, but it did help me garner some of those skills and gather more interest in learning different perspectives for things, so all over the place really got lots of influence.

**JB:** Would you like to say that I mean, a lot like your life will never be just a straight line. It'll always be changed here and there, whether....

**LB:** Right. Exactly.

**JB:** Um, I've switched my major twice already. Going to be the third time. So I'm going to switch to a business major.

**[00:19:33.580]**

**LB:** I've never wanted to be, I'm kind of a perfectionist, so I never wanted to waste time, so to speak, and like I always felt guilty about wasting my parents money or wasting their time. So then in college, I was like, OK, I need to figure out exactly what I'm going to do for a while, I was like, well, I don't know what I'm going to do. I'm not where I need to be, whatever it is. But I think I've kind of come to terms with that in the last year as far as not being exactly where I'm supposed to be at whatever age, just kind of letting things happen and not like free for all, but more like not being so stressed about it. So. Yeah, I can definitely see. Like I always thought, like I'm supposed to be in a certain spot in my life by whatever age, like the traditional path. But yeah, I definitely started to let go of that in the last year or so.

**JB:** Yeah, I think, like when the pandemic first started is kind of your life was kind of put on a quick halt. It is kind of like, OK, this is like a stopping point and like a time out for everybody really. They collect themselves and collect, you know, who they are as a person, mentally, physically and emotionally.

**[00:21:07.980]**

**LB:** Right. I also turned twenty-six this year. So that was kind of like a sad day for them. Somewhat traumatic year in terms of like age and like being an adult here, adult, so to speak, like you mean when you lose your insurance and you have to start figuring all that stuff, then like, yeah, so being an official adult at twenty-six when you don't have anybody to fall back on for certain things, it's like, OK. And then you start thinking like, am I where I'm supposed to be, am I doing this right. What is life? So yeah, now I'm almost twenty-seven. That was fast.

**JB:** I mean, I think life does move fast and move faster than they like to.

**LB:** Yeah, I mean, this has definitely been a long year, but we were in December already. I never get anything on my list of goals done, I noticed. So I'm going to have to re-evaluate how I attack my New Year goals or whatever, which I don't really make New Year's resolutions because...

**MD:** I just, new years eve plans are just like a fake plan.

**LB:** Right. I mean, I started making my goals for the year and February around my birthday. So it's not really like a New Year's resolution. It just happens that my birthday is closer to the beginning of the year because I feel like setting actual New Year's resolutions just kind of sets you up for failure. But I mean, it works for some people, so I can't say it's everybody. But for me, it's I feel like at best for failure because maybe I just don't make smart goals or whatever they're called, so, I tried. I'm great at planning, terrible execution.

**JB:** I think that to me, too, it's not looking at all the details for you to.

**LB:** When, as I am, I do it for two weeks and then I'm like, OK, well, that was fun.

**MD:** I changed my mind now.

**LB:** Yeah. So I'm hoping to get better, but I know myself, so. It is what it is,

**JB:** It's always best to learn yourself before you can learn anybody else.

**LB:** Yeah.

**MD:** Jackson's a wise man

**LB:** I see, I can tell.

**JB:** I watch a lot of documentaries. I like to ask a lot of questions, just who I am.

**LB:** Yeah, I ask a lot of questions too, and I do like documentaries. But if you watch a documentary about Alex Jones, you might be stressed after that

**JB/MD:** Really? Really.

**LB:** Yeah. My dad made me watch that and I was like, OK, now I'm stressed.

**JB:** I usually like more of the crime documentaries and I'm like,

**LB:** Oh yeah, me too. My parents always thought that was weird, but I think it's weird. And they're like, you like watching. My dad likes watching it too now. So my mom is the only one that thinks this way right now. But I listen to crime podcast and stuff too.

**MD:** Oh.

**[00:24:56.930]**

**LB:** So I don't know, maybe I'm supposed to be a detective, but actually most of them kind of make me mad just because, I don't know, maybe maybe it's empathy because I don't know, like I've always been interested in psychology. I mean, I have a psychology degree, so I've always been interested in the inner workings of people's minds and how they come to certain decisions or how people relate to each other. And so psychology has always been something that I liked and then tried to combine that with my interest in science and all of those things, but again, I have so many different interests that it's hard to, like, settle on something. But. But yeah, like asking. I always find myself asking questions and wanting to know more. And I just like to know things. So. My parents get annoyed sometimes when I'm like, OK, well, let me Google it like I know we were just talking about it, but let me Google it and they're like,

**MD:** I need the answer...

**LB:** I need to know now. So we'll be done watching a movie. And I'm like, this makes no sense. Let me look up the movie. Let me look at what this is supposed to be about. Why is it so confusing or what was the director thinking about this? Because this doesn't make sense. And then I'll talk about it for like 30 minutes when they've moved on. But I'm like, no, I need to know. I just gotta get down to the bottom of stuff, basically.

**MD:** OK, OK. That's good. I kind of have a personal question, so like all of us, Jackson did switch majors, you did. I am on the verge of switching majors from biology. But like you, I guess I'm interested in everything and I don't really know where to go, I guess. What kind of advice would you give me? Or like other kind of confused college students?

**[00:27:15.890]**

**LB:** Um I know Jackson mentioned like nothing's really a straight path, and that to me got clearer and clearer. But I wanted it to be a straight path like you want to be in, get yourself done and have a job and have a perfect life, but it really doesn't work that way. And yeah, it might for some people, like for my brother, it's working out exactly that way, but you wouldn't have thought that it would, I guess, like most people would assume that I'm in a different spot than I am right now. And so I think that pressure there is kind of like what keeps you in that mindset of needing to be perfect at your path. And I try to be cognizant of that, but also know that, like, I want things to go according to plan. But it, so one of the biggest things that I wish I did was like find more opportunities to explore different fields. And like utilize some of the Career services stuff more. So I think that's a big help in trying to figure out what you like and knowing that



you're not stuck in one career path for your whole life. I think that's kind of like the thing that people push on us a lot is when you go to college, you're going to choose this one major and that's going to be aligned with your career path and you're not going to do something that's unrelated. But if you look around like there are so many people that are on a career path that are completely unrelated to their majors, I mean, there are some that like you like if you're going to be a doctor, then, but there are doctors that never majored in bio and chem and all that. But the reason that they do so often is because of the courses. It aligns better with what you need to get into medical school. So it's not it's almost like you have a choice, but you don't only because if you want to finish in a certain amount of time, you need to have like these classes. You can't have a whole other major that has 50 other classes because, A, you won't have enough time. And B, you'll like to max out the amount of credits you're allowed to have before you can before you start paying more to the school for taking too many credits. So that's really the only reason why people on these paths are majoring in bio and chem and in those things, but you don't necessarily have to. It's just easier. So I feel like if it's something interesting to you, then try it like and try to get experience in it, see if somebody will let you shadow them for a day or like a week or a month or whatever, like once a month or something like that, so that you can actually see what the job is like or or and decide like, hey, that's not what I want to do every day or figure out, like, what other paths are in that major like in psychology, people don't know that there's so many things, so many paths you can go down like there's industrial organizational psychology, which puts you in like H.R. and most people are like, oh, you're going to be a therapist. I'm like, no, that's not what I want to be at all. I don't have the mental capacity to be a therapist. I think it would crumble me to pieces. So. Trying not to allow people to box you into what their perceptions of a certain major is or like talk to people and see if they're doing something different than the norm or different than the majority. So it wasn't until I started talking to different professors that I learned that there's more to psychology. And while I was using my classes, I'm like, what are all these other psychology classes? Like, what's industrial organizational psychology? And is that even psychology? What it is, because there is like workplace psychology and stuff, and that's how you end up in H.R. like. Well, but you'd still I mean, still have to look at, like the, the data and research like what fields are most popular in that major or like what other jobs you can do in that major? Because there's lots of different things sometimes that you didn't know about. Especially with something like business and there's popular things and then there's other things that still will help you get to where you want to be. You just have to find them essentially. And it's harder than it. It's harder than it sounds sometimes, but really, if you just kind of like ask your professors and take a class that maybe you didn't necessarily want to take it just or have to take, it just sounded interesting, like I was also in the honors program. So it was kind of like a minor for me. So I took lots of classes that I probably wouldn't have taken other like elsewhere, so. Again, like to reiterate what Jackson mentioned earlier, it's just not a straight path, you just have to dip your toe in the water and try different stuff.

**MD:** see how you feel.

**JB:** I was, I started out actually as I was a computer science major coming in and then switched to kinesiology because I always wanted to do something with dermatology and also into computers in high school. But then I ended up changing again and changed again that I was thinking about it really in the quarantine and said, I don't really go to a medical school anymore

because I mean, every, the world revolves around business and I been learning more. I mean, just from online school alone, I'd be learning more from my own. Well, that was my whole semester, right?

**LB:** I mean, there's sometimes it's situational, like you end up learning something or trying something and then you're like, wait, this is actually pretty interesting. Like, let me look into that more like I didn't think I mean, I took some criminal psychology classes, too, and I was like, why would I want to be a law? Like, I hate law, but like like the psychology of it was always interesting to me, which is why I end up liking crime shows and stuff. But like the red tape and politics of law and stuff like that, I don't like any of that. So it's like trying to find out the different aspects you like, different things like. Even if I mean, like I said, like I watch these different shows and it's like, OK, well, what do I like about this? And that kind of led me into the psychology piece. And obviously, TV is different. But but yeah, like you, you have lots of different interests and some of those interests can really lead you to a career path that you didn't think about before. And knowing that you have the opportunity to have multiple career paths, it's not just one thing. So. And that's become more clear to me because I'm like, I like too many different things, like why would I pick just one?

**JB:** Got to be a little diverse, can't always like just one thing.

**LB:** They like to box you in, so try not to like I was telling my cousins that to this, they're applying for college now and they're the last ones in our side of the family to go. It's like everybody has their own opinion. But you know yourself and. Try not to allow your parents, your friends, me, like anybody really box you into something because. They all have their reasons and. You know, you have to do it for you because it's your life in the end, like everybody has, everybody has their own ideas and and things about what you should and shouldn't do. But you have to make your own choices because you have to deal with yourself at the end of the day. Right. So and my cousins are twins. I'm like, don't go to this school just because your twin wants to go to apply. They're just like you have to be your own person and understand where they're like, understand where people are coming from when they tell you like, oh, you should do this and you should do that. So, like keeping it in perspective, which is something I've learned a lot, too, is like because I know like my aunt was telling them to go here because it's cheaper and blah blah blah. It's like if you're not going to enjoy life there and you don't see yourself there and it's not for you, just because somebody thinks it is and tells you that it's the best plan doesn't mean it is. Yeah. So, yeah, like just when you know, when you can keep things in perspective, it's a lot. Things become a lot clearer, clearer.

**MD:** Hopefully, I picked my major correctly.

**LB:** If you like it, then stay with it. I mean, I don't know what you want to do with it. I forgot if you said you wanted to be a doctor, but just because you do bio doesn't mean you'll be a doctor. I mean, there's other things you can do with bio, you know, so. Try to explore some of those avenues, too.

**MD:** Definitely when you were describing how you were into a lot of different things when you're younger, I definitely see myself there. I guess just with my freshman college courses, I

took a bioethics class. I love the ethics of it. I didn't like the biology of it. It was too hard. I took an environmental science class and then I just feel like I'm going all over the place. I like too many things and I don't know what to pick. So, yeah.

**[00:38:33.080]**

**LB:** So I mean, you like you don't like the bio piece, which is the part that I hated. So it like in a sense it's cool and I find it interesting and I like science, but it's not something that I want to dive as deep into it do on a daily basis. So I was like, this isn't this isn't for me anymore. And it's kind of hard because I know in that moment I felt really lost when I was like, OK, well, I don't want to do this anymore because I don't like it. Like, this isn't the capacity I want to help people in anymore, but it's something I wanted to do since I was in kindergarten. So it's like, what do you do now and you spent 18 years of your life wanting to do one thing, and then when you're finally on that path, you're like, nope. Yeah. So you have to, then I start thinking about what I wanted to do. And I'm like, I don't know. I don't know. So it's good to. Try not to box yourself into early, even though that's what they try to make us do so. Yeah, I mean, that's really the biggest part, is trying not to let other people box you in.

**MD:** Definitely.

**JB:** That was one thing I had also learned when I was also in school, which is not was not trying to really be a follower, don't let anybody take you on the path you want to be on, like the way you live your life is also the way you live your life because you don't live your life the way that somebody else lives their life.

**[00:40:21.970]**

**LB:** Because you're right. And I mean, like I said, like the perspective piece is important because maybe they're like, oh, I wish I chose this major. I wish I did this and that. And so, like, try to force it on you or strongly suggest that you go down this path, that maybe it really isn't for you. It's kind of like people that go to school because their parents went there or become a lawyer because their dad's a lawyer. It's like, that's great. But if you don't like it, you're going to be miserable. If you don't have the passion for it, you don't like who wants to be miserable for their life. I don't I just don't understand people that do that. I think so. Yeah. That's kind of like one thing that I always tell people now. It's like just try not to. Keep yourself in a box.

**JB:** Well people always try to get you to change your past.

**LB:** Yeah, I mean, they're trying to keep you...everybody has good intentions. That's what I try to tell people. Everybody wants to help you, but, but they, like they may not understand everything about you. Yeah, you know yourself best for the most part, for the most part. Yeah, my dad likes to say he knows me better than I know myself, which occasionally I'd say is true, but not always.

**JB:** Yeah, my mom says that to me.

**MD:** I feel like they know us to an extent, you know? I feel like. With me specifically because, like I, I'm a sophomore now in college, so it's my second year, my I was definitely a whole different person when I was here living with my parents, like, oh, yeah, I know you want to do this. You want to do that. And then the second I went to college and they let me change my mind about things, like this isn't you who you trying to be? And I was like: myself.

**LB:** Right, exactly. If I was weird coming back home after you're away at college, I mean, even now, like being back home with my parents, like after I'm done with college, it's like sometimes I just feel really restricted. So it's like I want to do this, but it's like I know that they're not going to want me to do it. Like, yeah. Like it's still. They can say, yeah, you can do whatever you want, but, you know, that's not always to an extent, so yeah. Yeah, exactly. Like it's still their house and they'll definitely remind you of that really quick. So, yes.

**MD:** Yes, they will.

**JB:** Well, you play by our rules.

**LB:** Right, I think that I could do whatever I want, like I did, I mean, if I say it's OK, right. And they didn't really mean it in the literal sense.

**JB:** And I think that's really probably just I feel like college is kind of set up for a way for kids to really see what life is without their caretakers.

**LB:** Right. Exactly. I mean, you have so much more responsibility.

**JB:** And I do think that with the online school, that doesn't really help anybody because... going to class on the computer. Not many people can really focus on the computer for that long.

**[00:44:09.440]**

**LB:** Like, it's I mean, there are some people that can do it. But personally, I'm glad I'm not in school right now because I can not. Again, it's not a fun I can't learn online like I'm a fan of being in the classroom and interacting with other people because that's how I learn more so. I commend people that can take all their classes online, but the few online classes I took was enough for me in college because I. I need that engagement, so I think the engagement is like bouncing ideas off other people, because when you share your thoughts in class, like it's more natural than like looking at a forum post and seeing what people wrote. And, yeah, you can still kind of bounce ideas off each other, but it's not as though really there's no connections to anybody. And it's like, oh, yeah. The teacher said you need to respond to people. So you're like trying to make up a response. Like there is no. I like what you said about this thing. So so, yeah, I mean, college is definitely a transitional period in life, but I do also think like. People are like, we grow up on this path of like. Needing to know exactly what we're doing and like having that plan of like, you go to school, then you go to college, you get a job, you kids, blah, blah, like like this just so linear and it's just not like that at all. I don't know why they keep trying to make it like that when they know for a fact that it's not like that. So that's always been an interesting thing to me, is like if people know that your path is not linear, then why do they keep forcing us to try to do this, like, flowchart education of like, if you're going here, then go this way, if you're

going here to go this way. Why are we forcing everybody to do this boxed in path when we know it doesn't end up like that all the time. What would that mean?

**JB:** That's the quote on quote normal situation. You go to school there, you go to college, and after college, you can go to graduate or you can get straight into the workforce and...

**[00:46:50.040]**

**LB:** Right. But people make it sound easier than it actually is to. So, yeah, that's, you know, which is another thing like I mean, trying not to get too far off topic, but like bringing it back to. This year, in general, I think that it has become way more obvious that things are not. Yeah, things will not go as expected, like you can as we live like this month to month thing in the pandemic. It's become a lot clearer to most people that, like we've taken certain things for granted and we're like forcing ourselves to be on this pre-written path for no reason like. And a lot of, a lot of like the American mindset is: working. You're supposed to like work, work, work, work, work as Rihanna says. But people are not remembering to live, which is like a really American thing, so like if you compare our work to life balance with like other countries, lots of European countries, they. They will take month-long vacations and it's normal, but here it's like, how dare you take a sick day? So, yeah, like they're just like you just live to work, you don't work to live. And then I mean, that's that's that's just another reason I think the pandemic is good for a lot of people here in particular in terms of like this mental reset, everything else has been a struggle for sure. But this mental reset, I think, is really good for a lot of people and realizing, like we need to slow down a little bit.

**MD:** With the pandemic in general, a very hot topic with, I guess, the election and just like slash the pandemic, do you think that we might be able to get under control with Biden and Harris in office or people are still there...like how do you feel the pandemic might pan out within the next coming year?

**[00:49:35.790]**

**LB:** I think that because they're actually going to devote time and attention to it, that we'll have actual plans of how to try to handle things rather than kind of a free for all figure out yourself situation. And people will still be upset, but I mean, people don't like to be inconvenienced, people don't like change, et cetera. So like I do feel like with the election of Joe, Joe Biden and Kamala Harris like, since they do have a plan, I don't expect it to be perfect. OK, I don't know who does and expecting it to be perfect is the wrong, the wrong outlook entirely. This like all or nothing mindset that people are trying to take with this is just not this is not going to work like this pandemic, this virus changes every day. So I can see the criticism already, but like whatever I mean, it's not going to be a perfect implementation because stuff changes so often with this. It's just too new. I mean, we see the CDC steps behind in announcing stuff that we all knew already, like I mean. Hey, they're supposed to be the ones giving us all the science info for disease control, but like they're behind. And it's kind of embarrassing, actually for them... but whatever I mean, it's a pandemic. So I do feel like once we actually try to implement a plan and we try to start working together, things will be a lot clearer. I just wish people would stop politicizing a health crisis. Like, to me, it should have never been this political like this is about health and safety. Like, I don't know why, I just, that to me, like the moment we went down that path, I

would like this to be a disaster. That's the whole reason it's a disaster, is because we went from how do we protect the health and safety of people to wearing a mask is a Democrat thing or wearing a mask or not wearing a mask is a Republican thing or whatever, whatever the political nature of it all, like, it just wasn't the right path. And I think that in that itself just doomed us to this, this length of time with this pandemic. So I do think once they are elected and we start getting people that are in the same mindset of like trying everything they can to help achieve like this health and safety of, of millions of people then and people start listening and trying to, like, combat this distrust in the government. This, all this political stuff that has nothing to do with health and safety of everybody. Like once we try to let that go, I think things will be a lot smoother. Again, don't expect anything to be perfect, but I do feel like they will...that Joe and Kamala will at least get us towards that path again, of like trying to get everybody on the same page and like...

**MD:** Not have it so political.

**LB:** Or just trying to deal with the health crisis, like ignoring the politics that got thrown into it, because in the end, like we're all people I mean, we all live here like we're all trying to get by, so if we just like all shut up and listen and do what we're supposed to do, like we'd be out of this already, but because they immediately politicized it, it became like an us versus them situation. And that kind of just doomed us entirely. Like I said. So. If we can get out of that mindset, I think we'll be fine.

**MD:** We'll get there.

**[00:54:23.320]**

**LB:** If people just stop fearing the inconvenience of things and just walk the other and listen to the people that are doing the research. And because that's what they're there for. Right? That's why they went to these fancy schools, got these degrees. They're the ones that are wanting to look under the microscope like, I don't want to do that. You don't want to do that. You know nothing about it. So I don't know why you're trying to tell me a dissertation paper in five minutes when you don't even know how to spell some of these things. You know, also, like if we just leave the people that need to be there to do their job and then tell us information and we'll be fine, we don't need to be making up our own research, facts and numbers and all of that. So. Like, I, for one, know that I know nothing about epidemiology, so I'm going to look to the scientist and tell me about this. Is it safe now to take the vaccine, whatever it may be because that's not my job. Not my that's not my forte. I don't know any of this. So I'm looking for guidance. I'm not. I don't feel like people need to continue to throw in more confusion because with a novel virus, it's already confusing, like they're struggling to keep up with it. As well, so. If we just allow them the time and space to do what they need to do then and listen, when they say this is what you need to do to keep you, your family, your friends, etc, strangers safe like the mind set of it's not real if it hasn't happened to me. It's not going to work in this case, like you need to be able to have that empathy and care about other people, care about strangers like. This fear of being inconvenienced is like it is, it's just in this us versus them mentality is really the problem right now. So I have hope that this new presidency, this new administration will steer us in the path of together rather than us versus them. So. Hopefully they can live up to it.

**MD:** We can do it. I know we can.

**[00:57:07.920]**

**LB:** And I mean, it's not like I said, they're not going to be perfect and we're all here to tell them when they've messed up pretty much. So our job is to keep them accountable as citizens that have elected them. So, yeah, we remember that that's part of our job is not just elect them and let them do whatever it's keep them accountable for things that they're doing and not doing so. Of one and done it is.

**MD:** Thank you so much for being here and letting us interview you did get a lot of good insight on your life, what we can do to make our, I guess, college lives better.

**LB:** Yeah, college life, your life, life.

**JB:** It's actually good to let us meet. New people are always it's a good thing to meet the people around, just not the country, but around the world. Yeah, I learn a lot of new things. I never knew about the Auntie Sewing Squad.

**LB:** Yeah. I wasn't in sewing either until this year.

**JB:** So yeah. Everybody has, everybody's picked up some type of hobby.

**[00:58:31.990]**

**LB:** Yeah. I mean I've learned a lot, there's so much so to each other and I've gone through like random crap obsessions. There's just a lot to learn when it comes to any new hobby, any new craft. This is like anything super detailed. There's so much to learn about fabric, about thread, about needles, about all kinds of crazy stuff that I just don't think about and never thought about before until now. So. It's nice having a new skill, too, that I can use and grow, and it's not something that I thought I'd be learning this year at all, but, you know, 2020 is different. So. I think hopefully everybody has learned something this year. I'm a fan of learning something new every day. And that's that's what you're supposed to do. You can't just stop learning. I'm a fan of learning something every day. So this year I credit my sanity to Auntie Sewing Squad for the most part for keeping me afloat during this time when you could definitely give up on people because, yeah, this has been one crazy ride of the year, so I'm really glad that I found this group and I tell the people that I am most like more in contact with, like, so glad to have you guys, because people out here driving me insane. And just the craziness that we see out on the streets sometimes with all of this, and I do worry about people, too, like the kids especially, and parents and things like that, so that it's not easy for anybody. And it's definitely like. Not a black and white decision as to what to do. So, yeah, I just I just hope that this next year we can start moving in a positive direction and start getting things like we can't just jump back into normalcy, but we can if we start working together and getting things on track like we can. Start slowly migrating back to our normal lives. It's going to take a little while, but we just have to be patient, so. Hopefully, we've all learned a little patience this year. I know I have. We're just so used to instant gratification nowadays that I think it's making this pandemic a lot harder to handle. I have hope I have hope that next year will be better. Things are looking up. And I really want the kids

to go back to school. I just want it to be safe for them and for the teachers and staff because. They need they need each other, they need the teachers and staff to run the place. So we need to make sure that everybody is safe. Yeah, this this year has been a year of trials. This year has been. Very challenging in many aspects, but I think we'll come out the other side. Better for it, those of us that are still here, fortunately. But I'm really glad to talk to you guys. My my brother's in his last year of college, he goes to OSU. He's in business, logistics and supply chain. So if you need somebody to talk to you, just let me know if you want to know about business. Jackson business is a very wide field too. So you got to know what you want to do, not know what you want to do exactly, but explore your options, so to speak,

**JB:** My dad, he was a business major with a minor in Math. But he ended up pretty much doing accounting.

**LB:** Interesting. Yeah, but again, remember that just because you have a degree in something doesn't mean you end up doing.

**JB:** My pediatrician, he told me he was a major in zoology. Well, wait, how did he feel? And he went to medical school, right, somehow. I mean, is it possible again, so you look at it, zoology, interesting. A very different way that even humans like a..

**LB:** A pediatrician, zoology. OK, well, you know, that goes to show you like nothing. Nothing is. All right. He ended up in medical school anyway, so. And people trust him with their children. Um. So, yeah, just if you guys ever want to. Chat outside of interview space, let me know if you need help with school stuff and resumes, my brother does that. You will. The abuse or that. I'm not as good at that stuff, but I am a good writer, so I can help with that. He's good with resumes and stuff and business stuff. So we need somebody to talk to. That's kind of in your shoes right now. Just let me know and I'll put you in his direction. That's great. You're welcome.

**MD:** Well, yeah, definitely. Thank you so much for letting us interview and learning about you and the now extending us to help with your family as well.

**LB:** No problem. Always here to help. Well, I do hope you enjoy the rest of your day. You, too. What time is it? It is 3:13 here. OK, you've got a long way to go for today.

**MD:** I do.

**LB:** Jackson and I are over halfway done. So, but those nice dealing with people in different time zones and different areas, that's also been very interesting to me this year too. So I've met a lot of different people, but it's always nice to hear people's different perspectives. So I thank you guys for your time and and taking part in this project, too. So that was good to have oral history. And I did an oral history project to but for a different thing. But oral histories are always fun. So. It's good that you guys are in this. This class, what is this?

**JB:** Women's history. The history of the country, but from a woman's perspective, from looking at what women have done and how they've contributed to...



**MD:** Our rights that we have now, our experiences that we have.

**LB:** That sounds cool. Well, I hope you guys enjoy the rest of your semester and get all your Exams done, good grades, all that to finish up this year. Enjoy your holidays if you're celebrating, Annie and. And again, just let me know if you need any help with anything, be happy to help. All right.

**MD:** All right. I'm going to end the recording.