

Jeraine Nieves interviewed by Thaliyah Ruiz
December 6, 2020
Long Island

Thaliyah Ruiz: What's your name?

Jeraine Nieves: Jeraine Nieves

TR: Your age?

JN: I am 19 years old

TR: Racial identity?

JN: I don't know actually. I guess if you see me, I present as white because I am albino but other than that I don't know what color I was supposed to be.

TR: But you are Hispanic at the same time. You are Puerto Rican.

JN: Yes.

TR: I think you should say that because even though you appear as white you still have the culture and background of being Puerto Rican.

JN: That's true.

TR: how has the coronavirus changed your life?

JN: Online school. I've had to adapt a lot through that. I'm not very good at online school and I had to change my schedule. I had to help my grandmother and my sister with things a lot more.

TR: I agree. Same. So, what was it like to be home so often?

JN: I hated it. At first, I hated it and I still do but that's mainly because growing up I lived a very sheltered life. so, I was never allowed to go outside only for school and when my mom took me out. Even in parts of my teenage years I was just really sheltered, my mom didn't want me outside ever and now that I started college, I have freedom now, I can go outside by myself and it's gone now but it's slowly getting better. I've had to get used to that, but I've started redecorating, I like decorating so that's mainly what I've been doing.

TR: That's how you occupy your time?

JN: Yeah, I've been decorating and buying stuff I don't need.

TR: How did the coronavirus impact you mentally and emotionally?

JN: It was really hard. It brought me into a slump. When we got sent back home from school it brought me into a really gross slump and I didn't want to do any work. It's not that I didn't want to do it out of laziness I just couldn't like.

TR: It wasn't motivational.

JN: Yeah, no motivation Like before I could write an essay within an hour it'll be like 2 or 3 pages and I was a beast at it, I was very proud of myself. Now I can barely sit down and write a paper within an hour, like I can't. I don't have that drive like I used to. Part of it is still there, I have ways that I have fun studying and make things fun for myself but it's hard, really tricky

TR: You get distracted very easily. I completely understand.

JN: Yes, that too and I just couldn't get out of bed.

TR: Uou already mentioned this, but you can go in depth about it how did the coronavirus impact you socially

JN: I'm a little compromised so my mom went into full gear again like when I was little. I wasn't allowed to see anybody for 5 months going into COVID. I didn't start going out till June July because my mom went into full gear and was like yeah no, you're not going outside, and it was really depressing because I miss my friends. Especially my friends from the city because I worried a lot about you guys and you guys were really on my mind and I was like I hope they're okay and their loved ones are okay.

TR: I completely relate because I wasn't allowed to go outside either. How did the coronavirus impact your family?

JN: Well, the way my apartment is set up we have the mini hallway for when you first walk in so whenever my mom finished coming back from like the grocery store, we would have them disinfected in that area and we would have them spayed. so, I think it played a lot more psychologically than physically and they were mainly panicking because they didn't want any of us to get sick. Cause the only ones that if we got sick would be an issue would be me and my grandma that's cause my grandmas old. But other than that, I feel like my mom handled it pretty

well because there were no jobs and my mom was kind of struggling for a while but she's okay now.

TR: You just spoke about this but are people in your household working?

JN: Yeah, my mom is working, and my parents are divorced so my dad is also working he lost his business, so he had to close it.

TR: Because of the coronavirus?

JN: Yeah so, he had to shut it down and he had to find a new spot, so he is not a happy camper right now.

TR: I can only imagine. To start over from scratch again that's very difficult.

JN: I know it was hard seeing him too because he would just be so sad.

TR: A lot of people are going through that.

JN: Yeah, he's in a lot of debt right now but I know he'll pull through and I'll always be there to help him.

TN: You got to be hopeful and push through.

JN: Yes.

TR: Have you learned about yourself or your family since the beginning of this crisis?

JN: Yes, I learned that my ass needs to learn braille for so many reasons, one because it'll be easier to accommodate me. like if a professor told me I had to read this book and I'm like I can't they could send that chapter to a brailist and have it made in braille and my life would be like 50 times easier.

TR: Yes, cause you need big wording in order to see it that's why.

JN: Yes, and braille would be so much easier cause I feel bad because teachers would run to the printer and go print something out in large print and I'm like ugh this isn't nowhere near big enough and I feel bad cause they're trying and it just makes things hard. I also really want to move out. I know it sounds mean but me and my mom are very different from one another in a good and bad way. You know we both have great and not so great qualities but me and her are so

different that it's just not going to work out. I was already having a hard time with her before coronavirus but once COVID started it kind of made it worse.

TR: Because you're stuck with each other in the house?

JN: We would constantly be arguing it was so stressful.

TR: What has been the hardest part of this pandemic for you?

JN: Definitely the lack of motivation has really hit me hard. For many reasons, one because my grandmother is very religious, so she thinks the end of the world is happening right now. I personally disagree even though I'm also religious I feel like she's just being dramatic but idk my thing is we're all just kind of worried and she's stressing me out. I've been mainly stressed mentally more than anything because it's depressing, and I had a really big drive when we were back at school. You know this I was always like on top of my stuff except for math I hate math, but I was always on top of everything, and you know I was a big school person. Now I'm not even well before at least in Spring 1 and 2 I was out of it, I failed chemistry two times it was such a mess I hated it.

TR: Yes, I completely understand it has been very unmotivational.

JN: Yeah, I'm happy I took chemistry now better than later even though I failed it I don't have to take it anymore.

TR: Has there been anything positive to come out of the pandemic for you?

JN: Yeah, I learned how to use my cane properly and I still am taking classes for it. I've just been getting updated on blind related stuff like my cane and like braille. I'm still finding a braille teacher and I won the election. Which I kind of regret a little bit only because it's a little bit overwhelming from time to time but I am trying my best and with EZ he's been training a lot more he's been a great help lately.

TR: That's good at least something positive came out because you know you're learning how to adapt more.

JN: Yes, that's definitely true.

TR: Especially once this pandemic is over even though it's kind of going down but like once it's officially over and we're back to usual it'll be better for you.

JN: Yes.

TR: What do you think the nation and the world should learn from this pandemic?

JN: Wear a freaking mask. It's not something to debate over. It's like okay when people cough really gross what do they do? They put their mouth by their elbow, so they don't get to spit everywhere. It's literally the same thing except the elbow which is the mask is on the entire time.

TR: Yeah a lot of people have been protesting about it and I'm just like there's no reason to do that like especially in Brooklyn. A lot of Jewish people have resisted wearing it where my dad lives. A lot of people don't wear it and it's just like huh alright.

JN: Oh my gosh and I also found out a lot of people. I don't live in the five boroughs. I live in long island right. I was always wondering why everyone from the boroughs hates people from. I know now, I understand. Their Trump supporters, I don't think are racist, I think they're not the type of race to be up in your face and be like go back to your country they're not that type of racist their like passive aggressive. They won't say anything but they'll like look at you funny that's it. I joined my town's Facebook group for several reasons, I had an incident with EZ in June and I had to try and find the person and then I just stayed on because I'm like well maybe they have fun events for like kids later on and I just stayed. Oh my gosh, every Sunday, every Sunday there's rallies for the Dorito man [Trump] and I don't like it, and it is so gross, and they wonder why nobody likes them. I said that having children say the national anthem when they don't fully understand what it really is unbelievable.

TR: I had to do that when I was younger.

JN: Oh my gosh so did I. I just went on the Facebook group and I was just like hey I think it's weird how we make the children, like children like 5 years old 6 years old say the national anthem in school when in reality they don't really know what they're saying. the teachers don't explain you know why, and they always make them say it.

TR: Yeah, it was always mandatory in my school. Well cause i went to this school for a couple of months and it was always mandatory at a specific time every single day and I was just like huh like why? and we had to have our hands on your chest and everything like that.

JN: It was not mandatory in my school, but they'll be like hey stop walking and you'll get in trouble if you didn't do it. It's like first of all who are you? It's just words right I can understand why they'll make you say it in high school but at the same time it should be an option. it should not be mandatory cause if you're really patriarchal then do it but if it's like whatever I just want to go on about my day then you don't do it. Cause you don't have to do that in your job only in

the military and who do they recruit for the military? a lot of people who are doing really bad in high school that are scared they won't get into college at least for my school. idk I think they're doing something psychologically and I just don't like it. I said that, you know what the people responded they were like America has wasted on you they were like well where would you want to go, would you want to move somewhere else? It's like I would love to move to another country, the issue is I still have to pay American taxes if I decide to move out and if I wanted to completely cut off America, I will have to pay 20 thousand dollars to get rid of my citizenship with the United states. I'm just like if you want to pay for me go right ahead, I'm not going to stop you and then they were like let's start a go fund me and I was debating for a while I was like do I really. I can steal all their money cause it's not like their poor white people their rich white people who are just stupid. so, I was just like I could rob you all right now but I'm like let me stop and I just kind of laughed and then they kicked me out of the Facebook group after that day so they're so childish.

TR: Why do you believe these anti-racist protests have erupted?

JN: Because they should erupt. I do not like racist people either. So, as they should.

TR: True.

JN: My thing is like it's about time and it was going to happen, and more and more things started pushing them, pushing them, pushing them. taking, taking, taking until you hit the last straw and people are tired of it. people are over it, they're just like no I don't want this anymore and they want to take the stand. Some of them want to stand together, others want to be dramatic and make completely different groups all talking about the same thing. I say that in the sense that because I saw online a bit of backlash on the Black Lives Matter movement with Hispanic people and Latino people saying oh Hispanic lives matter.

TR: Yeah, I saw that too.

JN: :like if a republican looks at it, they'll be like oh their working together but in reality, their not and it all depends. That phrase came from a Hispanic person getting angry at something a black person did to a Hispanic person. they're like oh but what about us and then feeling some type of way taking it a little too personal cause you can't blame one person's actions on an entire race. unless it's like a lot of multiple actions that a lot of people from that race are doing. like for example slavery so many white people participated in slavery, oh my gosh.

TR: Yes exactly.

JN: So, it would be stupid if a white person said white lives matter no sit down.

TR: That's why they're protesting that like all lives matter all of a sudden.

JN: Yes, no all lives matter is the stupidest thing I ever heard. To an extent I kind of understand the psychology behind it because they want to feel included right but at the same time half of the people are not realizing that we have to do one thing at a time right. Black lives are the ones most effected right now in discrimination then, it would be Hispanics/Latinos and blacks because a lot of people from I think Jamaica are also getting captured by ICE and having their kids separated from them and then we tackle that because that's basically the plan that's going on. let's tackle the chunk of racism first and police brutality then we'll go after ICE and so on and so forth. And I think I agree with that. I personally don't join the protest because I can't see so I would not be alive. As much as I want to join the protest I can't, and it sucks. you know it is how it is.

TR: You can help out in different ways.

JN: Exactly but I'm fine with the protest that I do online. I'm happy that people are standing up for what they believe in and making a change that is going down in history literally. Cause people say like it's going to go down in history 99% of the time it doesn't, but now is an interesting time people are already starting to write history books about now.

TR: So what has happened?

JN: Exactly. Exactly and I am excited.

TR: How have the uprising across the country shifted about how you think about your ethnic identity and your place in society?

JN: I've had a really hard time. With me I've always had a hard time with my identity because I don't really fit in where I go. I've had Hispanic/Latino friends all my life. I have maybe 2 or 3 white friends and then like 4 or 3 black friends not from you guys, but from people I've met this year. I don't know where I identify because my mom moved me out of Puerto Rico for medical reasons and for safety reasons. In my hometown, when I was born, I don't know what had happened but basically my grandpa was like you're going to have an albino child because I want an albino child because he thought they resembled angles based on certain descriptions of the bible and I ended up being albino. So my grandpa thought that god had sent an angel down to help Puerto Rico or the town or whatever and my mom was weirded out, like were all religious, but that was such a big claim that I guess she was overwhelmed. She believes that God sent me down specifically for her for another reason that I could tell you another day, but I was always so white looking. Everyone in the town, I lived in a very small town in Puerto Rico. everybody

knows who everybody is but everyone would just stare at me all the time no matter where I went and it was so uncomfortable. My mom moved here. They stare at you like you're either an angel or you're like a freakshow, it's either or never both at the same time. So I moved to the states and you know what's so ironic? I got teased by white people because I was too white. how does that make any sense? But yeah, I didn't make friends until fifth grade because everybody was scared of me. Then that's when I made my first friend and then we were friends for a while, but I never felt like I fit in anywhere because none of the white girls wanted to play with me and then none of the people from my background wanted to play with me either. then growing up now makes it even tougher because I am basically alone. I don't know where I belong. I've never experienced racism like my Latino and like my black friends and I don't think I'll ever experience that racism. Which is in a way good, but I feel bad because it makes me sad that they have to go through it. so what I've been doing is I use what I look like to my advantage. in the sense of when I'm with you guys and I've even done this with Amari. You know when I ask you guys to open the door to the subway by the turnstile the emergency door.

TR: Yeah, I remember that.

JN: Yeah and Amari is like no the police is there and I'm like no if they tell you something I'm right here, I got you because one they're not going to yell at a blind person's friend for helping out the blind person with a guide dog and two I look so white that they're most likely going to be like oh he seems like a good kid cause he has a white friend because that's how they are. I never went to the school for the blind, so I was able to analyze a lot of people who I grew up around and that's really how they are. I use that to my advantage because I don't really know what to do. I try to help, and I will always try to help but it's hard when I really don't fit into my own community. There are others similar to me. They may have the features of their family; I don't even have the features well I have like my nose. Well, no I have my dad's like mouth and my mom's eyes but I don't have either their skin color. I could be as dark as, maybe a little bit darker than you or as light as a regular average white person because of my mom's side but my dad's side is also really dark. so I could range but yeah it's just hard I feel like, I feel a bit more lost than I did before.

TR: I mean that's completely understandable because of what you said, like you know you feel like you don't fit in because of how you look compared to who you are. I mean you do your best to try and help other people. Do you have any stories you are willing to share about encounters you have had with racism or the police?

JN: I can't really speak upon racism, but I can tell you about my personal experiences with the police. Now I can't tell you if it's because they see my skin tone first or because they see my disability first but when I encountered the police up till all this started happening, I thought they were okay people. I say okay because some of them are stupid, but I thought they were okay

cause I always had good interactions with them. They always gave me directions, they always help me out, they always let me into places for free so I never had any major issues. I do use my, like the example I gave earlier, I use myself to kind of be a shield for others. Other than that, I never had any negative experiences before all of this started happening. that's when I started noticing like oh is it because of me? That's why I can't tell you, I don't know if it's because of my disability or my skin color or both. I also have a blind person that I know who is black and he also doesn't get treated badly by the police, but he gets treated like okay. Like he still gets help if he needs it, but there was a blind man in California who got shot by the police. simply just by walking around, I think he was Latino and the police I don't know what the claim was, but it was very stupid. how you going to just shoot a blind man? he had a cane; he didn't have a dog and the cane is like the easiest identifier any blind person can have. I don't know how you fuck up that bad I think he shot him like five times.

TR: That is crazy.

JN: And that's also why I don't want to protest because you guys may see a giant rubber bullet but I'm not going to see it and like little things you know. so that's the only reason I won't protest because I'm scared, I will hold other people back or u know things like that.

TR: there are peaceful protests but there are incidents that happen. Like out of nowhere or like it could either involve the police or just the people in the protest in general. Seeing from the media a lot of incidents have been happening from the police because the police have been violent against the peaceful protesters. So it is honestly, I would say dangerous like for you especially if you were to go to a protest. You never know what could happen, like anything can happen and especially what's been seen though the media is even more scary.

JN: That's the only bummer. if it was definitely a safe protest and the police were guarding the protestors, I wouldn't have an issue. I would go, but that's never the case. at least with these in the city even where I live. Around where I live there were only like two protests. pretty peaceful there wasn't anything major, but it was just one protest. If I'm going to be very honest there isn't any a lot of police brutality in my neighborhood or in my area. Simply because it's like when a police officer or when someone sees a black person in my neighborhood no one really says anything they just kind of stare weirdly like how I was explaining earlier.

TR: Were you at all in digital or in person an activist in the last six months if so how?

JN: definitely digital. I signed a lot of petitions. I unfortunately wasn't able to donate money because I was helping my mom with bills and stuff. I would share a lot of important information. I posted if you were going to protest how to do it safely and strategies to use and I've been really aware. I've been really cautious about what I post. being cautious in the sense that I don't want to

post something that the government would show up to my house and be like this, but I just mainly do everything online. I feel like that's the best way to get things out there and I don't have a gigantic following, but I have a pretty good one. I can get information out safely and people will see it. So I use that to my advantage and I just get as much information. Like daily I'm always posting random stuff about the president and his up-running candidates. I post a lot about ALC, I love her. I post tips and stuff and even stuff for school. I just try to help out as much as I can.

TR: I think that's a really good thing that you're doing because even though you can't go to the protest like in person, you're still helping out other people through the media. A lot of people use social media especially young people and now they can be more informed about what is happening in the world or like the tips you've been sharing as well. I really think that's really helpful because even though you can't go to the protest, you're still helping other people and you're still being an activist at the same time even though it's not in person it's through the media.

JN: I definitely try because I know a lot of my friends would go and I know that I want to help out as much as I can. I may not know how, so I post as good information as they could use.

TR: How have the past few months changed how you think about police and racism in the US?

JN: My view on racism hasn't changed. Solely because I hate it, I don't like it, I think it's the stupidest thing one can think about like in ideology, that's very stupid. It makes no sense never made sense but my view on police definitely changed since I never had any negative encounters. I was kind of ignorant to other people's struggles until everything that's going on. That being said I probably never defended any police just because I've had good encounters doesn't mean other people have had those encounters too. People get arrested all the time for so many different reasons and it is so unfair 90% of the time. Mainly it's just because they look a certain way or act a certain way. I said this all the time, but I feel everyone relies on their eyes too much and I'm happy I'm blind. It's great, I don't see facial features first I don't see facial expressions until you're like 10 inches from my face. I don't see those first, I mainly see blobs of colors and just shapes, I don't rely on my eyes that much. I rely on how people speak, their tone, how they act. not necessarily their appearance. Everything over here in the United States is too visual, way too visual from education, to crossing the street, to everything walking on the sidewalk. Because in japan there's stuff on the sidewalk for blind people so that way they can walk straight and not get in other people's way and vice versa. I feel like everyone is just a little bit too visual and relies too much on it and it's a dangerous thing and it's a shame, it's a real shame.

TR: Especially racism has to do with visuals as well. You see someone's skin color and you automatically assume. Like police officers automatically assume and do horrible things because of skin color and it makes no sense. Because at the end of the day they still have the upper

power. I don't understand why you would come after someone else who doesn't have the same power as you.

JN: Exactly I definitely get what you mean. Sometimes it just makes me sick to my stomach and it's so disappointing because I always tell people who think that they're the most educated, take away their eyes for three days and don't tell them it's three days. they couldn't handle a thing and I say that causes you to be strong until something you rely on so heavily is taken away from you. till you learn to adapt and learn different types of valuable lessons in life. so no one is really perfect, no one is really that smart. It doesn't matter what color you are, there's always a fault and there's so many things you can learn in a day. Don't get me wrong there are blind racist people. I don't know how. It's either, it could be a few things. it could be like they lose their vision, and they were just racist before they lost their vision, or the racism was taught by family. like Helen Keller, she was racist, it was disgusting. I want to punch her but like she's dead now so it's fine. But she was racist, and no one talked about it, yeah, she was a remarkable woman when it came to her disability but when it came to her brain, not very smart. so yeah, she's kind of embarrassing but that's just an example. like there is racism like especially when it comes to her that she was taught to her, that wasn't something that she could see. that's dangerous. people forget that others have such a great influence in their lives.

TR: She grew up being taught so yeah. What have you seen your peers doing that inspires you?

JN: do their work. that sounds so corny but it's true. cause I've had such little motivation when it comes to doing my assignments and doing my work. When I see my friends being motivated and doing their work it really inspires me and I'm just like let me do my work too. Also, activism. A lot of my friends are not strong activists, but they post stuff too and I repost it. The people in my neighborhood in particular we, not we for legal reasons but they steal the signs of the trump supporters.

TR: Really.

JN: Yes and it's very funny.

TR: That is interesting.

JN: That's fun just to watch and just in general, it's very fun. I really like their mentality, their drive, their focus and it's hard to have that right now. I'm just so happy they're able to have that and be so strong willed and get their work in on time. Which I'm really cheesy in a weird mom sense but it inspires me to do it too.

TR: Yeah, that type of thing motivates you. That's why it's kind of better going back to school cause it's like the other people around you see them doing something and it's not like you're at home watching tv to get distracted by it. It's just like might as well just do my work too it's all around you might as well you do it too. What do you think about cops' responses to protests that began in May 2020?

JN: Some are great. the ones that kneel down and respect the protestors I appreciate those policemen because they understand. the others are garbage and then others are forced. I say this because the majority of the time police don't make their own decisions. unless they're pulling someone over and stuff but when it comes to okay, I'm going to send these forty police officers to Brooklyn. To defend Brooklyn or whatever and you have to shoot someone who gets in your way and those are the types of instructions and directions they get, and they can't break those directions. only because let's say there is somebody within those forty police officers that believes that's the right thing to do, they're going to tell the chief of police and then everybody is going to get in trouble. Some of them are forced, some of them are stupid and some of them are great. I feel like that's the main three categories and the ones that are stupid their just the stupid ones I don't know how to explain it their just dumb.

TR: Yeah, I have seen on social media some police officers talking about a lot of the protest or like what they would do if they were stopping an African American person. There was one police officer who was like I wouldn't have done this; I would've done this instead. he explained what he would do but then he ended up making another video and he got fired from his job because he made that video. And he had to apologize because he made that video when in reality, he was just speaking his mind. He shouldn't have gotten fired for that, that was freedom of speech right there.

JN: I can understand why certain things inappropriate but other things are are just like I don't know it's hard because it would be the same thing in reverse. Like let's say a stupid Nazi person was like I'm a Nazi and I'm a police officer what about it and he gets fired. Good. I think it all depends on who's in charge. Like I think we should yell at and get at the person who's in charge of a lot more issues and a lot more trouble because they're the one in charge, they're the ones telling him hey shoot, they're the ones covering up a lot of evidence, they're the ones hiding everything. They should be the ones that should be in jail and then they start working on the police. The police program shouldn't even be a few weeks, it should be like 3 years in college. Half of them didn't even pass high school.

TR: That is true. What do you think about the local and national government's response to the protest?

JN: Oh it's terrible. We need to get the Dorito [Trump] out of office because they are just sending the national guard and the national guard doesn't want to be there. You know who's in the national guard? The national guard are the people that got recruited in high school, those are the exact people I'm talking about. They don't want to be there. Those are like their friends; those are their allies and the majority of them have the same beliefs but at the same time they are forced to do something by their chief or their troop leader or whatever it's called and that's what makes it hard and tricky.

TR: How would you like to see this movement resolve?

JN: I want the president out of the office. I want the corrupted chiefs of police to get removed from their positions and the CEOs of whatever county or I don't care. I want them all out. I want the training programs to be a police officer to be a lot stealthier and a lot more diverse with their training. A lot of deaf people especially deaf black people have been shot because they're trying to do sign language and tell the officer hey, I'm deaf. When they try to do a sign, they get shot because the officer thinks he is trying to grab a weapon. So that's bad, that's very bad because they're literally trying to communicate, so they need to be better trained. Also there needs to be better gun restrictions for citizens and police for everybody really because it is so ridiculous. The national guard should be there to help protestors, not to stop protestors unless it's an obnoxiously dangerously violent protest where everything's on fire and people need saving and stuff. It should be a federal offense if you are racist towards somebody cause that is part of discrimination and it should be put on your record. Just like how if you're a sex offender it should be put on your record, if your racist it should be on your record, so people get a warning. Proper school education in history because we don't even learn proper history. I was watching a tick tock the other day that explained something that happened with Spain and Mexico that I did not learn in high school.

TR: Really?

JN: Yeah, I have to find the video but I was like what?

TR: Yeah, a lot of schools do that. like I haven't experienced that in my schools that I've gone to, they said the good side and the bad side like how white Americans would think of it and how other races would think of it. What they experienced in the past. What issues have you expressed in your social media currently?

JN: Currently I posted what's happening in Nigeria. I also posted about the feminism anthem from chile, how it went viral globally and every feminist protest is talking it, singing it and chanting it. I love that, that makes me happy. I also posted about someone posting a bionic eye. I

would never get that. Never. It basically restores blind people's vision. I would never get that. Never.

TR: That's something you would see in movies.

Jay: Yeah I would never get that. oh my god that's terrifying. Oh, and trump he got a secret bank account in china, isn't he talking crap about china like two days ago? it's just crazy.

TR: What issues do you dislike or disapprove of?

JN: Everything. I really hate everything in this country. well not really but like I do but I don't at the same time. I don't like their false idea of a democracy because it's not. It's a constitutional republic I think it is. America is not an actual democracy. I could be wrong but I'm pretty sure I'm not. I really don't like anything. There are so many things wrong and corrupt with this country, it's disgusting. They value pedophiles and rapists over regular normal qualified people for the job and it's gross, it's disappointing. They have a terrible education system and the only reason they rank so high is because they are teaching their history from their point of view. It's like in Germany were to teach in Germany they teach like hey we caused the holocaust and that was really bad never do that, we regret everything, the world doesn't hate us anymore, but we need to watch where we step. America doesn't do that. America is just like yeah, we did it, but it wasn't that bad like we're fine, in reality so many countries despite Americans. Where if an American were to go to let's say France they have to cover their luggage with stickers from another country. Why? Because then other people would know they're American and treat them not so nicely. No one really likes Americans.

TR: Americans have done lots of damage.

JN: Ugh and even to how the way money is distributed. I have my own theory on how money should be distributed and how and I'm not talking in a communistic type of way. I'm just talking about how we do it now but differently, that I would like to implement but I won't have the power to implement but maybe one day. I would also like Puerto Rico to be independent because I am tired of these Americans. But that's where I stand in a political sense, not everyone is going to agree with that, but I don't really care. From education to how things are taught in college to you know to be an EMT you have to be in a really long program. You know what's crazy? You have to be in a really long program and a police officer makes more than a EMT worker. as much as police officers quote on quote risk their lives ehh kind of but like not really. a firefighter risks their lives that is what risking your life is an EMT yes. to an extent yes because sometimes you have literally mentally unstable patients that try to kill you, cause remember when you get a patient into the truck, you're not always checking their pockets for weapons. you're just picking them up and going and a police officer it's like oh I have a shiny gun and a taser watch out like

okay sit-down guard. like no it just stressed me out because their programs are a lot longer while the police programs are a lot shorter. Everything needs to be changed in America. they need to get rid of the constitution and I say this I know it's so controversial, but I say this because it is so outdated. it needs to be rewritten obviously with basic human rights put first and then you know you put gun control and stuff in there, rewrite it in a more modern sense. obviously take out the stuff that is clearly outdated but I do not know America is an S. also give indigenous people back half of the land that they deserve, like come on now those poor people there are so stressed. and that's how I feel.

TR: Are there people you know who have faced these issues happening?

Jay: In what sense?

TR: like racism or anything else happening with the protest.

JN: when it comes to racism my friends haven't really vocalized it to me. at least as of lately, cause in the area I live there's not really much police brutality. no one really calls the police. They just kind of follow everybody and give everybody a heart attack but i don't know. around where I live no um yeah not at least now.

TR: Okay. Do you have any advice for any individuals who are facing any current issues?

JN: The current issues.

TR: Yes, anything that's happening with police brutality or racism or the protest like do you have any advice for anybody going through that?

JN: My advice is to remember you're not alone. You're not the first and you're not going to be the last in the sense that like you're not going to be the only one going through this. It makes me sad oh my god but just remember that you are not alone and there's people that believe you, that back you up and that are here for you. Yeah, I don't know what much to say you know. remember to stay connected to your friends and family, never really go anywhere alone, be careful when you go outside, learn self-defense. like karate not karate but like jujitsu stuff that does not cause injuries but can put an opponent down because if you cause a police officer an injury you will go to jail. If you detain the police officer or let's say an off-duty police officer that thinks he's the bomb no you can technically make a citizen's arrest. Because if you didn't know they were undercover you can make a citizen's arrest and all you have to do is detain them. That's all you have to do, you don't have to hurt the person. You have to work like educating yourself on the laws and find a loophole for each one that you feel like you will be involved in. That's my best advice and wear a mask.

TR: I completely agree, and I think that was really good advice.

JN: thank you

TR: and that's all the questions I have.