

Summer Directive 2020

Part 1: Covid-19 and Time

COVID-19 has disrupted life as we know it. For many of us, our daily rhythms and routines have altered significantly following different government and workplace guidelines. For some, the days may seem to have bled into each other while for others the pace of life has become more frenetic. Time is generally something that is taken for granted but the pandemic has made many of us notice it in new ways. In this Directive, we ask you to tell us how time in your daily lives may have changed– or stayed the same – as a result of the pandemic. At this moment (August 2020), as lockdown is gradually easing in the UK, we would like you to please look back on your experiences of time and COVID-19 so far, consider what it means to you for life to get ‘back to normal’ (if it is) in the present day, and imagine what you think the future might hold.

Please start each part of your Directive reply on a new sheet of paper with your **MO number, gender identity, age, marital status, the town or village where you live and your occupation or former occupation.**

Remember *not to identify yourself or other people* inadvertently within your reply. It is best to use initials instead of real names.

As always, please include anything that is important to you that you feel is missing from our questions.

Rhythm and routine of the day

In what ways, if any, has ‘time’ in your daily life been disrupted?

In the first days of the lockdown, did your daily rhythms, routines, or habits change? If so, please say how and describe how this felt. Can you recall how these changes came about? Were they connected to specific government regulation or advice?

In what ways have different aspects of your life sped up or slowed down? For example, have you been furloughed from work or taken on caring responsibilities? Maybe you’ve been studying online or have taken up new hobbies. Please describe your experience of this.

Many people have spent more time than usual in their local environments. If this is the case for you, have you noticed anything in particular about the rhythms of the environment around you, such as the timing of seasons, plants, animals, the sun and the moon?

Are your rhythms and routines changing again now? If so, in what ways? Do you anticipate them changing again in the future? If so, please describe how you feel about this?

Homelife

For those of you spending most of your time at home, how do you make distinctions between different times of the day? Do you describe these times – to yourself or members of your household - in any new ways since lockdown? For example, do you have particular times of the day you leave the house to take a walk or have meals? What factors influence the organisation of your time?

For those of you living in households with others, how do you negotiate time in relation to one another? Do some people's time matter more than others? Is this determined by work, caring responsibilities or maybe access to computers?

In what ways have your lives come to be 'in synch' with or at odds with one another over the period of lockdown?

What changes do you anticipate in the time of your homelife in the future?

Media and technology

Have media and technologies featured in any daily life changes – for example, speaking to family or colleagues using online tools, having online medical appointments and/or shopping online? If so, has using these tools made a difference to how you manage, schedule or plan your time?

Did other materials – for example, notepads, diaries, wall calendars – feature as well? What did you use them for?

If you used new media, technologies or materials, or changed how you used them as a result of COVID-19, do you anticipate that you will keep using them in the same way in the future? The Spring Directive included a similar question. If you answered it, have your views changed?

Waiting

For some people, it seems as if life has been put 'on hold' during the pandemic. Does this feel relevant to you? If so, please say how. Have you experienced a particular pause or a delay, for instance in waiting for appointments, activities, a new job or for work to resume?

What is your experience of waiting? For example, you may have spent time queuing outside shops, waiting for deliveries, or waiting to see friends or family. Please describe how these times felt.

For those who have been directly or indirectly affected by illness during the pandemic, how have you experienced time and waiting in particular in relation to incapacity, recovery, loss and grief?

Part 2: Black Lives Matter

On 25th May 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old black American man, was killed by the police in Minneapolis. Since then, protests and rallies have been organised worldwide in support of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Whether you have been part of any Black Lives Matter protests or not, Mass Observation want you to share your thoughts on these recent events.

Some prompts for your response:

- Share any thoughts on George Floyd and others who have been killed during an arrest or other police action.
- How did you find out about the Black Lives Matter Movement? What media, news, or social media did you use to inform you of events?
- Did you participate in the protests? What do you think about those who did? This might include attending a protest event, wearing a Black Lives Matter badge or taking part in the “Blackout Tuesday” on social media.
- Have you watched, read, listened to anything in an attempt to educate yourself about Black Lives Matter, black history, slavery, racism or anti-racism?
- How did you feel when you discovered that the statue of Edward Colston had been toppled in Bristol?

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Please post your response to: Freepost: RTGU-AYJE-YSSC, The Mass Observation Archive, The Keep, Woollards Way, Brighton, BN1 9BP (please note that the MOA team are currently working from home and unable to respond to directives sent by post) or by email to: moa@sussex.ac.uk. JS/KP Summer Directive/No. 119