

Spring 2013

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Sustain Interview Project

██████████ (A) interviewed by ██████████ (H)

Interviewed on 4/9/13

H: Ok. ██████████.

A: With Sustain, it made me...

H: This is gonna be hard for you because you talk so softly

A: Ohhhh. Because I'm sick and ...

H: ...and also because you're a soft-talker!

A: ohhhh.

H: Scootch up!

A: With Sustain, it made me explore the aspects of my life that I didn't, like know, like tap into, areas that, like, tap into areas of my life that I didn't know existed, so Sustain like also inspired me to change my major to Kinesiology. So I started the change of major process last year and...

H: What was it before?

A: It was parks and recreation.

H: Parks and Rec—okay.

A: And so I switched it to kines...I turned the change of major to kinesiology. So I officially changed like three days before spring quarter,

H: okay

A: so it was just like—it took me, it was like a whole year's process because like of getting classes and everything—

H: Right

A: --so the fact that it took me a whole year and then to do this that I want to leave,

H: ooookkkkaaayy

A: is like—I worked so hard for this why would I leave? Sooo...

H: Ohhhhh—so you might stay?!

A: Yeah, I might stay...

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H: Wooooow

A: But I'm always conflicted like every day I'm just 'I want to stay/I want to go' like it depends on the day of the week, actually

H: Tell me about –tell me about that, l

A: I don't know.

H: Like why stay, why go, why—what's in your head about all that?

A: Because like, actually I have a pro and con list if you'd like to see it, it you wanna...do you wanna look at it?

H: I would love to see it!

A: Okay—because, cause like, I feel like, leaving is like, there's like hope in the future, you know?—there's also like a bigger idea of what I want to do. I don't know..Like—what's gonna be the outcome of ...

H: look at your list!...

A: So..

H: tell me about it.

A: Well, I basically like divided it into like professors, like tuition

H: Have you always made decision like this?

A: Well, my mom usually does it so now I picked it up

H: It's a great, it's a great tool

A: Yeah, so like professors, like versus here like, um, well, specifically with Sustain they care about us, and it's like we have that community to go back to

H: Yeah

A: And like tuition, finances, and then like social life, and then friends, clubs

H: yeah

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A: so it's just like there's so many aspects to consider when I'm leaving that I'm so scared because like the future is like, like if I leave it's ambiguous

H: yeah

A: And if I stay, I don't know..

H: What's making you want to leave?

A: Well, [laughing] that's a good question. I haven't even thought of that. I don't know...[pause] I actually don't know what. I don't know—I think what's making me want to leave is that I have the option of leaving, because it's like if I didn't have the option of leaving, I wouldn't want to leave, so

H: Wait a minute—back that up...so if you didn't have the option of leaving you wouldn't?

A: Yeah—because I have the option because I got accepted into the colleges, so I have that option, but if I didn't get accepted I would stay. I don't know..

H: Okay, so maybe back it up—what made you ..you had to apply? So what made you do that?

A: Because like I didn't know I didn't know if I was gonna get into kinesiology for change of major.

H: Oh—I see

A: So it was like a back. It wasn't really a back up, but like changing my major was also a back too, as well, like if I stay here, if I get into major I'm gonna stay here, if I don't, I'm gonna leave, so then back then I didn't know if I was gonna get in.

H: Okay

A: But now that I've gotten in, I don't know if I want to stay.

H: So now you have all these possibilities!

A: Yeah...But too many options make me all confused, like...

H: Yeah

[pause]

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██████ (A) interviewed by ██████ (H)

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A: So...it's like that's why like I was actually watching a documentary like at Costco they only have Kirkland brands—they only have Kirkland brands so people go to the store don't, like and want can't choose from they don't have like all these options so they just choose that one but at other grocery stores they have like five different options and people take longer, so it's just like when we give people limited options, like they choose—or when like—when the possibilities are endless it's much better as well

H: How are you going to make the decision?

A: Well, I'm actually waiting on the financial aid packages because finances are a factor to, so

H: Yeah...What made you want to switch over to kinesiology?

A: It's like—it's just like the human body is like fascinating to me I feel like, cause I love like the Olympics—all I did this summer is watch the Olympics, so I find it really fascinating to know how the muscles interact, so...

H: Yeah...Now, if you went to the other places would you also study kinesiology?

A: Actually, I'm studying it's called community health education—public health—so that's what I want to do in my life, so it's like

H: okay

A: like what I'm gonna study if I go is like what I wanna do with my life for the rest of my life, but here's it's like I'm not really as passionate about kinesiology as opposed to the other majors

H: okay

A: yeah

H: yeah—is kinesiology? What is the connection? Or is there one for you between kinesiology and that later dream?

A: Yeah within kinesiology my concentration would be health promotion which is basically like public health so like yeah

H: okay

A: that's basically the connection

H: alright

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██████████ (A) interviewed by ██████████ (H)

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A: The thing is, like now in my life, I feel like I need stability because my whole life I've always moved around, so it's like if like middle school and high school like the only times I've actually started a school and finished it so it's like—is college gonna be like my elementary school where I moved around all the time? and so I just like—in my life right now I need stability, but in my life I'm also scared to be stable and like in terms of like location, so I'm just terrified to be stable, but I desire to be stable at the same time, so it's like a conflict.

H: I do know what you mean—yeah.

[pause]

A: So, but that's what I have in my life.

H: Yeah. . . The interview process is awkward to students, I notice because you guys are so used to me blabbing back when you talk

[laughing]

. . .and my job in this setting is to stay quieter and listen

A: oh—okay

H: and I have to bite my lips off to do that, you know?

[laughing]

But I want to keep saying 'tell me more about that'—but I don't wanna drive you crazy with that, but I'm really really interested. Do you, um, how do you feel like you'll make your decision—or do you have to? Do you have time?

A: I have til june 1st, so I do have time

H: Okay

A: Yeah. . .but, time is of the essence because I have like housing because of like housing over there and housing here so there's like that factor

H: yeah

A: there's so many factors going into it

H: yeah

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A: but, it's...

H: --so—can you make—are there any connections to be made between kinda what's going on here and your s experience in sustain last year?

A: Yeah

H: I'm interested either way—but are there any?

A: --like connections between sustain and..

H: --your experience and this

A: --decision? or?

H: Kinda fork—you're at a little bit of a fork in the road you know?

A: oh yeah—that's true. I feel there were connect—there actually were connections because like during our, doing the sustain project when we had to decide if we wanted to hold all of it or not hold it to like, in that aspect, we were like going at the options, but then like somebody superior—like our community member made our decision for us. And at like this point in my life my parents have always made the decision for me and now it's my decision. I even talked to my mom and she told me to make the decision, which was scary, so I guess that's what it means to be an adult now

H: I know...golllee.

A: ...to make these decisions...

H: yeah. so I have more to say about that, but let's come back to that after I turn this off – about your decisions, right? If you want me to speak into that, I'd love to.

A: Oh yeah—yes please.

H: Yeah—so let's, that's a really important topic let's just put it aside for a second and go back to it after I...so, tell me if you can to reflect on anything else about what's it been like for you after

A: Sustain?

H: After Sustain

A: Well, fall quarter was like the hardest quarter because like that intrinsic motivation had like somehow disappeared over the summer

H: somehow!

[laughing]

A: Yeah . . . It wasn't as exercised because when you don't use—when you don't exercise, your muscles deteriorate so it wasn't like exercised during these summer so just like I lost majority of it, so when I was sitting in class I was just bored—and I was thinking 'why does this matter to me?' and then I felt like we had—I wish we had like a sustain recap and then we could be all fall quarter or so we could like all remember why we did sustain and like how to push us through this year cause like fall quarter was so difficult to me that I met with roger actually and he like helped me like see like go back to intrinsic motivation and see what I could do and then like winter quarter was much better and then like spring quarter I feel like I still need to find it again so it's like peaks and troughs and now that intrinsic motivation that like during sustain

H: yeah

A: I wish there were like I wish there were like recaps every quarter to like remind us why we did it and stuff

H: that would feel good—yeah

A: that's true...but it's like to do that I feel like a solution to that would be to be involved with sustain right now but the students the current students who don't see it—it's really hard to make them see it because you're still struggling to see it in yourself right now so..

H: did you have interactions with the current sustain students?

A: yeah—I did but I kind of did like I went to some of the events but it wasn't really involved because I'm so busy so I feel so guilty for that because sustain really did change me and inspire me because if it wasn't for sustain I actually wouldn't have come back after—like after my freshman years, but I came back, so...I don't know.

H: Really? You you would not have come back?

A: I would have not come back. Because if it was just like the regular school year just like going to class, I probably wouldn't have come back because it was just such have been like boring and I wouldn't have seen my intrinsic motivation to push me through...

H: Yeah

[pause]

H: when you look back on that experience—what else do you think about still?

A: I feel like the sense of community was really helpful like especially like that was cause like college like there's like so many aspects of college but like you always need that like ground sense of community and like with check in and check out was really helpful and like now like not being in sustain we don't have like that grounded sense of community like I mean we do when we see each other on campus but like it's not as strong as it used to be or like okay we go to class and I know everyone in the class and I can chat with people but you have to fight—I mean you can fight it with friends and everything, but you can only, like—because your friends have like different passions but in sustain we all had similar passions like to make the world a sustainable place—but it's like really hard when like when your friends like have like different passions and you conflict sometimes so like that sense of community that with sustain we shared the same passion was really good—and that's what I miss actually

H: mmhhmm

A: so yeah...

H: I hadn't thought of it that way—you'd think I would've but I hadn't thought of it that way...that we had some nice...kind of agreements there, didn't we?

A: yeah..and it was also, I was really motivated to see like the other group projects and see what they're doing because like it motivated us but as students it's like oh—teachers will be like 'oh this student got an A' okay—good for them—they got an A, but I also need this A, like as well, but with sustain it was like everyone was going through the struggle together it was like we're in this together.

H: Oh—say more about that—that difference—I wanna hear more about that

A: well, you know how we had that periodically we had that progress of presentations, like the presentations about community projects, and when people shared that they actually had troubles within their community projects it was actually it was really helpful because like okay, we also have these troubles and other groups are having troubles but usually in the regular traditional classroom you only see the end product of a group project and that's it—but you never see like the progress of the struggles

H: mmmmm

A: so you feel like the other groups are always doing better than you—but they might be having the same struggles and in sustain we saw that...like, so...

H: yes.

Sustain Interview Project

██████████ (A) interviewed by ██████████ (H)

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[pause]

H: that's good stuff...what else? Just keep talking!

[laughing]

A: Well...

H: I kinda want to ask you about your inquiry project because that was so powerful, I mean to have done as a freshman to have ...from what somebody on the outside would think that you just kinda wrote a long report but that it—we know that it was something different than that—that it got, that it found its way into the hands of the president of the university and that he called you up for lunch—what—tell me about that experience for you.

A: I mean—it was a good experience, but, I don't know..I feel it was really eye-opening like for—if it wasn't for that, if it wasn't for your class I don't think I would've found that strength to make—like to make change in the world, like..like I wouldn't have found that like—cause you, I mean with sustain we did have, like we did have, like, each other's support, but it was just like sometimes with that extra push, you know, in classes with that extra push, to show that we could actually do something to change, so it was really, it was really helpful, so . . .

H: What was that like that because I felt like I saw you do...that was just a phenomenally gutsy project that you did—I mean that, you know the class was just the container—it was just the opportunity—but what—I don't want you to talk about. It it I don't felt like my presence there was mostly what made the difference, like—how did it help you have the guts to do that.

A: I feel like you just gave us to do like—to explore what we really cared about, and like teachers only usually give us the opportunity within such a ten week period, it's just like okay '10 weeks, we have to learn this and then we're done'—but you gave us the opportunity to do that so that like the fact we had the opportunity was amazing

H: Did you feel afraid to do it?

A: Yeah I was afraid—it was scary...

H: Tell me about that—

A: It was scary because—

H: --I've I wanted to hear from you about this, actually

Sustain Interview Project

██████████ (A) interviewed by ██████████ (H)

Interviewed on 4/9/13

A: It was scary because you just like told us to ask a question and there's so many questions in this world to ask and when somebody tells like ask a question—what was it again? It was like you just told us to ask a question or I forgot..I forgot the prompt..like you originally gave us.

H: Well I think it..I think it was a pretty bad, vague prompt—I think it was like, uh, “Go study anything...”

A: Yeah..

H: So-- and try to find a question that you actually want to answer—maybe that's what it was...

A: Yeah.

H: about any topic

A: that's true

H: and what was your question?

A: yeah—and that was, um-- because when you say like ask a question I had so many broad topics at the beginning and then you said scope. And then you kept ton saying ‘scope scope scope scope’ and then it was like ‘scope’ is really simple, so I just chose cal poly to choose for my scope so that's like when you said like ‘scope’ like it changed things..

H: that was ██████████'s word—that was fantastic—██████████ brought that to a, um, to a team meeting and said ‘we could all share this word’—and she said it and I was like “THAT'S what they need to hear..”

A: yeah—it really was

H: I just repeated what she said

[laughing]

A: when you said scope was like I've been here for a whole year, let me write about my experiences here, so it was just like yeah ...

[pause]

H: tell me more...tell me more about the guts that it took—or about the fear—or whatever..

Sustain Interview Project

██████████ (A) interviewed by ██████████ (H)

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[pause]

A: I mean..I was really fearful of like sounding really, like, hateful towards this institutions, that's like, that was my biggest fear because it's just..because it's a great institution like —people are always saying Cal Poly's a great institution...

Just like bringing out like the holes that the institution has or like the faults that the institution has is really—it's like the elephant in the room—I don't know if that's the correct idiom

H: Yeah—it is—idiom, yeah

A: So just like bringing that out and like addressing it front on. But I don't wanna sound like in a hateful manner, yeah—Or to the extreme, like even racist towards like the white population here—so that was like my biggest fear—was to sound so hateful towards this institution and why I'm here. —and people question 'why are you here?' like why don't you just leave? So it's just also inspired me to—that's also like what inspired me to start to transfer, like the transfer process as well, so...

H: People said to you 'why don't you just leave?'

A: No like that's like what I thought like

H: --or you?

A: Thought like..

H: You were afraid they would. . . Right. I remember you saying a lot you were afraid of sounding hateful, and what strikes me about that is that you have the kindest presence—you really do—and it makes me wonder 'what's the fear about that? I don't think you're crazy, but do you feel hateful about it? And you're afraid it's gonna come out that way? Or is it something else?

A: It's just like—I was—cause you know when you're really passionate about something?

H: Yeah.

A: So like other students might not get it—like cause we got to a predominantly white institution, like if a white student read it and they don't understand my view, they'll just see that I'm being hateful in general, so that's why I was scared.

H: Yeah.

A: So...

H: How did you feel like the student response was—the white student response, in our class?

A: Well, I don't think like, well it was really interesting cause I don't think like a lot of students--cause I actually didn't post it up and I haven't like given it to other students because I don't know.. I just.. I don't know. Because like the main purpose of it was for mainly like administration to do it. But if I did give it to other students I felt like it would have made like a minuscule impact, that's why I said just to like having the white-only event or like addressing the topic of like being white at Cal Poly? So I feel like if I did tell them that, if I asked them a question, it would be interesting, but I haven't actually given it to other students to read it.

H: Okay...have you followed up with any of that all-white student event idea?

A: I gave it to the MCC, but I actually—I should follow it up, actually

H: I thought it was an amazing idea

A: Because, yeah I feel like they need to implement it. . .But actually currently I'm in uh, it's called Psych 303 it's called "intergroup dialogue"—have you heard of that one?

H: Hamm

A: Yeah—I'm currently in that class right now so I'll just like bring it up to them

H: Have you done that yet?

A: Yeah I'm in it right now, it's a really good class.

H: Have you brought up your project to them yet?

A: Oh no--not yet.

H: It would be amazing, wouldn't it?

A: I, I'll bring it out, because it's like the second week of school, so...

H: That would be fantastic—to have the chance to keep chewing on all that, you know?

A: Yeah

Sustain Interview Project

██████████ (A) interviewed by ██████████ (H)

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H: Really cool.

A: But I feel like I've given up—like the passion I had in my paper is much different than the passion I have now. Cause right now I just like I have passion about the topic, but not as much as I used to because it's like beating a like beating a dead horse, so I'm just like tired of it. I've given up.

So if I was supposed to rewrite the paper, like write about my experiences this year.

H: Why is that?

A: Because I just like kind of feel drained—by school and just because right now in my life I'm just trying to get out—I'm just trying to get my degree and go. So, other aspects I'm not trying to bother with...which is bad because like if everyone had that inspiration then the world wouldn't change—like 'I'm just trying to get my degree and go'

That's why sustain was there—is to help us like to learn that while we're getting our degree we can do other things

H: Hmmmm...I think you had an amazing impact, ██████████—you did. You did on me.

A: You too. You provided a lot.

H: It took a lot of guts for all of us I think, looking back at that, you know?

A: Yeah--You were scared cause like we didn't have..by week 5 we didn't have anything

H: I was so scared! Oh my gosh! I'm about to push stop on this recorder if you keep... Yeah. Oh yeah. It was really scary. Yeah.

A: But you really did have an impact—you really did.

H: Oh...I was talking to ██████████ and ██████████ last night and I said—you know, they were talking about—well, they were talking about something about our class and just about all sustain professors and I just said, you know, we all got to—you all experienced a freedom in that classroom, or at least that's what I hear, that's what I've been hearing from people—something—not everybody's using the word freedom, but that's what I feel like I'm hearing and, we got to experience it too as the teachers, you know I did--I got to experience an entirely different kind of freedom in the class than I've ever experienced.

A: It's true

H: Yeah.

Sustain Interview Project

██████████ (A) interviewed by ██████████ (H)

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A: Especially like freedom from an institution ...

H: Freedom from an institution? Yeah. Which, you're bringing up an interesting point there—it's like you get free from the institution but then what's your responsibility to the institution? And again I'm talking about myself here. Yeah. You know. Do we have any? I don't know...

Anything else that you think happened to you through that experience? You've said beautiful things, but I just don't want to cut you off

A: Oh no—nothing else.

H: You good? I'm gonna push stop then we can keep talking...