**Artist Statement**

The development of my project was a long but important process for me. My intention was to reach out to people, specifically single people, and let them know that dating changed during covid. I just like other researchers of this topic has come to realize that this change was positive. While it was important for me to dig deep into pandemic dating to find an answer for my audience, I was already really interested in dating itself. I always wondered what type of connection couples had, since not all relationships shared the same strength. While growing up, I’ve seen many friends, classmates, and even teachers find significant others. This always raised a question for me, how did they develop either such strong bonds or such weak bonds with their partner.

 I chose the genre of op-ed since I really had a lot to say on this topic. Relaying some type of message to people from my own research and experienced seemed interesting to do. At the same time, I believe it was one of the easiest genres to do. I wanted my message to be aimed specifically to singles, but also those already in a relationship, because I’m also in that same boat in search of the right partner for me. I felt like connecting to people about relationships was only possible from relaying your own experiences to them. Taking information from mere statistics would be boring and wouldn’t help anyones case. Before I began my research for this topic, I always spoke to my friends and asked them about their relationships. They even used to ask me for advice on how they should move on or if they even should. I lacked the wisdom of this topic since I did not have as many past romantic partners like they had. A lot of the tips I gave them came from the experience of other close ones I spoke to already about their relationships. This helped me realize that the experience someone already had is really important when it comes to connecting to someone else about dating.

 Creating this op-editorial required me to have passion for it, along with extensive research. First thing I did was find information from 3 different sources, a news article, an opinional piece, and a video/visual presentation. I find much important information, and learned plenty of new words. After that, I created a proposal, clearly stating what aspects of dating during the pandemic I wanted to touch, the audience I wanted to reach, and how I was going to put my research together in order to create an interesting and meaningful message. Creating a proposal alone wasn’t enough since I still lacked the experience of creating op-editorial’s, so I studied other op-ed’s. I analyzed the opinion artical, “I Make Video Games. I Won’t Let My Daughter Play Them,” by William Siu and used it as a mentor text. His information was really interesting since I was able to relate to the problem of his topic, but then it hit me, why was this article so good? As I read it over, I realized that the attractiveness of his article had to do with how much personal information he shared compared to how much research he included, the formatting of his article, and it’s relevance to a broad audience.

I took what I learned from this mentor text and formed an outline to resemble how I wanted to write my op-ed. After revising it plenty of times and receiving helpful comments from experienced writers, I began writing my op-ed, while always looking back at the outline. I am proud of my piece although it needed some revisions, but that is why I needed people to read and make comments in order to know my errors. I had to fix my lack of information, story telling, and share more of what I learned.

 Overall, I am proud of my work since it wasn’t an entirely easy process. I believe a lot will be able to grasp my message and use my information in order to help themselve in search for a romantic partner. I definitely have areas where I could improve on my op-ed, such as knowing how much information I should include to make what I write more interesting. But at the end of the day, I’m getting better at writing pieces that informs and inspires others and the creation of my op-ed has a lot to do with that.