

Perseverance Through Every Occasion
Extra Credit (Exam 1): Interdisciplinary Project: Defining Moments
Marta Maia - HIS1043.002 - 01/22/2021

Part 1:

“Excuse me, are you bleeding?” “No, I’m okay,” I say to my instructor as I am giving CPR to a training dummy with puss coming out of my hand every time I press down at 100-120 beats per minute. This was one of my final tests in order for me to become a lifeguard and I was not about to stop. I decided to become a lifeguard in the summer, which does not seem extremely insane from an objective standpoint, but it was one of the worst, yet exciting, moments of my life. The certification process lasted for only two weekends, but it was in April, in forty degree weather, jumping in and out of a pool. As the training was coming to an end, it was now the testing process, where we had to perform various practices, such as saves and different CPR situations and I was starting to develop a large blister on the palm of my hand. In one of the very last tests, we had to perform a save in the water, immediately assess the situation, and give CPR, in under two minutes. As I was getting out of the pool, the blister popped, and it truly felt like my hand was on fire. I still kept going and decided to finish the test, even though my hands were also purple from the cold weather and I was asked if I wanted to stop. There was an unexplainable motivation that came as I continued, and I was able to eventually complete the course. I take pride in this moment because I could have quit, but I decided to persevere. I knew that if I were to stop, I would be unable to work as a lifeguard and I would have to retake the course, which I did not want to do. This moment also made me realize that I enjoy performing various tasks that can one day save a life, leading me to consider a career in the medical field.



Lifeguard Stand

Part 2:

My paternal side of the family is from Portugal, where most of them grew up in small towns doing rural work. In a small village, called Pereiro, my great grandmother left her family in another town to go help shepherd sheep as a job, when she was only seven years old. It was common for young girls to attain jobs at this age and quit education, since household work needed to be done and money had to be made. One day while she was shepherding ewes, which are female sheep, and their lambs, a lone wolf appeared and grabbed a lamb. Immediately, my great grandmother took hold of the other side of the lamb and a tug of war ensued between her and the wolf. Eventually, the wolf gave up and my great grandmother arrived back to the village at the end of the day with the whole herd. This was a defining moment because she had never encountered a wolf before but did not want to give up the lamb, so she did what she had to do. I would consider this story to also be a defining moment in my life because I could never imagine myself fighting a wolf when I was seven years old or even now. The lifestyle that she had is vastly different compared to mine, but I noticed how we both had this overcoming sense of motivation and perseverance to complete a task even though we may want to give up. While I did not know her well, I am in awe of her strength that she had throughout her life as a Portuguese woman living in a rural village, and I hope to one day be as strong as her.



Pereiro, Portugal