

**Interview Records of Kiran Klubock Shukla  
Completed for the Black Lives Matter Oral History  
Project**



**Kiran Klubock Shukla was interviewed By Selena Piercy  
11/11/2023**

**Website:**

**[www.blmohp.sewanee.edu](http://www.blmohp.sewanee.edu)**

**Contact information:**

**[blmohp@gmail.com](mailto:blmohp@gmail.com)**

**Prepared by Andrew Quinonez**

## Table of Contents

Abstract	3
Field Notes	4-5
Transcription	6-15

## **ABSTRACT – Kiran Klubock-Shukla**

Narrator: Kiran Klubock-Shukla

Interviewer: Selena Piercy

Date: November 11, 2023

Location: Sewanee, Tennessee

Length: 25 minutes

Kiran Klubock-Shukla was born in New York City, New York, raised in Charlottesville, Virginia and is currently a junior at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. The interview begins with Klubock-Shukla talking about his community at his local synagogue as a camp counselor and teacher to young children. He currently is involved in the music community as a violinist. He also discusses the differences between where he was raised and where he currently resides, as Providence is a much more racially diverse area than Charlottesville.

In July and August of 2017, members of the alt-right movement and Ku Klux Klan marched in Charlottesville as a counter-protest to the Black Lives Matter movement, despite the majority of residents not participating in these alt-right riots. He believes the alt-right community chose to hold the rally in Charlottesville because the city was one of the first to begin the process of removing statues that honored leaders of the Confederacy. Because of these two events in 2017, residents of Charlottesville further emphasized their unwavering support for the Black Live Matter movement when it gained a lot more traction in the United States in 2020 through protests and displaying lawn signs. Klubock-Shukla believes the movement succeeded in raising awareness of the racial segregation still occurring in Charlottesville neighborhoods and allowed people of color a space to voice their grievances. On the other hand, he believes that the movement failed because the organization for Black Lives Matter did not reflect the goals of the general supporters of the movement. Kiran has noticed that some things have changed since 2020, like officers who murdered Black people are being held accountable for their actions, but he also expressed concerns about the rise of anti-semitism because of people conflating that with anti-Black racism. He hopes to see a future of anti-racism on all fronts.

## **Field Notes-Kiran Klubock-Shukla**

Narrator: Kiran Klubock-Shukla

Interviewer: Selena Piercy

Date: November 11, 2023

Location: Zoom call (Interviewer in Sewanee, TN and narrator in Providence, RI)

**Narrator:** Kiran Klubock-Shukla is a junior at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. He was born in New York City, New York and was raised for most of his life in Charlottesville, Virginia. Klubock-Shukla was a resident of Charlottesville at the time of the alt-right rallies that occurred in response to the Black Lives Matter movement and stays well-informed on social matters through various news outlets. His future plans are to go to medical school and become a doctor.

**Interviewer:** Selena Piercy is a student at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee. She is a junior psychology major and women's and gender studies minor. She was raised in Knoxville, Tennessee and currently resides in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Her future plans are to attend graduate school to become a clinical psychologist.

**Description of the Interview:** This interview was conducted in a Zoom meeting with the interviewee in Providence, RI and the interviewer in Sewanee, TN. The meeting is split in two parts because the time limit was reached for the first call, so another call was started to finish the interview. The Zoom call was recorded using the interviewer's MacBook Pro. The interviewer

also moved locations twice within her dorm throughout the interview. The interview lasted about 25 minutes.

This transcript was exported on Dec 07, 2023 - view latest version [here](#).

Selena ([00:02](#)):

Okay, this is Selena Piercy from Sewanee, the University of the South. It is Saturday, November 11th, 2023, and it is 2:41 PM, and I am here with,

Kiran ([00:17](#)):

My name is Kiran Klubock-Shukla.

Selena ([00:20](#)):

And where are you joining us from today?

Kiran ([00:23](#)):

I'm in Providence, Rhode Island at the moment.

Selena ([00:26](#)):

Awesome. Thank you, Kiran, for being here. So we're just going to lay some groundwork with some general questions. Our first question is, where are you originally from?

Kiran ([00:37](#)):

I was born in New York, New York City, but I've lived most of my life in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Selena ([00:45](#)):

Great. And how is where you currently live different from where you were raised in Charlottesville?

Kiran ([00:56](#)):

Providence is definitely, I think, ethnically quite different, demographically quite different. I would say Providence is about 40-45% Hispanic, Spanish speaking, and that's not at all true for Charlottesville. Charlottesville has, I think, around 15-20% Latino population and has a much larger African-American population. I think also Providence is actually a much poorer city than Charlottesville. But yeah, I think those are the main differences. Obviously Providence is a larger city. I think it's about four times as large as Charlottesville.

Selena ([01:41](#)):

Wow, that is very interesting. So where would you say you found community as a child?

Kiran ([01:52](#)):

Yeah, sure. I think I lived for most of my life. I lived about two blocks from the synagogue. From the synagogue in our community. And while I'm not observant at all, I spent summers going to summer camp there. I worked as a preschool counselor and preschool teacher at the synagogue. So I think that's the Jewish community of Charlottesville is one that I feel quite connected and close to.

Selena ([02:22](#)):

Yeah. Awesome. And where do you find community today?

Kiran ([02:32](#)):

Page 1 of 8

Kiran Klubock-Shukla (Completed 11/19/23)

Transcript by [Rev.com](#)

This transcript was exported on Dec 07, 2023 - view latest version [here](#).

I would say in Providence, where I go to college, I find community in the different activities. I participate in, specifically in music is a community that I feel classical music is something that I feel I've made a lot of connections and a strong community in.

Selena ([02:54](#)):

Awesome. That is lovely. So you said that are a college student in Rhode Island. How did you get to this point? What was your journey to this role?

Kiran ([03:10](#)):

Yeah, I mean, I chose to go to Brown. I was lucky enough to get in. I'm a junior now, currently, so that is kind of how I made my way up here.

Selena ([03:26](#)):

Awesome. And who inspires you?

Kiran ([03:36](#)):

I would say my parents, but that's a little bit cliché. I would say, honestly, someone who I've been thinking about a lot who inspires me is the cellist, Yo-Yo, because he's someone who is an incredible musician, but he's also leveraged his musical abilities and talents in incredibly diverse ways. He's connected with, I mean, relevant to this interview. He's connected with so many communities, disadvantaged communities that hadn't been exposed or to classical music and to music and has played all kinds of music, hasn't limited himself to just classical music, is played bluegrass, jazz, all kinds of music. So that's kind of an ideal for me, is using one's career and skillset to kind of be incredibly expansive in different ways. I dunno, someone I,

Selena ([04:38](#)):

Yeah, I love Yo-Yo Ma. So that's a very interesting person to say. I don't think considering your parents an inspiration isn't that cliché, but I think it's wonderful that you can consider them good role models. What makes them inspiring to you? What traits do they have?

Kiran ([04:59](#)):

My parents? Yeah. I would say they're both incredibly selfless people, I would say. And that is incredibly inspiring to me, both selfless towards their children, but also towards everyone around them. I really feel like that's something I want to emulate in my life.

Selena ([05:28](#)):

Awesome. Thank you for sharing that. Let's see. What sorts of traveling have you done in your lifetime?

Kiran ([05:39](#)):

What do you mean international traveling or

Selena ([05:42](#)):

Just any travel?

Page 2 of 8

Kiran Klubock-Shukla (Completed 11/19/23)

Transcript by [Rev.com](#)

This transcript was exported on Dec 07, 2023 - view latest version [here](#).

Kiran ([05:48](#)):

You want me to list where I've been?

Selena ([05:51](#)):

I mean, yeah,

Kiran ([05:53](#)):

Sure. I suppose. Yeah. I mean, I was born in New York, lived in Virginia, lived in Virginia for most of my life. Now I live in Providence. I haven't actually really been, I've only been a couple of times to the West Coast. I've been to a few places in Latin America. Been to Europe a couple times. Yeah, that's about it.

Selena ([06:23](#)):

Awesome. Okay, great. So I think we can now get into the meat of the interview. So first question is how do you receive the news?

Kiran ([06:38](#)):

That's a good question. I unfortunately receive most of it from Google News. Yeah. When I'm at home, I read the newspaper, we get the newspaper, the hard copy, but I'm mostly dependent on Google News or the New York Times for most of my news at this point.

Selena ([07:02](#)):

Awesome. And why would you say that it's unfortunate to receive your news from Google?

Kiran ([07:07](#)):

Well, Google News tailors the news for each person so that you get more and more as you progress stories that Google thinks you will and end up you do find interesting. So you kind of surround yourself in this echo chamber of your own making that doesn't really give you access to different viewpoints or



different media sources that Google thinks you wouldn't be interested in, but could be very valuable. So I'm trying to get away from that, but I don't know if there's a solution to that.

Selena ([07:43](#)):

Yeah, it's kind of hard whenever you just keep getting stuff to reaffirm all of your biases. It feels good to just hear, oh yeah, I am. Right. And all of these kind events, but, okay, interesting. And what about social media? What's your experience with that?

Kiran ([08:05](#)):

I do Instagram, Snapchat. It's got the new one, elapse. Have you gotten that?

Selena ([08:16](#)):

No,

Kiran ([08:18](#)):

It's really good. It's like be real, but more interesting. I don't know. Anyways, but I would say I'm not, oh, and I'm on TikTok. Yeah, I'm also on TikTok, I would say. Yeah, my relationship with social media is, yeah,

Page 3 of 8

Kiran Klubock-Shukla (Completed 11/19/23)

Transcript by [Rev.com](#)

This transcript was exported on Dec 07, 2023 - view latest version [here](#).

I mean, the endless scrolling on TikTok and Instagram reels is definitely a bit unfortunate and something I'm guilty of, but I'm not the biggest social media user, I would say.

Selena ([08:47](#)):

Yeah, that's so fair. I am also a victim to doom scrolling a good amount of the time. I get that. Okay. Actually, I'm going to change locations really quick because I'm in my room, so I'm going to turn my camera off. One second. Okay. Sorry about that. Thank you for your patience. Okay. How did you first encounter the Black Lives Matter movement?

Kiran ([09:34](#)):

I think my first time encountering it was seeing lawn signs, Black Lives Matter, lawn signs. And then of course, during the protests in, I guess it was the summer of 2020 was when the first massive wave of Black Lives Matter protests were. And so yeah, I was in those protests in summer of 2020. Yeah, I suppose, I mean, I think my community had been, and I think this is one of the reasons that I was chosen for this interview, is my community went through a pretty traumatic situation in 2017, I believe, which was a alt-right? First, a Ku Klux Klan, Ku Klux Klan protest in June, and then in August, an alt-right protest riot, really, that took the lives of a counter protestor. And so after that, my city really had a reckoning with kind of racial issues that ended up culminating in Black Lives Matter, the movement, but had been kind of really discussed intensely for a couple of years leading up to summer 2020.

Selena ([11:04](#)):

Yeah, that is a loaded response. Yeah. So one of the questions I was going to ask later was what was your community's reaction to the Black Lives Matter movement? But it seems like there were a lot of different reactions considering the BLM signs and yards, and then on the other hand, alt-right. Protests and stuff. Would you care to talk a little bit more about your experiences in protests?

Kiran ([11:36](#)):

Yeah, I mean, I think Charlottesville, the dynamic was a bit tricky because Charlottesville itself, I would say has suffered for many years from intense discrimination, racism. But the city itself at this point in history is quite liberal, mainly due to the influence of the University of Virginia, which is kind of at the nucleus of the city. But so it's quite liberal, and I think especially after 2017, there was this sentiment that this is not us. And it wasn't because during the riots, it was all bad actors from other places, all the alt-right? Protestors, none of them were from Charlottesville, not a single one was from Charlottesville. None of the Ku Klux Klan, none of the alt-Right. So there was really a feeling, I think especially in summer of 2020, this city is like, we are so eager to demonstrate that this city is not a place of hate or division, even though it's come seen in the media as a place of absolute discord and destruction. So I think there was just an incredibly strong response in summer. I think this is the right year, right? Am I right? Summer 2020 was the big year.

([13:05](#)):

So in 2020, I think we just was a massive outpouring of support for the Black Lives Matter movement from Charlottesville.

Selena ([13:14](#)):

Page 4 of 8

Kiran Klubock-Shukla (Completed 11/19/23)

Transcript by [Rev.com](#)

This transcript was exported on Dec 07, 2023 - view latest version [here](#).

That is a lot. I feel like, I don't know, you have a very interesting perspective just being from a place, the majority of the people who do live in Charlottesville, like you said, were not on the side of the alt-Right. People, but that's like, why did they come to Charlottesville to do something like that?

Kiran ([13:39](#)):

Yeah, I mean, still, we're still a bit confused about why that happened, but it was prompted, Charlottesville was one of the first cities to start a process to take down our Confederate statues. We have two in very prominent parks of, or had thankfully had to Lee and Jackson, Robert Lee, and Stonewall Jackson. And we began the process to remove them from these parks that had, historically, they were whites only parks. They were incredible monuments to racism. They'd been installed, actually not at right after the Civil War, but in the 1910s and twenties, I believe, when the Jim Crow kind of era was really growing in strength. And there was all this interest in rewriting the history of the Confederacy and the Civil War. So they were erected at a time of incredible racism. So we decided, the city decided to start the process of trying to remove them in, I think, early 2017. And so the Alt-right, Klux first, the Ku

Klux Klan got wind of that. We were trying to remove these statues, and I think they were based, I don't want to say Tennessee, but I may have heard Tennessee.

Selena ([15:07](#)):

They are probably,

Kiran ([15:09](#)):

Yeah, I'm sorry.

Selena ([15:10](#)):

That's where it started.

Kiran ([15:13](#)):

But they got wind of it. So they came and did a little demonstration, and then the Alt-right, also got wind of it, and they came in massive force. So that was kind of why Charlotte--why Charlottesville, I suppose.

Selena ([15:28](#)):

Yeah, very interesting and unfortunate. Has the Black Lives Matter movement affected how you talk with your family and friends?

Kiran ([15:46](#)):

The movement itself?

Selena ([15:48](#)):

Yeah.

Kiran ([15:49](#)):

Yeah, I would say, yeah. I mean, I would say there's definitely a larger consciousness of, I mean, I think the black, I mean you're talking, I think a little bit, the movement and the organization are, I don't know, definitely two different things we or we deal with differently. We discuss differently. I mean, obviously

Page 5 of 8

Kiran Klubock-Shukla (Completed 11/19/23)

Transcript by [Rev.com](#)

This transcript was exported on Dec 07, 2023 - view latest version [here](#).

the movement where there was nothing but support from Charlottesville, and I think the organization as well, I mean, yeah, it just brought greater attention to these really crucial issues, I feel like is the biggest thing.

Selena ([16:44](#)):

Yeah, for sure. I guess going more in depth about raising awareness, a lot of people think that's the way that the movement has succeeded in its efforts. How do you think the Black Lives Matter movement has

succeeded in their mission?

Kiran ([17:07](#)):

Yeah, I mean, I think in Charlottesville is part of the history I mentioned of just Charlottesville is a city where it's on one side of the train tracks where the white people and on the other side of the train tracks, where the black people and that legacy today has resulted in these incredibly beautiful affluent neighborhoods. And then these quite rundown public run projects divided really by these train tracks. So it's just kind of horribly and incredibly stark division. And I think the Black Lives Matter, especially in Charlottesville, really let out to the surface the incredible resentment and oppression that African Americans in Charlottesville were feeling post, sure. Post 2017, but really post 2020, there really became, and there's still this day, there's a real strife in Charlottesville City's government to the point where they had to call in outside mediators because the city was so dysfunctional, because basically these movements, these social movements had brought to the surface this incredible resentment and anger quite justified that black residents had been feeling for many, many decades, but had really been under the surface in a lot of ways. I think. So I think one way that the Black Lives Matter movement really changed things in Charlottesville.

Selena ([18:50](#)):

Yeah, for sure. That is, yeah. Thank you for that. And then on the other end of the spectrum, how do you think the movement has failed?

Kiran ([19:07](#)):

That's interesting. I think this is not all something that I feel competent to speak on, but I will say that I think there are ways in which the organization and the movement began to, I don't know, maybe split off is not the way, I think there were ways in which people universally agreed with the concepts of the movement and the organization, Black Lives Matter, people didn't always agree with every single thing, every single belief and tenet of the organization, Black Lives Matter. And I think that was tricky, that there was this conflation that there was a movement called Black Lives Matter, and it was spearheaded by this organization, but the organization didn't necessarily represent the interests of every single person in the movement. Black Lives Matter. So I think that difficulty or that kind of tension, if you will, if Will was maybe, I don't know, definitely created some interesting dynamics, I think.

Selena ([20:29](#)):

Yeah, for sure. And actually, that leads us right into the next question. What is the state of race relations in the United States, in your opinion?

Kiran ([20:44](#)):

Oh, wow. Specific race relations in general,

Page 6 of 8

Kiran Klubock-Shukla (Completed 11/19/23)

Transcript by [Rev.com](#)

This transcript was exported on Dec 07, 2023 - view latest version [here](#).

Selena ([20:55](#)):

However you'd like to interpret that question. I mean, we've been talking about how the movement, I mean, is clearly centered around the lives of black people. So we could talk about that, or just in general, whatever thoughts you have.

Kiran ([21:12](#)):

Yeah, I think things have definitely changed since 2020, though. I just saw that the two police officers were just acquitted in the trial or of Elijah McCain or in their trials against, in that murder of Elijah McCain. So it's just still going on that police officers aren't facing responsibility for their actions. Yeah. I mean, I would say mean, not to change t, but, and I don't know if this is relevant to the project, but something I've been really thinking about lately is antisemitism, especially because that got really conflated with anti-black racism, especially in Charlottesville, but has in so many different ways.

([22:06](#)):

And yeah, antisemitism is totally on the rise. There's so many forms of racism that are on the rise. The thing I think about the most with regard to this is just how can we be intersectional about our resistance to racism? There was definitely some things that disturbed me when Kyrie Irving or Kanye West was putting out views that were quite antisemitic, or Kyrie was associated with an organization that was quite antisemitic. God. Now I can't remember the name of the organization he was supporting, but it was this really, oh, the black Hebrew Israelite, Israelite. Have you heard about them?

Selena ([23:02](#)):

I have not.

Kiran ([23:04](#)):

It's a very problematic organization. But anyway, so I think just when I think about race relations today, I think my hope is that we can find ways that are to all be allies together in the fighting against racism.

Selena ([23:21](#)):

Right. Okay. Awesome. I have one last question, but the Zoom call is about to end. Can I send you a new link and Yeah,

Kiran ([23:28](#)):

Yeah. For sure, for sure.

Selena ([23:29](#)):

Okay, thank you. Okay, so last question. What do you think is the future of Black Lives Matter? Or what are your hopes?

Kiran ([23:46](#)):

For the movement?

Selena ([23:48](#)):

Yeah,

Kiran Klubock-Shukla (Completed 11/19/23)

Transcript by [Rev.com](#)

This transcript was exported on Dec 07, 2023 - view latest version [here](#).

Kiran ([23:54](#)):

Yeah. I suppose kind of what I said before is I think my hope is that we can find ways to really have, I mean, yeah, just to have these movements coalesce and work together to fight racism on all fronts, whether that be antisemitism or xenophobia, like anti-Asian racism. Really just make work to strengthen our coalitions, our anti-racist coalitions in the United States, I think is my hope.

Selena ([24:33](#)):

Right. Awesome. Well, I think I'm out of questions, but do you have any final thoughts that you'd like to share? Anything you wish you spoke more about?

Kiran ([24:45](#)):

No, I think that was good.

Selena ([24:47](#)):

Okay, lovely. Well, thank you for joining us today for this interview and being part of this project. We appreciate you.

Kiran ([24:56](#)):

Thank you, Selena.

Kiran Klubock-Shukla (Completed 11/19/23)  
Transcript by [Rev.com](https://www.rev.com)