Kasey

Part of the reason I'd like to have this interview with you is because of your experience with elearning, online learning environments. What platforms or programs have you used before and in what contexts?

So could you please explain your experience.

J.

I took an online course, an AQ course in Indigenous Studies. A lot of the material was done pretty much almost through email, but there were a few times where we did live chats, where we'd have talking circles. I can't remember what the program was, but it was more along the sense we were typing, we weren't speaking with one another, and we never saw face-to-face, but so that was pretty much how we worked in the online world regarding those group chats.

We were doing smaller group work. We tried to do something very similar, but again it's that ... I found it to be very sterile and very cold. The fact that we were taking an Indigenous Studies course, which is supposed to be about relationships, and it's supposed to be about one-to-one and getting to know the people that you're working with and the downside that I found with the elearning, all those platforms, was that they were very cold and they kinda run contradictory to what we were supposed to be learning about.

Kasey

What insights, if any, did you gain by being part of that environment?

J.

I realized how far behind the technology I am, and how much I need to learn to kinda bring myself closer to the twenty-first century. Whether the fact that I'm not necessarily comfortable with this material I guess, in many ways, is irrelevant because learning is going in this direction and I think that we have to start to embrace it, and maybe try to find ways around those areas that we feel maybe are not comfortable or feel that make it kinda of sterile. How do we make it of a more human type of environment?

I think, for me, if the online world had existed when I went to university a very, very long time ago, I probably would not have finished because I found that in, taking online courses and being in that environment, deadlines didn't seem to be as hard fixed. When you're in a classroom, you know when you have to be in the classroom, you know when the class is going to end. Whereas, with the ecourses, I'm not saying that there weren't deadlines, it was just that we weren't expected to be in a certain environment at a certain time every week.

Kasey
Do you think there would be a benefit to having an elearning environment where you did gather as a classroom, at this time, on this date?

J.
Yes I do. I think that would probably make it a little bit easier for groups to come together. But I think it kinda to me, and again I could be wrong on this, it kinda, that idea contradicts the whole idea behind elearning because I, elearning is supposed to be about providing a convenient environment for people that may not have that ability to be in that classroom at 9 o'clock in the morning 'til 10:30 and so on and so forth. And I mean, the other beauty of taking the course online was, I was taking this course with people who were from all over the province of Ontario, so as a platform it was great because you got to see, I won't say hear because we never spoke, we always typed our responses in, but you got to see the sort of the world view or views of other people in other parts of the province.

So that's one, I guess talking about pluses versus minuses, that's a huge plus, that environment certainly can allow people from different areas who may never, ever have been able to sort of come together actually come together. But yeah, going back to that other question, I, for me yes, there's that, you kinda need that structure, you need to know this is when you're going to meet and so on and so forth. But again, I understand that might kind of contradict the whole idea behind the convenience of learning in, through the environment.

Kasey
What role if any do you see that the library would have in an elearning environment?

J.
Oh man. I think there's a number of roles.

I mean I think that, my experience, is here at Notre Dame but also with my daughter who's a librarian in this local municipality, is that there seems to be a little bit more cutting edge in the e-environment or this environment than we'd say would find in the classroom. And I'm not saying that teachers don't have the same experience and don't the same knowledge, but I think that the library is a great spot, or that environment is a great spot, to kinda act in some ways maybe as an educator to help people through that comfort zone in some ways. Talking to, talking to Kasey (here) and taking to my daughter, I was also able to kind of find better ways or easier ways to navigate my way around through some of the different platforms that are available to us in the e-world. I also think that this idea that maybe, that going into ebooks and that will sort of diminish the library's usefulness, I think that should be a fallacy, I think that should enhance and should provide a better, provide more opportunities for people to use a library environment.

Kasey
Thank you very much for your time.

J.
You're welcome.