

Webinar 'Women pioneers of online learning'

Organised by [FLANZ](#) and [ODLAA](#), presented by Dr Susan Bainbridge and Dr Norine Wark, authors of 'The Encyclopedia of Female Pioneers of Online Learning' on 8 March 2023.

The [recording](#) is available on YouTube.

Bill Simmalavong 00:04

But my name is Bill Simmalavong. I'm filling in for Dr Dawn Gilmore. So just a short little background on me. I lead the team here at RMIT Online where we build capabilities in our online teachers. Very much excited to host on International Women's Day, for ODLAA and FLANZ, a showcase of women in online learning. So I've got an amazing sort of panel today. Dr Susan Bainbridge was a sessional instructor of distance education in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Athabasca University in Canada, and with the center of Lifelong Learning at Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg, Germany. I've also done Dr Norine Wark with with us as well today, a freelance researcher, writer, and consultant in the field of distance education.

Bill Simmalavong 00:56

So both will be speaking about their incredible book 'The Encyclopedia of Female Pioneers of Online Learning,' landmark book is the first volume to explore the lives and scholarship women who have prominently advanced online learning.

Bill Simmalavong 01:12

Before I throw in to Bettina, I'd love to do an acknowledgement of country. So here at RMIT University, we acknowledge the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation as the traditional landowners of the land on which the university stands. RMIT University respectfully recognises elders both past and present. Turning it over to you, Bettina for...

Bettina Schwenger 01:40

Thank you, thank you, Bill for opening us up. So, karakia, a welcome from New Zealand. Kia hora te marino. Kia whakapapa pounamu te moana Hei huarahi mā tātou i te rangi nei. Aroha atu. Aroha mai. Tātou i ā tātou katoa. Hui ā! Tāiki ē! And in a nutshell, this is to welcome you into the space with Norine and Susan and thank you so much for joining us over to you, Susan and Norine.

Susan Bainbridge 02:19

Hi everyone, and thanks again for taking the time to be with us today or for listening to the recording in the future. We'd like to talk with you today about how a little passing thought can turn into a massive four year project. I'm going to quickly offer an overview of the book and particularly address the purpose, scope, and layout. Then we'll offer a few samplings of excerpts from a couple of the interviews to give you a feel for the fascinating info contained in the 30 interviews. Norine will then briefly discuss our data analysis and findings and end with our conclusion, and then on to a discussion with all of you who are here today. So, we begin with a brief discussion and overview. We'll first offer a short trailer of the book.

Susan Bainbridge 05:23

As with all ideas and research, this project started as a small seed. I had noticed in my facilitating of graduate courses in digital and online learning that my students were not citing any women with any seminal works or early research in online learning. By early I mean, the 1970s or 1980s. They were well aware of the 'fathers' of online learning, but not the 'mothers'. I have to smile here because I think it is obvious why we did not use this term 'mothers'. There is still quite obvious yet subliminal differences in these terms, isn't there? Anyway, I called Norine to chat, and I actually think that the initial chat was about something else, but I mentioned this observation to her. Then we actually wondered if perhaps there weren't any early female researchers in the field, as it would have been quite technical back then, and they were different times, and perhaps there simply hadn't been any women working with any online learning ideas before computers were in almost all our homes.

Susan Bainbridge 06:31

So we decided to open a work in an Excel sheet and to each start looking for any women active in those two decades. When we met again to talk a few weeks later, we looked at our document together and realised, yes, there were women looking at the potential of online learning then. Our ideas quickly morphed from some type of research paper to a book. When we realised that most of the women were still with us, and what if we actually interviewed them and use the interviews as our primary source? Really, honestly, we were not sure what we were creating [laughs] at that point, but we quickly realised our first goal should be to capture the voices of these women as soon as we could, and decide later what we would do with the interviews.

Susan Bainbridge 07:20

But finding the women and setting up the interviews was no simple pass. I could tell a story about almost each woman. But when it comes to literally finding them, I'll only give one example today. I was looking for Erin Keough out of Newfoundland. I tried to Google search first and couldn't find

anything with contact details. So I emailed Memorial University Department of Ed but to no avail. Then I thought, well, perhaps someone in the medical department might know her since her project had been with both the education and medical departments. A very kind executive assistant responded with "No, I don't know her. But I think a brother of a friend of mine in the Registrar's Office may." Long story short, after more than a few emails [laughs], I was told that someone would call her and give her my email. Erin responded, and we set up an interview. For many of the women it was a similar situation in finding them. But I met lots of interesting, kind people along the way, and it was actually so satisfying when I was able to overcome the challenges and find them.

Susan Bainbridge 08:30

We began interviewing November of 2018 and completed in March of 2019. We decided that Norine would interview all of the participants to keep our work as consistent as possible. Once we began interviewing, we asked each interviewee who else they had worked with in the early days. They offered some names we had but also some new names. After the interview, I would contact the interviewee again and asked if they could help me with contact details for anyone they mentioned that I could not find. So the more women we interviewed the easier it became to find the others. Sadly, there were some who had already passed away or were too ill to participate. We determined not to write about those women who could not tell us in their own voice about their experiences as we wanted primary sources only. There were also some who declined our invitation and still others who did not respond after multiple attempts to contact them. They were mentioned in our index, as they were mentioned in various interviews as pioneers. So at least in the future, if someone's using our encyclopedias a resource, the book will lead to the names of women we didn't have the opportunity to speak with.

Susan Bainbridge 09:52

Our initial purpose was simply to learn ourselves about any early female pioneers in online learning out of a natural interest and then to expand the general knowledge of others in our field. As time went on, and we learned about the valuable contributions and seminal work of these women, it became more of a passion. And as of today, we are truly committed to introducing everyone in our field to the experiences and research of these particular trailblazers.

Susan Bainbridge 10:23

Norine is going to speak about the methodology and data specifically, but I did want to mention that we did not come to this project as radical or Marxist feminists. We were not angry at any particular system, just curious about whether there were any female pioneers in online learning. I suppose in a sense, we have also learned a great deal about feminism itself. We didn't ask any

specific questions about gender issues in our interview, but the topic certainly came up in many of the conversations. Just as you can't lump any large group into one and generalise, the same is true of our participants.

Susan Bainbridge 11:04

The fact that there were so few well known female pioneers in online learning was attributed to many different reasons. But it was just the times. Women didn't go into technology and sciences back then. Some never mentioned gender and spoke well of many men they worked with, while others were more actively involved in feminist movements, such as the WIN Movement in ICDE years ago.

Susan Bainbridge 11:30

It is interesting that most of the discussions fell under the challenges they faced over the years. Again, when we asked "What were the challenges you faced over the years?" not coming from specifically a feminist emphasis, we expected stories of tech issues, etc. But this is where many of the participants began to speak about gender issues. I suppose readers will take away various ideas from the book, depending on their perspective, as you can find various types of feminist viewpoints within the content.

Susan Bainbridge 12:05

Sadly, we lost two of our participants after their interviews, but before the project was complete, Chere Gibson and Chandra Gunawardena. We ensured that their families were introduced to the book, and it truly warmed our hearts to receive messages from their spouses and children, thanking us for introducing their years of work to others.

Susan Bainbridge 12:29

The book begins with a wonderful and supportive foreword by Marty Cleveland-Innes. We thank Marty sincerely for her taking the time to review the book and write the foreword. We also want to thank Lisa Blanche, and Sir John Daniel for their recommendations that they each wrote for the book, as well as our editor at Routledge, Dan Schwartz, whose enthusiasm and assistance really kept us on track.

Susan Bainbridge 12:55

Chapter one is a brief overview of the impetus for the creation of the book. Then chapter two to 31 are single chapters on each pioneer. We hope the book is laid out in such a way that when a reader finishes one chapter on one of the pioneers, it's very clear that each woman's chapter is in the same format. It is a reference book and not particularly a book that you'd sit down to read

through. Each of the pioneers' chapters contains all their published work, which will save those interested an enormous amount of time in finding their work. And also quickly shows the reader all the amazing research for each woman, to hopefully increase reference and citations to their works.

Susan Bainbridge 13:38

I already noticed my students citing these women in their work. I've had doctoral students telling me, although they were nearing the end of their research, they were astonished to admit they did not know any of the work of these women until the book was published. And I recently had a graduate student tell me that he was embarrassed to think he was almost finished, a master's in digital and online learning, and hadn't been aware of these female researchers until the book was published.

Susan Bainbridge 14:07

As we work with the words of these female pioneers, it struck us how quickly we had moved in the last five decades. We could only vaguely remember some of the tools and platforms they were working with 40 years ago. I can only imagine how fascinating this book will be in 40 or 50 years to a young scholar who sits down to listen to a few of the interviews, it will seem like ancient history. Imagine having the words of these pioneers captured forever. There are two important aspects to this encyclopedia. One I have covered bringing these female pioneers to light and acknowledging the contributions, which we hope makes it a valuable resource and to the other is the study itself. The actual data collected and analysed which Norine will now address.

Norine Wark 15:02

Thank you, Susan. First, I'd like to treat everyone to some pioneers' reflections.

Helen Farley (recorded) 15:15

Since 14, he has been out of prison for months. So for him to say, who knows he won't be back in is huge. And he is unrecognisable as a person he used to be. I'm so proud of him. And I have so many stories like that. So it's just really worth taking the time and finding ways to overcome those challenges because the difference that makes in people's lives is just unbelievable, and particularly so when we're talking about prisoners. It just enables that education, that distance learning helps them to reimagine a new life for themselves and for their family. So totally worth putting the work into.

Theresa Koroivulaono (recorded) 16:24

Well, the biggest one for me, particularly coming from these large ocean states or small island developing states, is equitable education opportunity, so the opportunity to create learning experiences, despite the many challenges we have here, particularly with regard to resources and the continuity of those resources. You can send about out at the beginning of the year or the middle of the year, whenever it goes out with the kinds of materials that students need to advance the learning or to even engage with their learning. But there's no guarantee sometimes that the boat or the plane will fly.

Louise Moran (recorded) 17:16

And that was about parity of esteem. Because in Australia, where distance education has always been, almost always been, a dual mode passes of universities and colleges and schools, or school systems, the achieving of an acceptance that it was not a secondary form of education. If you couldn't see your teacher, or you couldn't see your students that certainly in Australia and I know in Canada too, was considered by many traditional educators to be a very second rate form of education and at Deakin [University], we deliberately set out to adopt adapt the British Open University model, which put a premium on the quality of the distance learning materials themselves, and on the teaching approaches that went with them. And we went to a huge amount of trouble over extended periods of time to improve ourselves in the rather smitty univercity environment that we were living in.

Norine Wark 18:39

Now, let's look at some research findings and conclusions. Our findings from the qualitative thematic analysis of the pioneers' interviews yielded 14 parent codes. 10 of these parent codes were overtly tied to an interview question. The parent code background was generated from four interview questions, which helps to explain why this code yielded so much discussion. Three parent codes were not overtly tied to any interview question. Shown in red here, these codes were benefits of distance education, career history, and general gender related comments.

Norine Wark 19:18

What was most interesting to note is that although we asked the pioneers about the challenges that they faced in the field, no interview question directly or indirectly asked about the benefits of distance education. Yet pioneers talked more about the benefits than they did the challenges. The most prevalent theme arising from benefits of distance education was social justice. In fact, social justice was the prime motivator for all of the pioneers.

Norine Wark 19:51

We also explored possible reasons for the under representation of female pioneers in the literature. For instance, we reviewed citation patterns between male and female academics. We considered STEM and corporate findings wherein we discovered, generally speaking, men are better at self promotion. And the possibility of the Matilda effect in our field was also debated because it's been identified in STEM and other academic fields. In a nutshell, the Matilda Effect is the lack of recognition or under representation of women's contributions to a given field.

Norine Wark 20:30

The book concludes with some implications for stakeholders. For example, there's a need to re-examine the importance of technology in online learning. The emergent theme of social justice underscores a basic tenet of distance education, that is distance education strives relentlessly to offer education for all. Finally, identification and acknowledgement of the Matilda effect could have profound implications for our field, but also impact our policies and practice going forward from here.

Norine Wark 21:05

We hope that you've enjoyed the sampling of study results. Check out the International Women Online Journal of Distance Education if you're interested in reading more of the Matilda effect and other articles on these female pioneers. Here's just a sampling of some of the articles that are already published in this journal.

Norine Wark 21:31

Susan and I appreciate your time and interest in this epic journey. Thank you for inviting us to speak about female pioneers in our field on International Women's Day. It is indeed an honour. And now we'll turn this over to our kind moderators. Thank you.

Bill Simmalavong 21:51

Amazing. Thank you. I want to sort of second the comment in the in the chat by Kristina around including the women themselves in the webinar. I think it was quite powerful to see those interview excerpts. And if anybody has any questions, do please ask them in the chat. I've got a couple for Susan and Norine. I suppose I can kick off and ask the first question around why an encyclopedia? Who decided that the book was going to be an encyclopedia and why that sort of format?

Susan Bainbridge 22:30

You know, I still when I look at the hard copy of the book, I shake my head and go, "Norine, what - we had no idea [laughs] at the beginning. First a research paper, then maybe a book, and it was actually Routledge, and it was quite near the end, close to publication when they had a board meeting and they were looking at it and they said "No, no, this isn't - " We were thinking handbook. But they said "No, no, this is an encyclopedia. This is a massive resource on the topic." So it was actually our publishers that decided.

Bill Simmalavong 23:07

Amazing. And how did sort of like the funding sort of work for the project?

Susan Bainbridge 23:13

Norine, do you want to do that one?

Norine Wark 23:17

Actually, we didn't seek any grants or any other source of external funding for this project. Susan, and I really wanted this to be a presentation of the women's voices. And we felt that if we sought external funding, there may be timelines we would have to adhere to, as well. There would be aims and goals from the grantors or funders that might interfere with the idea that this was going to be something organic rising from the women themselves.

Bill Simmalavong 23:57

Incredible. And it's such a huge piece of work that - I mean, you both have undertaken, it sort of as sort of Susan sort of spoke about it, it sort of snowballed from, you know, a little investigation to something that is an encyclopedia of a body of work. I'd love to so in the in the video itself well spoke about, you know, as you connected more with women in these spaces, through their connections and their networks of you were introduced some more. I'd love to get an understanding of how you determined which to include in the volume.

Norine Wark 24:45

We began to recruit potential pioneers by developing a list of possible candidates from among the women that we were already aware of. And then we adopted a snowballing technique by asking the interviewees if they knew other women who might be good candidates for the book as well. To facilitate the selection of potential pioneers in distance and online learning, we used three guiding terms. The first one was 'founder' or 'trailblazer'. The second one was 'leader', and the third one was 'researcher' or 'writer'. So whenever we were reviewing any potential pioneers' available profile, we determined that the profile had to match at least one of these terms. And then we also

used some inclusion and exclusion criteria. So a potential candidate, for example, would be excluded if their profile didn't match any of the three defining terms or if they began working in the field after 1980 that is, if they came from a country where open a distance learning was established during this period, or after 2000 if they came from a country where open and distance learning was just becoming established.

Norine Wark 26:05

They were unable to communicate clearly in English during the interview was another exclusion criteria. And if we couldn't contact them, or if they were too ill, or if they had passed on. So those were some of the things that helped us decide who should be in the book and who should not be.

Bill Simmalavong 26:25

Can you tell us a little bit more about the three different sort of criteria? So you spoke a bit about founder and trailblazer? I'd love to get a deeper sort of understanding as to the selection criteria itself.

Norine Wark 26:41

It's actually, in our book, where we define - we go through a small piece on each one of them, where we looked at different people's definitions for the terms, and then together, Susan and I, talked about what do we think from those definitions would become our definitions. So we wrote like a small paragraph on each one of the terms, clarifying exactly what criteria we were looking for in those definitions.

Susan Bainbridge 27:13

And if I could add here, Norine, I think it was also our goal was to have these women cited. So even if they were a leader and perhaps didn't - weren't prolific researchers, they all had research. They had all written in that era because that was the whole point was to bring these women to light for future students and other stakeholders.

Bill Simmalavong 27:43

Amazing. I've got a chat. I've got a question in the chat, by Sarah. So you mentioned the need for further exploration of tech in online learning. Can you please expand on this? And in what way?

Norine Wark 28:00

Susan, did you want to answer this one? Or would you like me to take a shot at it?

Susan Bainbridge 28:05

Well, you take a shot, then I'll add. Why don't we [unintelligible]

Norine Wark 28:07

Okay. So actually, we were very, I think, at least I was very surprised that there was so much discussion about technology. One of the emerging themes that came out of the study, in fact, the most prevalent emerging theme that crossed all of the categories was technology. These women were some of the pioneers, working on, for example, Hermes satellite projects and things like this. So it was really shocking to us in some ways to discover that there wasn't sort of that traditional men are more likely to be in the fields of technology and computer science than women. That wasn't true in the case of our pioneers. Most of them were very astute in the emerging technologies being used for online learning. So that in itself I thought was amazing.

Susan Bainbridge 29:11

It's also really interesting because, as we mentioned, in those days, and some of the women even mentioned, I think it was Susan Herring that was talking about her uncle saying, "No, don't take a Bachelor of Science. Are you out of your mind? You're a woman." Those were the times. And what was fascinating is these women actually come from linguistics backgrounds, social justice working, you know, with prisoners like Helen Farley. History, language, they come from all different fields. None of them come from technology. So they just naturally because of their natural abilities, I guess with tech, they just went into it in spite of the fact I don't think any of them have got a PhD in science or technology. They were just really interested. The other important thing for those of you here or listening later, is the fact that you need to remember this is 70s and 80s. There was no such thing as online learning. That's the spectacular part that these women were going, "Hey, I think we could use these computers to learn online someday." I mean, it was that early that they were writing papers on things that some people thought they were crazy to even write about.

Bill Simmalavong 30:37

Yeah, I can definitely see. I mean, it's very apt description to describe some of these women as trailblazers in the field of online education. There's another one in the chat, so from Sarah Kerr. And if anybody else wants to ask questions, feel free to pop them into the chat or to unmute your mic if like if you're comfortable. So do you envision further volumes that showcase the records of modern female pioneers in online learning?

Susan Bainbridge 31:09

You know [laughs], we started to be asked that question - the book was published in July, mid July, by the end of July, people are saying, 'Well, what are your plans for volume two?' [audience

laughter] First of all, like, we needed to rest for about four months [audience laughter]. And, you know, we want to think about it, but we also don't know if perhaps the next book should be more of a current females in distance ed, like we covered the trailblazers. Now, maybe the next volume would be the women working in the field 1990 to present that would be one idea.

Susan Bainbridge 31:53

Do you know the other thing fascinating that's come out of this is that we did not envision COVID at the time. So as you and everyone here fully realises what's happened in online learning since then, and so I'm getting and so as Norine, all of these connections on LinkedIn, for example, that are feminists, that are business people, that like suddenly, it's not just for the people that are working in online learning at the universities. Suddenly, the whole world is interested in this kind of work. So that was just you know, life is 90% hard work and 10% luck. So our timing was was pretty good [laughs].

Bill Simmalavong 32:46

Kristina, with her hand raised up? Would you like to hop in with a question?

Kristina Hoepfner 32:51

Sure. Thank you, Bill. And thank you so much for the encyclopedia and showcasing so many women in the book, and not just having the book, but also including their voices as audio, which is fantastic because that way we can actually hear them and can learn more from them through their own words. I do love a good oral history project. But my question is, it looks very much like you've had an international audience of the women that you interviewed. How international did you go? Did you do your initial research on women who had published in English? Or were you also looking at other languages like German, obviously for me, French, Spanish, or also in Asian or African countries? I guess that might be quite challenging at times to broaden the horizon there when people haven't published in the language that we are most comfortable in?

Susan Bainbridge 34:09

In person or...

Norine Wark 34:10

Oh, go ahead, Susan.

Susan Bainbridge 34:13

Well, okay, so first of all, we were looking at the trailblazers. So one of the real surprises to us is that we assumed that the majority of them would be American, US, citizens because the world

wide web and the internet came out of American universities, I think, was University of Michigan initially. And so we were enormously surprised to find that they weren't just the United States, but also Canada and Australia. For those of you that have looked at the women that we've covered. Huge numbers from there. And that's, I think, it was alluded to in one of our excerpts. The fact that just the size of Australia and the size of Canada, online learning was or distance ed at that time, was maybe even more important than in the United States. So very quickly, Australian and New Zealand and Canadian women were there, too. The other thing is, I know Norine would get often upset and concerned that maybe we weren't covering non English speakers. But again, we were dealing with trailblazers. So the internet was English. And those first early women were coming out of English speaking countries, the majority of them. But then we did - it did lead us to, there is a German, Christine von Prümmer, but of course, she's bilingual, so we could communicate with her and Beatriz [Fainholc] out of Argentina or Brazil, slap my face [laughs]. Anyway...

Norine Wark 36:02

Argentina.

Susan Bainbridge 36:04

Thank you. She was concerned, but she certainly could communicate in English, and we had no problem. And then we had our to French Canadian ladies Thérèse [Lamy] and and France [Henri]. And I believe it was France, who was - she was fine, but she was too concerned to - really concerned about the interview. And that was the only one where she answered as a transcript, and actually, I stepped in and pretended to be here so that we had an audio. That's the only interview that is not her voice. And I gave her hack a couple of times in emails because I wanted her to do it, but she was just too nervous because she said she hadn't been working for a few years, and she just didn't feel confident in English. And then we were just lucky because - but again, those foreign women like out of Namibia and South Africa, Korea with Insung Jung, they could speak English, and that's why they hopped on and Antion Belawati from Indonesia. Again, those trailblazers pretty much had to be bilingual in order to be working on the internet in those early, early days.

Norine Wark 37:17

Yes, and and don't forget Li Chen from China, which is...

Susan Bainbridge 37:21

Oh my goodness. Yeah.

Norine Wark 37:21

... Remarkable to - yes, yes.

Susan Bainbridge 37:24

Actually, what's exciting about Li Chen because we had such difficulty with firewalls, and talk about luck of the draw again, Norine went over to a conference in China. So Li Chen was the only one that was interviewed in person because we just couldn't manage to get the internet working between the two countries. We won't get into those politics.

Norine Wark 37:44

[laughs] Yes, and we had the most delightful pot of jasmine tea, butterfly jasmine tea, together. I'll never forget that. It was a wonderful experience.

Bill Simmalavong 38:01

Can I ask you in terms of the creation of an index. You chose to create one yourselves rather than having the publisher do it. Can you tell us a little bit about that decision making process?

Norine Wark 38:15

Thank you for asking that question. We decided that I do the indexing for the encyclopedia rather than pay to have a professional indexing company to do so. We thought that while a professional company would have the advantage of indexing software, we believe that the software might not capture various relationships and certain nuances in our field, like conceptual notions and of course, our jargon. So envisioning this book is a vital resource to researchers and students in our field, we wanted to ensure that all the acronyms, the abbreviations, concepts, and relationships, including the 'see' and 'see also' cross references would be documented in the index. Since I'd conducted and transcribed the interviews played the lead role in the research end of the project, I was very familiar with the content of the book, which I think helped to ensure all of the entries and connections were included in the index in such a manner that whatever readers might be seeking, could be easily found. So that was our decision making process.

Susan Bainbridge 39:21

If I could lead into that, I think those of you that are here today can see that Norine and I have very different talents. And if I could just give some sage advice to anybody who I think editing a book is very different from writing a book together. And often we get into group think and I'm gonna just as an aside, talk about the fact that we often say in lay terms, or so it's always a really big ego. But actually, if we're talking about somebody who's got a big ego, we're actually talking with somebody who's got a small ego because they're insecure and they want to control everything and they're

not easy to work with. Big egos have big shoulders. And I knew Norine well enough because I had worked with her in her doctoral studies that she and I both had big egos. But boy, are we different. And I think that really brought value to the book in the sense that, you know, I - people have described me as a person who - I've got the ideas. I walk 'Yes, this was my initial idea.' And I walk around like a tornado just leaving a mess behind me for other people to dot the I's and cross the T's [laughs]. And Norine and I quickly figured out, "Okay, just keep throwing out these ideas, Susan, and I'll just keep blocking that and trying to organise it all." But I think we were very much - if any of you ever want to really co author a book, I would suggest finding somebody different from you, wouldn't you agree, Norine? Like find somebody with different talents so that you both bring different stuff to the book.

Norine Wark 41:01

I totally agree. Between the two of us, we pretty much had abilities in every area that we needed to, in order to have this book come to fruition. Definitely.

Norine Wark 41:15

[unintelligible] skill sets.

Susan Bainbridge 41:16

And Norine survived it. She didn't have a nervous breakdown with me [Norine laughs].

Norine Wark 41:21

Yeah, and we actually fed off of each other. And one of the things that I found really amazing was that, through this process, I felt like we became bonded with each one of the pioneers. And when we would get together and we'd be working on something, one of us inevitably would bring up an anecdote about something from one of the pioneers. And it was just such a, like a group bond experience, I think, for me, and I think also for you, too, Susan, correct?

Susan Bainbridge 42:01

Absolutely. I mean, now we have to chat once a week whether we need to or not to [Norine laughs] just because we spent four years talking five times a week. But yes, I mean, oh, I do want to mention something for I know that many of our pioneers aren't here today. They couldn't make it. But I think for their interest, too, because many of them had lost touch with each other, were very interested in finding out what each other were doing. And I know that Louise Moran has been very close to Liz Burge. And sadly, we haven't lost Liz, but we've lost her to dementia. And her sister's caring for and Elise said it was fine to mention that. And that just keeps her fingers crossed that at some point her sister will come in and show her that chapter. And she'll have a lucid

moment, and it'll bring a smile to her face. But we got the interview, just in time. That's why we knew that the interviews were so important because these women, a lot of them were reaching, you know, mid 80s when we were interviewing each.

Bill Simmalavong 43:10

That's a beautiful story. Thank you so much. And it sounded like you both flourished, survived and flourished in the partnership between the two of you if I can use those terms. Can I throw it to Bettina? She's got a question, a hand raised?

Bettina Schwenger 43:30

It's a question from the chat from Sarah Prestridge. Her comment is, "I think the social justice position is more important than the physical distance issue in distance education." So more the social justice than the physical distance. "Could you tell me what you think," Norine and, Susan, in terms of that?

Susan Bainbridge 43:54

Norine, do you want to begin?

Norine Wark 43:56

Well, when we started to identify, first of all the benefits of distance education as a theme, which, you know, as I've said, I was absolutely floored because we hadn't in no way alluded to any of the benefits of distance education in the interviews. And then when we saw that the major subset of this benefit was social issues. And then we discovered it was social issues related to all kinds of things like prisoners, women who were working, working parents, people who were in the remote Marshall Islands struggling to just connect with other people in the world. When we saw the richness of the different kinds of social justice issues that these women were struggling to overcome in bringing distance education to the greatest diversity of people you can imagine here on earth that was really a profound moment for me when I was looking at that data, and I saw all of the different kinds of social justice, and yet they were all forms of social justice. And that just superseded time, space, distance. It was a profound discovery for me when I was sitting there and looking at it and I can't wait to tell Susan about this [laughs].

Susan Bainbridge 45:26

No, it's true. Because even in my teaching since we published the book, I use the term more often now in my classes, and I had never used it before. And yet, that's what online and distance ed is all about, really, is social justice. And it was our pioneers who brought that forward to us. I mean, it was there, but sometimes the obvious, or the terminology isn't there until you look at the data.

Norine Wark 45:53

Yeah, it brings to mind one story, and I believe it was Gila Kurtz, who told us the story. She said, there had been waring between a her country, Israel, and a country across the way, some distance, I can't remember what the other country was at this time. But they had been at war with each other. And then there was peace. And then some Americans had moved into the other country to help with peacekeeping missions. And she had gotten a job to help provide distance education opportunities to these American soldiers in this other country. She was worried about telling her mother [laughs] because she was essentially helping people in the country that had been the enemy country when her mother was raising her as a child. And so that was just one of those social justice issues that I won't ever forget the story connected to it.

Bill Simmalavong 47:03

Thanks so much for those insights. And a comment in the chat says "Perhaps it's time for a conference to honour our online evolutionaries." If this is something that someone's interested in, I'll also save the date then. I've got Sarah Kerr here with her hand raised and potentially final question from the audience and a couple more before we close off. Sarah?

Sarah Kerr 47:28

Yeah, thanks, Bill. And nice to hear all these stories and comments and thoughts throughout this session. Sarah Kerr here. I work at RMIT Online, and I am a colleague of Dawn's and Bill's. And you tapped into the social justice of distance education and online learning, and I'm wondering what advice you might have for the next generation of pioneers or the next generation, male or female, who - how we keep that alive in a context of online education now being quite commoditised and commercial? And how do we maintain that social justice for the future?

Susan Bainbridge 48:11

Whoa, that's a good one. I'm going to say that one thing, which seems like almost paradox to what we had said about technology, but - and I think we have to be really cognizant of this, as we move forward, several of the interviewees mentioned to us the classic, which some of you who are instructors with online learning will know. And that is, it's not the technology, right? It's the content. And I always have to reign in students who want to, you know, I might be doing a course on online pedagogy, and they want to talk about tools, tools, tools, tools. "Stop it. You know, we're still teaching. So don't get so - this is not an IT course. This is a pedagogy course." [laughs] So that was one of the things we - I think we took out of it, Norine. It's a difficult question. I mean, I hope the book helps with that, but it's certainly going to become more commercial, for sure. And how do we, I guess, keep talking about it and write a second volume, right, Norine?

Norine Wark 49:27

[laughs] I think there's - think the pandemic has shown me just how much social justice prevails. During the pandemic, look at how we altered what we were doing face to face instruction and everything so that we can continue to teach students. So that we can continue to reach each other and share knowledge and understandings and skills with each other. So I don't think the social justice issues is going to diminish in our particular field because of what our field represents. It is reaching the unreachable or the difficult to reach.

Susan Bainbridge 50:18

And if I could just I know you want to stop, Bill, but if I could add one more thing, which kind of ties into it because I now see that Ufuk is here from a Turkey. Thank you for joining us.

Susan Bainbridge 50:30

Thank you, Susan. Thank you.

Susan Bainbridge 50:32

Yes. Because I do want to plug again, the WOJDE, the International Women's Journal of Online Learning or Distance Ed [sic], okay? Because I think that is another way that we can keep the ball rolling in the sense that it's the only journal that we're aware of that is specifically about women and online learning and distance education. And so you know, it offers - I really, really want to, and I'm going to continue as as Norine has to get other women to begin to publish or submit to that journal. When the - if they are female authors or if the topic is about women, but Ufuk, would - do you want to join in here? Maybe not.

Norine Wark 51:28

Dr. Tanyeri, would you like to say some things about the journal?

Ufuk Tanyeri 51:34

Hi, everyone. My English level is bad. I'm so sorry. First of all, I would like to start my speech by celebrating the International Women's Day. My name is Ufuk, working as executive editor of Int WOJDE journal. Before introducing our journal, I would like to thank Dr Norine Wark and Dr Susan Bainbridge for organising such a nice webinar. Also Professor Demirai who is editor of Int WOJDE that she was sorry that she could not attend this webinar.

Ufuk Tanyeri 52:26

What is the Int WOJDE? Int WOJDE is double blind, peer review online ejournal that has been published biannual since 2019, in April and October. International in scope, this scholarly ejournal published refereed articles focusing on the issues and challenges of providing theory, research, and information services to global learners in any kind of distance education or open learning applications. Int WOJDE will particularly esteem to meet the continuing education needs of practitioners and educators by providing a good forum for the discussion of extended learning strategies, policies, and practices and trends in information technology as depicted delivery of student support services for distance learners and faculties. Articles may be theoretical, philosophical, or quantitative analysis of distance education or open learning and teaching issues and may take the form of case studies, research studies, or general interest reports. Sample topics include the role or story of distance education, standards for such services, organisation or planning of new services for distance learners etc., book reviews, conference reports, cases, literature reviews, news items, editor's notes, announcements of conferences, and publications and letters to the editor also welcomed and how can I say - That's all.

Susan Bainbridge 54:38

[laughs] That's great. Thank you so much. I also just one quick and then I'll be quiet. This journal is also I think if you look at it I have to compliment them because it truly is designed in a feminist or a female way in the sense that it's not just research, research, research, research, that previous issues have had interviews and collages that are photography and historical and just the flexibility. And we know that so many of our online learners are female. So I really want to encourage everybody to read it and to submit, please. Thank you.

Ufuk Tanyeri 55:28

Thank you.

Norine Wark 55:29

Thank you so much.

Bill Simmalavong 55:30

Thanks so much for coming on and talking about the International Women Online Journal of Distance Education, and I think we've got Susan on the recording committing to volume two of the encyclopedia. So... [Norine and Susan laugh] I think about sort of wraps it up for us. Thank you so much for joining us. I think I'm gonna throw it over to Bettina in a little bit to close. But again, thank you so much for the panelists. Dr Susan Bainbridge and Dr Norine Wark coming on to talk about their brilliant piece of work 'The Encyclopedia of Female Pioneers of Online Learning'. And

I'll throw it over to Bettina now to wrap this up. And then I think that's, I don't know how to close that. So that's it [audience laughs].

Bettina Schwenger 56:25

I believe I might, I might have misunderstood it. But I think we have still, we have books and memberships to give away. That's right. I think Bill, you would be from the Australian side, I invite you to first [laughs] give a membership from ODLAA and one of the electronic book copies away. And then we can do the New Zealand side if you're like or I can do it. I can do it first if you're like.

Bill Simmalavong 56:53

Yeah, I don't know how this works.

Bettina Schwenger 56:54

I close my eyes and pick [laughs]...

Kristina Hoepner 56:56

It's very easy in the sense that you close your eyes or you think of a number and then we'll go through the list of participants and see who will get the book and who will get the membership. So Bettina can demonstrate that.

Bettina Schwenger 57:15

I've it already. I did [laughs]. I can't do it all. Well, I could but I have the names already. So if that's okay. I go ahead with the names if that's alright [laughs] So for the individual membership from FLANZ, closed eyes, I promise, and picked, my head landed on Elizabeth. And Elizabeth, I don't have your second name, but you joined as Elizabeth. And for the book I ended up on Sarah Prestridge. I hope I say your name correct, Sarah. And this is the electronic copy of the book.

Sarah Prestidge 57:57

Yay [audience laughs]. Thank you very much. That's so exciting.

Bettina Schwenger 58:09

Enjoy copy.

Sarah Prestidge 58:10

That's wonderful. Thank you. And thank you ladies for that absolutely inspiring talk. I'm going to read every, every word of it. Thank you so much.

Bettina Schwenger 58:19

Could you perhaps, Sarah, put your email address in the chat to me? And Elizabeth the same. If you can hear me. It would be great if I could find out your email address. But it's up to you [laughs].

Bill Simmalavong 58:38

So I guess I'll I think there's 30 participants and I'll close my eyes so that everyone can see I suppose the fairness. Can I do 10 and 15? So 10 for the book and 15 for the membership to - it's the membership to ODLAA? Yes.

Kristina Hoepfner 59:01

Okay, so 10 was in Indira Sukamuri, and 15 is Lucia without a last name.

Bill Simmalavong 59:18

So Indira will get a copy of the ebook. And Lucia, you have won the membership to ODLAA. Congratulations.

Lucia 59:33

Thank you. Was that was that me? Lucia. So in terms of the membership might want to go to somebody else. I'm actually on the committee so perhaps somebody else.

Kristina Hoepfner 59:46

So let's go down, let's go down to 16 then. Who's number 16? Okay, so the next one on the list.

Kristina Hoepfner 59:57

That would be Marti Cleveland-Innes.

Susan Bainbridge 1:00:01

That's great. How appropriate Marti [laughs] that's your payment for the forward [audience laughter].

Marti Cleveland-Innes 1:00:09

Oh my goodness, thank you so very much. I'm sorry, I had to get my camera off. But this has just been - oh, thank you so much for for this - for your receiving a prize. Icing on an incredible cake. I can't tell you enough how proud I am of these two who - I can hardly claim they were students of mine because they were just so incredible and are still demonstrating their intellect, their commitment, their vision in the way they put things together. So...

Susan Bainbridge 1:00:55

I'm only here because of you, Marti.

Marti Cleveland-Innes 1:00:59

Well, that's kind.

Susan Bainbridge 1:01:00

Mentor for yours. Yeah.

Marti Cleveland-Innes 1:01:03

Yeah. Well, and it was a pleasure to see the others and thank you very much for offering prizes on such a wonderful webinar. Thank you have a nice day everyone.

Bettina Schwenger 1:01:17

So I'll just close as quickly with a karakia and to get us back to our day and I hope you have our rest of wonderful women's day. Po hihiri. Pou rarama. Pou o te whakaaro. Pou o te tangata. Pou o te aroha. Te Pou e here nei i ā tātou Mauri ora ki ā tātou. Haumi ē! Hui ē! Tāiki ē! Have a great day and thank you so much for joining.