## Merging Personal and Professional Identities

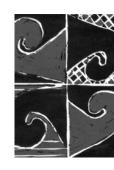
### An interview with Ted Glynn

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#### **ABSTRACT**

This is an excerpt from two conversations between Professor Ted Glynn and George Middleton. Ted Glynn's contributions to education have included being Foundation Professor of Teacher Education at the University of Waikato, a Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand, and researcher and author. Professor Glynn was a part of the team of academics from three universities, Waikato, Auckland and Wellington, responsible for training the first teachers to become Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour (Brown et al., 2000). Ted shares part of his professional journey and how it was illuminated by his family experiences, and how he hopes to continue researching in bicultural and bilingual education.

- G. What was your theoretical position when you started out on your journey?
- There's some interesting background there, George. When I became a Masters student in Education at the University of Auckland I'd just completed my primary teacher training at Auckland Teachers College, and completed a third year studentship to allow me to finish the degree. During the time I worked on my Masters degree I encountered two engaging and enthusiastic lecturers, Marie Clay, who had just come up from Wellington, and Warwick Elley who'd just come back from Canada, and I was deeply influenced by each of them. My undergraduate degree was a double major in psychology and education, and I received a fairly traditional behavioural-psychology background, but I also had a reasonably good educational background having qualified as a primary teacher. Marie Clay's work influenced me by showing that if we wanted to develop materials and strategies to help children experiencing difficulties with reading then we needed to observe children who were successful readers and find out what it is they do that's successful and then try to understand it and include this in programmes for readers who needed support, rather than just offering them more and more of the same. I asked Warwick for advice as to whether I should go on in psychology or education because I had majored in both. I knew he had been in the same position. He said, "Well, for me there was no choice. I chose education and I haven't regretted it one bit". I thought, "OK, if it's good enough for him ...", so I made that choice.

- G. Yes. RTLBs have had national conferences in Waitangi and Rotorua where we experienced two very different and enriching Māori worlds. How did you start your journey into learning te reo and tikanga?
- T. There are probably two answers to that. When I was doing my PhD in Canada (University of Toronto) I was asked if I could speak Māori by various other PhD students, and I couldn't. I knew only a few words and a few phrases. I decided that when I had got this PhD out of the way, and returned to New Zealand I would certainly undertake to learn Māori, and I took a number of courses beginning around 1969, and then intermittently, one or two a year, with occasional years off. I am very aware that I have been given a great gift, in the form of support and teaching from Māori women that were my tutors in those courses. I'm thinking of Tilly Reedy... and Meremere Penfold, who started me out on this journey. Then, while I was Chairperson of the Department of Education at the University of Otago, there was a woman who, sadly, has now passed on called Alva Kapa, a strong, staunch Kai Tahu woman, and she "gingered me along" in my role as departmental chairperson. It was 1990, the time for recalling the 150 years since the Treaty of Waitangi was signed, and for assessing to what extent the Treaty had been honoured in that time. I took these Treaty issues and challenges seriously and tried to effect some changes within our department, like inviting local Kai Tahu people, associated with marae at Otakou, Huirapa and Moeraki into the department to talk to the staff and to our postgraduate Educational Psychology and Counselling students about the implications of the Treaty for educational professionals. That was a really challenging process! But it was also really rewarding in terms of positive outcomes. Some of those educational psychologists and counsellors from those years say they still value very much what they learned about their job from listening to those Kai Tahu people talk about their history and their current concerns for the wellbeing of their children and mokopuna. Some of these graduates have gone on to take Māori language courses but, just as importantly, others have become so much more aware of how to understand and relate to Māori people with respect.

So, yes, it came from there. But there was also a powerful defining moment for me, a personal experience around about fifteen years ago. I met, for the very first time, an older brother, a tuakana, who is now in his mid-80s and who lives in Waipiro Bay, where he has lived all his life. We have found out that we have the same father.

My father married Hiria Akena in the 1920s and she died in childbirth, giving birth to this boy, this baby, my brother Albert Fairclough Glynn, but known as Jack Wharehinga because he was a whangai of the Wharehinga family. Now, if you think about the 1920s in the East coast of New Zealand, there's no way a Pākeha man could have taken a baby away from the whānau after the death of his mother so near to childbirth. Now it's a long story. My father had married twice since that marriage, and before I came on the scene, and so had my mother. At that time I had two half-sisters and a half-brother, all over twenty years older than me. But all through my growing up I had no knowledge at all of having another older brother. However, looking back with the advantage of hindsight, I realise that I had been aware that there was something going on that I didn't know about, and that some of my family were not at all keen for me to learn about it, for all those sad reasons that go back to that era ... But I had these strange early childhood memories of my father singing to me in Māori, especially when he sang me to sleep, so he must ...

#### G. He was a Pākeha?

T. ... Pākeha ... absolutely. So Jack and I are whanaunga, tuakana and teina, because we have the same father. One of us was born in the 1920s and raised by Māori family, speaking the language and living and working in the heart of Ngāti Porou, and the other was born over 20 years later and raised completely as a Pākeha, living and schooling in South Auckland. But the point is, as a young child you never question many things that happen. The questioning often comes much later when you recall some of those early childhood memories ... I can still remember him singing those Māori songs, and using quite a few Māori words in his talking ... but I never ever asked why, or how ...

#### G. No, they were just natural ...

T. That was just my Dad. Many years later, long after he had died, and after I got the news that I might have another older brother, I did ask the question! I was determined to work on it. My wife Vin has a long-standing interest in genealogy and she certainly helped me enormously with my search ... but to cut a long story short ... I then looked back on my childhood memories and I began to reflect more carefully on ... specific family events, and to "reinterpret" certain family conversations. I began to see things quite differently ...

#### G. Talk about a paradigm shift!

T. ... It was an utterly transformative process! So, again to cut that long story short, we tracked down his whereabouts, and I came to that critical day when I had to phone up from Dunedin to speak to this guy at Waipiro Bay. I was lucky that this was still in the era before Telecom privatisation, so I found myself talking to a Māori woman toll operator who said: "Oh so you're ringing there. Who are you ringing up there dear?" I said: "Well ..." I told her ... She replied: "Oh, that could only be one of about three families. Why don't you hang up dear, I'll ring around for you." And she did. When she rang back she said: "I think I've got it down to this one (of two phone numbers).

It will either be him or the next one, but try." She put me through, and I suddenly found I had to say *something* to this voice at the other end! I recall saying something nerdy like: "Excuse me, you don't know me, but ...", that kind of a conversation, and that started me on this long and very emotional journey, a journey of self-discovery as much as anything else ... and that gave me a huge impetus to do more Māori learning and to get to know my connections with my tuakana. But being in the heart of Ngāti Porou, Jack had been brought up as a Māori speaker, and English for him was very much a second language. So that provided me with a further incentive to try to learn to speak a little more. I am now very proud to acknowledge the world of my tuakana and how much it means to me, in my mihi:

Ko Hikurangi te maunga Ko Waiapu te awa Ko Ngāti Porou te iwi Ko Te Whānau a Rakairoa te hāpu Ko Kiekie te marae Ko Hau te whare Ko Rapata Wahawaha te tangata Ko Jack Wharehinga tōku tuakana

That powerful experience of discovering important whanaunga connections has very much altered my own identity as a Pākeha person in Aotearoa / New Zealand. This in turn, led me into taking out a Diploma for Graduates (in Māori Studies) while I was at the University of Otago. In that programme, I received some beautiful and inspirational teaching from two very talented academics, Godfrey and Toroa Pohatu, which I will always treasure. (Sadly, Godfrey is no longer amongst us). And all those experiences later built my determination to ensure that a strong input from Te Ao Māori went into the development and implementation of the RTLB programme ...

# G I wondered how your experience and cultural understanding changed after discovering in fact you were whanaunga to Jack?

T. It certainly made me look at things and listen to Māori people in a completely different way. But, yes, I certainly did have a strong background in applied behaviour analysis, but I was never ... maybe you could have said I was probably a methodological behaviourist, in terms of the importance of gathering and analysing data on behaviour but not so much an ideological behaviourist. You could see that in the work that I was engaged in at Glenburn, the early days of Glenburn in Auckland, and also in South Auckland during the early days of the Mangere Guidance Unit. These were both crucial experiences for me that eventually fed into the RTLB programme, especially given that we had to find better ways of supporting and working with Māori students, and their whānau. I could see some particular strengths of that kind of applied behaviour analysis approach. You had some fairly good tools, and you could actually put those tools, the behaviour observation and recording tools into the hands of teachers or students and they could even learn skills in self-management of behaviour ...

It didn't have to be top-down, like "I've come to fix you, and here are the answers". It was more like: "Here are some tools that you could look at, and that I have found very useful, particularly in the difficult situations of students at Glenburn (you know this was at the very beginning of Glenburn), kids with emotionally, so-called emotionally disturbed behaviours and so on, and behavioural self management strategies did give me a way in, but I never ever felt constrained to understand what happened only in terms of behavioural constructs. I would look at the outcomes, even back then, and think, yes, well, there could be a number of reasons why this (good result) has come about, even though we did quite specific things.

And so, later on, when I started looking at behaviour through *cultural* eyes, I thought well, there's a whole different way of understanding what's happening here. Some of the more recent work done by our Poutama Pounamu whānau (that's the Ministry of Education (GSE) Educational Research Centre in Tauranga) has contributed importantly to an analysis of special education best practice for Māori, within the Specialist Education Services (SES), just before SES was wound up and became Group Special Education (GSE) within the Ministry of Education ... We had noticed in our work at Poutama Pounamu that despite all the things found to be wanting within SES at that time, they had got a number of things right, particularly concerning effective practice for Māori. I think this was mainly because Māori cultural messages and concerns were being listened to. We identified a number of sites of effective practice for Māori (Berryman, Glynn, Togo & McDonald, 2004), for instance, a wholeschool project, involving eliminating violence, a Mau Rakau wānanga for older students experiencing serious behaviour difficulties, on an island in the Marlborough Sounds, as well as excellent case work supporting Māori whānau – in really challenging situations like a family with four young children including newly-arrived twins and at least three of those children needing to wear hearing aids. The highly effective outcomes in this case indicated a wide range of people had been involved – both family and professionals, and that they had worked within a Māori worldview ... Somebody moved to support that mother, somebody else supported the father – and others supported the children. These people were not your highly qualified professionals; they were ordinary family members, extended family members, whānau basically. But they were working alongside and in full collaboration with SES professionals ... so that the input from both the professionals and from whānau members was enhanced by the collaborative relationship.

#### G. Mediated like ...

T. And professionals listened to the cultural messages and responded to them, so there were some very good outcomes. The Sites of Effective Practice for Māori (Berryman et al., 2004) is one project that we learned a tremendous amount from.

We looked at the sort of data we had to hand, not just "hard" data you can get from experimental interventions, but also the sort of field data that you get from projects where people are empowered to work collaboratively, and these data all looked very positive, and consistent with outcomes reported in international indigenous literature. But also we, (I think it was Mere Berryman who had the idea) decided to ask our whaea and kuia, who had been actively engaged in this project – they'd been out doing the field work and they had visited these sites – to look at the findings and interpret them what they thought about them. We found that they went back into their Māori world and used Māori cultural constructs to understand and explain what had happened. So, for example, instead of talking about eliminating violence, or reducing rates of challenging and disruptive behaviour they talked of restoring the mana of students whose mana had been destroyed, or nearly. They talked about a whole-school intervention as whakawhanaungatanga which is keeping on working until you've "got everyone on board the waka". We were talking about the same thing, probably basing our explanations on very similar evidence, but I think there was little chance then that such culturally based analyses and interpretations would have been acceptable to many educational professionals and behavioural practitioners.

#### G. Has learning te reo Māori been important for your own growth and development?

- T. Yes, very much so George. Its like, if you do a little bit of work on the language people will respect you for trying and they give you so much more, like those Māori women who taught me, and who have given me so much. And what that does is enlarge the window, and the more you see, the more language you pick up, and the more of the kōrero that you understand because you've talked about it and you've shared those experiences, and then you're able to see a bit further. So, yes, those kinds of experiences are really amazing.
- G I believe that if you spend time working alongside Māori people you start to have those sorts of experiences; they start to happen around you.

  Do you think it's to do with your growth or development as a person that you start to tune in?
- I think you do tune in, and I think one of the most important learnings is that if Māori people invite you to go with them to cultural events, powhiri, whakatau, tangi or hura kohatu, then you don't need to feel that you have to know and understand everything before you go! You just need to be willing to listen and learn. When I was chairperson of the Education Department at Otago University, there were some occasions when I had to at least respond to whaikorero because at that time we had so very few Māori speakers in the university, so that when tangata whenua came to our department to support us or to give us a seminar or to do whatever, someone had to reply. I felt OK about doing that because I was the department chairperson and it was up to me to say something, we didn't have Māori staff in the education department at the time.

However, later we went on to appoint Māori staff. Russell Bishop became our first Māori full-time permanent academic staff member.

What I've come to realise ... and what I see a number of other professionals doing ... that worries me ... is that when they are invited to attend a Māori event they are often turn up expecting to speak. They often seem to think along the lines "that's why I'm here; they've come for my professional knowledge and expertise ...". Now, fortunately not all professionals are necessarily expecting to speak formally on the paepae, although there are some who expect even that (!). However, after a pōwhiri, whakatau or hui is over, many professionals do expect to be called on to speak then. And what I've learnt is that you shouldn't hold any such expectation. This is because (I believe) from a Māori point of view if you attend a hui, but say nothing, your influence within the group can be every bit as powerful as if you had spoken. This seems to me to be especially true if while you are saying nothing, you are listening carefully and respectfully. I have found that Māori people usually will read this very clearly as tautoko for the kaupapa of the occasion. In the same way, other types of behaviour may well be interpreted otherwise! I've always felt very comfortable in that (less dominant) role at any Māori gathering. So the best thing you can do is to go along and listen (and to answer your question, George), it is in that active listening and tuning in, and not relying only on the words you hear, that you actually gain some sense of all these other things going on, even if you don't fully understand them. Of course, it is a different matter entirely, if you have been clearly invited to speak! This is a great honour and privilege, as many Māori adults may not yet have been given the opportunity to exercise this privilege, even on their own marae.

#### G. That sounds like helpful advice. Now, to conclude, in terms of your research interests, where are you heading now?

- T. Long before I came up to the University of Waikato, I was closely involved with the research whānau at Poutama Pounamu, who have been researching ways of supporting the language and behaviour of Māori students in both Māori and English medium contexts since 1991. Poutama Pounamu has been a formative research and professional experience for me. Very recently, I've been caught up in so many different things I haven't been able to work with the whānau as much as I would like. I am now hoping to pick up on that.
- G Thanks. I hope things work out so that you can continue your relationship with Poutama Pounamu, and continue with your journey into the language and culture.

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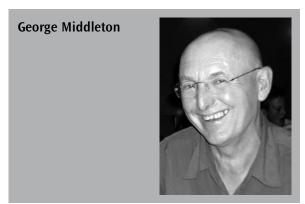


#### **INTERVIEWEE PROFILE**

Ted Glynn, PhD, is Foundation Professor of Teacher Education at the University of Waikato and a Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand. He has a wide background in applied behaviour analysis, inclusive education, and Māori and bilingual education. He helped to pioneer the Pause Prompt Praise (Glynn, 1994; 1995) reading tutoring procedures, and the Māori language version, Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi (Harawira, Durning & Glynn, 1993). He is a member of the New Zealand Universities Consortium which produced the *Resource Teachers:* Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) professional development programme, part of the NZ Government SE2000 Special Education 2000 policy initiative, now delivered to 800 teachers nationwide (Brown et al, 2000). Ted is a member of the Ministry of Education (GSE) Poutama Pounamu Education Research Centre in Tauranga, working to improve behaviour and learning outcomes for Māori students in Māori immersion and English immersion education.

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#### **INTERVIEWER PROFILE**

George Middleton has been involved in special education since the 1970s. He has worked as a teacher in special classes, an organiser of special classes, run an adjustment class and has been the principal of a special school. Since 1993 he has worked as an itinerant resource teacher in Hamilton. These positions morphed into Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour. He was a part of the first group of teachers to be trained as RTLBs.

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