

# Foreword

## 1 INTRODUCTION

I was asked to introduce Glyne at the 2011 MOT conference given in Glyne Piggott's honour and have now been asked to write an introduction to the collection of papers from that conference. At the end of this short introduction to the introduction, I have put my cheat sheet for the original introduction given in May. What I have to add here is the summary of what happened at that conference. Again, I will let the papers speak for themselves and comment on the academic impact that Glyne has had on several generations of phonologists. What can't be replicated in this volume is the warmth of that weekend last May. In the audience were students spanning four decades and several continents, colleagues, friends, and family members – wife, two daughters and two granddaughters. Most of the conference papers began with Glyne anecdotes and many speeches were made at the evening dinner. What was special was that when anyone reminisced, others would be nodding in agreement. We all shared that same Glyne experience.

Perhaps because I began as Glyne's student and feel like I'm still learning from him, I feel that his students had a special connection. We all remembered being pushed to what we felt was beyond our limits, only to find that we had set our sights too low. One student talked of being told to trash the last chapter of her thesis just weeks before she was supposed to submit. She was extremely angry at the time, but having redone the chapter, realized that she had been forced to stretch and the thesis was better for it. Her response was – how did he know that she had a better thesis in her when she didn't know that herself. We never felt belittled only challenged, and since he felt that we were capable of better things, we only pushed harder. His daughter, Nicole, summed up what we all felt – he listens without judgment. He provides a safe environment to try out new thoughts. He might not like an idea, he might think something was headed in the wrong direction, but we were never made to feel wrong or lacking, just temporarily off course. And more importantly, we felt we were in good hands, that we had a caring guide.

Glyne has produced countless papers on phonology, he has created a vast literature on Ojibwe, but he has also inspired a small army of linguists that span the globe. Through his actions as much as his teaching, we have learned about linguistics from him and we have learned about life from him. And we are very grateful.

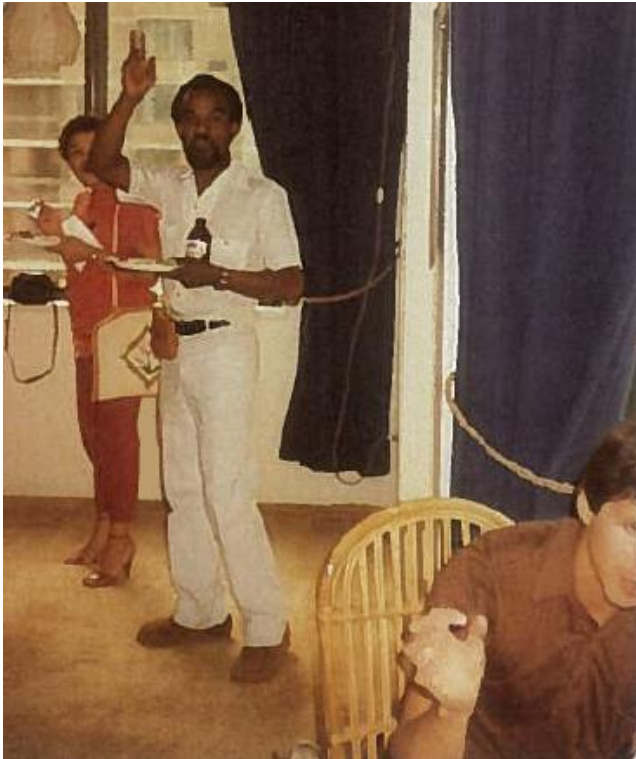
## 2 THE ORIGINAL INTRODUCTION: MAY 2011

I was very honoured to be asked to give this introduction, but quickly became terrified. This is right up there as being one the most important presentations I have given – in fact right up there with my job talk at McGill. One difference is that I wasn't worried about getting choked up at my job

talk. I was paralyzed at the thought of summing up 33 years of knowing Glyne, summing up my relationship with Glyne, and summing up Glyne himself. Once I realized that this was not going to be possible, it became doable. So I'm going to give a brief history of my various interactions with Glyne, not to be selfish but I believe this history, or at least parts of it, parallels the history of many in this room.

First off, as a syntactician, it's best if I leave it to others to talk about the impact that his research has had on the world of phonology and we have already seen it amply referred to in the talks and posters here. But as someone who has known Glyne as his student, his colleague, for a brief while his chair, and most recently his co-investigator and co-author, I still feel qualified to present a side of Glyne that we have all come to appreciate as much as we appreciate his academic side. The true testimony to Glyne as a person is represented in this room now. First and most importantly, he is a family man and that spills over into his academic life. We all feel special and we are all here because he has made us part of his larger family and treated us as we would treat a family member – with love and respect.

I first came to know Glyne in 1978 when I was his student. This was when Nikki and Adrian were young and Sydney and Gaby far off in the future. This is the picture of him at that time accompanied by his partner in life and an inseparable part of who he is, Sylvia.



I had come to McGill to be a sociolinguist and within two weeks of Glyne's class, I was a die-hard phonologist. Anyone who has had Glyne in class knows the excitement that he conveys. One recent student of Glyne's described his class presentation as a dance — he moves, he dips, he gestures. In the late 70s he was famous for wearing dark woolen turtlenecks, which would be covered in chalkdust by the end of the class. I'm not sure what changed first – Glyne's style of dressing or dustless chalk, but this is not so much of his persona today. But he IS the master of the pregnant pause. It involves a bit of eyebrow raising, intense staring, until everyone is in attention and then he reveals something magical or probing.

I should stress that being his student wasn't an easy ride. I received the lowest grades of my career from him – I still remember the 78 he gave me on my first paper. But this is where another side of Glyne comes in. When he pushes you, you feel honoured to be pushed. When he sets the bar high, you feel that he respects you enough to believe that

you can clear it. Breaching confidentiality here, I will tell you that when I was Acting Chair for a year I was privy to both his grades and his teaching evaluations. There are those who believe that teachers who push their students and who are severe graders are punished when it comes to teaching evaluations. Glyne is a counter-example. I have never seen such low grades so highly rewarded. What is his secret? For me it comes down to the basic respect for and commitment to his students – and this, in fact, is what I appreciate most about Glyne both within and outside of academia. He genuinely loves people and he genuinely loves ideas. He has the insight and the optimism necessary to see the best in a person and the best in an idea and, more importantly, he has the talent to work through and bring that best out. In the world of academics where hyper-criticism can be masked as standards and intellect, Glyne has the grace to give both people and ideas the benefit of the doubt and, where needed, a second chance. When he disagrees, it is supposed to be the starting point of a conversation, not the endpoint. As any good father, he taught me this through modeling, and when I forget, which I do, I'm lucky enough to have him nearby as a reminder. There are many people in this room that are a product of this enthusiasm, support, and generosity. Not the least of which are an amazing pair of daughters and an amazing pair of granddaughters – for which I also credit Sylvia. Theirs is a true partnership.



When I left McGill I also left phonology and was hired back here as a syntactician, and as Glyne's colleague. I was very happily a pure syntactician for many years, but one should never underestimate the power of Glyne's infectious enthusiasm. About five years ago, he started dropping into my office to talk about Ojibwe phonology and morphology with both the phonology and the morphology couched in syntactic terms. He basically had me at 'phase edge'. And the rest is not so much history as present day.

So we turn to Glyne today. Glyne now retired, coming in to the office more than I do, and not only NOT slowing down but striking out in new directions which I assume we will hear about shortly. Glyne who is willing to worry about Edge Features, Bare Phrase Structure, and numeration workspaces. I remember him telling me many years ago that he would stop being a phonologist if they got rid of rule ordering. Luckily for all of us, he is much more amenable to new ideas than he professes to be. We all have a lesson to learn here.

This second picture is actually one that I took on one of our annual departmental apple-picking excursions – where Glyne was not only an eager participant but often the initiator and organizer. So this is how I like to think of Glyne because even though I have moved from student to junior colleague to co-author, I still and will always, even without the aid of a ladder, be looking up to him

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