



MathsReach

Bio Sketch for Megan Clarke

What area of maths do you work in?

Mathematics education and applied statistics.

Tell us a bit more...

In maths education I've concentrated on equity issues as we lose a lot of talent because of teaching methods and social expectations. In the past I focused on gender issues and now I mostly do research with indigenous and migrant groups. In applied stats I usually work in a group on issues of social concern. I have been part of groups that have worked on analyzing data on schizophrenia, police organization, family violence.

What areas of maths do you follow from a purely interest standpoint?

Mathematical statistics especially areas where you can introduce subjective information (known as Bayesian statistics).

What were your best and worst subjects at school?

I changed a lot in my interests at school. In year 11 I was best in Geography and Science and worst in English and maths. But in Year 13 I was best in English and maths and worst in chemistry. I always really liked Drama and was useless at PE.

When you decided you wanted to be a mathematician and why

It just happened really. I thought I wanted to be an engineer when I started university but the maths at uni just blew me away (I was lucky and started directly into second year maths). It was so cool compared to school maths – no longer all cut and dried and it was very elegant and wasn't about trains, projectiles, ladders and guy stuff (or arithmetic!).

What training (degrees and subjects) you've done

BSc in maths although I did a bit of physics and chemistry. Then an MSc in maths education.

Most interesting place you've travelled with your research

Lots of places especially Morocco and Newfoundland but also Spain, Germany, Hungary, Denmark, Japan and Sweden.

If you follow sport, what sport, and which team - if not, why not!?

Well I guess I follow the all Blacks and I used to like the Hurricanes while Tama was still there. I'm really into theatre and dance and opera and Wellington is great for that. I've even advised students at the National School of Dance and Drama on probability and randomness which was really cool.