

Rajulton Fernando, 1945 -- 2018

Rajulton Fernando was born in Tamil Nadu India. After his bachelor's degree at St Joseph's College in Triuchirapalli, Tamil Nadu, and a Master's in Statistics at University of Madras in 1972, he obtained his PhD in 1985 from the Interuniversity Program in Demography at Free University of Brussels. It was during his studies in Belgium that he met Zenaïda Ravanera, his future partner in life. After a year in India and a year as a Post-Doctoral Fellow and Lecturer at Brown University, Professor Fernando joined the Department of Sociology at Western University in 1987. Western was rapidly expanding its Demography program and looking for a formal demographer at a senior level to strengthen its PhD program in Social Demography. Dr Fernando filled the post with commitment and distinction. He supervised a large number of doctoral theses and was an invaluable member of the Department, becoming Professor Emeritus in 2011. Professor Fernando was always very dedicated to his students, ensuring that they had the competence and support to launch their own academic and research careers. He was also a humble and generous colleague.

He was very active professionally, serving as the President of the Canadian Population Society in 2004-2006, and as a member of the executive for many years. Because he was fluent in French he was also involved in demographic activities in Quebec. He was extremely productive in his scholarly publications and very successful in receiving grants and supporting students in his research projects.

Specializing in demographic analysis and demographic models, Professor Fernando wrote an early version of software for event history analysis. With funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Fernando organized an international workshop on longitudinal analysis in October 1999, bringing together leading colleagues from Canada and around the world (see Special Issue on Longitudinal Methodology of *Canadian Studies in Population*, 2001). Through his research and teaching, Professor Fernando promoted the development of longitudinal surveys and their analysis. For several years, he taught in the summer school of the *Centre interuniversitaire québécois de statistiques sociales*.

Rajulton Fernando was a quiet and modest man. He was deeply committed to his family, and was very proud of his children. Rajul and Zenny introduced Fravic and Carmina early, indeed very early, to professional meetings around the world. Only later did they admit that these demography presentations were invariably boring.

A decent and honest man, we have been privileged to have Rajul as a wonderful friend and colleague for more than three decades. We mourn his passing.

T.R.Balakrishnan (Bala), Rod Beaujot, Tom Burch, Eddie Ebanks, Carl Grindstaff and Kevin McQuillan