

In Memoriam

Ackland Paulusaramge Saram (1936 – 2024)

P.A. Saram, as he presented academically, or Saram, as he was known by colleagues and friends, began his scholarly career at the University of Ceylon (Sri Lanka), receiving a BA (Honours) in Sociology in 1962. He worked in and taught community development in Ceylon for several years before coming to Canada with his wife in 1967 to begin graduate studies in Sociology at the University of Alberta, funded by a Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship. He received his MA in 1970, and his PhD in 1973, both from the U of A.

Saram taught as a Lecturer or Visiting Professor in several universities, and also worked as a Consultant for the Alberta government, before being hired by the U of A as an Assistant Professor of Sociology in 1977. He was promoted to Associate Professor in 1980, to Full Professor in 1994, and retired in 1997. Saram's teaching and research interests included social change, South Asian society, deviance, and social theory, in particular the writings of Max Weber and Thorsten Veblen (e.g., *Int J of Politics, Culture, and Society*, 1998, 11,4: 579-605).

Saram is remembered fondly by his former colleagues as always cheerful, friendly, and helpful, particularly for new faculty members, with a wide range of interests and a wry sense of humour.

Sharon Abu-Laban: *Saram was a good colleague. He wasn't only smart, he was witty and interesting to be around. At one point he was creating cartoon captions celebrating human foibles, as seen by zoo animals. I had a chance to hear him give a lecture on theory and social class; it was mesmerizing.*

Jim Creechan: *Saram was a personal friend who taught me about Thorstein Veblen. He was godfather to the Alberta Sri Lankan community, and admired soccer coach of its Edmonton diaspora team. Fridays at the Faculty club were joyful times spent with him and Judith Golec. I treasure a Raksha mask he gifted me, and remember him each time I look at it.*

Mike Gillespie: *I thought the world of Saram. His sense of humour was something else. I remember him keeping us in stitches laughing at stories about us and other colleagues. His passing is a real loss.*

Tim Hartnagel: *Saram was a somewhat humble person with a gentle demeanour who had multiple talents and interests. I wish I had known him better to appreciate his varied talents.*

Les Kennedy: *My fondest memories of Saram are of an always smiling, gentle person who was humble about his accomplishments, including his prodigious knowledge of social theory. I was always impressed by his understanding of Weberian thought. He was a cherished colleague.*

Steve Kent: *He was friendly, thoughtful, helpful, and generous, and encouraged my own scholarship by speaking with me on some topics and even citing some of my work--exactly the kind of support that a young scholar and new faculty member needs. He was a very precise scholar who impressed me with his knowledge of the classics as well as his breadth of knowledge on other topics.*

Harvey Krahn: *Saram was a kind colleague whose gentle sense of humour could reduce tensions in faculty meetings. He also embarrassed many younger colleagues and graduate students at the department ping-pong table.*

Gord Laxer: *Saram was a lovely person. He was gentle, kind and inquisitive, a true scholar.*

Graham Lowe: *I echo my Sociology colleagues' positive memories of Saram. He was a kind, gentle, and very thoughtful and helpful colleague. I especially appreciated how he welcomed me into the department when I joined it in 1979. He helped me to understand, and adapt to, the department's culture and U of A's expectations for a junior faculty member.*

Susan McDaniel: *I, like other colleagues, remember Saram as being a calm and gentle presence. He was much appreciated, particularly when things got fractious in the Department. I wish that Judith Golec was still among us to share her thoughts. She was good friends with Saram and his wife. He is truly missed by many.*

Herb Northcott: *I remember Saram as a Weberian scholar. He was always pleasant, a positive and calming presence in the Department. I remember him fondly. He was always a sweet soul.*

Bob Silverman: *Saram was a fine man and an excellent colleague. I really valued his sense of humour. He often gave me valuable 'unofficial' administrative advice.*

Frank Trovato: *I hold fond memories of Paul. He was a kind and generous colleague. He often read my draft papers and offered insightful comments that helped me improve my writing. He was a great conversationalist, and often spoke with me at length about Thorstein Veblen's life and contributions to sociological theory.*