

In memoriam of Raja Parasuraman



Raja Parasuraman giving his keynote at the chapter's Lisbon conference in 2014.

After a sad illness, Raja Parasuraman passed away on Sunday, March 22. He is survived by his wife and colleague, Carryl Baldwin, and his daughters. Prof. Dr. Parasuraman was a popular university professor at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia, where he served as the famous Director of the Human Factors and Applied Cognition Program at the Department of Psychology and Director of the Center of Excellence in Neuroergonomics, Technology and Cognition (CENTEC).

Previously, Raja had been appointed as associate professor and later full professor of Psychology at The Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, from 1982 to 2004. He started his brilliant career by receiving a 1st class honours BSc in Electrical Engineering from Imperial College, University of London, UK (1972), and four years later a PhD in Psychology from Aston University, Birmingham, UK.

He was a well-known expert in more than just one field of psychology. He dedicated his life to combining cognitive science, specifically the phenomena of measurable cognitive activity, brain functions and the application to practical fields such as vigilance in task performance, for example driving. His publications on human interaction with automation are leading in the field and have been cited numerous times. He coined the contemporary term neuroergonomics which is now well-established. All in all, we lost a very big shot in the fields of neuroscience, human factors and ergonomics.

Personally, I met Raja for the first time at a conference on brain activity, long ago, when we were both young scientists. Most of his colleagues called him Roger in those days, but the hard-nosed Dutchmen at this conference insisted on using his original name. He appreciated that very much. We became friends, be it at a distance, met only now and then at conferences. Therefore, I was very happy that he consented to join our Annual Conference in Lisbon in 2014 upon the invitation by our President and his good friend Dietrich Manzey.

He was a beloved father, a good friend, student mentor, lover of good food (chef-de-cuisine himself), fine wines, and music and fun. Raja will be sadly missed by his family, friends, and his colleagues from HFES Europe Chapter who will remember him from his excellent keynote at the Lisbon Conference last year.

In remembrance, Karel Brookhuis, on behalf of the Executive Council of the HFES Europe Chapter.

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