

June 15, 2018

I was quite surprised to know that I have been inducted into the SDTTA Hall of Fame. I appreciate the honor and thank the Board to think of me as worthy of it.



I'll do my best to answer your queries.

I was born in 1934 in Ponda, Goa, which was a colony of Portugal, which had some small territories on the Indian subcontinent (with Goa being the centerpiece, so to speak, of this Portugal-controlled area) which they refused to cede to India, unlike the French government which gave up their colony in India without much ado on India's independence in 1947. Thus I was born a Portuguese citizen and even learned some Portuguese as was required by law (in a Portuguese primary school, after primary school in Marathi). At the age of 10, I went to an English school and went to college in India (there were no English colleges in

Goa) at the age of 14, finishing my higher education when I was close to 38, with a Ph.D. in social psychology from the University of Iowa (after a B.A. in philosophy and M.A. in psychology from the University of Poona in India). The very large temporal gap in my higher education was partly due to my incarceration by the Portuguese government for more than five years, which was a consequence of my participation in the freedom movement of Goa. It was only after Goa was liberated from the colonial tyranny of Portugal that I was able to continue my studies peacefully, winning a Fulbright Travel Grant and a U.S. Government Scholarship to do my doctoral studies in the U.S.

I have been a teacher and researcher for about half a century now, starting out in a high school, and winding up teaching most of the time at the graduate level. I have taught at several universities in India and the U.S., and have a few students in the two countries (4 in India and 1 in the U.S.) who got their doctoral degree under my supervision. I am currently a Research Professor of Psychology at the Alliant International University, San Diego, CA. (This is not a regular, full-time, or permanent position.) I have published 120 research articles and two books in social psychology, apart from other non-academic publications, and am still teaching at the age of 84, apart from currently working on a scholarly book.

I have a wife (Kumud) and four children, Shami, Amita, Cheryl, and Nissim, in chronological order, three daughters followed by a son. Shami got her Ph.D. in neuroscience from the University of Iowa (my alma mater) and is a research scientist at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. Amita is a historian of architecture (with an M.Phil. from the University of Cardiff)

and a novelist to boot, with her second novel on its way to publication, even apart from other publications she has to her credit. Cheryl has two Master's degrees, one in English literature (Bombay) and the other in film-making (San Diego State University), and is currently working for Google in Los Angeles. Nissim is a renowned prize-winning astrophysicist (Ph.D., University of Pune), and a faculty member at the radioastronomy center in Pune, and is also a good table tennis player, apart from other games he plays (like bridge).

I played a little, very little, table tennis when I was in the English high school, but could not play more mainly because I could not afford to buy balls or a racket. I was able to do so only after I went to college, and then I managed to win the championship of Karnatak College (in Dharwar), and later of Fergusson College in Poona, which college I represented for two years. I also represented the Central Group of the University of Poona in Inter-Group Sports and we won the team event which was in a Davis-Cup format, with me winning both my singles and doubles matches as the captain of the team. This was probably the highlight of my table tennis career in younger years, and soon I landed in prison at the age of twenty, where there were no facilities to play table tennis. Much later, in 1968, I represented the University of Iowa in the intercollegiate games, but did not do too well in the tournament, faring a little better in doubles.

After returning to India and joining the University of Bombay, I played very little and then stopped playing altogether for many years till I immigrated to the U.S. on my reaching 60, which was the age of mandatory retirement in India. I started playing in the United States and perhaps was playing better in my sixties than I was in my teens in college. I won several events, mostly age-restricted and low-rating events. At Meiklejohn in Laguna Woods I one year won the under-1600 event and was awarded \$50, now the prize for the same event being \$200. (Alas!) I have won the under-1600 event once in an open tournament (no age restrictions, unlike Meiklejohn) too, and under-1600 is the highest rated event I have ever won. My best table tennis performance was probably in Sun City in my mid-sixties in a tournament for seniors. I was hot on that day and was beating people left and right without due respect to their higher ratings than mine. I played in the over-50 and over-60 age events and during the whole tournament lost only one singles match, in the over-50 event, against the best player in the tournament who later won the event, but not without giving him a fright when I won the first game from him. He was actually a much better and much younger player than me. I won the over-60 event after some tough matches. I had a little over 1500 points when I entered the tournament and at the end of the tournament I had 1765, having thus won more than 250 points in just one tournament (two events, over-50 and over-60 singles). My highest rating has been 1765, which came down very quickly.

Now with the onset of arthritis in my early seventies and also with normal aging, my table tennis is in doldrums, and I have taken up contract bridge, which is probably the only thing in which I have not deteriorated. I am a Bronze Life master of the American Contract Bridge League, and am very close to achieving the rank of Silver Life Master. Brain is apparently less vulnerable to the ravages of aging than brawn.

This is the gist of my life story, not very impressive as I see it, especially in table tennis. Oh, by the way, recently I have been listed and profiled as an eminent Indian psychologist in a book published in 2017, *Eminent Indian psychologists: 100 years of psychology in India*, edited by Braj Bhushan, published by Sage.

Suresh