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# Biography

Anoop Chandola, an American linguist-anthropologist from the Indian Himalayas, was born c. December 24, 1937, in a picturesque little village in the mountains of Pauri Garhwal which is located in the state of Uttarakhand. He leaves behind family and friends who are inspired by and adore him.

Besides his bond with family and friends, how would he like to be remembered?

He would remind you that his books live on and encourage you to read them! Having authored and coauthored over twenty books on academic topics ranging from linguistics and music to novels which cover Indian culture and religion, including the experiences of the Indian diaspora in the US, his love for writing was evident. His granddaughter, Prasha, encouraged him to write his memoirs. Amazingly, it was only in the very last stage of his life that his son, Manjul, received a document entitled, "Memoirs of Anoop Chandola". Nothing could stop him from writing until the very end!

Much of his inspiration for writing came from his teachers. Something that he loved to reminisce about was his exciting educational journey which began with his humble beginnings near his village at a Methodist school run by Indian Christians of Chinese origin to eventually moving on to what was then the prestigious University of Allahabad for his undergraduate studies.

His journey took a lucky twist of fate when he immigrated to the US where he received his MA from the University of California at Berkeley and PhD from the University of Chicago. He subsequently served as a visiting professor at the University of California at Berkeley, the University of Washington at Seattle, the University of Wisconsin at Madison and the University of Texas at Austin. But his life as a full and tenured professor was spent at the University of Arizona where he achieved success as a scholar and a popular and innovative teacher who was loved by his students.

While he frequently expressed his desire to work at another university or retire in a place with a cooler climate, he evolved into a native of Tucson who enthusiastically expressed his joy of living in Tucson and appreciation for what an incredibly beautiful state Arizona was. He was lucky to have a doting spouse, Sudha, who was practically by his side every minute until the very end and an adoring family who pampered him with love whether they visited him in Tucson or transmitted it from the other side of the world. And his friends were not just friends, but individuals who magically transformed into family.

If there was a philosophy or practice he firmly believed in, it was Yoga. Although he maintained that he was not religious and frequently professed atheism, due to his status as a scholar of Hinduism and Sanskrit who was born in a Brahmin family where he witnessed his father perform religious rites, he felt the call of duty to fulfill the need for a Hindu priest for friends and family by performing several free ceremonies such as weddings, housewarming and coming of age rituals, and funerals which he found emotionally difficult to preside over.

But during weddings, which he enjoyed, he conducted interreligious marriages where he happily interacted with priests or people from other faiths such as Jews, Catholics and Sikhs! His progressive attitudes were not limited to simply respecting people of different faiths, but to diverse lifestyles as seen, for example, in his support for the LGBT community.

He was a compassionate and idealistic soul who treated both humans and animals with great respect. This gentle soul was also an optimist who strove for greatness. He devoted himself to academic research and devising theories which are reflected in his scholarly publications. In retirement, he became a novelist who dreamed that one day a movie would be created based on one of his novels! Towards the end of his life, he never stopped thinking of his next writing project.

He leaves us with the inspiration to strive for greatness, to be kind, to never give up and to pursue our passion until the very end! Let us keep him alive in our thoughts, memories and prayers. Whatever new journey he has embarked upon or wherever he is, may he achieve fulfillment.

