

Introduction: Special issue on the life and work of Braj B. Kachru

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The world Englishes international community has lost three prominent scholars in the space of the last few years. These are Professor Yamuna Kachru (1933–2013), Professor Larry E. Smith (1941–2014), and Professor Braj B. Kachru (1932–2016). The passing of these three has left many of us saddened by the sudden loss of colleagues, mentors, and disciplinary leaders, whose extended family included former students, numerous faculty at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, as well as a global network of scholars who were connected with the Kachrus and Larry Smith. The influence of Braj and Yamuna on everyone who came in contact with them was extraordinary, and difficult to explain to those who missed the opportunity to enjoy their warm hospitality, or the lively intellectual stimulation of their conversations, which would range widely over linguistics, literature and cultural studies. The Editors are grateful to all those who have submitted longer papers, as well as those who have written shorter tributes for this special issue. It is heart-warming to see that many of those contributing to this issue are former students and colleagues who knew Braj and Yamuna across the decades, while others are academic colleagues who came to know the Kachrus through their intellectual pursuits and through the International Association for World Englishes (IAWE) conferences that the Kachrus helped establish. This special issue includes more than forty longer and shorter articles attesting to the immense impact that the work of Braj B. Kachru had within western linguistics, Indian linguistics and, internationally, on students, teachers, and researchers of the English language. This volume provides scant consolation for the loss of Braj, Yamuna and Larry, but our sincere hope is that it succeeds at least in providing an important testimonial to the inspirational, and often spiritual, contribution of these three pioneering scholars to our personal and professional lives.

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