

Special Article

My Friend, Dr. Evandro de Oliveira

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Arq Bras Neurocir 2021;40(1):27–28.

While Evandro de Oliveira's heritage was Brazilian, his work and spirit belong to the international neurosurgical community. He traveled the world over, giving exquisite presentations peppered with fascinating cases and always including his beautiful anatomical specimens. Evandro was the most prominent of Albert Rhoton's fellows, and he took his anatomical knowledge a step further than his esteemed teacher by applying it directly in the operating room.

I knew and admired Evandro for decades. We crossed paths in so many continents and cities that they all blur together. His passion—whether he was in the right or not—

was always evident, and no one was left in doubt as to where he stood on any topic. His exacting surgical technique coupled with his extensive anatomical knowledge gave him a platform to express his beliefs that found resonance with all neurosurgeons worldwide. Even after his disease greatly limited his physical abilities, when he attended *his* symposium at the AANS where colleagues from around the world presented lectures, he not only was present throughout the long sessions but also continued to express his opinions



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Fig. 1 At the annual Spetzler/Rhoton course at the BNI with special guest Dr Evandro de Oliveira, front row, third from right.

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DOI <https://doi.org/10.1055/s-0041-1730279>.
ISSN 0103-5355.

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Fig. 2 Dr Evandro de Oliveira (far right) joining the laughter after Dr Albert Rhoton Jr (third from right) had challenged Dr Robert Spetzler (second from right) to a pushup contest.

with absolute certitude and enthusiasm. His physical prowess may have diminished with time, but his intellectual convictions never faltered.

Each time we met, I could count on Evandro to teach me some new caveat, something to try, or something to avoid. At Barrow Neurological Institute, we held an annual Spetzler/Rhoton course with Evandro as a special guest each year. It was there that I had the opportunity to get to know the soul of the man. We had so many professional common interests where we shared triumphs and tragedies, but having the opportunity to spend time together outside of the hospital setting discussing religion, art, and other topics provided a unique perspective that allowed me to appreciate the incredible person Evandro was (► **Figs. 1 and 2**).

Neurosurgeons tend to be intelligent, coordinated, driven, and opinionated. Among many with these traits, there are those individuals who push the envelope of our art, giving patients hitherto unknown options in their struggle

with neurosurgical maladies. Evandro worked on the frontier of neurosurgery, pushing hard to develop new corridors into the brain, the most fragile of organs. He taught us that some lesions, like the most difficult AVMs, could be safely extirpated because of his exquisite anatomical knowledge. His contributions to our field will cement him among the giants of neurosurgery who allow our specialty to continually improve and provide new opportunities to those patients who desperately seek our help.

Although I know that all of us are proud of Evandro's international recognition and patients worldwide have benefited from his tremendous contributions to the art of neurosurgery, the Brazilian neurosurgical community, in particular, can take pride in producing this special man whom we will all miss greatly.

Conflict of Interest

None.