



## Missing Raúl Raúl A. Borracci (1958-2021)

As President of the SAC, I felt the need to write these lines to honor Raúl whom I had met a short time before.

I began to learn more about his career and I encountered a Director of the Argentine Journal of Cardiology who was a cardiovascular surgeon, Doctor of Medicine, Associate Professor of Biostatistics, Master in Molecular Biology and Genetic Engineering and Master of Sciences in Systems. Interesting and unusual to come across a personality with such diverse interests.

Then I reviewed his publications and I found that Raúl enlightened us on cardiovascular surgery topics, on the future impact of the feminization of medicine in Argentina and on how to “Evaluate and write a scientific article”, among other of his numerous publications.

I started my term meeting with representatives of each SAC area and on February 11 I met Raúl via Zoom, to talk about the RAC projects. He showed us a series of metrics, the times from article submis-

sion to acceptance, we talked about improvement opportunities, of the possibility of having a website for the journal, new attempts to index the RAC, the next publications, and projects and more projects.

Then I approached those who knew him and they told me about his kindness, generosity and commitment in each of the challenges he faced. His residency colleagues remember him as a sincere, considerate, open-minded and generous person, always ready to teach. Others talked about a very good surgeon, very concerned for his patients. Others of his passion for numbers, and remembered him carrying math books.

I have the feeling that we have lost an incredible person, esteemed by his colleagues, working team and patients.

He will always be an example to follow.

**Alejandro R. Hershson**

President of the Argentine Society of Cardiology

Like so many other colleagues from the Argentine Society of Cardiology (SAC), I shared unforgettable moments with Professor Dr Borracci, from his time as Director of the Research Area, in the Bioethics Committee and in the Argentine Journal of Cardiology, leaving his mark in each place.

Personally, I could perceive his joy 3 years ago for his brand-new position as Chief of Cardiovascular Surgery at Hospital Alemán. It was our reunion, this time in our daily activity, and it is from that moment that the generation of an immense number of projects, many accomplished, both in healthcare and integrative of the different services (Cardiovas-

cular Surgery, Interventional Cardiology and Cardiology), dreams and jobs about medical education, mountains of data and ideas for research ensued. Imagine what it was like to live with an outstanding man: an expert cardiovascular surgeon, but also proficient in Clinical Research, Medical Education, Statistics and Artificial Intelligence, among many other activities and concerns, and also, to discover Raúl inside the Professor, sensitive and cordial to the patients, who felt content and confident in his hands. Balanced with his peers, we also managed to share personal experiences, in which he embraced me as a person.

He became an adoptive father for the Cardiology residents and the Cardiovascular Surgery fellows, a collective mentor: he stimulated the vocation for research, requiring their dedication to the writing of national and international publications. He also maintained a warm bond with young cardiologists, insisting on the need of their scientific and professional improvement and progress in their SAC memberships: always keeping the bar high.

What he gave us was so much that the current

Generous, ironic, tireless.... versatile. A different player, one of those that cover the field (and play well many sports), with scientific and technical proficiency and an immense greed to know... to share what he knows and add people to develop this finding.

“When are you going to grow up (affectionate epithet) ?”, “are you going to remain crying?.... you should always keep moving forward, studying, publishing, the rest should not concern you”, “do you know anything about the dissemination of health technologies?, about bioethics?, neural networks?.... and fractals?” All these questions were expressed by Raúl Alfredo Borracci, with respect, affection and warmth. I became used to take notes of what I spoke with him since 2000. The question, as a systematic way of stimulating younger colleagues was one of the characteristics that moved

Why was a cardiovascular surgeon presiding a journal oriented to cardiologists in the Argentine Society of Cardiology? The answer is simple; because Raúl Borracci was extraordinary, someone different, a professional as I have never encountered. Gifted with a superlative intelligence and an insatiable curiosity, only him was capable of feats that others never even imagined.

I met him a long time ago when he arrived to the research area where I had been working for several years. The moment he arrived his sole presence stirred the hornet’s nest. His personality made him incapable of remaining unnoticed. Sometime later he summoned me to the journal, the same that is going to publish this farewell words. So capricious is life. His sudden death left me stunned, without reaction, as a defeated boxer receiving his last blow.

Raúl had the ability of removing you from your comfort zone towards quicksand covered areas. He

emptiness is indescribable, immensely heartbreaking.

Let’s honor him for what he was: a partner and friend, society colleague, unparalleled husband and father.

An extraordinary human being. Generous like very few, with the generosity of the great.

Raúl, I thank destiny for having given me the opportunity to be a small part of your journey, especially in these last and intense years of your life.

**Claudio Higa**

me most. And I know that that there were many of us who had the good fortune of coming across his path and learn to improve ourselves guided by his hand... a hand that shed no shadows, but made you mount one step and enlightened. That is the trait of an uncommon person who grows with the rest and not at their expense.

“What I like most is the method, the rest passes quickly....do you remember that betablockers were contraindicated in heart failure?”, “you don’t have to read books less than 150 years old”. Two of his consummate definitions (surgical, I would say) on his habit of searching for the essence of issues and not the superficial aspects.

Words are never enough.

Thank you, Raúl, we will certainly meet again!!!

**Mariano Giorgi**

had the key to make you intellectually better, without any personal interest, except to unleash your own ideas. He always made you reassess the course of your projects leading you to the limit of your possibilities.

Each encounter with him was an apprenticeship and I perceived my transformation with each meeting. Perhaps that is the reason why so many mourn him. People like him are not common in these cloisters. Since I learnt about his demise, the words to say goodbye choked my soul and I felt the need to write these paragraphs because it is my way of showing him all my admiration and gratitude. I would like to believe that I will see him again somewhere, but instead of harboring false hopes I prefer to tell him: THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING. I will try to set foot in those quicksands where he used to push me.

**Darío Di Toro**

I met Raúl Borracci at the end of the 90's; when he was Cardiovascular Surgeon at Clínica Bazterrica and I was one of the doctors on duty at the Coronary Care Unit. Our contact there was brief, governed by the urgent care of the critical patient. But, a couple of years later, I met him in this ceaseless and mighty river that is the SAC. I remember well our first joint task, he as Director of the Research Area, and I as Secretary. Even then I was struck by his knowledge on the subject, and his executive capacity. Raúl knew a great deal, really a great deal about Methodology and Statistics; he handled the Directorate with discipline and surgical precision. But if I had to say where I really met Raúl, it was at the heart of the Argentine Journal of Cardiology where I saw him as a member of the Editorial Committee, as Associate Director, and simply as Director. And my admiration grew, because to the sciences he added the arts: he was an accomplished reader of classical literature, of Greeks and Romans ("you have to read books that have stood the test of time", he said); he knew about history, classical music, philosophy. At the time of judging the works for the journal, Raúl added to the criticism where

nothing was overlooked, the attitude of someone who after pointing out the errors, began to amend them to make them publishable. He corrected tables, did statistical analysis, beautified the writing. He edited other people's works, and kept producing his own. He gave the impression of never stopping; wasting time was impossible to his nature. It is difficult not to think of him as a Renaissance scholar, of multiple knowledge, but concentrated, away from public exposure and vanity. In recent times we worked together, Raúl as Journal Director and me as Deputy Director, as we did about 20 years ago in Research. And I can only say that here in the Journal we miss him a lot and we do not stop naming him, and that we regret so much not having been able to work more together, and that to the physical distance imposed by the pandemic this other has been added, hateful and irreversible. And it only consoles us to think of a Raúl who, leaning back on his books and his music, continues reading, teaching and thinking.

**Jorge Thierer**

Deputy Director of the Argentine Journal of Cardiology