

## A rare journalism teacher

The ideal faculty member for this college is a practitioner with extensive journalistic experience who also has the academic training, dedication, and commitment to impart what he or she knows to young minds. Such a person is not easy to find. Professor Luis Villegas Teodoro is a rare combination of the seasoned journalist and the academic, one whose extensive experience has given him keen insights into the specific conditions, ethical problems and issues of Philippine media as well as the challenges that the media have to respond to if they are to help the Filipino people make sense of their society, which, in his own words, "has moved through historic passages of subjugation, revolution and sovereignty,... been ruled by foreign powers, by freely elected leaders and home-grown dictator."

At the same time, he is someone committed to the life of the mind, who does not tire of asking questions and seeking answers to them through research, reflection and debate with his peers and students as well as his prolific writing.

An A.B. English graduate of the University of the Philippines, major in Journalism and Creative Writing in 1964, he was editor of the *Philippine Collegian* in his senior year. He attended the Master of Arts Program of the Asian Center of the University of the Philippines, was a research fellow at the East West Center in Honolulu, and a senior fellow of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication.

Among the publications he worked for early in his journalistic career as a book reviewer and editor were *Progressive Review Magazine*, *Asia Philippines Leader* and *Graphic*. When martial law was declared in 1972, he was among the journalists who questioned the legitimacy of the declaration of martial before the Supreme Court together with the then militant lawyer now senator Joker Arroyo. He was among the journalists who were detained for being critical of the dictator.

During the post-martial law years, he became sub-editor of *The Manila Chronicle*. In 1987, he began his career as columnist, with "Vantage Point" in *The Manila Standard* and "Interesting Times" in *The Manila Times*. He also became

editor and columnist of *National Midweek Magazine*, and chief contributor of *Philippine News and Features* print edition from 1983 to 1989.

His columns steadily built a reputation for him as a fearless and independent columnist whose analyses of political issues, though laced with tongue-in-cheek comments, were always characterized by a profound understanding of current events and situations.

Since he joined the then Institute of Mass Communication in 1976, he has taught courses on press history, introduction to journalism, magazine editing and writing, opinion writing, media criticism, and journalism ethics which have shaped the training and orientation of Journalism majors of this college. Whether he is tracing the two traditions of the Philippine press—what he calls the revolutionary and acquiescent traditions—explaining what news is, teaching journalistic skills, or discussing ethical issues that journalists are bound to encounter in the practice of their profession, Professor Teodoro

is known to speak with authority and passion.

I am told that he delivers very lively lectures spiced with his characteristic humor and irony, and resorts to all kinds of teaching techniques, from snapping at students who chat with their seatmates while he is struggling to drive home a point, to vigorously shaking his head, or even occasionally sticking out his tongue and making funny faces to show the absurdity of our national dilemmas and problems, the corruption or ineptitude of our political leaders or the military—just so the lesson is learned and remembered!

He is a stickler for accuracy of facts and correct grammar, and being the first-rate editor that he is, lapses in both of these are not bound to escape his eye!

Yet, despite his apparent sternness, students flock to his classes and some of them regret that the 17-week semester has come to an end.

It is a pleasure to introduce former dean of the college, and distinguished columnist, editor, highly esteemed professor of journalism, Professor Luis V. Teodoro.

- Dr. Georgina R. Encanto

## My WWSTD (What Would Sir Teodoro Do?) bracelet

Some people wear a WWJD (What Would Jesus Do?) bracelet, believing the accessory can help them make better decisions. Should I give money to the old beggar? Should I confront my enemy? What would Jesus do?

The things I learned from Sir Teodoro's ethics class are like a WWJD bracelet. Every time I am faced with ethical dilemmas, I will my mind to return to room M209 in Plaridel Hall and listen to Sir Teodoro

explain why I should honor my source's request to remain anonymous, or why I should think twice before attaching the word "Muslim" to the name of a convicted criminal.

I will never forget Sir Teodoro's commitment to the ethical practice of journalism. Professors like him inspire me to work hard not just for career advancement but also to serve fellow Filipinos better.

- Cyril L. Bonabente

This newsletter and the party that was held to mark Prof. Luis V. Teodoro's 65<sup>th</sup> birthday were made possible by his friends:

Linda and Leoncio Co, *Caterers*

Prof. Danilo Arao, *Gofers/Collector*

Dr. Georgina Encanto, *Mastermind of ceremonies*

Raquel Bacarra, *Layout artist*

Chit Estella, *Fixer*

All guests who attended today's celebration

The full version of these write-ups can be seen at [www.dannyarao.com/files/tribute2lvt.pdf](http://www.dannyarao.com/files/tribute2lvt.pdf)

## Parting Shots

### The present

Luis V. Teodoro, as the best of his fiction attests, stood apart from his generation in going back to the tradition represented by journalist-artists of the early twentieth century. We would have wanted him to stay with fiction so that he could help readers view with analytic eyes the social realities of the years that followed the 1960s. But he seems for the moment, to our great loss, to have chosen journalism over fiction. Perhaps the publication of his stories in book form would persuade him that if, in the 1960s, he had linked up with a most vital tradition, in our time, the need of our milieu is once again for creative writers who do not apologize when their fiction or poetry partakes of the concerns and functions of journalism. Teodoro does not have to give up journalism to be an artist. He has already shown his readers that he is indivisibly journalist and artist.

- *Bienvenido Lumera, from the introduction to Teodoro's*

*The Undiscovered Country*

### The future?

When he retires, UP Professor Luis Teodoro may yet find greater fame and fortune in an acting career than in teaching ethics. His specialties are high-strung females in a foul mood.

And he seems to have a special talent for impersonating personalities he doesn't particularly like. Names will not be disclosed for ethical reasons (tsk, tsk) but watch him and the uncanny resemblance with the subject will reveal itself.

He gets inspired when angry or when he impersonates someone who's equally fired up. But upon request he can oblige a GMA act in a flirty mood.

-Patty Adversario

The interesting

# TIMES

of Luis V. Teodoro

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## Jomas's message to Louie revealed

I am delighted to join the close comrades, colleagues and friends of Louie in conveying to him warmest greetings on the occasion of his 65th birth anniversary. This is a time to salute him for all his achievements and wish him to enjoy many more years of good health and productive life.

At the age of 65, one may be assailed at times by intimations of mortality. But there are more than enough inspiring examples of greater creativity and even virility beyond that age, even for those less accomplished. In the case of Louie, he has a great stock of accomplishments to further build on. I do not think that soon he will turn to full-time gardening.

I presume that a number of us can try to present in a structured way his best qualities as a progressive, as a teacher, as an administrator, as a journalist, as a creative writer, as a man of honor and possibly as a lover. I prefer to play the role of the slightly older man who initiates

reminiscences in order to draw some chuckles from him.

It was Joe Burgos who popularized through *Malaya* the nick name "Joma" in the early '80s. But it was Louie in the early '60s who had originally baptized me as "Joema" in the same way that he called Jose Nadal Carreon "Joecar." I do not know if Louie still remembers this creative act of his. But I cannot forget it and I always remember it as a term of endearment.

I became close to Louie in the course of discussion groups of the Student Cultural Association of the UP, the weekly press work when he became editor in chief of the *Philippine Collegian*, informal get-togethers of campus writers and frequent conspiracies with Pete Daroy in the early '60s.

I became so close to Louie that I knew when he had an upset stomach just because a certain pre-med student whom

he fancied seemed to ignore him (in the first place he was only "ligaw tingin") or because he was having serious trouble with the faculty adviser of the *Collegian*. He was only a bit worried when there seemed to be no contribution for the features section of the *Collegian*. But he could always tell me to pull out an article from my "baul."

After his *Collegian* editorship, Louie was with me in the editorial board of *Progressive Review*. He was an active supporter of Kabataang Makabayan and the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism. He edited the book, *Struggle for National Democracy*. At the same time, he was editor of a national commercial weekly. He did much more for the national democratic movement than I can mention here. Suffice it for me to say that unwittingly the Marcos fascist regime honored



Sison

him when it arrested and detained him.

When I myself was under detention, he was active in the committee to seek my freedom and helped edit the publications of the committee. I was happy and thankful to meet him again after my release from detention in 1986. Since then, I have watched and admired from abroad his successes as a teacher and dean of mass communications and as a practicing journalist in the patriotic and progressive tradition of Marcelo H. del Pilar.

- Jose Maria Sison  
August 18, 2006

## Baby ni Sir Luis nagsalita

Hindi ako malapit kay LVT nung unang dalawang taon ko sa Journalism department. Malamang ito'y dahil hindi ko siya naging guro sa Journ 101 o 102. Mas nauna kong nakilala ang dalawa sa kanyang mga kaibigan, si Dr. Encanto at si Professor Arao.

Ganunpaman, natutuwa ako tuwing nakakasalubong ko siya. Matagal nang biruan sa aming magkakaibigan na magsarap sigurong lolo si LVT—matinik magsulat at magma-neho ng asul na Vitara.

Noong huling taon ko sa CMC, pinilit ko talagang makuha ang Ethics class ni LVT. Huling pagkakataong maging Teodoro baby—at masaksihan ang mga tatak-LVT na ugali niya tulad ng:

Ang "anyway" na tumutuldok sa mga diskusyon.

Ang mga facial expression kapag may narinig siyang nakakatawa o kakaiba sa mga ulat namin. (Pinaghalong pagkuno ng noo at ngiti na hindi

sagad sa tenga.) Ang paggugupit ng kuko.

At siyempre, ang mga pamatay na pagsusulat na nakakangalay sa kamay.

Hindi ako ganun kalapit kay LVT, hindi gaya ng asaran at tsismisan namin ni Danny Arao. Laging mananatili ang respectful distance ko kay LVT.

Ngunit gayun pa man, si LVT ay isang simbolo, isang paaalaala, na lagi kong binabalik-balikan sa tuwing pagbisita ko sa CMC.

Na ano man ang trabaho, dapat may sinusunod na patakaran—ethics, sa madaling salita—hindi lang para hindi makasakit ng iba kundi dahil ito ang dapat at tamang gawin.

Na sa pagbuo ng isang istorya, dapat balanse ito at may panayam mula sa bawat panig. Dapat maging sensitibo sa paggamit ng mga salita. Na ang kapangyarihan ng salita ay malawak at hindi dapat isawalang-bahala.

-Julie Aurelio



Prof. Luis V. Teodoro with friends.

### Rage taught in this class

Rage.

It's something you pick up as you go along, something that builds up inside you whenever you hear of broken election promises, botched infrastructure projects, or the latest nugget of wisdom from Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

It's not something usually taught in the classroom. Unless, of course, it's a classroom presided over

by Luis Teodoro, who despaired over apathy more than anything else. He tried to develop in his students the seething but analytic minds of those who could change the world. He stressed that it was not grammar and syntax that ultimately mattered (though, of course, they help) but ethics, heart, and one's capacity to seek the truth.

- Jamie Alarcon

## Madilim na kasaysayan ni Prof. Teodoro isiniwalat

Kung umaga man o tanghali ang pangyayari ay hindi na niya matandaan. Basta sa mga panahong iyon, ang tanging mahalaga ay kailangan na nilang umalis—umalis nang mabilis nang hindi maabutan.

Ilang ulit na hindi na nagtatagal sa kanilang tirahan sa Gusaling Jacinto sa Quezon Avenue ang 31 taong gulang noon na si Luis Teodoro at ang kapwa manunulat na si Ninotchka Rosca. Iniwang na rin nila ang kanilang dalawang taong gulang na anak na lalake sa kanyang mga magulang upang hindi madamay.

Sampung araw na ang lumipas noon nang ideklara ng dating pangulong Ferdinand Marcos ang batas militar sa bansa. Sa gabi ding iyon, napabilang sila sa National List of Target Personalities at plano na silang hulihin dahil sa pagsusulat ng umano'y mga artikulong kritikal sa pamahalaan. Hindi sila nadakip dahil wala sila sa bahay.

Subalit sa araw na sila ay akmang paalis, apat na armadong taga-Philippine Constabulary, bersyon ng kasulukuyang kapulisan sa bansa, ang sumalubong sa kanilang pintuan. Dala ang isang arrest order mula kay Juan Ponce Enrile, ministro ng tangulang pambansa noon, inutusan silang magdala ng ilang damit at saka dinakip upang ikulong sa Camp Crame.

"Kinulong kami para sa wala," sambit sa wikang Ingles ni Teodoro, guro ng pamamahayag at dating dekanong Kolehiyo ng Pangmadlang Komunikasyon ng Unibersidad ng Pilipinas. "Walang demanda, walang paglilitis, walang hatol," aniya.

Sa piitan, bagaman hindi sinasaktan, saksi naman si Teodoro sa pang-aabuso ng mga otoridad sa mga bilanggong karamihan ay nasa haikul pa lamang. Bugbog na mata, namamagang mukha, baling braso at pasa-pasang katawan ng kanyang mga kasamahan ay mistulang kakambal na ng pagsikat ng araw sa piitan. Nakita niya rin kung paano na lamang bugbugin ang isang kaibigang kakatapos pa lang kumuha ng bar exam.

"Hindi namin alam kung kailan kami palalayain o kung palalayain nga ba kami," sambit niya sa wikang Ingles.

Kahit ang pagbalik niya sa Unibersidad ng Pilipinas noong taong 1977 ay nadehado dahil sa kanyang pagiging dating bilanggo. Upang wala nang gulo, nilagay na lamang siya ng noong pangulo ng UP na si Salvador Lopez sa dating Institute of Mass Communication bago lumipat bilang puno ng publikasyon ng Philippine Center for Advanced Studies, ngayo'y UP Asian Center. - Jerald T. Uy



Louie listens during a forum on foreign ownership of media.

## Cowboy gives life lessons

Efficient in words. Effective in meaning. Ethical in practice.

These invaluable lessons come to mind when I think back to my journalism classes under Professor Teodoro. Well, apart from his cowboy boots.

Returning to my ethics and internship classes of four years ago is not that hard at all: sessions with Professor Teodoro are among the most memorable I had in college, courses where I gained many of the ideals I hold on to today.

Between the frequent "anyways," Professor Teodoro conveyed wisdom that only a man of his experience could give the younger ones.

He could switch roles from being an outsider looking in to an insider looking even deeper into the practice of journalism, all in his effort to make concrete concepts and situations that could

only be hypothetical to a journalism student.

And he made sure his students got his drift, however short their attention span might be. Never let the streaks of white hair on his head fool you: Professor Teodoro can speak the language of anyone, from clueless college freshmen and stubborn seniors to, well, his fellow senior citizens.

"Never, never let your trainer tell you to run an errand, photocopy or make coffee." I remember the professor telling our internship class in the summer of 2002.

By giving a high regard to the journalist despite the industry's many flaws, Professor Teodoro strengthened my conviction that I could, and should, pursue my dream to become one. - Tarra V. Quismundo

## Passionate senior citizen awes colegialas

"Wait, I'm having a senior moment."

That line is a trademark of Sir Luis. He says it when he suddenly forgets something in the middle of a class discussion; he stops talking, looks down at the floor or up at the ceiling, then strokes his forehead.

Seeing that never fails to fascinate me. Then again, almost everything about Sir Luis fascinates me. I am so proud to have been a student of the Luis V. Teodoro that I boast of every moment he personally addressed me in class—even of that time he asked me to get out of the classroom (it's a long story).

Sir Luis seems fond of throwing witty one-liners—statements of, say, contempt for the government. Those lines never would've been as fascinating if it weren't him who said them. During bonding sessions with peers we'd casually recall something Sir Luis said. Then we'd go, "Aaw, Sir Luis is so cute."

It's true. My friends and I talk like colegialas—which we are, come to think of it—when he's the topic of discussion.

Sir Luis used that "I'm having a senior moment" line quite a number of times, but truth

be told I think he has one of the greatest memories ever. I remember being so amazed at him as I heard him recall the events that led to the 1971 Diliman Commune. I remember thinking about what a great journalist he is—so immersed in his craft and in his country. I remember wondering whether I'll have the same passion for journalism as he does, because, senior or not, you can still see the fire in him.

I doubt if that fire will ever fade away.

-Johanna Camille Sisante

### Use Baygon!

It was one of those busy days towards graduation and I went to the faculty room to see my thesis adviser. There was Sir Teodoro, sitting on Ate Raquel's seat, boasting to other students there that there is not a single cockroach in his house.

"We use Baygon," he said, swearing on the repellent like he was paid to endorse it.

That is Sir Teodoro's solution to one of the Philippines' biggest problems—the cockroaches. I'm sure he wished there was a Baygon to straighten up the corrupt media practitioners and he will start with his former students.

- Carmela Fonbuena