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Letter from the Editor

Here we are – this issue of the International Forum for Teaching and Study (IFOTS) is bringing you the voices of adult educators that ought to give us pause for critical reflection. Increasingly, we are called upon to work inter-generationally, inter-nationally, inter-culturally, and inter-ideologically. *What does that mean for us?* There are many perspectives and contexts of different stakeholders to consider in our praxis of educating adults. For nearly two decades now, IFOTS has brought us insights from colleagues from around the globe – and what has been fascinating to me is that the issues, needs, concerns, and practices repeat in the stories these voices of educators from 20+ countries have told us over the years ... So, let us ask ourselves: *What is the purpose of adult education in today's world and are our concerns and solutions mutual?*

As you read the articles in IFOTS Volume 19, ask yourself: *Does our profession integrate the values of humanist and radical humanist philosophies of educating adults?* Durkin (2014) spoke of a global philosophy that emphasizes the oneness of the human race with a belief that humans have the capacity to develop their own powers to arrive at inner harmony; and that in this way we could strive toward and reach the establishment of a peaceful world. Then, do we approach teaching in our respective settings with respect for the learners and with valor to uphold such values we find in educational institutions' mission statements?

Ask yourself: *Do we care about each learner in educational endeavors?* Anderson, a former dean at Temple University, deliberates on the roots of issues in our public education institutions in the USA,

Right from the get-go, this country created an unequal educational system, but the relationship between education, race, and socioeconomic status becomes even more complex if you look at post-slavery America. The unequal system is based on a confluence of factors, including Jim Crow legislation in the South, the rise of residential segregation in northern states, and the limited role of the federal government in funding and overseeing public education. (2020).

Ask yourself: *What ought we strive toward as we facilitate learning in our education, training, and development programs?* If the proclaimed humanistic underpinnings for setting goals for education programs, its constituents, and its professionals do stand, then such include: the primacy of human values, the development of human potential, and the acknowledgment of human dignity. *Do we collaboratively and jointly work toward such goals?*

Keep these questions in mind as you reflect on the message the voices published in this IFOTS issue are sharing with you. You will be prompted by these questions to examine the shared experiences of the authors and pause to imagine their realities, reception and rejection by peers, and their personal reactions to their work and values. You will read about: the benefits when business and military stakeholders partner with educators; how to embrace each student in agape love to foster self-efficacy and encourage women in STEM field studies; an authentic and forceful nudge to break away from prevailing racism in USA institutions of education; about forming

learning teams in one HBCU toward improving learning outcomes; the difficulties of conveying the cultural meanings and connotations in language translation for publicity purposes; the reality of differently-abled instructors and professors and their ways of coping and survival by means of mutual support. Grounded in the voices in this issue, you can find common ground and mutual support. *Why is that needed?* Because once shared, our art, skills, and critically examined attitudes about the process of facilitating learning for adults to achieve their goals just may guide the transformation to an effective adult education praxis across whatever ~isms continue to be maintained.

Gabriele Strohschen
Editor-in-Chief
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