



THE QUEST FOR WHOLENESS — SHANN RAY FERCH

T*he International Journal of Servant-Leadership (IJSL)* has been in existence for more than a decade, seeking to help strengthen the heart of humanity. The articles in this volume of the *IJSL*, like the articles we've been honored to publish throughout the journal's history, are bold, transgressive, and aimed at decentralizing dominant-culture narratives. As people, I believe we are specific and universal, beautiful, tragic, met with fracture, met with fusion, triumphant, graceful, traumatized, deeply harmed, lovely, and graceful. My heritage is immigrant. My German forebears enacted genocide against my Czech forebears. I believe in the Garden of Friendship and Peace outside Prague at the Lidice genocide site, a place of reconciliation not division, unity rather than dissolution. My experience as a scholar and a poet, interwoven with the experience of scholars and artists of many cultures, is devoted to the healing embodied by people of uncommon humanity everywhere. Our journal publishes writings about leadership that cover both the shadow and the light, stories of fraught and robust relationships across gender, race and class lines, written



by gifted scholarly minds whose work imprints indelibly on the reader's imagination.

Such work decentralizes the I/ego stance so prominent in patriarchy, replacing it with understandings of self and other in the context of multivalent regional, national, and world cultures. Through existentially profound articles, the journal seeks to undo the calcified enagement we presently encounter in much of American and Western life. The dream of unity and peace in the midst of chaos, despair, and violence, is furthered in the articles here through both uplift and descent, comedy and tragedy, and especially through openly naming the Western hyper-capitalistic shadow (the parts of ourselves we hide or won't let ourselves name, choosing psychological hiddenness to the detriment of ourselves and others). I believe the collective presence of the articles we are publishing in this volume addresses the call given by Seattle writer and National Book Award winner Charles Johnson (*Middle Passage*) who asks, "How do we portray the racial, cultural, gender, and class Other? It's very important that we make this attempt given our goal of truly becoming a multicultural society." Claudia Rankine also articulates this truth: ". . . I'm often wondering why race acknowledgement remains absent from the writing of many mainstream white writers . . . Even if people of color are present in the lives of whites they are wiped and rendered invisible in imagined works that fail to imagine beyond their segregationist orientation."

Claudia, Charles and others call us to see things whole, and to give our lives in the mutual work of embodying wholeness



with others. In your reading of this volume of *The International Journal of Servant-Leadership*, I hope your quest for wholeness finds a home, welcoming, invigorating, and restorative.

In this unity, may our mutual endeavor give life and strength to others.

Shann Ray Ferch, PhD, is Professor of Leadership Studies with the internationally-recognized Doctoral Program in Leadership Studies at Gonzaga University, and the Editor of *The International Journal of Servant-Leadership*. Dr. Ferch's work regarding leadership, organizational culture, and the human will to forgive and reconcile has appeared in scientific journals and other scholarly venues internationally, and he has served as a visiting scholar in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas. His story collection *American Masculine* (Graywolf Press), selected for Esquire Magazine's list of "Three Books Every Man Should Read," won the the American Book Award. He is also the author of *Forgiveness and Power in the Age of Atrocity: Servant Leadership as a Way of Life* (Rowman & Littlefield/Lexington), an Amazon Top Ten Hot New Release in War and Peace in Current Events, *The Spirit of Servant Leadership* (Paulist Press), edited with Larry Spears, and *Conversations on Servant Leadership: Insights on Human Courage in Life and Work* (SUNY Press), edited with Larry Spears, Mary McFarland, and Michael Carey. His novel *American Copper* (Unbridled Books) won the Western Writers



of America Spur award and considers colonization, racism, and cultural dignity in the American West. His collection of poems, *Balefire*, won the High Plains Book Award and appears with Lost Horse Press. As a poet and prose writer, his work has appeared in some of America's leading literary venues including *Esquire*, *Poetry*, *McSweeney's*, *Narrative Magazine*, *The Journal of American Poetry*, *Poetry International*, and *Salon*. He has served as a National Endowment for the Arts Literature Fellow and as a panelist for the National Endowment for the Humanities, Research Division.