

Tod Sloan's Struggle

Dennis Fox

SUMMARY: Dennis Fox reflects on two decades of academic, political, and personal interactions with Tod Sloan

KEYWORDS: exploration; explanation; integration; bridging; personal-as-political.

In conversations during the months leading to his passing, Tod Sloan periodically expressed regret that he had not yet done enough to make a difference. That concern was not shared by those who spoke at a memorial in his honour two months after his death. Had he been able to hear their stories about his impact on their lives and on the broader arenas in which he lived and worked, struggled and learned, and played and loved, I suspect Tod would have been pleased by the affection even while still insisting he could have done more. Remembrances of Tod written since his death – accounts of his impact as well as of his wisdom, gentleness, and humility (eg. Toporek, 2018) – have similarly captured parts of Tod's essence that he resisted acknowledging for himself.

Skimming through our email correspondence going back to when we met more than two decades ago brings to mind Tod's shifting roles in my life as academic colleague, political comrade, and personal friend. His accomplishments have been inspiring. So, too, were his efforts to make sense of his own dissatisfactions and confusions in ways that pushed him to explore new directions and open himself to new possibilities as he navigated one major turning point after another. Tod's 1996 book *Life Choices: understanding dilemmas and decisions* impressed me, even more so with his rueful acknowledgment that writing about how to navigate those choices was easier than finding his own way through them. Our overlapping

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