INTRODUCTION OF RONALD GROSS

By
Charles A. Bunge

We asked Ron Gross to respond to, or to elaborate on, Margaret's talk because he has a rich background of training and experience in adult learning, and because he is enthusiastic about the place of the library in lifelong learning. He has shared his insight with librarians at other meetings. For example, when the New York State Library System brought together its adult learning services librarians last year, Ron was asked to keynote their conference, as he was at the A.L.A. meeting last December.

Ron has carried this message to audiences nationwide through his book The Lifelong Learner, which extolls libraries as "the second home of lifelong learners, where they have traditionally found exactly what they want, when they want it." Ron believes that librarians and libraries can and should be at the center of the emerging "learning society." Today, perhaps he will challenge us to take the initiatives necessary to make that happen.

Ron is not a professional librarian, but an informed enthusiast about the role of libraries in society. His background includes serving with the Ford Foundation, the Fund for the Advancement of Education, and the Academy for Educational Development. In preparation for celebrating the nation's Bicentennial Anniversary, the U.S. Office of Education commissioned Ron to write the official bicentennial essay on

independent learning, called, *Nation of Learners.*\(^{(12)}\) Currently he is
director of the first Independent Scholarship Project -- serious na-
tional research being done by people who are not academically affili-
ated -- a kind of scholar whom libraries have traditionally served.
He is also senior consultant to the Office of Adult Learning Services
of the College Board in New York City. The *New York Times* has profiled
him as the founder of "The Invisible University," to which he will wel-
come us today.

---

\(^{(12)}\) Gross, Ronald and Beatrice, "Nation of Learners," *American
Education*, 11 (March 1975) 16-17, 21, 26-29. Republished under
the title "Lifelong Learning," p. 97-103 in *A Nation of Learners.*