

beginning in its descriptive account of a classroom experience, in its analysis of the work of the supervisor, and the new vistas it discloses in educational research. We have always new worlds to explore, and as we explore them, we need to submit ourselves to the final phase of the creative act, the discipline required by our own particular medium. We know our goal—a free society of free men in which there are adventure, courage, strength to endure, and a deep joyousness born out of the faith that is in us. The present issue of this journal points the way; it defines the problem in the

large; it indicates the avenues of our endeavor. It remains for us to break down the problem of the development of creativity into the minutiae pertaining to maturity levels, to the complex areas of individuality, to the demands of specifics of time and place. New horizons spread before the creative teacher, the creative supervisor of teachers, the painstaking research worker, as they bring together into unity the needs of the individual and the needs of society.

—AGNES SNYDER, *chairman, Department of Education, Adelphi College, Garden City, New York.*

## “The Importance of People”

PEOPLE are important! This was the idea which guided Ruth Cunningham throughout her career which ended with her death on July 2.

Early in her term as executive secretary of the Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction, Ruth used her own style of writing and line drawings to introduce us to the now famous Joe Brown, the school principal whose intentions were so good but who had so much to learn about people.

When ASCD was formed and Volume One, Number One of *Educational Leadership* appeared, the reason for the name of the new magazine was explained in a statement which could well have been written by editor Ruth Cunningham herself, so well did it express her views on people as leaders:

The term *leader* as used to guide the affairs of this magazine will refer to all who in marked degree demonstrate two abilities in education—the ability to help their fellows see ahead those things that need to be done and the ability to help their fellows find the energy enthusiastically to do those

things. The potential capacity for leadership as thus defined is infinitely greater than has been realized in the conduct of educational affairs—at least such is the faith that supports this publication.

The hope of American education, perhaps the hope of America itself, lies in the fullest possible development and utilization of the capacity for leadership throughout its total ranks. It is to the realization of this hope that *Educational Leadership* will seek to contribute.

From the start *Educational Leadership* has carried the column which Ruth conceived, “The Importance of People.” When she left the Washington office to join the staff of Teachers College, Columbia University, Ruth was editor of that column and, again with words and drawings, brought us wider understanding of teachers and supervisors.

Children were especially important people to Ruth Cunningham, and she made us stop to listen to them when she brought out *We, the Children*. She made us understand children better through her research for the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute for School Experimenta-

tion which eventuated in *Understanding Group Behavior of Boys and Girls*. The ASCD yearbook which she edited, *Growing Up in an Anxious Age*, also focused on people and their problems. And at the time of her death Ruth was working on two further Institute reports, *Ways of Studying Children* and *Understanding Group Behavior of Adolescents*.

This productive person, who was so liked and admired, was exceedingly modest. The way she viewed herself is perhaps revealed in a poem entitled "The Teacher," one of a large collection written over the years without the knowledge of family or friends:

*Who am I to lead the way?  
I, who stumble with each step,*

*Who grope in darkness for I know not  
what,  
Who lean upon a broken staff because I  
know no other;  
I, who hope to reach the stars by  
climbing up a hill,  
Who am I to lead the way?*

The unimportance of the self who did so much for others comes out even more sharply in another piece:

*In all the world of giant trees  
And mountains reaching to the sky,  
There was but one small timid thing.  
I looked, and saw that it was I.*

—ARNO BELLACK, MARGARET LINDSEY,  
ALICE MIEL, *Department of Curriculum  
and Teaching, Teachers College, Colum-  
bia University, New York 27, New York.*

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