

Remembering Our Founding Editor, Sonia Leib Abels (1929-2019)

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“If we accept the significance of narratives in the construction of human experience; and consider the natural affinity between narrative reasoning and social work practice; then the discipline of narrative inquiry ought to become a central part of professional education. It may be the means to achieve the integration of research and practice.” (Abels, 1995, p. 2)

Sonia Abels was Founding Editor in 1995 of our *Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping*, first published at California State University Long Beach and since 2012 published online at Cleveland State University (www.rnoph.org). Serving as editor through Spring 1999, Sonia continued to serve on the Executive Board of *Reflections* until 2012.

In the above photo—taken at a November 2012 reception in Cleveland for Sonia and for her surviving husband Paul Abels—Sonia is talking in her characteristic, enthusiastic manner to one of her authors, the late Sam Richmond. Sam was Professor Emeritus of Philosophy and former Chair of the Department of Social Work during the formative years when Sonia earned tenure at the Cleveland State University School of Social Work, where she worked from 1970-1987. Sam authored an article in the Special Issue on Social Justice.

Long committed to the struggle for social justice, educator and activist Sonia Abels also served as Co-editor of the Special Issue on Social Justice (Volume 16, Number 3). In that issue, she and her companion of 70 years—her husband Paul Abels—eulogized her successor as Editor, the late Professor Jillian Jimenez, saying: “Social justice, in all its rich meaning, is the purpose of social work....The narratives [in the special issue] help in the memorializing. Jillian’s life had full meaning for those who knew her...We honor the work done to build a more just society” (Abels & Abels, 2010, p. 2).

So, too, Sonia's life had full meaning for those who knew her. We are incredibly grateful for all Sonia brought to the lives of so many. We dedicate this current issue of *Reflections* to her, comforted in knowing her vision endures. In tribute we are reprinting the editorial letter she wrote for the very first issue of *Reflections* in 1995, titled "Salutatory." It is the last article in this issue, and is reprinted in its original form. It is as relevant today as it was then, and the narratives published in *Reflections* still bear witness to the human experience Sonia wanted each of us to discover and learn from.

References

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