

EDITORS' NOTES

This volume, and the symposium held at the 2000 meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence on which it is based, was initially motivated by the untimely passing of one of the leading contributors to person-centered theoretical and methodological approaches to studying development in context: Robert Cairns.

Perhaps a life can be likened to a song. From birth onward, there exist more or less persistent intimations that one's individual voice, spoken amid the collective voice of one's people and times, does matter in some greater or lesser but truly always significant way. Our life is our song. And the song of a life resonates on, even after its composer is gone.

So too is the work of a scientist a song, or perhaps a poem. And maybe the poem is never *really* written, the work never truly done. But the song of someone like Dr. Robert Cairns sings on, even after the scientist is gone. Perhaps by drawing on some of the themes he sounded in his research, which he left to us in our collective science concerning human development and its study, we can honor Dr. Cairns through his song, even if the composer is now gone.

On behalf of ourselves and the contributors,

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