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Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*

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The academic year 2004–2005 marks the 50th anniversary of the *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly: A Journal of Developmental Psychology*. This occasion provides an opportunity to celebrate the journal's heritage, its long history of scholarly contributions to the human developmental sciences, and its current and future mission as a purveyor of scientific discoveries. Accordingly, the purpose of this article is to announce this important milestone and to provide an overview of some of the journal's history, including the confluence of events, persons, institutional forces, and publication trends that brought about its creation and contributed to its longevity. The purview of this historical treatise is divided into four principal epochs: (1) the era preceding the inception of the *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*; (2) the establishment of the Merrill-Palmer Institute and founding of the *Quarterly*; (3) the 1950s through the 1990s, when the *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly* became a repository for scientific research; and (4) the post-millennial *Quarterly*.

Aggressive Victims, Passive Victims, and Bullies: Developmental Continuity or Developmental Change?

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We evaluated the extent to which aggressive victims show unique developmental pathways that are different from those of passive victims, bullies, and uninvolved children. A total of 1,722 children were followed from 4th grade to 6th grade, and the prevalence and stability of each group were assessed. Aggressive victims became less prevalent and passive victims and bullies became more prevalent with age. Although it was common for aggressive victims and bullies to move from one group to the other across time, there was little overlap with the passive victim group. Stability estimates were higher for the bully and aggressive victim groups than for the passive victim group, and patterns of stability were influenced by peer rejection and exposure to violence.

Young Children's Personal Accounts of Their Sibling Disputes

Anne E. Wilson, *Wilfrid Laurier University*

Melissa D. Smith, Hildy S. Ross, Michael Ross, *University of Waterloo*

We investigated children's personal representations of significant sibling conflicts. Forty pairs of siblings were interviewed separately about the same disputes. Although they described the same episodes, both older (M age = 7.0) and younger (M age = 4.4) siblings ascribed more serious transgressions to their opponents than to themselves. They also justified and denied their own severe transgressions more frequently than their siblings' offenses. Overall, children were systematically biased in favor of their own innocence, and older siblings were more self-serving in their use of justifications than their younger siblings. The number and complexity of justifications increased with siblings' age, whereas denials were more frequently relied upon by younger siblings. It is suggested that investigations of children's unique conflict representations represent an important complement to observational studies of sibling conflict.

Shading the Truth: Self-Serving Biases in Children's Reports of Sibling Conflicts

Hildy Ross, Julie Smith, Catherine Spielmacher, and Holly Recchia, *University of Waterloo*

Siblings between 4½ and 9½ were interviewed concerning positive and negative actions of self or sibling that either did or did not occur in past conflicts, and then asked to describe these disputes. Children evidenced self-serving biases, ascribing positive actions to themselves more than to their siblings. Additionally, younger siblings denied their negative actions. Older siblings admitted to, but spontaneously explained, their negative actions; they also excluded such actions from their narratives. Moreover, differences between children's accurate and inaccurate responses (in latencies to respond, integration of actions in narratives, and explanations for actions that did or did not occur) suggest that children's attempts to manage the impressions they make on others contribute to biased reports of past conflicts.

Valence Effects in Reasoning About Evaluative Traits

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Reasoning about evaluative traits was investigated among a group of 7- and 8-year-olds ($N = 34$), a group of 11- to 13-year olds ($N = 25$), and a group of adults ($N = 23$) to determine whether their inferences would be sensitive to the valence of social and academic traits. Four aspects of trait-relevant beliefs were examined: (1) *malleability*, (2) *stability* over time, (3) *origin* in terms of nature versus nurture, and (4) an *inference criterion* that concerns how readily traits are inferred. Although there was evidence of an age-related decrease in the tendency to emphasize positive information, participants of all ages responded that positive traits are less malleable and more stable over time than negative traits, that the positive influences of biological and environmental factors are likely to override the negative influences, and that competence can be more readily inferred from positive outcomes than from negative outcomes.