Birth order and prominence in the History of Psychology.

Terry, W. Scott.

AB Examined birth order (BO) information for 79 prominent psychologists. The History of Psychology in Autobiography series (C. Murchison, 1930; G. Lindzey, 1980) was used as an indicator of prominence and a primary source for family data and was supplemented by biographies of other historically important individuals. Nearly 56% of Ss were either 1st-borns or only children. Using more selective criteria (e.g., American Psychological Association presidency, election to the National Academy of Sciences) did not change the proportion of 1st-born to later born. Results demonstrate a BO effect among prominent figures in the history of psychology and suggest that BO may be one factor leading to eventual success.