



Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development

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Editorial Perspectives

SRCD Monographs—Mission

The *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development* is a long lived, highly respected, widely distributed, and arguably unique serial publication in developmental science. It provides authors or collaborative teams of authors a platform for disseminating conceptually rich and empirically distinguished work that supports the SRCD mission—to advance developmental science and promote its use to improve human lives. Because "monographs" are, by definition, relatively long, individual volumes that address specialized topics, they offer authors the space needed to present innovative conceptualizations and to detail complex empirical work that would be difficult if not impossible to cover within the page constraints of most journals.

Long, however, is not an alluring quality on its own, particularly in an era in which 140-character tweets are used to disseminate national policies, and in which the expression "tl;dr" ("too long; didn't read") is used to explain why class assignments remain unread (see <http://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Plague-of-tl-dr/151635>). *SRCD Monographs* must, therefore, be more than long. To be accepted for publication, a manuscript must be judged as providing a significant contribution to one or more aspects of developmental science.

Such contributions can be achieved in varied ways. For example, a *Monograph* may be used to integrate results of multiple waves of testing in longitudinal studies; to illuminate connections across diverse developmental processes (e.g., cognitive, social, and neurological) with respect to some phenomenon of interest; to analyze a given topic at different levels of analysis using different disciplinary perspectives, methods, and traditions; to consolidate and extend large and varied research literatures (e.g., via meta-analysis); to examine developmental phenomena as they operate in and are affected by diverse ecological contexts defined by individual or intersecting ethnic, geographic, economic, political, or historical qualities. *Monographs* may also serve as an outlet for scholarship that describes and demonstrates new developmental tools (e.g., for data acquisition, visualization, analysis, sharing, or replication).

The examples just given unquestionably reflect two of the core goals identified in [SRCD's Strategic Plan](#)—one to advance cutting-edge and integrative developmental science research and the other to promote racial, cultural, economic, national, and contextual diversity in that science. *Monographs* are also well-positioned to serve a third SRCD strategic goal—promoting the application of developmental science to policies and practices that improve human well-being. That is, *Monographs* offer opportunities to describe contributions of developmental science to conceptualizing, designing, implementing, and evaluating national and global programs and policies in arenas as diverse as parenting, education, physical

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and mental health, economic policy, community development, workforce development, and family policy, to name only a few.

As is also suggested by the various examples given, although *Monographs* are intended to address some specialized topic within developmental science, they are not intended to be unduly narrow. Indeed, most *Monographs* are expected to be of interest to a wide swath of the membership of SRCD as well as to scholars and practitioners who work in disciplines and settings that have traditionally been under-represented among SRCD members. To this end, *Monograph* authors are urged to embed the presentations of their work within the context of past scholarship, linking their specialized focus to general developmental questions, theories, and processes. A *Monograph* should be comprehensible to (and engaging for) the general reader at the same time that it is valuable for colleagues who share research interests with the *Monograph's* authors. Furthermore, as suggested by words such as *integrate*, *consolidate*, and *connect* threaded through the examples, each issue is expected to be a fully-integrated volume written in a single voice. As such, even when a *Monograph* involves multiple scholars who work from diverse perspectives and who contribute in different ways, the *Monograph* is indexed as a single unit, linked to a single author or authorship team as a whole. (Information about how individuals' specific roles may be indicated is described in the [Submission Guidelines](#).)

SRCD Monographs—Past and Future

Monographs have an extensive reach both within and beyond the United States. First, each issue is automatically distributed to every member of SRCD, meaning that there is a large base of individual subscriptions—over 5,000. The series is also available to readers through over 5,000 institutions that hold licenses or subscriptions, and through over 7,500 developing-world institutions that make *Monographs* accessible through the support of philanthropic initiatives. The series typically attracts between 4,000 and 6,000 unique visitors a month, and between 35,000 and 45,000 downloads annually. In short, *Monographs* penetrate the scholarly community broadly and often.

Historically, *SRCD Monographs* have garnered outstanding journal statistics. Illustratively, in the first dozen years of the 21st century, with only one exception, the series was ranked among the top five most highly-cited developmental psychology journals (ranking #1 in 8 of the 12 years). Although there has been a recent drop in these rankings, this change does not reflect a decrease in citations, but rather a shift in post-editorial indexing procedures. In particular, rather than indexing each *Monograph* as a single unit, the new procedure treated sections within each issue (e.g., chapters, appendices) as independent or "citable" publications. This occurred irrespective of how authorship was handled in a particular issue, that is, both when a single person or team authored the entire issue and when different combinations of people were listed as authors of individual chapters. A procedure like this has negative effects on journal rankings because rankings are based on the ratio of citations per citable unit. This problem should not occur in the new editorial term because individual *Monographs* will be published and indexed as a single unit under one identifiable author or author team.

The reach and impact of *Monographs* is also expected to grow further through initiatives that extend beyond traditional print and electronic text. For

example, to expand engagement with *Monograph* content, the journal page of the SRCD website will provide a platform for invited and submitted commentaries, discussions with authors, and links to related papers, research tools, or data. To expand the adoption of individual *Monographs* for classroom use, authors will be involved in identifying relevant course offerings and relevant marketing strategies. To diversify the audiences that use *Monographs*, authors, editors, and the SRCD Policy and Communication office will be involved in developing outreach and dissemination activities such as press briefings, webinars, and on-line moderated discussions.

SRCD Monographs—Submission

SRCD Monographs—like the Society in general—seeks diversity, and thus there are no restrictions on who may submit manuscripts. For example, potential authors need not be members of the Society for Research in Child Development, they need not have any specific higher degree, and they need not be identified with any particular discipline.

It is strongly recommended (although not required) that potential authors consult with the Editor before submitting a full manuscript by sending a very brief description of the idea directly to Lynn Liben, liben@psu.edu. If there appears to be a potential fit with *Monographs*, the author will be invited to submit a short written prospectus. The prospectus (in Microsoft Word) should be sent as an email attachment to both the Editor and Managing Editor, monographs@srcd.org. The Editor will contact the author directly with feedback on the prospectus. Additional details about this process are found in the [Submission Guidelines](#).

Submitted manuscripts should be in the range of 100 to 200 double-spaced manuscript pages (1" margins on all sides), inclusive of all material (e.g., tables, figures, references). As explained in the [Submission Guidelines](#), with few exceptions, manuscripts should be prepared in accordance with the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th edition, 2010). Complete manuscripts should be submitted electronically at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/mono>. At submission, various assurances are required (e.g., regarding ethical treatment of participants) and authors are invited to provide suggestions about possible reviewers, commentators, and about courses, disciplines, or professional settings for which their work may be relevant. Again, additional details may be found in the [Submission Guidelines](#).

Submitted manuscripts undergo peer review. Every effort will be made to reach an editorial decision as quickly as possible, but given the length of *Monograph* manuscripts, the review process is typically time-consuming. Please feel free to contact the *Monographs* office, monographs@srcd.org, to inquire if you have not received a decision within 4 months of submission. More generally, questions about editorial policy or content should be directed to the Editor, Lynn Liben, at liben@psu.edu; questions about manuscript preparation and submission should be directed to the Managing Editor, Lisa Braverman, at monographs@srcd.org.