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Sport
and Education

Tribute to Martin Lee
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MOTIVATION AND ACHIEVEMENT GOALS:
After 25 years, where are we, where are we going? (1)

1. Introduction

In 1978, those of us in the Institute for Child Behaviour and Development at the Children's Research Center of the University of Illinois (John Nicholls, Marty Maehr, Carole Dweck, Carol Ames, Russ Ames, Ken Hill, Carol Farmer, and myself) decided to have a seminar series in the Spring to talk about our individual research thrusts into motivation processes. It was John Nicholls's idea not to have our graduate students present so that we could say "silly things without worrying about what our students will think". Each of us chatted about our research data and ideas and where we were going in the future. It was John Nicholls who first introduced us to the concepts that we now recognize as integral to achievement goal theory-ego and task involvement. John presented his ideas about having equality of motivation through task involvement and the ideas eventually became a publication in the *American Psychologist* (Nicholls, 1979). We all had our input, and gave our ideas. It was the most stimulating and exciting academic experience of my life. It reflects something in science that we often fail to recognize, but experience all the time—serendipity! For me, it was serendipitous that I was a colleague of these scientists at that place and time at Illinois. It was serendipitous that all these young scientists (with the exception of Marty Maehr, who may disagree with my categorization!) were at the same University at the same time. That seminar series changed the research of all of us involved and directly led to the first article where the concepts were first introduced in the form that we would recognize today (Maehr & Nicholls, 1980). We all became achievement goal people in one form or another after that seminar series. Each of us who were there has acknowledged the importance of the seminar in the development of achievement goal theory. We all

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