

Peg (Marguerite) Barratt – National Science Foundation

Participant in conference on
Modeling Developmental Processes in Ecological Context
March 2004

Dr. Peg (Marguerite) Barratt went to the National Science Foundation as the Program Director for Developmental and Learning Sciences in July 2002. Before that, she was at Michigan State University as the director of the Institute for Children, Youth, and Families for 4 years where she holds appointments as Professor of Family and Child Ecology and Professor of Psychology. Under Dr. Barratt's direction, the Institute for Children, Youth, and Families emerged as a multidisciplinary unit that offers an infrastructure in support of research, policy engagement, and outreach and works to facilitate university-community collaborations. Her Ph.D. is in developmental psychology from the Department of Psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and she has Bachelor's and Master's degrees in psychology from Michigan State University. She was on the faculty of the University of Wisconsin--Madison for 19 years in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies.

Professor Barratt's research is in the area of parent-child interaction with a focus on naturalistic field work. Special populations that have been the focus of her research include single adult mothers, adolescent mothers, mothers and fathers of young children with Down syndrome, families in Japan, and parents with preterm infants. Her research has been published in the American Journal of Mental Deficiency, Infant Mental Health, Developmental Psychology, and other journals, and she served as an Associate Editor of Developmental Psychology. In 2002 she was selected as a Fellow in the American Psychological Association.

Her outreach activities have included development of a newsletter for expectant parents that focuses on preparing to parent as well as speaking on topics including the role of relationships in early development, uses and misuses of brain research, parent-child interaction, the developmental perspective, quality child care, infants and toddlers, and links between universities and communities. She is interested in media dissemination and has made numerous radio, television and video presentations as well as interviews with print media.

Dr. Barratt is at the National Science Foundation through the interagency "Intergovernmental Personnel Act," and thus is still on the Faculty of Michigan State University. Developmental and Learning Sciences at the National Science Foundation is located within the Division of Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences. This program supports research into the processes of change, especially during childhood and adolescence, with a particular focus on etiology and consequences of behavior. Understanding individual differences is an emphasis, and development is examined within its family, community and cultural contexts.