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*Sometimes I worry
about being a success
in a mediocre world.*
-- Lily Tomlin

**Sibling Rivalry***Do Family Dynamics Guarantee Stardom?*

We tend to think of celebrities as immune to the problems the rest of us earthlings have, but the truth is, they're just like the rest of us, only famous. And that means, when they go home for the holidays, old patterns and sibling rivalries can emerge like a skeletal hand out of a muddy swamp in a Wes Craven movie. Chances are, in fact, that their sibling rivalries are enhanced by their public positions -- but that's another story altogether.

Related Article:**Stuck in the Middle?**

How Birth Order Can Affect Your Life

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For more on Birth Order, check out the **Adlerian site** (Developed by Henry T. Stein, Ph.D.)

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Youngest children frequently make good talk-show hosts (**Rosie O'Donnell**, **Jay Leno**), as they are constantly vying for attention. For this reason, too, they are likely to be the 'clowns' of the family, trying to make everyone laugh (Drew Carey). Because they want to be noticed, they tend to take the most risks and be the most artistic. Some make grandiose plans that never work out; others make grandiose and artistic plans that work just fine: **David Duchovny**, **Julia Roberts** and **Celine Dion** are all youngest children who have successfully (consciously or not) overshadowed their siblings.

Middle children take one of two paths: most frequently, they are the peacemakers, the most even-tempered of a family, the diplomats. Is it any wonder that both **John F. Kennedy** and **Princess Diana** were middle children? Depending on the number of siblings, middle children can also take on characteristics of a youngest child, vying for attention - just look at **David Letterman** or **Michael Jackson**, both middles. Letterman is famous for his other 'middle' characteristics: self-discipline, honesty, determination and sociability. Many of these traits, psychologists believe, stem from the middle child's need to outperform his or her older sibling(s).

Not surprisingly, **Diane Keaton** is the **oldest** of three sisters. No actress in our generation has brought such truth to the eldest sister role (*Crimes of the Heart*, *Hanging Up*), epitomizing on screen the real-life traits of academic and career ambition, perfectionism and competition. As with Keaton's *Hanging Up* character, Georgia, first-borns usually feel that power is their birthright, and they may become authoritarian or strict, acting as a third parent to the younger kids. Other famous firsts include **Bill Cosby** (no wonder he's the consummate Dad), **Sean Connery** (can't get much more authoritative than "Bond. James Bond."), **Harrison Ford** and **Hillary Clinton**.

'Nuff said?

Then there are those who have no siblings, like **Jennifer Aniston** and **Leonardo DiCaprio**. Traditionally, these children show signs of both the oldest (overly responsible) and youngest (artistic), in addition to having characteristics unique to themselves. **Only children** are accustomed to being the center of attention, and they generally grow up to maintain that position - **Robin Williams** is the perfect example of an only child.

So when you suddenly find your 35-year-old self arguing with your 32-year-old brother about who got the better present in 1974, know that you're not alone. Millions of people around the world, famous and civilian, are re-enacting their birth order quarrels. Think of it as an unheralded holiday tradition. ♪

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