Being more creative is possible, but it takes work

BY NEIL SCHONSHIER

Do you desire to be a more creative person but don’t think you have the “creative” gene? You may have some hard work ahead, but it’s possible to become the next Walt Disney or Martha Stewart, according to R. Keith Sawyer, Ph.D., associate professor of education and of psychology, both in Arts & Sciences.

“Not one is born highly creative,” Sawyer said. “Psychologists studying creativity have discovered that it is based on cognitive processes we all share. Creativity is not the result of some magic brain part that some people have and others don’t.”

Sawyer’s latest book, Explaining Creativity: The Science of Human Innovation, is a seminal overview of the history of creativity and of research into traits that highly creative people all share. Designed as a textbook for his course “Psychology of Creativity,” Explaining Creativity is a general overview of the science of creativity for anyone who wants to know more about it. In the book, Sawyer outlines some of the myths that many of us hold about creative people.

“When people say they aren’t creative, it’s because of some false idea about creativity that we hold as a society,” Sawyer said. “One myth is that if you’re a creative person it’s a trait and everything you touch turns to gold. That’s not the way creativity works. It’s not some magical trait. You have to work hard to be a more creative person. You have to be diligent.”

Collaboration is key

It’s a myth that creative people “have pierced body parts and tattoos and they sleep at odd hours and maybe they are not socially smooth or skilled — maybe they are loners.”

Actually, when researchers collaborate, they get more and better ideas. "When people say they aren’t creative, it’s because of some false idea about creativity that we hold as a society,” Sawyer said. “One myth is that if you’re a creative person it’s a trait and everything you touch turns to gold. That’s not the way creativity works. It’s not some magical trait. You have to work hard to be a more creative person. You have to be diligent.”

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Actual...
Many adults in the dark about aging parents

BY JENNIE IVERSON

I f this memo to the Washington University in St. Louis administration were written by Mark S. Wrighton, it reaffirms the University’s commitment to equal opportunity and cultural diversity.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Washington University is committed to providing equal opportunity and a culture free from discrimination and harassment for all students, faculty and staff. All equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination requirements are given equal consideration.

Disability

The study’s findings place a higher priority on training programs that address the needs of older adults. Washington University is committed to the development and implementation of these programs.
Storch named first Ruth L. Siteman professor
Will also direct pediatric infectious disease division

BY RUTH MILLER

Gregory A. Storch, M.D., has been named director of the Division of Infectious Diseases in the Department of Pediatrics and the first Ruth L. Siteman Professor of Pediatrics at the School of Medicine. The endowed professorship, given by Alvin J. and Ruth Siteman, "is a nationally renowned scholar, teacher and clinician in pediatric infectious diseases as well as a leader in the field of Medicine and St. Louis Children's Hospital.

The professorship is part of the St. Louis Children's Hospital Foundation and Washington University School of Medicine Joint Program in Pediatric Chairs, which sets a goal to have 12 new pediatric professorships by 2008.

Childre,n have:
Creativity

‘Everyday conversation is a great example’ – from Page 1

Sawyer insists that to be creative, one has to have organizational structure and collaboration. "If you are a loner in a room somewhere doing your own thing, you aren't going to be employed very long," Sawyer said.

"Video games are just one example. Think of any major creative organization, increasingly over the past 20-50 years, the important kinds of creativity and innovation have involved large groups of people." But the myth of the lone genius still persists because many people, when they think of the stereotypical creative-type person, think of the ultimate lone genius — the poet.

"People see poets as being very solitary and yet very creative," Sawyer said. "Many people think a poet could be a genius, but they don't think he would need to collaborate. Poets network with other people. "They have to get ideas from somewhere," he added.

Some conventions needed

Another myth about creativity held by many is that creativity is the opposite of convention and constraint. "Many people think the best way to be creative is to break all the rules; anytime you are conventional, you are not creative," Sawyer said. "That's just not true. In fact, creativity could not happen in the absence of convention." An example of this is something as basic as musical convention. "All music, at least in the West, is based on 12 tones and has certain rhythmic patterns," Sawyer said. "There are structures to songs and a finite number of instruments are available. Those are all conventions for creating music. You wouldn't say that a composer is not creative because he composed a tune in the 12-tone scale. We don't insist that every composer make up a whole new scale. We don't insist that every composer invent his own instruments."

"Music wouldn't exist without this complicated set of conventions that we often don't even think of as conventional. Musicians never get frustrated because they only have 12 notes in the scale. Writers don't get upset because they only have 26 letters to use."

Many people don't realize they're being creative by just carrying on a conversation. "Everyday conversation is a great example of creativity that everyone does on a daily basis," Sawyer said. "There's a lot of give and take, and everyone is listening to everyone else. You hear what your partner says and really absorb that and then build on it. So a good conversation is truly collaborative and emerges from what everyone is doing together."

How can I be creative?

So what's the secret to becoming more creative?

"You can't be creative without knowing a lot about what you are trying to be creative in," Sawyer said. "You can't just decide to be creative in something. Really creative people spend a lot of time in preparation."

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Metro

Passes will be available beginning July 1

- from Page 1

cate services provided by the University’s shuttle program, and reduced ticketing and roadway congestion;

- Red Chickens: parking de-
mands at various University

» Clearinghouse; and

- Enhanced trip planning and
customer service offered through the University’s Parking

» Transportation Services Office;

- Ongoing major funding and

» support for public transporta-
tion services in the St. Louis re-
gion.

Beginning July 1, the passes will be available at no charge to full-time students, benefits-eligible faculty and staff, and full-time

» employees of qualified service

» providers who perform daily tasks. As the transition to Metro transportacion proceeds, the Uni-

» versity will seek to reduce the
duplicate shuttle services. The Gold and Blue lines will be phased out over the sum-

» mer and replaced with Metro

» service that will largely follow the

» same routes and schedules previ-

» ously served by the University’s

» shuttles. The Green line will be main-

» tained as an important link be-

» tween the Hilltop Campus and

» neighborhoods where large num-

» bers of students live. The University will also pro-

» vide a “Hilltop Campus/South 40

» Circulator” that will provide shuttle services from the MetroLink stations at Skinker Boulevard

» and Forest Park Parkway, to vari-

» ous MetroLink and MetroBus

» routes in the St. Louis region.

The Parking & Transportation Services Office will be posting additional route schedules and Metro pass information at transportation.wustl.edu as it be-

» comes available, including details as to when and where Metro passes will be issued to those

» students, faculty and staff who quali-

» fy for the program.

Sports

Women's hoops wins finale; to host regional

The No. 3 women's basketball

» team is set to host the 2006 NCAA Regionals March 3-4 at the Field

» House.

WUSTL, which is making its 17th straight trip to the tourna-

» ment, will face Manchester

» College. Carlow College and

» Carroll College will square off in first-round games at 3 p.m. The

» winners of these two first-round games today will meet at 7 p.m.

»

Senior Lisa Verhulst led the Bears with a throw line, as she eclipsed the pre-

» vious school single-game record. Manning was 14 of 27 from the field and 9 of 9 from the free-

» throw line, as she eclipsed the pre-

» vious UAA high of 37 by Mar-

» sela Causey of New York University in 1998.

Men's hoops drops finale to Chicago

The men's basketball team dropped its final regular season game with a 77-67 loss at Chicago Feb. 25. Senior Jeff McDonald paced the Bears with a career-

» best for Manning, was just

» one point shy of tying the school

» single-game record.

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» throw line, as she eclipsed the pre-

» vious UAA high of 37 by Mar-

» sela Causey of New York University in 1998.

Men's tennis team pulls off two upsets

The No. 17 men’s tennis team upset two top-15 teams as the Bears upset No. 11 Washington & Lee University in a 6-1 contest Feb. 25 in Fred-

» ericksburg, Va. Freshman Trevor

» Bowman clinched the match for the Bears as he posted a 7-5, 6-4 win over Charles Anderson at No. 6. On Feb. 26, WUSTL knocked

» off No. 12 Mary Washington Col-

» lege, 4-1, and junior Zach Zech won two leads to win the bears.

Baseball team posts season-opening sweep

The baseball team opened the sea-

» son with a sweep of Fontbonne University Feb. 24 at Kelly Field. The Bears took Game 1, 10-0, and

» rolled to an 18-3 win in the second contest.

With three doubles on the day, senior Ryan Corning moved into

» sixth place on the Bears' career
doubles list with 35. In the first game, junior Ben Buhuta tossed a

» shutout, giving up six hits and

» striking six strikers. The Bears scored twice with two outs to take a 2-1 lead in the first inning. In the sec-

» ond inning, WUSTL put the game away with six runs. Junior

» Andy Shields picked up the win.

Women's tennis team wins at Principia

The women's tennis team swept six singles and five doubles flights at the Principia College Invitational Feb. 24-25 in Elsah, Ill. At No. 1 singles, freshman Car-

» tyn Preston rolled to three wins for the tournament title. She surren-

» dered just four games in three matches to improve to 1-6 this year in singles play.

Preston paired with junior Erica Feininger at No. 1 doubles for three comfortable wins. The duo is now 10-1 on the season.
Orwell classic Animal Farm comes to Edison

By LIAM OTTEN

“A" animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others.

Such is the satiric lesson of Animal Farm, George Orwell’s cautionary parable about the uses and abuses of power.

This month, New York’s acclaims Animal Farm in its production titled "The Puppet Musical," with the story’s witty and visually stunning puppetry — based on the award-winning musical adaptation by famed British director Peter Hall — reimagines Orwell’s novel with all the wonder and grotesquery of a childhood fairy tale.

Performances — part of the Edison Theatre’s 2023-2024 Season — will begin at 8 p.m. March 10-11.

Published in 1945, Animal Farm is a thinly disguised allegory of Soviet communism. The story follows a group of oppressed barnyard animals who rise up against their cruel and neglectful master, Farmer Jones. At first, they thrive under the leadership of the idealistic Snowball, an intelligent and neglectful master, Farmer Jones. However, a rebellion against their cruel and neglectful master, Farmer Jones, turns into a power struggle among pigs — Napoleon and Snowball — until they too become as bad as the humans they were rebelling against. Inspired by the simple motifs and primary colors of a children’s book, Animal Farm: The Puppet Musical, reimagines Orwell’s novel with elements of vaudeville and musical theatre to create a tongue-in-cheek, family-friendly experience that both stimulates and entertains.

Designers Emily DeColes and Eric Wright enlist an astonishing array of puppetry forms, from life-sized puppets to shadow-puppets to stick-and-rod, Japanese bunraku, stick-and-rod, and WUSTL faculty and staff; and as well as re-present provocative and challenging works that address the most pressing issues of our time.

The Puppet Musical in 2004 as part of The Orwell Project, a multidisciplinary arts and education event that also included a new production of "1984," as well as co-sponsored conferences and workshops.

Edison Theatre programs are made possible with support from the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency and the Regional Arts Commission of St. Louis.

Tickets are $28; $24 for seniors with WUSTL faculty and staff; and $18 for students and children under 12.

For more available at the Edison Theatre Box Office and through all Mettix outlets.

For more information, call 935-6543.

Cable-stayed Bridges • Amazing Thailand • Aging

Discounted tickets for March 8 show

Edison Theatre will host a special performance of "Synapse Productions' Animal Farm" as part of the Puppet Meets Existential for WUSTL faculty, staff, and their families as well as their friends and guests — at 8 p.m. March 8. Tickets are $28; $24 valid. WUSTL ID must be presented at time of purchase.

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Cable-stayed Bridges • Amazing Thailand • Aging
Kingsbury Ensemble to perform music from the French Baroque

By NADINE GUNASENA

Wendy Kopp, founder of Teach for America, a national nonprofit, will speak about her efforts to help bring quality education to students in low-income neighborhoods. The organization has grown from a handful of teachers and students in a single urban school district to serving millions of children in more than 100 cities through 30 countries.

Kopp’s journey to create the organization began after she saw a movie about the lives of children educated by explorers in the 1950s.

“Once, years, interest has exploded, averaging about 17,000 applicants for 2,100 posts. Candidates include some of the nation’s most talented and graduate, the training year’s recruits had an average GPA of 3.5, and 93 percent held leader- 

down a decade at the stun-

ningly successful nonprofit organization.

Kopp serves on the President’s Council on Teaching and Civic Engagement, the board of the New Teacher Project, and the advisory board of the Corpus Christi (Texas) Public Schools.

In 2007, Kopp was named one of the 100 Most Influential People by Time magazine. She also was a Finalist for the MacArthur “Genius” Award and is the author of Two Years at the Center: The First Two Decades of the 19th Century.

Kopp’s book, One Day, All Children: The Unlikely Triumph of Teach for America and What I Learned Along the Way, chronicles the program’s creation, including the numerous challenges she faced in its implementation. The New York Times describes the book as "a diary for a social entrepreneur, an inspiring how-to-guide for young people with big dreams, a thoughtful take on the ups and downs of a decade at the stunningly successful nonprofit organization.

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Kopp was one of the founders of The George Washington University School of Social Work and the School of Law will host a workshop titled “Certification in Social Work—Preparing for the Criminal Justice System” from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, March 9 in Brown Hall Lounge.

This workshop, presented by the School of Social Work at The George Washington University School of Law and the School of Social Work at The George Washington University, will identify and review the population characteristics of adults and adults and the significant issues over the last several years. Participants will discuss a case that served as a national benchmark in changing the way the justice system treats juveniles in the United States. Community psychologist David C. Kerr, Ph.D., will serve as the course instructor. He served as a director of clinical services at Child Mental Health Services in the Illinois.

For more information, call 862-2675 or e-mail kingsburyensemble@yahoo.com.
Perry Grigsby, M.D., is thoroughly grounded and happily busy in the Department of Radiation Oncology. On the faculty since 1982, he finds himself well-rooted in a career that includes patient care, research, teaching, management and even invention.

With an education in biology and physics and medicine, Grigsby feels sure he made aelligent choice when — fresh out of medical school — he took a position in radiation oncology at the School of Medicine.

"My mentor at the University of Kentucky, where I went to undergraduate, graduate and medical school, told me to apply to the best places in the country for radiation oncology," Grigsby says with a bit of a Slow, Kentucky drawl. "So I did. And of the five places I looked at, the combination of St. Louis, Washington University School of Medicine and the Mallinckrodt Institute of Radiology fit me best. It's been great, and I've never been bored.

A full professor in the radiation oncology department since 1982, Grigsby is also professor of nuclear medicine and of obstetrics and gynecology. In November, he was named to direct radiation oncology and to establish Brachytherapy and micro-RT Treatment Center, which was implemented to inject radiation sources to treat cancer.

"Perry Grigsby has been such an asset to our department," says Susan M. Post, M.D., chief of the department. "He's hardworking and brilliant. We knew that creating the center with him as director would ensure our brachytherapy program would remain among the best in the world.

In part, the brachytherapy center is a response to a burgeoning patient base.

"We graphed the number of brachytherapy patients that we've seen here over the past 35 years," Grigsby says. "The growth is pretty flat through the '70s, '80s and '90s. But in recent years it just skyrocketed."

Under Grigsby's charge, the brachytherapy center will expand and update its equipment and implement new technologies while striving to maintain its excellence in patient care.

About half of the cases treated at the center are gynecological cancers. Brachytherapy has been a mainstay of therapy for these cancers for many years. In fact, Grigsby, a history buff, has found records going back to the 1930s that detail cervical brachytherapy treatments.

"Not long after Madame Curie discovered radium at the turn of the last century, doctors started placing radium sources in patients to treat a variety of disorders," Grigsby points out. "Cervical cancer was one of those diseases."

Grigsby says the basic principles behind the radiation treatments are the same now as they were at the start. But advances in techniques and equipment have made tremendous improvements in patient care.

"Perry is one of the smartest clinicians I know," says David Mutch, M.D., chief of the Division of Gynecologic Oncology. "He's ideas about patient management are original and thought-provoking. Grigsby leverages this talent for originality by researching ways to improve the use of radiation to treat cancer. His latest studies demonstrate that the use of PET scans improves the placement of radiation in a very small beam."

The result, the micro-RT, can target tiny tumors without irradiating nearby tissues. The patent-branded device permits scientists to irradiate tumors as small as 2 millimeters wide, enabling them to conduct animal studies that can potentially advance human cancer treatment.

Grigsby's expertise in the use of radiation for cancer treatment earns him frequent invitations to speak at scientific conferences and meetings around the globe. In the past two years alone, he has given invited presentations in Turin, Italy; Edinburgh, Scotland; Mumbai (formerly Bombay), India; Barcelona, Spain; Budapest, Hungary; and Taipei, Taiwan, to name a just few.

Because his wife and one or more of his seven children often travel with him, Grigsby makes an effort to see the local sites while he's abroad.

"We look at the local art and historical sites," Grigsby says. "We've been to a gazillion art museums throughout the world."

Grigsby's children range in age from 9 to 28. His daughter Beth and son James work at the School of Medicine, Beth in the clinical trials office of the Siteman Center and James in the physics section of radiation oncology. Grigsby's wife, Susan, whom he married in 1999, is a poet and writer.

"All the kids are in town with us," Grigsby says, showing the latest family photo on his computer desktop. "I'm lucky. My life is pretty full. I'm glad I came here and stayed here. This is a great institution, and it's been a lot of fun."

Perry Grigsby
Born: Catlet, Kentucky, 1952
Wife: Susan Grigsby
Children: David, 9; Isabel, 14; Barbara, 19; Thomas, 18; James, 23; Amy, 26; Beth, 28
Ancestors: By a line of medical residents, Grigsby was named Teacher of the Year in the Radiation Oncology Division in 1995, 1996 and 2000.
Background: "I grew up on a farm in western Kentucky, not too far from Paducah," Grigsby says. "We had cows, sheep, wheat, a little bit of everything."