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HIDA's mission is to increase awareness of dyslexia in our community, provide support for dyslexics, families and educators, promote teacher training and improve literacy for struggling readers.

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OCTOBER IS DYSLEXIA AWARENESS MONTH

Each year in October, small groups of parents, students, educators and other professionals across the United States step up their efforts to raise public awareness about the difficulties faced by dyslexic children and adults. This task is monumental because, although as much as 20% of the population may suffer from reading disorders, very few people seem to know about dyslexia. Until there is sufficient public commitment to help dyslexics, far too many will remain undiagnosed and labeled “lazy,” “slow” or “uneducated.” Commitment begins with public awareness.

HIDA has planned a number of October events and programs to raise public awareness about dyslexia and the interventions available to help dyslexic children and adults.

On October 25, HIDA, in conjunction with the Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools

(HAIS), will hold its 2008 Fall Symposium, *The Evolving Reading Brain in a Digital World*, at the Japanese Cultural Center. HIDA is incredibly fortunate to have Maryanne Wolf, Ed.D., as the keynote speaker. Dr. Wolf is the director of the Center for Reading and Language Research, the John DiBiaggio Chair in Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University in Boston and a research scientist at Harvard University. She received her doctorate from Harvard in the Department of Human Development and Psychology in the Graduate School of Education, where she began her work on the underpinnings of reading, language and dyslexia. In the early 1970s, Dr. Wolf worked in the Hawai'i Department of Education as a teacher in Waialua. In her bestselling book, *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain*, which was described in the New York Times Book Review as “absolutely brilliant,”

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HAWAI'I'S NEW DYSLEXIA RESOURCE GUIDE

Earlier this year, HIDA proudly unveiled its long-awaited *Resource Guide on Dyslexia for People in Hawai'i* written by Kathy E. Ferguson, Ph.D., a member of HIDA's Board of Directors, and published with the support of the Donald C. Brace Foundation, Office of Hawai'ian Affairs, and the International Dyslexia Association Branch Council. The 124 page Guide is in response to years of requests from Hawai'i's educators, parents, clinicians and individuals with dyslexia for

up-to-date information on dyslexia and a comprehensive list of local service providers and resources. It provides detailed information on testing for dyslexia, appropriate teaching strategies and methods, relations within the family, and parent and individual advocacy. It also addresses school and life-time transitions, legal rights, work-place issues and social and life skills. A glossary of terms, information on scientific research, and a thorough bibliography are also included.

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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

HIDA Rides on the Shoulders of Volunteers . . .



Sue Voit

Most of the services provided by HIDA are the product of the hard work of volunteers who spend their limited “free time” working on HIDA projects. Over the past year, their efforts enabled HIDA to publish and distribute the *Resource Guide on Dyslexia for People in Hawai'i*, to co-sponsor (with Dr. Ann Lemke at Windward Community College and with Wade DeSa District Specialist for Special Education in East Hawai'i) conferences featuring keynote speaker Dr. Brett Miller addressing Issues in Adolescent Literacy, to sponsor Associate Level Orton-Gillingham training this summer in Honolulu, and in collaboration with Assets School, to present Project Read Story Form, a multisensory reading comprehension workshop facilitated by Angela Wilkins. Volunteer efforts also allowed HIDA to improve services to individuals participating in the *Odyssey Project* which, for over 10 years, has sponsored multisensory language (“MSL”) interventions for dyslexic (or specific learning disabled – SLD) individuals who show financial need. In turn, the *Odyssey Project* enriches the professional development opportunities for educators by offering more multisensory training and support for MSL therapists.

Without the ongoing hard work of volunteers, HIDA will be hard pressed to sustain this level of service. This is particularly true in these difficult economic times when HIDA, like most non-profit organizations in Hawai'i, needs to find creative ways to operate on a shoestring budget. Therefore, the focus at this year's annual board retreat in July was on streamlining procedures, maximizing efficiencies, and expanding the pool of volunteers. The board members reaffirmed their commitment to weather current economic conditions and strive to continue HIDA's programs and projects. I would like to thank Mrs. Betty Hoddick for hosting

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NEW LEADERSHIP AT ASSETS SCHOOL



Paul M. Signer

HIDA welcomes Paul M. Singer, the new headmaster of Assets School, to HIDA's community of parents, learners, and educators. Assets School has been educating gifted and/or dyslexic students (K-12) in Honolulu since 1969. Mr. Singer generously gave of his time to be interviewed. “I am looking forward to getting involved in any way I can,” he said. The following are excerpts from his interview. The complete interview can be found on HIDA's website www.dyslexia-hawaii.org.

Mr. Singer's background with regard to dyslexia is more personal than clinical. “I was a student who grew up with a lot of pain,” he recalled, “trying to figure out how to read and write during the days when the diagnostic skills weren't what they are today.” His parents took him to educational clinics all over California to find out why he was in the 4th grade and couldn't read. His education in California public schools “was a pretty negative experience. By high school I was a pretty bad disciplinary problem.” With an appreciative laugh, he recalled spending so much time in the office of the dean of students that they bonded and became life-long friends.

“I surprised myself,” he reflected with a smile. “It took me a while to recognize that I was just as capable as the next guy. There were just certain hurdles that I had to come to understand and develop my own strategies to overcome.” And overcome them he did, earning a

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LEARNING TO THINK IN A DIGITAL WORLD

By Maryanne Wolf, Ed.D. | September 5, 2007



Maryanne Wolf

AS PARENTS invest in the latest academic software and teachers consider how to weave the Internet into lesson plans for the new school year, it is a good moment to reflect upon the changing world in which youths are being educated. In a word, it is digital, with computer notebooks displacing spiraled notebooks, and Web-based blogs, articles, and e-mails shaping how we read and communicate. Parents, teachers, and scholars are beginning to question how our immersion in this increasingly digital world will shape the next generation's relationship to reading, learning, and to knowledge itself.

As a cognitive neuroscientist and scholar of reading, I am particularly concerned with the plight of the reading brain as it encounters this technologically rich society. Literacy is so much entwined in our lives that we often fail to realize that the act of reading is a miracle that is evolving under our fingertips. Over the last 5,000 years, the acquisition of reading transformed the neural circuitry of the brain and the intellectual development of the species. Yet, the reading brain is slowly becoming endangered - the unforeseen consequences of the transition to a digital epoch that is affecting every aspect of our lives, including the intellectual development of each new reader. Three unexpected sources can help us negotiate the historical transition we face as we move from one prevailing mode of communication to

“Parents, teachers, and scholars are beginning to question how our immersion in this increasingly digital world will shape the next generation’s relationship to reading, learning, and to knowledge itself.”

another: Socrates, modern cognitive neuroscience, and Proust.

Similarly poised between two modes of communication, one oral and one written, Socrates argued against the acquisition of literacy. His arguments are as prescient today as they were futile then. At the core of Socrates' arguments lay his concerns for the young. He believed that the seeming permanence of the printed word would delude them into thinking they had accessed the heart of knowledge, rather than simply decoded it. To Socrates, only the arduous process of probing, analyzing, and ultimately internalizing knowledge would enable the young to develop a lifelong approach to thinking that would lead them ultimately to wisdom, virtue, and “friendship with [their] god.” To Socrates, only the examined word and the “examined life” were worth pursuing, and literacy short-circuited both.

How many children today are becoming Socrates' nightmare, decoders of information who have neither the time nor the motivation to think beneath or beyond their googled universes? Will they become so accustomed to immediate access to escalating on-screen information that they will fail to probe beyond the information given to the deeper layers of insight, imagination, and knowledge that have led us to this stage of human thought? Or, will the new demands of information technologies to multitask, integrate, and prioritize vast amounts of information help to develop equally, if not more valuable, skills that will increase human intellectual capacities, quality of life, and collective wisdom as a species?

There is surprisingly little research that directly confronts these questions, but knowledge from the neurosciences about how the brain learns to read and how it learns to think about what it reads can aid our efforts. We know, for example, that no human being was born to read. We can do so only because of our brain's protean capacity to rearrange itself to learn something new. Using neuroimaging to scan the brains of novice readers allows us to observe how a new neural circuitry is fashioned from some of its original structures. In the process, that brain is transformed in ways we are only now beginning to fully appreciate. More specifically, in the expert reading brain, the first milliseconds of decoding have become virtually automatic within that circuit. It is this automaticity that allows us the precious milliseconds we need to go beyond the decoded text to think new thoughts of our own - the heart of the reading process.

Perhaps no one was more eloquent about the true purpose of reading than French novelist Marcel Proust, who wrote: “that which is the end of their [the author's] wisdom is but the beginning of ours.” The act of going beyond the text to think new thoughts is a developmental, learnable approach toward knowledge.

Within this context, there should be a developmental perspective on our transition to a digital culture. Our already biliterate children, who nimbly traverse between various modes of print, need to develop an expert reading brain before they become totally immersed in the digital world. Neuroscience shows us the profound miracle of an expert reading brain that uses untold areas

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LEARNING TO THINK IN A DIGITAL WORLD

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across all four lobes and both hemispheres to comprehend sophisticated text and to think new thoughts that go beyond the text.

Children need to have both time to think and the motivation to think for themselves, to develop an expert reading brain, before the digital mode dominates their reading. The immediacy and volume of information should not be confused with true knowledge. As technological visionary Edward Tenner cautioned, "It would be a shame if the very intellect that produced the digital revolution could be destroyed by it." Socrates, Proust, and the images of the expert reading brain help us to think more deliberately about the choices we possess as our next generation moves toward the next great epoch in our intellectual development.

Maryanne Wolf is professor at the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development at Tufts University, where she is also director of the Center for Reading and Language Research. She is author of "Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain."

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HIDA 2008 Fall Symposium

The Evolving Reading Brain in a Digital World



October 25, 2008, 9:00 AM – 11:45 AM
Japanese Cultural Center (JCC) | Mo'ili'ili Ballroom
2454 South Beretania Street | Honolulu

Registration Fee: \$35 for HIDA or HAIS member
\$42 for non-member | \$12 for student

Parking: \$2 at Varsity Theatre and \$4 at JCC

Proust and the Squid book: \$15

Featuring

Maryanne Wolf, Ed.D.

Director, Center for Reading & Language Tufts University

Sponsored in part by:

A grant from the Atherton Family Foundation

For registration or HAIS information:

Lisa Leong | E-mail: lisa@hais.org | Ph: 973-1543 | www.hais.org

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NEW LEADERSHIP AT ASSETS SCHOOL *Continued from page 2*

Bachelor's degree in Sociology, two Master's degrees in Education (one in Social and Philosophical Foundations of Education and the other in Educational Administration and Supervision) as well as completing doctoral work in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies.

Prior to joining Assets School, Mr. Singer spent 28 years at the Country School in Valley Village, California, while also teaching as an adjunct professor at Cal State, Northridge. "I started working with different kinds of kids when I was in college. I saw a lot of troubled kids with undiagnosed learning problems. People often just fell through the cracks. They became victims of the huge bureaucratic system where teachers were immersed in classroom management because their classes were so large; they would teach

"I want Assets to be a comfortable place, where kids enjoy going to school, with a reputation for excellence in teaching."

to the middle, and the kids at both ends would just get left behind."

Mr. Singer has come to cherish an approach to learning that focuses on the needs of each child. Leaning forward to make his point, he stressed, "Dyslexia is not 'wrong' – it's just a different way of learning." He sees his role as "helping parents understand that their child is dyslexic, and that's good news; finding that out means there's an answer, a place to go with it, a future." Mr. Singer stressed his

parents' contribution to his success: "My mom was my big supporter. I learned a lot just watching her."

He spoke with respect, even amazement, at the accomplishments of Assets faculty and staff. "These are incredibly committed individuals. They spend so much time going above and beyond. It's really impressive. Nobody's working the hours they're supposed to work! If I worry about anything, I worry about burnout."

"I want Assets to be a comfortable place, where kids enjoy going to school, with a reputation for excellence in teaching." His enthusiasm shone as he imagined his students' future. "I want to get the phone calls from them 10 years down the line...telling me what they're doing in their lives. I think it will be pretty exciting."

HIDA'S SHOWCASE

ALL IN THE FAMILY . . .

By Kathy E. Ferguson, Ph.D. | August 2008



Until my older son began having problems with reading, I didn't think much about dyslexia. I'd heard of it, largely due to a pioneering woman I knew in Minneapolis in the 1970s who created a clinic for dyslexic learners because her own son was having problems learning. Still, it had very little to do with me.

My husband, Gili, had mentioned to me that he is dyslexic, and I could see it in his indecipherable handwriting and imaginative spelling. I knew he had had a very hard time in school, and had been viewed as a trouble-maker by adults who couldn't understand why this boy, who was obviously intelligent, was bored in school and did poorly in his academic subjects. He did not find out he is dyslexic until he was in the army, and an instructor noted the learning difference but had no way to address it. Gili was saved by his fascination with machines and his ability to do things with his hands. In our house, we call him "our fixer-guy." By the time we met, he had become a successful mechanic, respected by his colleagues and employers. While he avoids writing, he likes to read, and has never, so far as I can tell, lacked a positive self-image. Again, dyslexia didn't seem to have very much to do with me.

That comfortable distance crumbled when Oren was assessed as dyslexic. I will never forget the concluding words

"My stomach still clenches with fear when I remember those words... that chilling evaluation....never learn...never learn."

of the assessment: "he is a classic dyslexic child" and will probably never learn to read or write without specialized assistance. My stomach still clenches with fear when I remember those words. Our second son, Ari, came along five years later, and again, that chilling evaluation....never learn... never learn.

I knew in my head that, with proper instruction, my boys could learn. But in my heart, I felt an awful fear for them. What was I afraid of? First, there were the practical problems: how could we find the instruction they needed? How could we pay for it? Those fears, while daunting, were straightforward. Behind them, however, lurked more unsavory anxieties. They have to do, I think, with some largely unconscious assumptions many parents have about our children being a kind of mirror in which we search for our reflections. My children are, in a very basic way, not like me. For example, throughout school, I was the standardized test queen, and high test scores opened doors for me in college and graduate school. My children would not have that advantage, and it scared me. More fundamentally, my sons' way of being in the world is different than mine: they think in pictures, while I can't conjure up a mental image to save my life. I think in words, I relish language...and the very meaning of dys (difficulty) lexia (with language) marks their distance from me.

It took some time for my heart to catch up with my head. We found the teaching they needed, and we will always be grateful to Assets School for providing the multisensory structured language interventions that enabled our sons to learn to read and write. I learned to teach that way as well, in order to

home school the kids during a year of travel. Our boys have thrived, each in his own way: Oren, now in college, writes fiction and is a splendid story-teller; Ari, in high school, excels at math and enjoys history. They both love to read. They are both avid gamers. The "down side" of dyslexia still shows up, sometimes, in their academic work; but the "up side" of dyslexia enhances their creativity, their imagination, and their ability to surprise me, to think in unique ways.

Perhaps most importantly, I've learned that there is no need for my children to be like me. They are not on this earth for me; they are for themselves. My job is to help them grow and to delight in their uniqueness, not to look for mirror images of myself.

Gili admits to feeling a certain envy when he thinks about how his life might have been different if he had had the kind of teaching our sons have received. He found his way, as have many other dyslexic adults, despite obstacles tossed on an already rough path by unknowing teachers and inhospitable classrooms. But we wonder whether he would have had more opportunities to embrace the "up sides" of his dyslexia had he been helped instead of hindered along the way. It is a criminal waste of human potential and resources to let dyslexic learners founder when resources to teach them well are available. We have to change our schools so that every learner can thrive.

Kathy E. Ferguson is a professor of political science and women's studies at the University of Hawai'i, Manoa. She is a member of the Board of Directors of HIDA, and is the author of A Resource Guide About Dyslexia For People in Hawai'i.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Continued from page 2

the retreat, and to our volunteer board and staff for that long, hard-working and extremely productive day.

On behalf of HIDA, I would like extend our appreciation to departing directors Linda Currivan, Marilyn Gray, Dorothy Laughlin-Whitaker, Doric Little, and Cal Sakata, each of whom has generously donated time and expertise to HIDA. Thankfully, many will continue to serve as community members. I would also like to welcome our new directors, Jyo Bridgewater Borg (principal K-8 Assets School), Shannon Duffy (senior systems engineer at Century Computers), and Ann Iwai (Punahou School counselor), and a new member of our professional advisory board, Paul Singer (the new head of Assets School). Finally, as many of you know, one of HIDA's founding members, Susan Walker Kowen, has been serving as HIDA's part time consultant, a position which she supplements with many volunteer hours. Each of these people bring tremendous energy and commitment along with their stellar qualifications.

As HIDA moves forward we welcome input and participation from members and the community. Please contact us if you wish to become a community volunteer or have suggestions on how HIDA can best improve services in Hawai'i. Remember, HIDA rides on the shoulders of its volunteers.

Sincerely,

Sue Voit
President

OCTOBER IS DYSLEXIA AWARENESS MONTH

Continued from page 1

she examines the history of reading and ponders its future in the digital age.

Dr. Wolf's lecture at the 2008 Fall Symposium will address such provocative topics as: how the human brain has learned to read, how new interventions can help children with reading difficulties, and her concerns that development of key reading comprehension capabilities may be short-circuited in children "raised on the internet."

HIDA encourages all persons interested in dyslexia, or in the subject of learning to read in general, to attend Dr. Wolf's lecture and take advantage of a rare opportunity to interface with this nationally renowned educator. See Dr. Wolf's article, *Learning to Think in a Digital World*, on page 3.

On October 10, HIDA's annual fundraiser event will be hosted by Jim and Priscilla Growney at their beautiful and historic Diamond Head home. Enjoy the lights of Waikiki, sip a delightful selection of wines, find treasures in a silent auction and meet people who share a commitment to HIDA's cause. All monies raised will be used to support HIDA's projects in Hawai'i.

Other HIDA events for Dyslexia Awareness Month include a dyslexia



HIDA has planned a number of October events and programs to raise public awareness about dyslexia and the interventions available to help dyslexic children and adults.

information booth at the Hawai'i Association for the Education of Young Children Conference at the Hawai'i Convention Center on October 3 and 4, and the annual "Meet the Experts Open House" at the HIDA offices on October 18. Information about these events and other October events and programs can be found on page 6.

HIDA's Board of Directors and dedicated volunteers hope people in Hawai'i will take time to attend some of these events and learn more about the difficulties faced by dyslexic children and adults. They need and deserve Hawai'i's commitment. Commitment begins with awareness.

HAWAI'I'S NEW DYSLEXIA RESOURCE GUIDE *Continued from page 1*

The hundreds of hours to research and write the Guide represent a true "labor of love" by its author. Dr. Ferguson has been active in HIDA since her first son was assessed as dyslexic in 1994. She sought Orton-Gillingham training in order to home school her two sons. The Guide is the book she "wishes she had had back in 1994." See page 5 for Dr. Ferguson's article "All in the Family..." which provides insight into Dr. Ferguson's motivation to complete what she

fondly refers to as the "Manifesto." Words cannot adequately express HIDA's appreciation to Dr. Ferguson for her extraordinary contribution.

During 2008, thousand of copies of the Guide will be distributed to schools and universities, social service organizations, agencies and individuals in Hawai'i. Contact HIDA if you are interested in receiving a free copy.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

KEEP IN TOUCH WITH HIDA

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Email: HIDA@dyslexia-hawaii.org

Send an e-mail to HIDA if you would like to receive information regarding upcoming events or articles of interest by e-mail, or to let us know if you have a new address, phone number or e-mail address. We want to keep in touch.

DID YOU KNOW . . . ?

HIDA has an extensive lending library of books, tapes and CDs. Titles include:

- *Learning a Living – A Guide to Career & Finding a Job with Learning Disabilities, ADD & Dyslexia* (Dale S. Brown)
- *The School Survival Guide for Kids with LD: Learning Differences* (Gary Fisher)
- *Sex Differences in Dyslexia* (Alice Ansara, et al., editors)
- *Copy This! Lessons from a hyperactive dyslexic who turned a bright idea into one of America's best companies* (Paul Orfalea, founder of Kinko's)

HIDA also has many books available for sale. Titles include:

- *The Misunderstood Child* (Larry B. Silver, M.D.)
- *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain* (Maryanne Wolf, Ed.D.)
- *Straight Talk About Reading* (Louisa C. Moats, Ed.D. and Susan L. Hall)
- *Dr. Larry Silver's Advice to Parent on ADHD* (Larry B. Silver M.D.)

Check HIDA's website for a complete list of titles and call the HIDA office if you are interested in borrowing or purchasing materials.

MAHALO TO RECENT FUNDERS

- \$5250 from Honolulu Sunrise Rotary Club**
- \$2000 from Healing Our Island**
- \$1000 from Wal-Mart, Ke'eaumoku Store**

FEATURED HIDA EVENTS

Check HIDA's website for a complete list of events.

2008		
Date	Event (Speaker/Host)	Location
Oct. 1	Dyslexia Basics: Struggling Readers (Sue Voit)	Hilo
Oct. 3-4	HIDA booth at HI Association for Education of Young Children Conference at Convention Center	Honolulu
Oct. 6-10	Orton-Gillingham Training – Associate Level (Sue Voit)	Hilo
Oct. 10	Annual Fall fundraiser (Jim & Priscilla Growney)	Honolulu
Oct. 13	HIDA Booth at Hawai'i State Teachers Association Institute Day	Honolulu
Oct. 16	HIDA Booth at Hawai'i State Teachers Association Institute Day	Hilo
Oct. 18	Annual "Meet the Experts Open House" at HIDA's office (HIDA's officers and directors)	Honolulu
Oct. 25	Fall Symposium: The Evolving Reading Brain in a Digital World (Dr. Maryanne Wolf)	Honolulu
Nov. 11	MSL Module 2: Advanced Phonics & Decoding (Sue Voit)	Honolulu
2009 (tentative dates)		
Date	Event (Speaker/Host)	Location
Feb. 12-13	Project Read: Report Form & Written Expression (Angela Wilkins)	Big Island
Feb. 16	Project Read: Written Expression (Angela Wilkins)	Honolulu
Apr. 3	Spring Conference: Issues in Early Literacy (Eric Tridas, M.D.)	Hilo
Apr. 4	Spring Conference: Issues in Early Literacy (Eric Tridas, M.D.)	Honolulu
May 18-19	Early Childhood - LETRS Module (Lucy Hart Paulson)	Honolulu



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Oct. 29 – Nov. 1, 2008
Seattle, Washington



Featuring:

Rick Lavoie, Conference Key Note Address

Hugh Catts, Ph.D., Orton Award Lecturer

Daniel Geschwind, M.D., Ph.D.,
Norman Geschwind
Memorial Lecturer

Judith Birsh, Ed.D., Rawson Lifetime
Achievement Award

<http://www.interdys.org/AnnualConference.htm>

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or Toll Free: 1-866-773-4432.

