they reside in the homes of nearly every family in America. They often occupy a place of pride within family libraries as they sit next to volumes of Dickens, Twain, Austen, Rowling, and Grisham. They play an important role within the workings of most households as a form of entertainment and education. At their best, they offer lessons in tolerance, self-esteem, and acceptance; at their worst, they serve as mechanical babysitters, cathode ray nannies, or barely disguised advertisements for toys, clothing, and Happy Meals.

What are they? They are children’s videos, of course, and during the past fifteen years, they have established an almost ubiquitous presence within the culture of the American family.

Beginning with the release of The Little Mermaid in 1989, children’s films have gradually re-established themselves as an important commercial genre within Hollywood. Indeed, looking at the list of the top worldwide box office champs of all-time, one sees such family-friendly fare as The Lion King (1993) at #16, Finding Nemo (2003) at #9, and Shrek 2 (2004) at #7. Recognizing the market potential of an audience previously served by the “dumping ground” of Saturday morning cartoons, studios such as Disney and Pixar have employed a shrewd combination of industrial synergies and “branding” strategies to establish themselves as the industry’s most trusted names in family entertainment.

While the growth in the children’s film market has been nothing short of astonishing, it is matched by comparable growth within various ancillary markets for children’s entertainment. Video sales, of course, are not only the most important of these additional revenue streams, but they have also provided an additional platform for new products. A parent looking to replace the family’s worn out VHS copy of Aladdin (1992), for example, might opt for such “direct to video” sequels as The Return of Jafar (1994) or The Lion King 2: Simba’s Pride (1998). Cable networks, like Nickelodeon, the Cartoon Network, and the Disney Channel, offer thousands of hours of kiddie programming, which have in turn provided the training ground for several of today’s top music and movie stars, such as Britney Spears, Justin Timberlake, and Hilary Duff.

Yet, while the commercial prospects of children’s film are undoubtedly important, perhaps the more significant question concerns the extent to which this glut of children’s entertainment has shaped the interactions between parents and their children. The emergence of a market for children’s video has certainly given parents more control over what their kids watch, but it also raises important questions about the values communicated through this medium. To what extent should children’s films reflect the structure of the larger society in which it is produced? How seriously do the companies that produce children’s films take their mission to educate as well as entertain? How do film-makers develop their ideas for children’s film and television? How do they deal with issues of censorship regarding depictions of violence or romance? How do they balance the pressure to make films that appeal to both children and their parents?

To explore these issues, the Center for the Humanities, the Program in Film and Media Studies, and the Children’s Studies Program of Washington University will host a two-day symposium on Children’s Film that will take place on April 29 and 30. The workshop will include lectures, panel discussions, and film screenings, and will allow students, faculty, and members of the St. Louis community to meet some of the industry’s top creative personnel in the field of children’s literature, film, and television.

Guests for this workshop will include:

**Betsy Hearne**

Ms. Hearne is a professor in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, where she teaches courses on children’s literature and storytelling. Hearne is also the author of numerous articles and books, including *Choosing Books for Children: A Commonsense Guide*, the folktales anthologies *Beauties and Beasts*, and several novels for children (most recently, *Listening for Leroy and Wishes, Kisses, and Pigs*). Her picture book, *Seven Brave Women*, won the Jane Addams Children’s Book Award in 1998. Her most recent title, *The Canine Connection: Stories About Dogs and People*, is a Junior Library Guild selection and winner of a Parents’ Choice Silver Honor Award. In addition to her books, Hearne also served as the children’s book editor of *Booklist* and of *The Bulletin of the Center for Children’s Books*.

**Brian Hohlfeld**

Mr. Hohlfeld is a screenwriter whose credits include *He Said, She Said* (1991), *Piglet’s Big Movie* (2003), and *Pooh’s Heffalump Movie* (2005). In 2004,
continued from previous page...

Hohlfeld was a finalist for the screenplay division of the 2004 PEN Center USA Literary Awards. His script for Piglet’s Big Movie was nominated for the award, but lost out to Brian Helgeland’s adaptation of Mystic River (2003). Hohlfeld teaches at Webster University and is the co-founder of HH Studios in St. Louis.

Amy Keating Rogers

Ms. Rogers was the head writer for the Cartoon Network original television series, The Powerpuff Girls. She is the author of four Powerpuff chapter books for young adults and has also served as a story writer for two Powerpuff films including the feature film, The Powerpuff Girls Movie. She has also written scripts and stories for animated series such as Samurai Jack, Johnny Bravo, Dexter’s Laboratory, and most recently Foster’s Home for Imaginary Friends.

Schedule:

Friday, April 29

3:00pm: Betsy Hearne will give a keynote address in the Formal Lounge of the Women’s Building. Discussion, reception, and book sale follow the talk.

4:30-5:15pm: Storytelling with Betsy Hearne

Saturday, April 30

12:00-2:00pm: Screening: Piglet’s Big Movie and The Powerpuff Girls, “Mo Linguish.”

2:15-4:00pm: Panel discussion with Brian Hohlfeld, Amy Keating Rogers, and Betsy Hearne.

Both of Saturday’s events will take place in Room 100 of Brown Hall.

Jeff Smith is Associate Professor of Performing Arts and the Director of Film and Media Studies Department.
Like most people, I go through phases where for one reason or another I find I want to learn more about a topic in which I have little or no background. When I am busy I do my best to suppress this exploratory urge. If the topic seems too interesting and I am feeling energetic, I look a little deeper. Whenever possible I start this process by seeking out a talk or presentation on the topic to get a quick overview. Most of the time this approach works, and I learn either all I want to know or at least enough to find out where to go for further research. Selecting the appropriate talk or presentation is, however, not as easy as it might seem. Sometimes, just the title of the talk is enough to change my mind. For instance, I may want to know more about “Ockham’s razor” after someone mentions it as a useful way of solving complex problems, but not be willing to sit through a presentation on medieval philosophy (which my husband, who was once a philosophy major, refers to as ‘eight hundred years of unrelieved gloom’). Other times, although the title sounds like a topic I want to explore, once the speaker begins, I feel I must be in the wrong room because the title and the actual content are so different.

I had this ‘wrong room’ experience recently. The event was a visiting speaker presenting “The Aesthetics of Chinglish” in the English department at Washington University. As a past and, when I am especially tired, continuing speaker of Chinglish, I was looking forward to this event because I hoped it might help me understand the experiences I had writing English when I first crossed the language barrier from Chinese to English. Rather than a talk on Chinglish as an innovative combination of English and Chinese, however, the speaker presented Xu Bing’s “New English Calligraphy,” an artistic but unintelligible combination of Chinese characters and other symbols that purport to question such entrenched practices as written communication and reading. I was obviously in the wrong room and searching for the wrong aesthetics. I was looking for the beauty of a hybrid or pidgin language that communicates meaning, rather than a beautiful but meaningless combination of Chinese characters and English letters.

Of course, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. If one approaches it as the product of hundreds of millions of Chinese learning English, and by doing so creating innovative trends that should be distinguished from errors or carelessness, then Chinglish in China is an often creative and sometimes beautiful way of expressing the hospitality and unique perspective of the Chinese worldview. In China, however, where government and businesses attempt to communicate with a growing population of tourists, Chinglish on public signs has become a linguistic disease. In fact, a month after they learned that they had won the right to host the 2008 Olympic Games, the authorities in Beijing launched a campaign to improve English-language signs. The signs they are most concerned with use English incorrectly or mix Chinese and...
English in a confusing and sometimes amusing manner. Some, like the restaurant sign announcing a new menu item, “Three kinds of Carp,” rather than “Three kinds of Carp,” result from carelessness. Some are simply errors in translation, such as “To take notice of safe: The slippery are very crafty.” Such warning signs are found on sloped walkways opposite the Beijing train station and mean “Be careful, slippery slopes.” Others are close to what they mean in English, such as “Waiting will be prosecuted,” a sign found on Beijing streets that means “No parking”; or the attention grabbing “Please keep your legs” sign next to the escalator. Still others are almost poetic, and I would hate to see them removed as errors, confusion, and unintentional absurdities. The blunt English command “Keep off the grass” is more beautifully phrased in the Chinglish warning next to a freshly seeded piece of earth, “Little grass is smiling slightly, please walk on the pavement.” This exemplifies the kind of Chinglish aesthetics I hoped the lecturer would address.

Of course, the Chinese are not the only people to supply a hybrid “lish” to English. Korea has gone even further than China in incorporating English into their vernacular. The linguistic situation in Korea is somewhat unusual. Due initially to geographic location, the language of South Korea has a very large number of loan words from other languages. In the past, these came primarily through and from China. With the rise of globalization, European languages and English have begun to influence every-day speech in South Korea. South Koreans refer to the result as “Konglish.” Obviously, Koreans rely on their knowledge of “Konglish” for English communication with native speakers of English.

There are many “lishes” out there in the world. A computer company’s help line may introduce you to “Hinglish” (Hindi English), and you might be able to watch the film Spanglish (Spanish English) at the local cinema if you hurry. While not technically dialects, these variants suggest the worldwide importance of the English language. The spread of English as a global language is obviously related to the prominence of U.S. influence in the world. But internal factors also play a role. The most important of these is the hybrid nature of English. English has a predominately Romance language vocabulary combined with a predominantly Germanic grammar and a wide range of Greek and Latin constructions that provide a highly versatile toolkit for expansion. Like every other language, English is — and always has been — a work in progress. Today, its success is a major factor in changing it into a form of “World Speak.”

According to a BBC News article, “Nine out of ten computers connected to the internet are located in English-speaking countries and more than 80% of all home pages on the web are written in English.” Moreover, over four fifths of all international organizations use English as their main operating language. It is estimated that more than half the world population will be “competent” in English by the year 2050. But as the examples of “Chinglish” and “Konglish” show, hundreds of millions of people will not learn English without changing it. So, in addition to the “Standard American English” you were taught in school, be prepared for a large number of oral and vernacular versions of such local languages as “Chinglish.” Finally, in the digital realm, look for a rapidly mutating “world” language based on English but containing large numbers of words from other languages in addition to American slang or text-style messaging abbreviations and even symbols, but not including the meaningless ones I saw in the Aesthetics of Chinglish presentation.

Jian Leng
Assistant Director
Center for the Humanities
St. Louis Literary Calendar

**April**

*are free unless otherwise indicated. Book events are followed by phone numbers. Area codes are omitted unless otherwise indicated.*

- **Friday, April 1**
  - **Disciplinary Program in the Arts** presents John E. Toews on "Choosing the Self," Alumni Center, 11am. 935-4200.
  - **the Heart** meets, Rock Road Bar & Grill, 10267 St. Charles Rock Road, 4/29-4/45.

- **Saturday, April 2**
  - Presents a workshop on *Pit & Ishie* for time & venue: 636-451-8080.

- **Sunday, April 3**
  - **Headquarters** presents poet Gary Ferguson reading from his book, The Assembly Series at WU, 1640 S. Lindbergh, 7pm. 367-6731.
  - **LBB** presents chili & Low, for women's voices, by Richard Rodney Bennett, B&N, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-6731.

- **Monday, April 4**
  - **Dave Schuman** teaches a weekly Fiction Writing Workshop, Mons. tl 4/25, Clayton Oasis 130, 10am-12pm. $25. 539-4557.
  - **Mary Troy** reads from her work, JC Penney room 229, UMSL, 12:15pm. 516-6845.

- **Tuesday, April 5**
  - **Poetry** presents *Pearl Cleage* discussing her book *Babylon Sisters*, SLPL Schlaffly Branch, 225 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-6731.

- **Wednesday, April 6**
  - **Poein Trigone** reads from his work, Pearson House, Webster U, 8270 Big Bend, 1:30pm. 968-7170.
  - **Ridley Pearson** discusses his new mystery, *Cut & Run*, LBB, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-6731.

- **Thursday, April 7**
  - **LBB** presents Jennifer Lawler discussing her book *Dojo Wisdom for Mothers*, SLCL Headquarters, 1640 S. Lindbergh, 7pm. 367-6731.
  - **Gary Ferguson** discusses his book *Decade of the Wolf: Returning Wild to Yellowstone*, co-sponsored by the Wild Canid Research Center, LBB, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-6731.
  - **LBB** presents Ron Chernow discussing his book *Alexander Hamilton*, SLCL Headquarters, 1640 S. Lindbergh, 7pm. 367-6731.

- **Friday, April 8**
  - **Readings @ The Contemporary** presents Stephanie Young, Stefene Russell, & Stephanie McKenzie reading from their poetry, Contemporary Art Museum, 3750 Washington, 7pm. 863-3033.
  - **Elders Probe the Arts** presents a Poetry & Gardens Festival, MO Botanical Gardens, 12-2pm. 991-1529.

- **Saturday, April 9**
  - **SLPL’s Hitchcock Festival** presents Vertigo, Barr Branch, 1701 S. Jefferson, 3:30pm. 771-7740.
  - **LBB** presents Buzz Bissinger & Tony LaRusso discussing their book *Three Nights in August*, SLPL Central Branch, 1301 Olive, 7pm. 367-6731.

- **Tuesday, April 12**
  - **Susan Marks** discusses her book *Finding Betty Crocker: The Secret Life of America’s First Lady of Food*, LBB, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-6731.
  - **LBB** presents Byron Katie discussing his book *I Need Your Love*, SLCL Headquarters, 1640 S. Lindbergh, 7pm. 367-6731.
  - **Foreign Literature Book Group** discusses *Gimpel the Fool* by Isaac Bashevis Singer, West Campus Library, WU, 7pm. 367-6731.
  - **MU Center for the Humanities** presents poet *Rafael Campo* reading from his work, for the *Inside Out* exhibition program, Kemper Art Museum, Steinberg Hall, WU, 7pm. 935-5576.

- **Saturday, April 16**
  - **MORWA** presents Alicia Rasley on “Turbocharge Your Story/Power up Your Proposal,” B&N Crestwood, 9618 Watson, 9am-4pm. $15 non-mems. www.morwa.org.
  - **LBB** presents Jay Feldman discussing his book, LBB, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-6731.

- **Wednesday, April 20**
  - **The Assembly Series at WU** presents Alan Lightman on “The Physicist as Novelist,” WU Music Dept, 9pm. 367-6731.
  - **LBB** presents *I Need Your Love* by Betty Crocker: The Secret Life of America’s First Lady of Food, B&N, 8771 Ladue, 7pm. 862-6280.

- **Thursday, April 21**
  - **LBB** presents Sue Monk Kidd discussing her book *The Mermaid Chair*, SLPL, 1301 Olive, 7pm. 367-6731.
  - **Nicholas Sparks** discusses his novel *The Lucky One*, B&N, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-6731.

- **Friday, April 22**
  - **WU English Dept: Writing Program** presents C. K. Williams reading from his poems, The Assembly Series at WU, 1640 S. Lindbergh, 7pm. 367-6731.
  - **LBB** presents *I Need Your Love* by Betty Crocker: The Secret Life of America’s First Lady of Food, B&N, Crestwood, 9618 Watson, 9am-4pm. $15 non-mems. www.morwa.org.

- **Saturday, April 23**
  - **The Center for the Humanities** presents poet *Rafa Campo* reading from his work, for the *Inside Out* exhibition program, Kemper Art Museum, Steinberg Hall, WU, 7pm. 935-5576.

- **Monday, April 25**
  - **LBB** presents Edward Conlon discussing his book *On Thin Air*, LBB, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-6731.

- **Tuesday, April 26**
  - **LBB** presents *I Need Your Love* by Betty Crocker: The Secret Life of America’s First Lady of Food, B&N, Crestwood, 9618 Watson, 9am-4pm. $15 non-mems. www.morwa.org.

- **Wednesday, April 27**
  - **LBB** presents Ron Chernow discussing his book *Alexander Hamilton*, SLCL Headquarters, 1640 S. Lindbergh, 7pm. 367-6731.
  - **Knit & Lit Book Group** discusses *The Sewing Circles of Heart* by Christina Lamb, B&N, 8771 Ladue, 7pm. 862-6280.

- **Thursday, April 28**
  - **LBB** presents John E. Toews on “Choosing the Self,” Alumni Center, 11am. 935-4200.

- **Saturday, April 29**
  - **LBB** presents *I Need Your Love* by Betty Crocker: The Secret Life of America’s First Lady of Food, B&N, Crestwood, 9618 Watson, 9am-4pm. $15 non-mems. www.morwa.org.

- **Sunday, April 30**
  - **LBB** presents *I Need Your Love* by Betty Crocker: The Secret Life of America’s First Lady of Food, B&N, Crestwood, 9618 Watson, 9am-4pm. $15 non-mems. www.morwa.org.
Contemporary Fiction and Non-Fiction Reading Group discusses The Sand Reckoner by Gillian Bradshaw, Moom Lounge, West Campus Library, WU, 2-4pm. 481-0730.

Monday, April 25

Ridley Pearson discusses his new novel, Cut & Run, U City Public Library Friends’ annual meeting, 6701 Delmar, 7pm. 727-3150.
Open Book Club discusses Blue Shoe by Anne Lamott, B&N, 8871 Ladue, 7pm. 862-6280.

UMSL MFA students read from their work, Duffs, 392 N. Euclid, 7:30pm. 516-6845.

Tuesday, April 26

Dee Knight, Jennifer Skully, & T.L. Schaeffer discuss their books Impatient Passion, Sex & The Serial Killer, and The Summerland, the Brotherhood, Borders, 10890 Sunset Hills Plaza, 7pm. 909-0300.
The authors of Under the Arch: St. Louis Stories discuss the book, MO History Museum, Forest Park, 7pm. 454-3150.
WU English Dept’s Writing Program presents MFA poetry readings, Hurst Lounge, Duncker 201, WU, 8pm. 935-7130.

Wednesday, April 27

WU English Dept’s Writing Program presents MFA poetry readings, Hurst Lounge, Duncker 201, WU, 8pm. 935-7130.

Thursday, April 28

LBB presents Alexander McCall Smith discussing his new book, The Company of Cheerful Ladies, SLPL Schlafly Branch, 225 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-6731.
Schlafly Book Group discusses Betsey Brown by Ntozake Shange, SLPL Schlafly Branch, 225 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-6731.

Alliance Française Cercle de Lecture discusses Un Peu Plus Loin sur la Droite by Fred Vargas, 8505 Delmar, Ste G, 7:30pm. 432-0734.
WU English Dept’s Writing Program presents MFA poetry readings, Hurst Lounge, Duncker 201, WU, 8pm. 935-7130.
U City Great Books Discussion Group discusses Hamlet by William Shakespeare, Trinity Presbyterian Church, 6800 Washington, 8pm. 994-7914.

Friday, April 29

WU Center for the Humanities presents Betsy Heame’s keynote address to their Children’s Film Symposium, Women’s Building Formal Lounge, 3pm. 935-5576.

Saturday, April 30

WU Center for the Humanities presents a Children’s Film Symposium, Brown Hall room 100, screening 12:2pm, panel discussion 2:15:4pm. 935-5576.

Sunday, April 30

LBB presents Meg Cabot reading from her book The Princess Diaries, Vol IV: Princess in Training, SLPL Buder Branch, 4401 Hampton, 7pm. 367-6731.

Sunday, May 1

LBB presents Back to the Books with Bobby Norfolk, for Library Week, Headquarters, 1640 S. Lindbergh, 10am. 994-3300.

Club Read picks apart poetry: Lyrics to Limericks, Rap to Rhapsody, teens, SLPL Schlafly Branch, 225 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-4120.

Family Night, read cowboy stories, SLPL Schlafly Branch, 225 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-4120.

Sunday, May 8

Cynthia Hitschler, author of the Jacky Blue series, signs her books, B&N, 8871 Ladue, 1:30pm. 862-6280.

Tuesday, May 9

Poetry Slam, read your favorite poem, ages 11-16, SLPL Schlafly Branch, 225 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-4120.

Saturday, May 13

SLCL Cliff Cave presents film matinee Harry Potter & The Chamber of Secrets, from the book by J.K. Rowling, 2pm. 487-6003.

Friday, May 19

Teen after hours: Shakespeare’s Birthday Bash, ages 11-16, SLCL Samuel C. Sachs, 6:30-8:30pm. 636-728-0001.

Saturday, May 20

Borders presents a children’s poetry event, with poems by Shel Silverstein, Jack Prelutsky, Dr. Suess, et al., 1519 Brentwood, 1pm. 918-9189.

Abbreviations:
B&N: Barnes & Noble; LBB: Left Bank Books; SIUE: Southern Illinois University Edwardsville; SLCL: St. Louis County Library; SLPL: St. Louis Public Library; UMSL: University of Missouri St. Louis; WU: Washington University.

Check the online calendar at chenhum.artsci.wustl.edu for more events. To advertise, send event details to tical@artsci.wustl.edu, or call Amanda Beresford, Calendar editor at 314-935-5576.