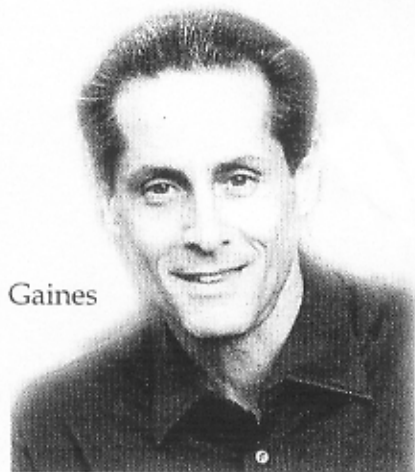


ISLAND LIFE

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Jed Gaines



Don't let computers cut into reading time

"What about our children's use of computers? Should that be on hold along with TV viewing during the week?"

I am asked these questions at almost every one of my presentations.

As with TV, computers need to be balanced and monitored. Although they don't have the same negative effect as the television, a computer should be used during the week for school-related activities. Remember, as much as computers offer excellent and educational functions, they will never have the same result as spending time with a good book. The more time spent on a computer, less time is available for reading or listening to a book read aloud.

Whenever possible, while conducting hiking tours in Switzerland during the summer months, I purchase the International Herald Tribune. An August 31 front page story stated: "In the first concentrated study of the social and psychological effects of Internet use at home, researchers at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh have found that people who spend even a few hours a week online experience higher levels of depression and loneliness than they would have if they used the computer network less frequently. Participants reported a decline in interaction with fam-

ily members and a reduction in their circle of friends that directly correspond to the amount of time they spent online."

The *Home Net* study suggested the interactive medium may be no more socially healthy than the older mass media, television.

Here are more favorite read-alouds to kick off the school year for you and your children.

The first book is one that should be read aloud with the entire family: **ALWAYS WEAR CLEAN UNDERWEAR** (grade 3-adult) by Marc Gellman. The author reviews 32 golden rules to a healthy and happy life. It is a book of virtues for children and grownups to share and discuss.

Linda Reser, Iolani lower school librarian, recommends **POPPY** by Avi (grades 4-6). Poppy, a small deer mouse, risks her life to travel through the forest where prowls Mr. Ocax, the dangerous great horned owl. Mr. Ocax can't stand that a small, insignificant mouse

eludes him several times and discovers his secrets. This action-packed book is not for the faint of heart.

Dave Del Rocco, children's librarian at Aina Haina Public Library, suggests **JOEY'S HEAD** by Gladys Cretan (grades 1-2). Mike was always telling his little brother, Joey, to get lost or to disappear. Of course he doesn't really mean it. But one day while Joey is pestering him, Mike mixes up a strange concoction in the kitchen, tells Joey to drink it, and amazingly, Joey's head disappears! Will they be able to restore Joey's head before Mom gets home?

I hope to see many of you at Barnes & Noble on September 23, at 7p.m. for my next read-aloud presentation.

Next month I will discuss Kids Voting Hawaii, which also takes place on election day, November 3. Kids go to official polling sites to cast their own ballot.

Jed Gaines, the father of two public-school children, has been working with the read-aloud concept for the past 14 years. He conducts presentations for educators, parents and their Hawaii school communities. Send questions or a self-addressed stamped envelope for his K-8 reading list to: Jed Gaines, Read Aloud America, 1937 Keeaumoku Street, Honolulu, HI 96822. Or call 531-1985.



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