

Environment Influences Children's Development

There have been many stories about the effect that early childhood experiences have on the eventual choices people make in their adult lives.

Thomas Edison's father could not sing, and he nearly drove the inventor crazy as a child singing him to sleep. Not surprisingly, his son invented the phonograph.

A wide-ranging study in this area was conducted on the Schwartzhoffs, a midwestern family, which yielded some eye-opening results.

Laurie Pasquier, the fourth child, suffered from an inability to find work near her home, and spent 10 years in Costa Rica, Hong Kong, and France before settling in Chicago. She says this is connected to all the traveling her parents subjected her to as a child.

Tammy Broughton's choice of a career as a master carpenter was formed by the trauma of witnessing first-hand, the construction of a toy chest and wine rack as a child. "My father constantly was making \$120 pieces of furniture, from \$360 worth of lumber. And they were never plumb or square," she said.

Stephanie Grillo's technique of car maintenance was formed early on when she spent time in several family cars. "We had a crappy aqua blue-green station wagon with a big hole in the floor where we would throw things when we were kids." This no doubt accounts for the appearance of Stephanie's cars over the years, which resemble storage facilities more than cars, many of which have up to 6 umbrellas in the back seat.

Eric Schwartzhoff has never cooked anything in his life. In fact, he only has a picture of a stove in his kitchen. This anti-cooking tendency was developed over many years of his hearing his mother tell his father to "keep out of my kitchen."

The family has been contacted by the Discovery channel to discuss the possibility of recreating the early years of the Schwartzhoff children in a new reality series. The two titles being considered are "Get to the table before Eric," and "Good, they're not home."

Matriarch Reflects on Retired Son's Checkered Career



Mrs. Mary Schwartzhoff, mother of recent retiree Jim Schwartzhoff, leads a quiet life in her retirement community in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. She is quite an independent person, and considering that she recently celebrated her 99th birthday, she is remarkably candid.

Asked about her son's retirement, Ms. Schwartzhoff commented, "I wish he would make up his mind! I've been trying to figure out how much money I will need to support him once he retires, and I need a firm date!"

It seems that Mary has been building a retirement nest egg for her son by running penny-poker games and nickel Bingo sessions in her local area, and has amassed quite a fortune in recent years.

Nieces and Nephews Want Secret Recipe

Terri Schmitt has brought suit against Jim Schwartzhoff to release a recipe for "Ham-ka-bobs," which she says has been withheld from the family since she was a child. Ms. Schmitt is Mr. Schwarhoff's niece.

"When we were kids, (Uncle) Jim would make these for us on special occasions. They were so good that it kept us all well-behaved. We need the recipe to control our own children, and he insists on keeping it secret."

Ms. Schmitt and her many cousins have another legal action against Mr. Schwartzhoff for facial disfigurement and associated wrinkling of the cheek area. (See article: Pinching Causes Trauma).

"It's not easy, you know" she said in a recent interview. "I had to teach about 80 people how to play Texas Hold-um, and all they wanted to play was canasta."

"Jim was never a saver," she continued. "He has some pretty expensive hobbies, like collecting back-packs, and really weird-looking ski hats. And he keeps the thermostat in his house at a stifling 65°. It's like he's burning the money in the furnace. He has no financial discipline."

"I remember when he was a boy, he couldn't get the hang of building a career for himself," she said. "He couldn't decide on a job, or hold one for more than a few weeks. At one point, he tried being a caddy, then he wanted to be come a grounds-keeper, and later announced that he would become a moving man."

"Even as an adult, he continued to bounce from one job and one city to another. It's a miracle he's lasted at the Foundation for as long as he has."

Although we didn't tell this to Ms. Schwartzhoff during our interview, our sources tell us that Jim has had many jobs at the Kettering Foundation, and in his later years there, he made a concerted effort to pass most of his responsibilities off on his colleagues.

FDA Confirms Cheek Pinching Causes Trauma

Yesterday the Food and Drug Administration released results from a 50-year study on the affects of pinching babies cheeks (commonly known as 'pinchables').

The FDA conducted the study using 175 babies and one control subject (a man currently 68 years of age). The study was held in the following states: Wisconsin, Iowa, Indiana and Ohio.

The study concludes children whose cheeks are pinched develop tendencies toward overeating and drinking to excess at family gatherings, snoring, drooling, and dunking toast and cookies into milk and coffee.

Officials say there is no known cure for pinchables at this time.

Triple A Files Suit Against J&J Travel Ventures, Inc.

The American Automobile Association (AAA) has brought a suit against the principals in J&J Travel Ventures, Jim Schwartzhoff and John Wilson, for their portrayal of traveling as an experimental science.

"Their blatant disregard for maps, advice from family, and road signs make a mockery of organized travel," the company said. "They are also the least intuitive travelers we have ever encountered," they added.

Jim and John, who are brothers-in-law, will depart Ohio by car en route to St. George, Florida in February 2006. There is no guarantee that the pair will ever make it to Florida. Las Vegas bookmakers have made Florida a 9 to 1 longshot, but have set Phoenix, Arizona as a 6 to 5 favorite.

Their wives, Mary and Gary, were interviewed and asked why they are traveling by plane. Gary, Jim's younger sister, stated "I was fooled by my older brother's travel plans many times in the past. When I heard he was planning to pack a tent, the flight plan was sealed."

Mary, Jim's wife, said "I cannot subject myself to yet another of Jim's 'experiments'." The last time Mary participated in one of Jim's experiments, a 9-hour car drive from Wisconsin to Ohio turned into a torturous 2-week trek.

Jim and John plan to install a web-cam in the backseat of the car to make the progress of their travels available for viewing on the internet.

The URL for their website is www.where-the-hell-are-we.com.

Children's Story Book Discovered After Thirty Years

The Saber Tooth Tiger, written by Jim Schwartzhoff, discovered in an old trunk, is a unique children's book that is ideal for long family trips when up to 7 children are in the car. It's just the thing when the car's DVD player is broken.

It is guaranteed to keep siblings quiet for at least 20 minutes, stop them from punching each other and lessen the number of times they get car sick.

The book is from the imagination of an over-worked accountant, who spent

Schwartzhoff Children Tell Tales of Harrowing Experiences

Triggered by notoriety about their father's recent retirement, the children of Jim and Mary Schwartzhoff have plans for a tell-all expose of their childhood experiences and the decadent life-style of their parents.



Asked why they decided to tell their story, Stephanie, the third-oldest of the siblings, said "There is a very mistaken impression that we were well-cared for as children. We just want the public to know the terror we lived with as we were growing up."

Laurie, Stephanie's younger sister, was routinely abandoned by her parents, once being left stranded at a gas station, while her parents drove off on their way to a vacation, and another time when she was left alone on their front porch, while the rest of the family went apple-picking.

Stephanie, who is married to the world record-holder for antipasto, told this reporter that she and her siblings were often left alone to fend for themselves while their parents were off drinking and partying.

several summers driving his 7 children back and forth from Wisconsin to Ohio and amusing them with stories about the Saber Tooth Tiger. "It's the only thing that kept the kids from jumping out of the car," he said.

The author suggests that parents add alternate endings, and even embellish the story itself. "It doesn't hurt to be able to make up a story," he said, "and in my profession that presented no problem at all."

The children were often left in the Wisconsin wilderness with no food other than 12 cases of Kraft Macaroni & Cheese, 15 gallons of ice-cream and 9 cases of beer. They would have expired if not for a kind-hearted farmer and his daughter, who would occasionally provide the children with breakfast of bacon and eggs or cinnamon-sugar toast. Additionally, the farmer's son-in-law taught the children how to catch fish and turtles in order to survive.

The couple, which was well-known throughout Canada and the United States as wandering hippies, apparently used this free time to go on expensive vacations and throw wild parties.

They often dragged their children across the county in a station wagon with a car-top carrier that resembled the Partridge Family's bus and later in a 'love machine' of a van with shag carpeting and a fold out bed.

Eric, the second oldest of the family was particularly traumatized by all the traveling. His situation was so bad that he was getting into fights with other children in just about every city they took him to. As a result, Eric keeps a vast collection of guns and fighting paraphernalia in his basement.

Perhaps an even more tragic story is that of Steven, the youngest of the Schwartzhoff children. All the traveling he was subjected to resulted in so much momentum that one day he just took off and was hurled eastward, well off the North American continent. He eventually landed in the Czech Republic, where he went to school, and later met a woman and started a family.

Michelle, the third youngest child, spent so much time in the wilderness that she cannot resist flushing toilets whenever she is indoors. She gets particular glee from doing this when others are showering.

And finally, Tammy, the oldest sibling, has a recurring dream about Idaho. She has had this dream ever since she was exiled to Idaho by her parents when she was 16 years old.

Wisconsin police have determined that since the statute of limitations has expired, charges cannot be filed against the parents for abandonment.