



Georgia Newsletter

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From the President

Roger Waters

Before looking ahead to the San Antonio Convention next month I would like to take a moment to congratulate the members of our organization who performed with their groups at the GMEA/SDMENC Conference in January. The inspiration you provide by your outstanding work is encouragement to us all as we go about our never ending tasks of planning, rehearsing, teaching and concertizing. From your efforts we are energized to "brighten the corners where we are" with the contributions we can make.

Speaking of brightening corners, I hope you will brighten some in San Antonio. ACDA conventions, state, regional and national are tremendous sources of musical gratification, knowledge and social interaction. The national is the premiere event. If there is any feasible way to attend, may I encourage you to do so. Dr. John Haberlen, National President-elect and convention chair, gave us a wonderful birds-eye view of what we can expect in

March when he spoke to the ACDA luncheon crowd in Savannah this January. Thank you, John, for all you do for our organization.

For that matter, Georgia will be extremely well represented with performances by the Choir of the Cathedral of St. Philip directed by Robert Simpson and the Newnan High School Womens Ensemble directed by Kathy Chandler. Of course one of the premiere events of the convention will be a performance by the Robert Shaw Festival Singers. I don't believe that we Georgians will ever be able to measure the influence that Robert Shaw has had on the choral music of our state. Surely, our lives and work have been made richer by his presence and influence.

Millie Turek, Georgia President-elect, is organizing an ACDA event to run concurrently with the Georgia All-State Chorus this spring. Please watch for more information that will be coming to you in the in the mail.

May I encourage you again to participate in all ACDA events. You are a vital link in the chain of success for your organization. I look forward to seeing you in San Antonio.

Announcing !

**Georgia ACDA Directors
Chorus Workshop
April 22 and 23, 1993**

In looking for an opportunity to bring our Georgia membership together without adding another event to our busy calendars, Mille Turek, Georgia President-elect has planned a unique experience to run concurrently with the Georgia All-State. This will provide an opportunity for GMEA membership to learn while their students are learning and an opportunity for other ACDA members to enjoy a spring trip to Savannah.

**Jerry Jordan, Clinician
Directors' Chorus**

Participants will rehearse with Jerry Jordan, University of Mississippi choral director, beginning Thursday evening and will perform on Friday evening for the All-State participants. There will be a small registration fee and SDU credit is still pending. Directors who are not participating with students in the All-State event may wish to stay for the students' performances on Saturday, April 24th. More information including repertoire will be sent to you later. Please mark your calendar now for this event!

Sources of Literature for the Choral Music Educator

by Charles Claiborne

Finding literature that is both good and appropriate for the groups that we teach can be a time consuming and often frustrating experience for the choral director at any level of teaching, or at any time in his/her career. The following are some techniques and ideas that I have developed over the years that help me to find quality literature that my groups can perform well.

Professional conventions and in-service conferences, such as those sponsored by MENC and ACDA have been very helpful. Attendance at the concerts, interest sessions, and reading sessions exposes us to a great quantity of music. Another benefit of attending these meetings is that we often receive free materials distributed by music publishers at the exhibits. Talking to directors from other parts of the state or country can also be an important source. Occasionally we have opportunities to meet composers of pieces that we are preparing and ask questions concerning interpretation.

Attend professional meetings and workshops

Workshops sponsored by music publishing companies, colleges, or professional organizations are also useful. These are often held during the summer, and attending one of these workshops might be coupled with a family vacation since many are held in or near vacation spots. Complimentary copies of new releases can be obtained at these workshops, and often composers or arrangers of the music are present.

Even though attending the concerts of your colleagues in the surrounding area may require giving up some extra time, the benefits are two-fold. You can hear first hand how a group similar to yours handles the literature and your attendance

shows that you support your colleagues' programs. *All too often the only choral concerts we attend are our own.*

Another way to benefit from your colleagues' knowledge is a program exchange. If you see a piece that you might want to use, ask if you can borrow it when he/she is finished with it. With the escalating music costs today, borrowing/loaning is an attractive alternative to increasing fund raising activities.

Listening to the tapes that come to us in the mail from publishing companies and perusing the bins at the local music stores are both time consuming but essential and other ways to find out about new literature.

Develop a personal library

Develop a personal library of single copies that you can go through occasionally. You may have forgotten about that piece that you did in 1987 that your students enjoyed so much.

Most important, keep your school or church library organized and up to date. With access to easy computer data programs it is possible to keep accurate records at the touch of a keyboard with print outs of your library by "voicing" or "title" or "number on hand" or "date last performed," to name a few categories. If you still don't have access to a computer, a card file can be quite adequate.

Teach concepts through literature

Once when Robert Shaw was guest conducting at a college the group's choral director was apologizing because Mr. Shaw was having to work some notes. Mr. Shaw turned to the director and asked, "Well, what else is there?" We choral educators teach concepts through literature. We must take the time and expend the energy necessary to present our students a wide variety of quality literature that is within their capabilities for, after all, what else is there?

THE DEKALB CHORAL GUILD
hosts its third annual
Elizabethan Madrigal Dinner

**STRANDED AT THE
PIG N' THISTLE**

or
An evening with the Varlets

March 13, 1993, 7:00 PM
First Presbyterian Church
\$25.00

**Mark your
calendar today!**

ACDA will sponsor a reading session to be held in the Atlanta area on July 17th. This is the same week as the DeKalb International Choral Festival, a most exciting event that presents choral groups from around the world performing in venues all over the city which are free and open to the public. Make plans for a family vacation in Atlanta!

Summer Reading Session

WANTED!

**ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS BY
GEORGIA CONDUCTORS FOR
PUBLICATION IN OUR STATE
NEWSLETTER.**

You may request and receive help on the final edit if you wish. Often articles from one state letter are picked up and reprinted by other state and regional letters. Let your ideas be known! This is the best vehicle for sharing that we have!

The Jazz/Show Choir — A Model for Student Empowerment Using Cooperative Learning

Kathleen Vande Berg

“Where in school do you feel important?” Dr. William Glasser, noted author and reality therapist, often poses this question to high school students. The students are usually momentarily quiet and then admit that they rarely feel important in academic classes, but often do feel important in music, drama and sports. They say that in fine arts classes and sports they are more likely to work together to help each other achieve; that they are allowed to interact and have fun.

What basic needs are being met in music, drama and sports that are not being met in other classes? Glasser identifies five basic human needs — survival, love, freedom, fun and power.¹ In group activities students easily achieve support, love, fun and freedom, but for young people, the gaining of the fifth basic need, a sense of power, can be elusive. Glasser maintains that empowerment can take place through a “lead-management” style of teaching.²

Time constraints and program scheduling usually force us to resort to the traditional “boss management” style of teaching, instead of Glasser’s “lead-management.” Boss-management reflects our own educational experiences and our relationships with administrators. We coerce students to comply with our demands and instructions; however, coercion merely directs the students to critique the teacher (the “boss”) instead of the quality of their own work. The students feel what they are asked to do has little meaning, and inferior work becomes the norm. This happens in spite of the fact that the students know they are capable of doing work of distinction. A teacher cannot *make* a student do work of high quality. However, good “lead-managers” (manager-teachers) can make it easy for students to believe there is

a strong tie between what they are asked to do and what is truly worth doing.

Lead-management in the jazz/show choir

Music offers unique possibilities for establishing an atmosphere in which students can feel empowered, an atmosphere in which they choose behaviors to satisfy their needs and have the satisfaction of

Music offers unique possibilities for establishing an atmosphere in which students can feel empowered

producing a superior product. An ideal musical organization for beginning the “lead-management” style of teaching is the jazz/show choir: class size is small, usually twelve to twenty; students already have a feeling of importance because they have been selected for the group; they are already interested in the subject; and there are already strong feelings of support and community within the group.

Rather than relying exclusively on traditional large-group rehearsals, dividing the class time into various types of small-and large-group experiences may enhance both the quality and the quantity of a jazz/show choir’s accomplishments.

The most effective way of implementing the “lead-management” approach in the classroom is through cooperative learning groups. “Learning together as a member of a team satisfies the need for power and belonging much better than does learning alone.” Therefore a jazz/show choir of twenty members might be organized into five teams. Each team should be carefully selected on the basis of ability, ethnic, and gender considerations. Team-building activities must be conducted at the beginning of the school year so that members are well acquainted, group

goals and norms have been established, and students have been trained in group techniques — “on-task behavior,” decision making, how to give “put-ups,” not “put-downs.” (See Johnson, Johnson and Holubec.) Teams should know they are committed to working together for a specific period of time. This knowledge enhances their commitment to developing strategies to insure the group’s success.

The director’s role

Cooperative learning actually magnifies the role of the director. The director now teaches concepts — vocal style, music fundamentals, performance technique, harmonies, history and listening — in such a way that students are persuaded to follow the director’s instructions; they recognize that doing so is to their benefit as well as the teacher’s. And the director empowers the students to use critical thinking, to be responsive for their individual and group development.

Cooperative learning actually magnifies the role of the director

Team Duties

Areas in which cooperative learning can be used in the jazz/show choir include the following (Although evaluation techniques are not spelled out for every suggestion, remember the most successful groups are those that provide for both individual and group assessments):

•Listening lessons

Teams compare recordings of the same jazz chart and defend their preferences. They listen to instrumental jazz recordings isolating five jazz articulations. The teams show how these same articulations are performed in vocal jazz. They listen to jazz recordings from different periods, then compare, contrast and critique the style. Teams compare vocal

(continued on page 4)

(Jazz/show choir)

jazz soloists giving the salient qualities of the vocal style and technique of each.

• **Music Fundamentals**

As teams, the students study the fundamentals of pitch and rhythmic notation. After a period of study the director uses the TGT technique (*Teams, Games and Tournaments: Slavin*) in which all singers have the chance to win and carry points back to their home teams. Individual quizzes may then be given and bonus points awarded to teams that raise their team average from quiz to quiz.

• **Choreography**

After instruction in the basic rules for choreography performed while singing and using a sound system, the teams research dance styles, watch videos to come up with ideas, and then create and learn choreography for at least one jazz chart during the year.

• **Repertoire choice**

After the groups have studied the principles of show design and how to choose appropriate jazz charts, each team receives several possible charts along with tape recordings. Each group then designs a show and justifies its musical choices using musical, aesthetic and entertainment criteria.

• **Improvisation**

With the aid of a tape recorder the group practices improvisation lessons. Group members support and critique each other's improvisations leading to an eight-bar blues performance, in which the team lays down background riffs for the individual solos.

• **Chart accuracy**

Teams help their members learn voice parts using tape recorders, instruments, and sight-singing techniques. Individual assessments follow.

• **Sight-singing**

Teams rehearse exercises, then take individual and team quizzes which are assessed by THT and other methods.

• **Physical and Vocal Warmups**

Each group is responsible for one week of physical warmups, vocalizes,
(continued on page 5)

Georgia High School Directors Survey

These are the results of a survey sent last spring to the 69 Georgia ACDA members who are identified on our printout from Lawton as being high school choral directors. 42 responses came back for a return rate of 60%.

1. The school where I teach contains grades:
8-12: 20% 9-12: 73% 10-12: 6% other: 1%

2. The enrollment at my school is:
under 500: 4% 500-1,000: 27%
1,000-1,500: 46% 1,500-2,000: 15%
2,000-2,500: 6% over 2,500: 2%

3. I teach _____ choral music classes.
1: 0% 2: 2% 3: 43% 4: 41%
5: 12% 6: 2%

4. I also teach:
Music Theory: 21% Music Appreciation: 11%
Music History: 9% other: 21% none: 38%

5. I also teach out of field:
yes: 16% no: 84%

6. Out of field, I teach:
math: 4% English: 7% social studies: 4%
none: 85%

7. In lieu of teaching a class, I perform administrative duties:
In school suspension: 2% lunch duty: 7%
other: 11% none: 80%

8. Voicing of choral music classes taught.
SATB: 32% SAB: 12% SSA: 33%
SA: 14% TTB: 9%

9. I conduct a show choir:
yes: 52% no: 48%

10. The show choir meets during the school day.
yes: 50% no: 50%

11. I am a member of GMEA.
yes: 100% no: 0%

12. I took _____ groups to a GMEA large group choral festival last year.
0: 2% 1: 19% 2: 22% 3: 31% 4: 10%
5: 4% 6: 2%

13. I would be interested in having a choral group perform at a state choral festival sponsored by ACDA for choral groups that have received a superior rating at a GMEA district choral festival.
yes: 98% no: 2%

14. I have been teaching choral music for _____ years.
1-5: 19% 6-10: 21% 11-15: 10%
16-20: 14% 21-25: 4%

15. I have been teaching in my present school for _____ years.
1-5: 36% 6-10: 29% 11-15: 17%
16-20: 14% 21-25: 4%

16. My age is : under 25: 2% 26-30: 14%
31-35: 21% 36-40: 17% 41-45: 21%
46-50: 19% 51-55: 10% 56-60: 5%

17. My sex is:
male: 31% female: 69%

18. I would rate the support I receive from my school administration as:
excellent: 52% good: 37% fair: 5%
poor: 5%

19. How often is an administrator present at your concerts?
always: 50% frequently: 28% occasionally:
11% rarely: 7% never: 2%

20. The biggest problem I face in teaching choral music at my school is:
scheduling-listed 7 times
eligibility-listed 5 times
graduation requirements-5 times
recruiting, especially boys-3 times
small number of males-3 times
budget-2 times
dedication of parents and students-2 times
required PE for athletes-2 times
conflict with sports-2 times
need an assistant-2 times
too busy-2 times
lack of good accompanist
teaching out of field
competing with other electives
not enough planning time
poor visibility of program
peer pressure
starting a new program
discipline of males
administrative support
having to share facilities with band
band and drama overshadow choral program
student apathy
need a 7 period day
paperwork
ignorance of community
low enrollment
maintaining quality
students have less time for the arts
administrative attendance at concerts
no directed leave for attendance at professional meetings
conflict between music and drama
students not prepared to sight read in middle school
students not disciplined to polish music
poor performance facility
low economic status of students

21. What choral pieces have worked for you?
The list of choral pieces that have worked for this group is simply too long to reproduce. Please contact Charles Claiborne if you wish to have a copy.

Jazz/Show Choir, cont. from p. 4
jazz articulation, and harmonic study.
Not only do they prepare the exer-
cises, they make corrections and help
the choir achieve excellence.

• **Choosing soloists**

After discussing the consider-
ations in soloist selection, teams ap-
ply these principles to the audition
process. The final decision rests with
the director, but students are asked to
justify their decisions using valid
objectives rather than peer popularity.

• **Evaluation of performance**

Each team evaluates recording of
the choir's rehearsals and perfor-
mances using criteria developed by
the entire group.

• **Concert preparation**

Teams rotate the designing of
programs, preparing and organizing
ticket sales, publicity, designing,
lighting, preparing the stage set, and
choosing and preparing refreshments.

Initially, "lead-management"
and empowerment take time, plan-
ning, and patience. However, as the
students become empowered to be in
control of their own progress and
development, they pass on these
techniques to new members. Choir
members learn to set high standards
to define quality, to be critical think-
ers, to be supportive and coopera-
tive, to appreciate differences, and to
make decisions. Not surprisingly,
they also develop a superior jazz/
show choir and become magnificent
individual musicians.

notes

¹ William Glasser, MD, "The Quality
School," *Phi Delta Kappan*, Feb., 1990, p. 432.

² *ibid.*, p. 428.

³ *ibid.*, p. 432.

David W. Johnson, Roger T.
Johnson, Edythe Johnson Holubec, *Circles of
Learning, Cooperation in the Classroom*
(Edna, MN: Interaction Book Co., 1990).

Robert E. Slavin, *Student Team
Learning Techniques* (Baltimore: Johns
Hopkins University Press, 1977).

*Kathleen Vande Berg divides her time
between White Plains Middle School and
White Plains High School where she teaches
general and choral music. This article ap-
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**GEORGIA ACDA
BOARD OF
DIRECTORS**

PRESIDENT
Roger Waters
1996 Gibraltar Way
Lithonia, GA 30058
(404) 957-4543 (O)
(404) 482-9470 (H)

PRESIDENT-ELECT
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65 Stokes Dr. Rt. 5
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(404) 474-1927 (H)

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(404) 433-0561 (H)

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Music Department
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(404) 864-6298 (H)

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801 Carolina Dr.
Tifton, GA 31794
(912) 382-3125 (O)
(912) 382-8538 (H)

**NEWSLETTER
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60 Forestwood Ln.
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(404) 843-7710 (O)
(404) 252-4917 (H)

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Dept. of Music
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30341
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(404) 284-0010 (H)

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MEN'S CHORUS
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(912) 386-8524 (H)

WOMEN'S CHORUS
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2296 Wisteria Dr.
Snellville, GA 30278
(404) 972-4840 (O)
(404) 979-1065 (H)

YOUTH & STUDENT
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103 Lakewood Dr.
Carrollton, GA 30117
(404) 836-6516 (O)
(404) 834-9033 (H)

COMMUNITY CHOIRS
Roger Waters (Interim)
Roger Waters
1996 Gibraltar Way
Lithonia, GA 30058
(404) 957-4543 (O)
(404) 482-9470 (H)

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