



Abstracts from Symposium Presentations

Music Pedagogy and Learning in Community Contexts

BEYOND THE MOZART EFFECT: AGE-RELATED COGNITIVE FUNCTIONING IN INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PARTICIPANTS

Steven Moser

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to identify differences in the cognitive functioning of healthy older wind and percussion instrumental musicians, compared with the normative data for the same cognitive measures and demographic variables. A convenience sample was used, consisting of 120 instrumental musicians, 55 years and older, active in selected community band organizations in Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Washington D. C. Test measures included the Mini Mental State Examination, Trailmaking Tests A and B, and the Satisfaction With Life Scale. Data were collected and scored by the researcher in accordance with the guidelines developed by the instruments' authors. Variables under study were analyzed and the results were presented to correspond to the following issues: the relationship between music participation and cognitive performance; the relationship of cognitive performance and music participation to demographic variables; and the relationship between life satisfaction scores, music participation and cognitive performance.

The results indicated that the participants in this study demonstrated higher cognitive functioning when compared to the normative means for this age group on global cognition, psychomotor function, memory recall, and executive function. Though other factors may have influenced cognitive functioning for this sample, the strength of the demographic observations coupled with the highly successful test results indicated a strong, perhaps untested link between the lifestyles of amateur instrumental musicians and healthy cognitive aging. While causality cannot be inferred from this study design, the study revealed three important findings: (a) the older adult instrumental music sample performed better than the general population in global cognitive functioning and memory recall skills; (b) the older adult instrumental music sample performed better than the general population in executive functioning and psychomotor functioning; and (c) the older adult instrumental music sample were generally satisfied with life.

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**BUILDING AND SUSTAINING CHORAL MUSIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN
COMMUNITY CONTEXTS: THE MILLIKIN UNIVERSITY
CHILDREN'S CHOIR PROGRAM 2001-2004**

Christina Shields

Abstract

The purpose of this session is to share the success story of a community choral music education program for children and youth begun four years ago in a university preparatory program. The program began in 2001 and has grown to four level choirs of over 80 participants. Research results from a survey study conducted in the fall of 2004 will provide Millikin music education student, parent, and singer-student attitudes and opinions about the curricular focus, learning outcomes, rehearsal experiences, performance practices, and community interaction provided by the program. Special emphasis during the session will be placed on the importance of developing a program vision and determining the likely success of such a program based on community need, socio-cultural context, key personnel, and resources.

Christina Shields is Assistant Professor of Music Education at Millikin University where she teaches elementary and middle level methods and is Director of the Preparatory Department.

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**COMMUNITY MUSICIANS ASSISTING WITH A HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ
ENSEMBLE**

Andrew Goodrich

Abstract

The use of community members to assist the director in teaching a successful high school jazz band in the metropolitan Phoenix, Arizona, area was explored using ethnographic techniques to collect data during one academic year of instruction. Two groups of participants served as informants in this study: (1) primary informants including the students in the jazz band, the director, assistant director, and community members, and (2) secondary informants including a guidance counselor, the principal, parents, and students not enrolled in the jazz band. Research literature including studies on teaching and learning of jazz, jazz curriculum, jazz pedagogy, jazz history and culture, and mentoring served as the theoretical grounding for the study. The following questions guided the study: Do community members contribute to the success of this jazz band? What role do community members have in the educational process of the students in the jazz band? Do community members provide a connection to music outside of the walls of the band room for these students? Community members included a retired jazz educator from the Midwest and two local professional jazz musicians. Community members assisted in various aspects of this jazz ensemble including performing, conducting, pedagogy, curriculum, and instruction.

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THE FACULTY-STAFF CHORUS: A WIN-WIN-WIN SCENARIO

Susan J. Avery

Abstract

The purpose of this presentation is two-fold: 1) to narrate how to create and nurture a faculty-staff chorus on a college campus, and 2) to discuss its benefits to three populations (members, college community, and director as an artist-educator) and relate the benefits to current best practice and research. The model used is the Ithaca College faculty-staff chorus IC voICes. The benefits to the members will be couched in their stories; topics such as lifelong participation in learning and in the arts, stress relief, and physical benefits will be discussed. Benefits to the college community will be examined in areas such as the chorus seen as a connection of the music department to the campus as a whole, a source of pride for the college, and attention for the importance of Music Education in the truest sense of the term. The benefits to the director as an artist-educator will be examined through the lens of the Music Educators National Conference publication Vision 2020 and the National Arts Standards.

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QUALIFICATIONS OF A COMMUNITY MUSIC ORGANIZATION LEADER: A NATURALISTIC INQUIRY

David S. Smith

Abstract

What kinds of previous experiences do individuals need to provide leadership for a community music group? Is playing in a high school band or singing in a church choir sufficient? How about taking piano lessons for a number of years? Do they need to be able to read music fluently, or is desire and dedication to bringing a dream to realization sufficient? In the years to come, it's possible that the number of community music groups of all kinds will increase due to the greater numbers of people who will have come of retirement age. If that is the case, the next logical question is who will lead them? In a school context, leadership duties fall to the teacher. But because community music groups fall outside of the school context, non-music teachers also provide excellent leadership. When that happens, what qualifications do those individuals have? What qualifications do they need?

Naturalistic inquiry was used to focus on these questions in a newly formed senior center based big band located in a Mid-Western metropolitan area. The participant/observer, a university music education professor, participated in the band for three months, playing trombone at weekly rehearsals, as well as two Senior Center events. Data collection, in the form of field notes, informal interviews with band members, and a formal interview with the band leader, was conducted throughout the project, with on-going examination and re-examination of data resulting in the identification of general and specific leadership qualifications. This session will focus not only on examining the findings of the study, but also on naturalistic inquiry, and the contributions this type of research can make in examining adult and community music issues.

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**THE ENSEMBLE EXPERIENCE: THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF BUILDING
A COMMUNITY STRING ENSEMBLE**

Tracey Rush

Abstract

This session addresses procedures for organizing adult string players into an ensemble and strategies for building the program. Included in the discussion are choosing venues, programming ideas, and marketing concerns. The session includes a documentary on the Dubuque Community String Orchestra following its growth from the first concert playing Christmas carols at a nursing home to full orchestra opera concerts in Dubuque Five Flags Theater. The video includes interviews with some of the players relating the importance ensemble playing in their lives.

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**VOICES FROM THE TRENCHES: TEACHERS OF ADULT MUSIC
LEARNERS**

Chelcy Bowles

Abstract

For those in the music education profession who promote lifelong music learning, it is extremely important to hear the voices of those who are in the “trenches” – that is, practicing teachers of adult music learners – in determining future action related to the training of adult music educators and in responding to the needs of those currently in service. This interactive session focuses on issues highlighted in the results of a survey of adult music educators regarding experiences, practices, preparation, and instructional needs as perceived by those who are practicing and experienced teachers. A panel of adult music educators addresses and responds to selected survey questions, particularly those questions which give insight into challenges that relate to teaching adults. Panelists include experienced teachers who teach in different instructional modes (lessons, skills classes, lecture classes, performance groups, etc.) and different subject/performance areas (instrumental, vocal, history, theory, folk/ethnic, etc.). The purpose of the session is to give the opportunity to discuss concerns and issues encountered by practicing adult music educators as a springboard for discussions that will result in effective responses to needs by the profession.

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**IMPROVING INSTRUCTION BASED ON RESEARCH ON ADULT
LEARNERS:
CAN OLD DOGS LEARN NEW TRICKS?**

Debbie Rohwer

Abstract

This session discusses the results of five recent studies on adult learners ("A Case Study of Adult Beginning Instrumental Practice," "The effect of method book content on adult instrumental musicians' reported preference and musical understanding," "Teaching the adult beginning instrumentalist: Ideas from practitioners," "Musical expression behaviors of senior citizen musicians," and "Lessons on lifelong learning"). The research findings highlight how novice adult musicians practice, their method book preferences, their expressive performance tendencies, what they like about making music, and how instructors of adults structure their classes. In addition, the researcher addresses what she has intuitively and pragmatically learned from these studies concerning adult learners and research. Both the research findings and the intuitive findings may help instructors to more consciously weigh the educational choices they make for their adult learners.

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**PREFERRED REHEARSAL STYLES AND PERFORMANCE QUALITY
IN AN ADULT COMMUNITY CHORUS**

Susan J. Avery

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate how adults in a community chorus enjoy learning choral literature and if a rehearsal style positively influences the performance. Two questions were addressed: 1) do adults enjoy a more holistic style of rehearsal over one that merely focuses on technical performance? and 2) does rehearsal style positively affect the quality of the final performance?

Two relatively similar pieces were used so the singers' preference of one song over the other would be primarily the result of how they learned the songs (that is, the rehearsal style). The holistic style of learning involved rehearsing a song with both theoretical and historical information that could alter the performance quality (i.e., providing singers the with knowledge of non-harmonic tones and the result of correctly performing them or performance practices of the song's era), as well as rehearsing with correct vocal/choral performance techniques (i.e., diction or breath support). The non-holistic style provided only vocal/choral rehearsal techniques.

Data is collected through participants' reflective journaling during the rehearsal period that is assisting their metacognition of learning and tracking their preference of rehearsal styles. In addition, the director keeps a journal of the pieces' progress. To evaluate the quality of the final performance, it is videotaped and shown to the chorus members to elicit their opinions and to two state choral judges for their informed opinions. In addition to their perception of the performance quality, information is solicited from the chorus members concerning possible correlation of their confidence of performing the songs and rehearsal style. Findings may indicate how adults prefer learning and if a higher level of performance quality is achieved through a deeper knowledge of the theoretical and historical underpinnings of the song.

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VOICES OF EXPERIENCE: INTERVIEWS OF ADULT COMMUNITY BAND MEMBERS IN LAUNCESTON, TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA

Don Coffman

Abstract: please see complete paper in this issue