1950

Effect of individual vocal study upon the school choral program

James Harvey Callihan

The University of Montana

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THE EFFECT OF INDIVIDUAL VOCAL STUDY

UPON THE SCHOOL CHORAL PROGRAM

by

James H. Callihan
B.A., Montana State University, 1949

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Music in Music Education

Montana State University
1950

Approved:

Stanley M. Todd
Chairman of Board of Examiners

W.P. Clark
Dean, Graduate School
Acknowledgements

The author wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to the presidents of the Music Educators Associations in the states of Montana, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Wyoming; to the leading professors of music and of music education in the universities of those states for their lists of outstanding choral directors; and to these choral directors themselves who supplied the information needed in this study by filling out the questionnaires which were sent to them.

The author wishes especially to express his sincere appreciation to Dean John Crowder, Professor John Lester, and Professor Stanley M. Teel, of the School of Music at Montana State University, without whose wise counsel and guidance this paper would not have been possible.
INTRODUCTION
General background of the topic—importance of understanding the problem to the school choral director.

THE PROBLEM
Statement of the problem—delimitations—research procedures—source of data—results of the questionnaire.

OBSERVATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIXES
LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Years of Private Vocal Study</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Years of Teaching Experience</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Numbers of Solo Vocal Performances in Public</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Average Number in Choral Groups</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Percentages of Choral Members Taking Private Lessons From Their Choral Directors</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Percentages of Choral Members Taking Private Lessons From Teachers Other Than the Director</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. Percentages of Choral Members Taking Lessons</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. Age at Which Boys May Begin Private Vocal Study</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX. Age at Which Girls May Begin Private Vocal Study</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. Rating of Items Stressed in Choral Singing</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI. Rating of Items Stressed in Solo Singing</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIGURE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Age Levels With Which Directors in Survey Work</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Percentages of Those Participating in the Study Who Have Continued Singing in Public Performance</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Choral Members Listed</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Should Voice Lessons in Class Be Given to Choral Members?</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Age Levels at Which Class Lessons in Voice Are Effective With Numbers of Directors Who Indicated Each</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

Vocal music, perhaps because of its highly personal and subjective nature, has always been a source of considerable controversy. Hardly ever will there be found two teachers who agree as to the exact mechanical function of the physical apparatus which produces a good singing voice or the methods of development which will supposedly lead to the proper mechanical function and proper use of the voice.

This is a condition with which the school choral music director must deal in the exercise of his profession. In many of the smaller communities the school choral director is the only one capable of conducting individual voice study and gives the only lessons, if any are given at all. On the other hand, most choral directors in the larger towns and metropolitan areas will have members of vocal ensembles who are studying voice individually with private teachers in the town or city.

The latter situation often leads to controversy and working at cross purposes on the parts of the director and of the private teacher. The director works for the ensemble, the greatest good for the greatest number of people, while the private teacher generally aims his pupils toward solo singing which sometimes results in a prima donna attitude not making for the best functioning of the choral groups in which these people may participate. Accordingly some of the directors who participated in this study expressed the
wish that their singers would not engage in private vocal study with any teachers other than themselves.

Since this situation will confront many school choral directors when they complete their studies in their various colleges and universities and sally forth to engage in the activities of their profession, it is important that they completely understand the situation and develop a healthy attitude regarding it.
THE PROBLEM

It is the purpose of this paper to determine the effect of individual vocal study by members of vocal ensembles upon the school choral program in the experience of the school choral directors themselves.

When the data obtained from these directors have been presented, conclusions will be formulated upon the basis of such data.

Since there is often a difference of opinion on the different grade levels, choral directors in junior high school, senior high school and college were contacted. The five northwest states, Montana, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Wyoming were covered in the study. Data were collected by means of a questionnaire¹ which was sent to the outstanding school choral directors of these five states.

In order that lists of outstanding directors might be obtained, letters² were sent to the presidents of the Music Educators Associations and professors of music education in the universities of each of the five states. Along with the letters, blanks³ were sent on which these people were asked to fill in the names, addresses, schools, positions, and grade levels of at least twelve persons whom they considered to be outstanding.

¹ See Appendix D.
² See Appendix A.
³ See Appendix B.
the outstanding school choral directors on the various levels in their states.

The Music Educators Association presidents contacted in the five states were:

1. Mr. Leonard Hetrick, Montana.
3. Mr. Howard Miller, Oregon.
4. Mr. Jack Snodgrass, Idaho.

The professors of music education likewise contacted were:

1. Prof. Stanley M. Teel, University of Montana.
2. Miss Alice Sorenson, University of Washington.
3. Dean Theodore Kratt, University of Oregon.
4. Miss Anola Radtke, University of Wyoming.
5. Prof. Hall Macklin, University of Idaho.

These people responded very generously, all of them sending lists with from five to fourteen directors. Naturally there was a good deal of duplication in the lists of the Music Education Association presidents and the professors of music education so that a total of seventy-seven names was obtained, seventeen from Montana, sixteen from Washington, thirteen from Oregon, fourteen from Idaho, and seventeen from Wyoming.

To these seventy-seven people, then was sent the question—
naire and a letter explaining it and its purpose. Of the seventy-seven, sixty-seven filled out and returned the questionnaire, making an 87% return. Of these sixty-seven people, five are employed in junior high only, twenty-three in senior high only, nineteen in junior and senior high, sixteen in college only, three in senior high and college, and one indicated he worked with all levels.

Section I of the questionnaire was designed to determine the qualifications of the directors who returned the questionnaires through studying their performing abilities and activities and professional training.

Of the sixty-seven people, fifty-four, or 80%, have sung both in ensemble groups and as soloists and the remaining thirteen have sung only in ensemble groups. In the college group, only one out of sixteen directors who work only in college indicated that he had sung only in ensemble groups.

Of the sixty-seven directors, only one indicated that he had not studied voice privately. In the college only group all sixteen have studied voice privately. They have indicated periods of vocal study of from one to twenty years and three have studied in Europe.

---

4 See Appendix C.
5 See Figure I.
6 See Appendix D.
Fig 1: FAMILY LIFE LEVELS WITH WHICH DIRECTORS IN SURVEY WORK
The average time spent by the complete group in private study is 5.45 years. The college group has studied privately for a longer period of time, the average here being eight years while the group exclusive of college directors shows an average of only 4.64 years.

Only 25%, or seventeen, have attended their own universities in obtaining their vocal and professional training. Three have studied with foreign coaches or schools and three have attended the Christianson Choral School. Eighteen, or 26.7%, have studied voice in conservatories.

By far the largest number, fifty-two or 77.6%, have a teaching major in music or music education. Other teaching majors indicated were choral music, mathematics, vocal music, political science, violin, and composition and theory.

The largest number, sixteen or 23.8%, had a teaching minor in English and the next largest group, ten or 15%, indicated no teaching minor at all. Other teaching minors with the numbers that listed them are: Education (3); Music (3); Social studies (7); Piano (1); Instrumental (1); Voice (2); Mathematics (4); Languages (4); Social science (3); Geology (1); Speech (2); Chorus (1); Orchestra (1); Music education (6); Psychology (1).

---

7 See Table I.
8 See Table I.
Table I.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>MEDIAN</th>
<th>MODE</th>
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<td>5</td>
<td>4.33</td>
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<td>COLLEGE</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>7.2</td>
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YEARS OF PRIVATE VOCAL STUDY

Table II.

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<td>12</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>COLLEGE</td>
<td>13.21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>COLLEGE</td>
<td>14.37</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3</td>
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YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Table III.

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<td>COMPLETE GROUP</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER THAN COLLEGE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLLEGE</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLLEGE</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NUMBERS OF SOLO VOCAL PERFORMANCES IN PUBLIC
It is interesting to note that of these choral directors the greatest number, twenty-eight or 41.7%, listed piano as the major instrument, while only sixteen, or 23.8%, listed voice as the major instrument. Other majors listed were cello, reeds, none, violin, brass, clarinet, cornet, baritone horn, bassoon, flute, viola, percussion, and saxophone.

In the category of minor instruments it is found that by far the largest number, twenty-three, or 34.3%, had no minor instrument at all, while twelve, or 18% listed piano as the minor. Only five, or 7.4%, indicated voice as a minor instrument. A surprising number, ten, or 15%, had neither voice nor piano as major or minor. The group with a piano major and no minor was the largest numbering thirteen, or 20%. The next largest group of seven, or slightly over 10%, indicated a voice major and piano minor.

It was shown that the group had from two to thirty-two years of teaching experience, with an average of thirteen and one-half years each. Here again it is indicated that the college group has more experience on the average. An average of 14.37 years experience is shown here.

The college group is by far the most active in public vocal performance. Thirteen, or 81.2%, of the sixteen college choral

9 See Table II.
directors indicated that they do solo singing in public from twelve to fifty times a year, an average of 23.2 times apiece. On the other hand 53% of the junior and senior high school choral directors do not sing publicly. The 47% who do sing do so for an average of 11.6 times apiece, the range being from two to thirty times per year.  

The choral groups with which these people work are:  
1. Girls glee club, 76.1%.  
2. Boys glee club, 58.2%.  
3. Mixed chorus, 56.7%.  
4. A cappella choir, 61.2%.  
5. Madrigal group, 1.5%.  

Several of these people have one group only. This situation occurs most often in the college group, of whom seven, or 43.8%, work only with an a cappella choir. By far the largest number of the complete group of sixty-seven, amounting to 74.7%, work with two or more choral groups.  

The singers under the direction of this particular group number from ten to four hundred apiece for an average of 110.21

10 See Figure II.  
11 See Table III.  
12 See Figure III.
Figure II.

(A) Complete group

(B) Other than college

(C) College

Percentages of those participating in the study who have continued singing in public performance.
pupils per director. The difference between the college group and
the rest can be readily seen in Table IV.

Of the sixty-seven people who returned the questionnaire,
fourty-two, or 62.7%, do not give private lessons to their singers
while 37.3% do. This percentage tends even further to the negative
if we consider the college group separately. By subtracting the
twelve college directors who give private lessons from the total of
twenty-five, we find that only thirteen of the junior and senior
high school directors, or slightly over 25% give private lessons to
their singers. On the other hand 75% of the college group give
private lessons to their choral singers. The percentage of choral
members taking private lessons from their director is 11.5% from the
college group, 2.8% for the other than college group, and 4.8% for
the total group. 13

The percentages of students taking private lessons from other
teachers is a bit different. Here it is seen that 76.1% of the
choral directors have choral singers who are studying privately with
other vocal teachers. The percentages of the total group studying
with private teachers other than the director are 14:

1. 13.3% in the college group.

13 See Table V.
14 See Table VI.
The percentages of students taking private voice lessons from their choral director or from other teachers is quite low. The total percentage taking private lessons are as follows: \(^{15}\)

---

\(^{15}\) See Table VII
1. 24.8% in the college group.
2. 10.6% in the junior and senior high group.
3. 13.8% in the total group.

In response to the question number six of section II, sixty-four, or 95.5%, were in favor of their singers taking lessons from private teachers other than themselves. There were only three out of the group who were not in favor. One was particularly bitter stating that private teachers seek personal glory at the expense of the pupil and should be discouraged. Of the sixty-four who were in favor of their students taking from other teachers, ten answered affirmatively but with the reservation that they were in favor if the private teachers were good. Otherwise, of course, they were not. The whole college group answered that they favored private study with other teachers by their singers.

Of the total group, 73% answered that they urged their singers to study with private teachers other than themselves.

In response to the request that they indicate the age at which boys should begin private lessons, twenty-five, or 37% did not reply. One said that she did not favor private lessons, another said that it depends upon the attitudes of the individual, five

16 See Appendix D.
17 See Appendix D.
### Table IV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complete Group</th>
<th>Total Number of Singers</th>
<th>Total Number of Teachers</th>
<th>Average Number Per Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>7384</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>110.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Than College</td>
<td>5725</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>112.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>1659</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>109.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average number in choral groups

### Table V

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complete Group</th>
<th>Total Number Taking From Director</th>
<th>Average Number Per Director</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Taking From Director</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Than College</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Percentages of choral members taking private lessons from the choral director

### Table VI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complete Group</th>
<th>Total Number Taking From Other Teachers</th>
<th>Average Number Per Teacher</th>
<th>Percentage of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Than College</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
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</table>

Percentages of choral members taking private lessons from teachers other than the director
gave no answer at all, and eighteen stated that it depends upon the maturation of the individual. The forty-two, or 63%, who did indicate the age at which private lessons should begin for boys gave answers ranging from seven to eighteen years of age. The average age derived from their answers is slightly over fifteen years.\(^\text{18}\)

The same question was asked with respect to girls.\(^\text{19}\) The response was essentially the same here as in the question concerning boys but with one more responding. The spread was the same, from seven to eighteen, but the average is a bit lower,\(^\text{20}\) being about fourteen and one-half years of age, or about one-half year less than in the case of boys. Roughly 55% indicated that girls might begin private voice study at a slightly earlier age than boys. Three persons, however, indicated the reverse. One director stated that he felt that students should take piano instruction before they began vocal studies since this would make better musicians of them and thereby hasten their progress.

Fifty-eight, or 86%, stated that they were in favor of giving voice lessons in class to choral members. The college group

\(^\text{18}\) See Table VIII.

\(^\text{19}\) See Appendix D.

\(^\text{20}\) See Table IV.
Table VII

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TOTAL NUMBER TAKING LESSONS</th>
<th>AVERAGE NUMBER TAKING LESSONS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL TAKING LESSONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMPLETE GROUP</td>
<td>1004</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER THAN COLLEGE</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLLEGE</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
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PERCENTAGES OF CHORAL MEMBERS TAKING LESSONS

Table VIII

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>MEAN : MEDIAN : MODE : HIG : LOW</th>
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<tr>
<td>COMPLETE GROUP</td>
<td>15.04 : 16 : 16 : 18 : 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER THAN COLLEGE</td>
<td>15.06 : 16 : 16 : 18 : 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLLEGE</td>
<td>15 : 16 : 16 : 18 : 7</td>
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</table>

AGE AT WHICH BOYS MAY BEGIN PRIVATE VOCAL STUDY

Table IX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>MEAN : MEDIAN : MODE : HIG : LOW</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMPLETE GROUP</td>
<td>14.53 : 15 : 14 : 18 : 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER THAN COLLEGE</td>
<td>14.8 : 15 : 14 : 18 : 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLLEGE</td>
<td>13.83 : 14.5 : 14.16 : 17 : 7</td>
</tr>
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</table>

AGE AT WHICH GIRLS MAY BEGIN PRIVATE VOCAL STUDY
was a bit lower, with 75% in the affirmative. 21 As to the ages at which they considered voice lessons in class to be effective, 61% of the whole group, 50% of the college group, and 62.7% of the junior and senior high school group felt that they were most effective on the high school level. All groups agreed that they were most effective on the high school level, next most effective in college, next that the effect was the same on both senior high school and college levels, and 9% of the total group felt that they were most effective on the junior high school level. 22 Six of the group gave no answer at all, three indicated that they did not know, and three more felt that voice lessons in class were not effective at any level.

Even though the majority felt that class lessons were beneficial, a slightly smaller majority, 71.2%, indicated that individual lessons were of more benefit to their choral singers than were class lessons. There were thirteen, or 20%, who said that class lessons were more beneficial. Seven gave no answer, one did not know, two said it depends on the teachers, and one said class—maybe. The college group, when considered alone, was even more in favor of individual lessons, totalling thirteen, or 81% of this group in favor of them. Only one answered in favor of class lessons and the

21 See Figure IV.

22 See Figure V.
SHOULD VOICE LESSONS IN CLASS BE GIVEN TO CHORAL MEMBERS?

(A) Complete Group

- Yes: 86.5%
- No Answer: 8.9%
- No: 4.6%

(B) Other than College

- Yes: 90.2%
- No Answer: 12.5%
- No: 7.5%

(C) College
Figure V

(A) Complete group

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- Senior High -- 41
- College -- 20
- Senior High and College equal -- 13
- Junior High -- 6
- All equal -- 3
- Junior and Senior High equal -- 1

(B) Other than College

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>1</th>
<th>5</th>
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<th>15</th>
<th>20</th>
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</table>

- Senior High -- 32
- College -- 14
- Senior High and College equal -- 8
- Junior High -- 6
- All equal -- 2
- Junior and Senior High equal -- 1

(C) College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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- Senior High -- 9
- College -- 6
- Senior High and College equal -- 5
- All equal -- 1

**AGE LEVELS AT WHICH CLASS LESSONS IN VOICE ARE EFFECTIVE WITH NUMBERS OF DIRECTORS WHO INDICATED EACH**
remaining two of this group gave no answer.

In answer to the controversial question as to whether or not boys should continue singing through the period during which their voices are changing a very large majority, sixty-two, or 92.5%, answered that they should. Of these, eight qualified their answers by stating that singing in this period should be done carefully and that one should be very careful of the teachers chosen to guide the singing activities during this period. There were no directly negative answers to this question but two said they did not know and one gave no answer. The college group answered 100% affirmatively.

The school choral directors participating in the study were asked if private lessons were beneficial to boys during this period. Here the difference of opinion was more evenly divided. Only 39% stated that private lessons are beneficial during the period of mutation while 32% answered that they were not. Of the remaining 28% who did not answer directly in either the affirmative or negative, five said that they did not know, five more gave no answer at all, three said it depends on the maturation of the individual, one said it depends on the attitude of the individual, three said maybe private lessons are beneficial, and one said that they could be. The college group, when considered separately, were more in favor of private lessons. Of this group, 56% stated

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23 See Appendix D.
that private lessons are beneficial at this time, 37% said they were not, and the remaining 7% did not know. However, the junior and senior high school people, when tabulated separately from the college group, gave an even higher percentage of negative answers than the total group. Of the high school directors, only 33% were in favor of private lessons while 31% were directly opposed to them. The remaining 36% did not know, gave no answer, or said that it depends on the individual and his attitudes. In this group of school choral directors which must deal continually with the problem of the changing voice the answer seems to be slightly in favor of the negative. However, since the decision is so close, the best conclusion to be drawn is that this is a controversial issue and that lessons during the period of mutation in boys are of doubtful value. One of the high school directors who answered this question affirmatively commented further that lessons should be given to boys at this level only if there is a teacher available who is an expert on the changing voice. He stated further that the age at which persons, male or female, should begin vocal study depends upon what kind of and how much elementary music is taught in the grade schools.

As to whether or not a member of a choral ensemble who has been trained as a soloist strengthens the group, 75% said that he did, 10% said that it depends on the individual or did not know,
and the remaining 15% said that the person trained as a soloist did not strengthen the group. A higher percentage, 87.5%, of the college group felt that soloists did strengthen their groups.

Of the high school directors, 75% stated that private lessons created a beneficial psychological effect upon members of choral groups. In the college group this percentage became larger, amounting to 94% who felt that private lessons were beneficial. Considering the groups as a whole, fifty-three, or 79%, stated that private lessons were beneficial, while only 4% felt that they were definitely not beneficial. The remaining 17% answered that it depends on the quality of instruction, is sometimes beneficial, is not always beneficial, said they didn't know, or gave no answer at all.

One high school choral director stated that few people with whom she works have any real musical ability and that when she begins work in vocalizing with her choral groups, she immediately has a discipline problem. She further states that:

Private teaching is often just a big racket. Most people who try to sing have no business doing it. Their poor voices and lack of musical ability are of no enjoyment to their listeners. For this reason most people should do group singing since it does not require trained voices.

A substantial majority, 81%, of the college directors felt that having persons with privately trained voices had a beneficial
effect upon the groups themselves while one stated that there was no effect at all and another said that it depends on the individual. Of the high school directors, 63% felt that privately trained persons have a beneficial effect upon their choral groups and 14% said there is no effect. Considering the total group, forty-five, or 67%, felt that soloists were beneficial, eight, or 12%, felt that they have no effect, and the remaining fourteen, or 21%, stated variously that it depends on the individual, depends on the teacher, or that they did not know. There were none in any of the groups who stated positively that having soloists in a choral group was detrimental to the group.

The next question, number 7 of section III, proved to be somewhat controversial. A group of items, which included phrasing, posture, breathing, frontal or head resonance, diction, and vowel formation, was written out and choral directors were asked to rate them according to their comparative importance, i.e., first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth. Of the sixty-seven school choral directors included in the survey, forty-eight, or 73%, rated the items as had been requested of them. Several of those who rated the items marked them all one and two or marked some with a zero, question mark, or a seven. The item that drew most of the objection was that of frontal or head resonance, which was the one most often

24 See Appendix D.
rated with zero, indicating no importance, or a question mark, indicating that the term was questionable. Of the nineteen, or 27%, who did not rate the items, seventeen stated that all the items were stressed and that it was impossible to rate them comparatively. Only two persons gave no answer at all and one of them objected to the question. Both of the two who did not answer the question were college choral directors. Eleven, or 68%, of the college only group rated the items and three said they stressed all and could not rate them comparatively.

On the basis of the ratings, the items may be organized as follows as to comparative importance in choral singing by the complete group:

1. First: breathing
2. Second: posture
3. Third: phrasing
4. Fourth: frontal or head resonance
5. Fifth: diction
6. Sixth: vowel formation

There is, of course, considerable overlapping here. For example, one item, such as breathing, might actually be both first and second, but on the basis of rating the highest and then dropping it out the foregoing list has been formulated.

25 See Table X.
Table X

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RATING OF ITEMS STRESSED IN CHORAL SINGING
The high school directors, when considered separately, maintained approximately the same ratings as the total group. Their ratings summarized are as follows:

1. First: breathing
2. Second: posture
3. Third: phrasing
4. Fourth: vowel formation
5. Fifth: diction
6. Sixth: frontal or head resonance

The only difference between this and the whole group rating is that this has vowel formation and frontal or head resonance changed around from the positions they occupied in the previous list.

The rating derived from the college group turned out differently:

1. First: posture
2. Second: breathing
3. Third: vowel formation
4. Fourth: frontal or head resonance
5. Fifth: diction
6. Sixth: phrasing

Other things listed as being important in choral singing are: breathing, message of the text or interpretation, tone quality,
intonation, staggered breathing, physical and mental alertness, flexibility, reading ability, sense of rhythm, intellect, attack and release, spirit, clipping the consonant, dynamic contrast, relaxed jaw and posture, emotional response, vocal intensity, tone balance and attitude, listening to each other, freedom, support, personality, and desire to sing.

The next question in the questionnaire is the same as number 7 of section III but has reference to solo, rather than choral, singing. Its purpose was to determine whether or not essentially the same problems are involved in choral and solo singing.

Three fewer directors rated this question, giving a total of forty-five, or 67%, of the whole group who rated it as requested. Of the twenty-two, or 33%, who did not rate this question, sixteen, or 24%, stated that all items were stressed and could not be rated comparatively, one objected to the question, and five gave no answer.

An overall rating, in which there is again some overlapping as there was in question number 7, with reference to solo singing is:

1. First: breathing
2. Second: vowel formation
3. Third: diction
4. Fourth: phrasing
5. Fifth: posture
6. Sixth: frontal or head resonance
It was previously noted that the rating for question number 7 was essentially the same in the complete group and the high school group. In this question they are exactly the same.

The college group, however, is again different. On the basis of returns tabulated from this group the rating is as follows:

1. First: posture
2. Second: breathing
3. Third: vowel formation
4. Fourth: frontal or head resonance
5. Fifth: diction
6. Sixth: phrasing

This rating of the items listed is exactly the same as in this question dealing with solo singing as it was in number 7, which dealt with choral singing, in the college group. It is evident then that the college directors feel that exactly the same things are involved in each and that each should be treated in the same way.

The high school directors, however, felt differently about it, since their ratings are different for each question. The only thing the ratings for the two questions have in common is that breathing is considered the essential thing in both.

The rating derived from the college group, the same in both

27 See Table XI.
Table XI

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RATING OF ITEMS STRESSED IN SOLO SINGING
questions, differs greatly from the ratings of the other groups in either of the questions. The other groups feel that breathing is of prime importance in both of the questions but the college group feels that posture is of prime importance in both choral and solo singing.

Other things listed as being important in solo singing are: intellect, uniformity of quality throughout range, singing sense, poise and personality, interpretation, living the song, intensity, intonation and tone, balance, emotional understanding, expressive singing, attitude, relaxed open throat, musicianship, sense of rhythm, listening, imagination, dramatization, freedom, pitch, timbre, flow of tone, spiritual import and projection of the words, thoughts, and music, voice production, sight reading, and ability to play the piano.

Essentially these added items are much the same as those added in answering question number 7, except for some slightly different terminology in some cases.

In response to the question, "In choral groups which do you work for?", 20% of the total group listed straight tone without vibrato, as opposed to 54% who indicated use of normal vibrato in the tone. One said he worked for light head tones only, three stated they worked for brilliant robust tones only, three gave no answer, and eleven, or 16%, said that they used all the foregoing at times, depending on the character of the song. In listing only
the straight tone without vibrato for choral groups, one said that he felt this to be the natural tone and that using it was his part in the pupil's preparation which would then be further extended and worked out in college. Another stated that he does not work for any one tone. He stated further:

Some screw-ball teachers do not want their darlings contaminated by a public school musician. However, we must keep kids singing—no choral director will hurt their voices as much as they themselves will by just screaming, as at a football game.

Another high school director says that she stresses vowel formation and clean consonants because speech in her state is so generally slovenly. She indicated that her students have had almost no music in the grades and no speech training, so she emphasizes clear enunciation and thoughtful interpretation of the words.

Of the college group only one indicated use of the straight tone while thirteen out of the sixteen indicated use of normal vibrato. One stated that he used the brilliant robust tone only and another said he used all the foregoing, depending on the song.

Other things listed as being worked for in choral groups were: perfect blend, dynamic contrast, full voice, open throat, breath control, resonance, attack and release, rhythm, unison vowel formation or good intonation, combining chest and head quality, relaxed jaw and posture, support from diaphragm, natural flowing tone, freedom from throat tension, singing on pitch, natural easy singing, rounded vowels, buoyant tone and pitch, ability to change
tone colours to fit moods, and precision.

One director stated that the biggest difficulty in choral work is flat singing and another stated that breath control should be individually considered. Another director said that the most important thing in choral singing is that the singers receive an emotional experience. One high school director pointed out that we should not advance too many theories and rules or we may hinder rather than help our students. She stated further that singing should be as natural as speaking and will be if we do not raise too many questions. She said the correct approach is to keep it as simple as possible and work for a few fundamentals.

As to whether or not the brilliant robust tone would injure the junior high school student's voice, 59% of the high school group said that it would and 23% said it would not. Of the college group, a larger percentage, 69%, said that it would injure junior high school voices and 19% said it would not. One said it might.

On the senior high school level, 21% of the high school directors said that the robust tone would injure voices while 53% said it would not. Two said it might. Of the college directors, 12.5% said it would injure senior high school voices, 31% said it would not, and 50% said it might.

The majority agreed that the brilliant tone would not injure voices on the college level. Of the high school directors, only 6%
said that the brilliant tone would injure on the college level, while 65% said it would not and one said it might. Of the college directors, 12% said it would injure college voices, 75% stated it would not, and one indicated that it might.

Five directors said the brilliant robust tone would injure voices on all levels, fourteen said it would injure on none, sixteen answered that it would injure the junior high school voice only, six said it would injure voices in junior and senior high school but not in college, seven said it depends on how it is used, and four gave no answer.

One high school director said that the brilliant robust tone is never worth using while another stated that the light head tone would do more harm if it is used constantly. Some said it depends on the teacher and others said that the brilliant robust tone would injure voices on all levels if it is used constantly.

Of the sixty-seven directors questioned in the survey, forty-two stated that they felt that persons who have had private voice lessons will find more opportunities for ensemble singing after graduation than those who have not, eight said that they would not, seven did not know, six gave no answer, one said probably, one said maybe, and two thought it depended on the quality of the teaching.

Twenty-four indicated that persons who have studied voice privately will find more opportunities for solo singing, thirteen thought they would find more opportunities for ensemble singing,
and twenty said they would find more opportunities for both. Six gave no answer, two did not know, one said it depends on the individual's ability, and one said there was no way of knowing.

Twenty-four, or 36%, thought that people with privately trained voices would prefer solo work, seven, or 10%, said they would prefer ensemble singing, another seven said there would be no difference, seven more did not know, two indicated there was no way of knowing, one said they would prefer solo parts in ensemble work, and four said that it depends on the ability and training of the individual.

Some comments were: The choice will not be influenced by private training; should enjoy both; the expert soloist will prefer solo work; will prefer ensemble because it requires less preparation; many soloists have prima donna attitudes and will prefer solo work.

One director stated that he favors ensemble singing because it requires and builds better musicians and another said that many singers will never do a presentable job as soloists but are of great value to choral groups. Another director stated that solo singing is preferred by most because it builds the ego more and is thereby more satisfying.

Of the sixty-seven people who returned the questionnaire, 70% wished to know the results, the special field of interest being section III, entitled Professional Observations.
This study brought out several facts that proved to be a surprise to the author. For example, piano rather than voice has been indicated as the major instrument of the school choral directors who participated in the study. The normal expectation would be that these people, leading music educators of their various states, would have majored in voice during their own professional training. Since, however, the majority of these school choral directors have majored in an instrument other than voice, it would seem to indicate that one need not necessarily be an expert vocalist himself in order to work successfully with vocal or choral groups.

There were some who indicated a teaching major other than music but they were by far in the minority. A substantial majority listed music as the teaching major and English as the teaching minor. The popularity of this music-English combination could very well be due to the fact that many school choral directors must also stage and direct operettas. Since dramatics is a branch of English in the college or university curriculum and since future school music educators may often expect to be called on to produce plays and operettas, one can understand and appreciate the incidence of English as the teaching minor.

Quite often the school choral director neglects or ceases his own vocal activities after he has entered his profession. This
was brought out in the questionnaire which showed that a small majority of high school directors do not continue solo vocal performance in public. On the other hand the college directors indicated that a most substantial majority of their number have continued their own vocal activities, appearing from twelve to fifty times a year in public performance. Thus it seems apparent that a personal performing medium becomes of greater importance on the college level.

The main question for which this study sought an answer was whether or not individual voice study is beneficial to the school choral program and thus desirable from the point of view of the school choral director. It was quite generally agreed by those who participated in the study that individual voice study is definitely desirable and beneficial to the school choral program. In spite of this favorable attitude, we find that only a very small percentage, 13.8%, of the number of choral members under the direction of the educators participating in this survey are actually studying voice either from their directors or other private teachers.

Economic factors are probably to some extent responsible for the aforementioned situation. This is indicated by the fact that in college where economic factors are not so likely to be an obstacle the percentage of choral members taking individual voice lessons is much higher, 24.8%, or nearly one-quarter. This represents
quite a substantial increase over the 10.6% of high school choral members who are studying voice privately.

It is the opinion of the author that more opportunities for voice study and development should be provided in the school system as is often done in the case of instrumental activities. If individual or class lessons in voice were provided at school expense, many more persons would be able to develop their singing voices than are able to now, and the school choral program would benefit because of it. Substantiation for this observation is found in the agreement of the directors participating in this study that voice lessons are decidedly beneficial to the students and to the groups in which they sing.

The directors contacted in the study almost unanimously agreed that boys should continue singing throughout the period during which their voices are changing. In their comments they stated that this should be done carefully. As to whether or not private lessons were beneficial at this period they were evenly divided as to affirmative and negative. Those who felt that private lessons were valuable stated that they were only if the quality of teaching was good. Many of those who felt that lessons were not valuable during this time commented that they felt as they did because in their opinion there were not enough private teachers available who understood the changing voice or knew how to deal
with it.

Treatment of the changing voice has always been a controversial issue among teachers of singing. Because of this the author recommends that the school music teachers and the private teachers work in closer cooperation with each other with the best possible welfare of the students as their common objective.

It might well be to the advantage of the public school music educator to call a meeting of all the private teachers of all instruments in his community. Here he could state his aims, ideals, and objectives and his willingness to cooperate with the private teachers and support their activities. In exchange for this he should ask for their understanding of and cooperation with his program. He might further meet with these teachers individually to discuss particular problems, such as that of the changing voice, and exchange ideas for dealing with them. It is the opinion of the author that if this is done, there will generally prove to be some common ground for understanding from which to proceed in a worthwhile program of education.

It is deplorable that so often the public school music teacher and the private music teacher work to cross purposes and actually resent each other's activities. This need not be so and with some understanding and cooperation will not be. There may be cases in which a hopelessly incompetent private teacher is doing harm to immature voices. If that is so and the public school
teacher can not find any basis for cooperation with the private teacher, then it becomes his duty as an educator to do his utmost to protect his students by making the situation known.

The majority of school choral directors participating in the study indicated that they were in favor of class lessons in voice, especially on the high school level, but that individual lessons were much more beneficial. This we might sum up by saying that individual voice lessons are to be desired for our students but when this is impossible, class lessons are valuable and are more within the realm of possibility.

The high school choral directors indicated by their answers that there are somewhat different problems involved in choral singing and solo singing, but that proper breathing is the most important factor in either. The college directors, on the other hand, stress posture and indicate that the same things should be stressed in each. Even though the high school and college directors do not agree as to what factor is of the highest importance, each group agrees that choral and vocal singing basically involve the same things. This further substantiates the premise that individual vocal study will enhance the school choral program. The only reservations that the directors made in this regard are that the quality of instruction be good and that the singers must blend with the group. This latter stipulation represents the
central issue in the situation. Individual voice study will develop the general vocal ability of the pupil and thus he will prove an asset to any ensemble in which he sings, if he is able to submerge any prima donna instincts he may have and work cooperatively with the group.

The majority of the directors contacted in this study desire normal vibrato in the voice rather than the straight tone that is used by some choral directors. This indicates to the author that the school choral directors do not wish to insist on or develop anything unnatural in the voice which might interfere with its normal development. This is a further indication of the compatibility of choral and solo singing. Most of them agree that the person who has studied voice privately will find more opportunities for both solo and ensemble singing and will probably prefer solo work.

In all respects, then, the school choral directors who participated in this study were agreed that individual voice lessons are musically, physiologically, and psychologically beneficial to the people taking them; that it is musically and psychologically beneficial to groups to have members with individually trained voices if they are able to cooperate with the group; and that those persons who have had individual voice training will find more opportunities to continue singing after they leave school. Thus
the school choral program and all its participants derive lasting benefit from private study with competent teachers who work in cooperation with the school choral director for the welfare and best interests of the pupil.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Mr. Stanley Teel
School of Music
University of Montana
Missoula, Montana

Dear Sir:

Knowing your interest in the field of music education, I am sending you this request.

I am making a study of certain phases of choral activities in the Northwest states. In order to make it more effective it was suggested to me that I write to you for information regarding the choral directors of your state. Thank you.

Sincerely,

James H. Callihan
APPENDIX B

Please fill in the following blank

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Comments:
One of the leading music educators of your state has submitted your name as being one of the outstanding choral directors in your state. Your filling out of the enclosed form and returning it to me is very important to this study. Without the return from you it can not be complete.

The study includes a survey of school choral directors of five states, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Wyoming. It is hoped to determine the effect of individual voice training of choral members upon the school choral program in the experience of the directors contacted. The results of the survey will be summarized and presented in a professional paper as one of the requirements for the degree of Master of Music, toward which I am working.

This is a statistical study and no names or places will be used in the body of the report. However, if you wish to omit any portion of the form, please feel free to do so.

If you wish to elaborate on any of the questions, please use the backs of any or all of the pages of the enclosed form for this purpose.
What effect does individual voice training have upon the school choral program? Is it beneficial or detrimental and how so? Do we strive for the same things in ensemble singing as in solo singing? How should we treat the changing voice? These are some of the questions for which I hope to be able to find answers in this survey.

If you wish to know the results of the study, please fill in the blanks at the bottom of this page. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

James H. Callihan

Name..................................
Address................................
School..................................
City and State.......................
APPENDIX D

I. Personal Information

1. What type of singing voice do you have (baritone, tenor, soprano, etc.)? ______________ What kind(s) of singing have you done? Solo _____ Ensemble _____ Both _____.

2. Have you studied voice privately? _____ For how long? _____ yrs.

3. Where did you receive your vocal training? (List private coaches, schools, etc.)

________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

4. Where did you receive your professional training as a conductor and teacher?

________________________________________
________________________________________

5. What is your teaching major? _____ Minor _____

6. What is your major instrument? _____ Minor _____

7. How long have you directed choral groups: Jr. high school _____ yrs., Senior high school _____ College _____ yrs.

8. Do you still do solo singing in public? _____

Approximately how many times during the year? _______________

II. Professional Information

1. With which grade levels do you work: Junior high _____,
Senior high _____, College _____.
2. List the numbers of singers you have in each of the following groups: Girls glee club_____, Boys glee club_____, Mixed chorus: (boys) ____ (girls) _____. A cappella choir: (boys) ____ (girls) _____.

3. How many members of your choral groups take private lessons from you? Girls _____, Boys ____. From other teachers (approximately) Girls _____, Boys _____.

4. Are you in favor of members of your choral groups taking individual voice lessons from private teachers other than yourself? _____. Do you urge them to do so? _____.

III. Professional Observations

1. Indicate chronological age at which you feel private lessons should begin: Boys ____ yrs., Girls ____ yrs.

2. Are you in favor of giving voice lessons in class to members of choral groups? _____. Check age level at which they are more effective: Junior high school _____, Senior high school _____, College _____.

3. Which provides more advantages, individual or class lessons in voice? ________________

4. Should boys continue singing through the period during which their voices are changing? _____. Are private lessons beneficial to them? ____

5. Does a member of a choral ensemble who is trained as a
soloist strengthen the group? __

6. Do private voice lessons create a beneficial psychological effect upon those members of the groups who have had them? ____ Does having persons with privately trained voices have a beneficial or detrimental psychological effect upon the group itself? ________________

7. Indicate which of the following you stress in choral singing and, if possible, rate them according to their comparative importance (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6): Phrasing ____, Posture ____, Breathing ____, Frontal or head resonance ____, Diction ____, Vowel formation ____. List other things you consider important. _______________________

8. Check the same way as in question no. 7 for solo singing: Phrasing ____, Posture ____, Breathing ____, Frontal or head resonance ____, Diction ____, Vowel formation ____. List other things you consider important. _______________________

9. In choral groups which of the following do you work for: Straight tone without vibrato ____, Normal vibrato unchanged ____, Brilliant robust tone ____, Light head tone ____. List other things you may work for. ______________
10. Is the brilliant robust tone likely to injure voices in: Junior high school ___, Senior high school ___, College ___.

11. Will the persons who have had private voice lessons find more opportunities for ensemble singing after graduation than those who haven't? ___. Will they find more opportunities for solo ____ or ensemble singing ____? Which will they prefer? ________________________________