

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD MUSIC SRIG

in collaboration with

THE MUSIC EDUCATION RESEARCH COUNCIL OF MENC

NEWSLETTER NO. 7

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This Newsletter contains two feature articles of interest to early childhood music educators, an overview of the proposal submitted for the SRIG session at the 1986 Anaheim MENC Convention, divisional SRIG news, calls for research papers in early childhood music, and other announcements.

DIVISIONAL NEWS

Western Division: Two stimulating and informative Early Childhood Music SRIG sessions were presented at the Western Division MENC Convention in Fresno, California held in March 21-24. The sessions were organized by Dr. Glen Fifield, Western Division SRIG Leader. Susan Kenney, Brigham Young University and National Chair of MENC's Society for General Music, presented an action research session entitled "The Two-Year Old Experiences Music: A Parent-Toddler Music Program." Dr. David Woods, The University of Arizona, presented the second SRIG session entitled "Conceptualization Through Exploration, Singing Games, and Movement." Between 40 and 50 patrons attended each of the excellent sessions.

Northwestern Division: The following papers of possible interest to early childhood music researchers were presented at the Northwestern Divisional Conference in Spokane, Washington in February, 1985:

- (1) "Early Childhood Music Curriculum: Rhythm Teaching Strategies," presented by Zoe A. Kelley and Patricia E. Sink.
- (2) "Music and Language Learning with the Hearing Impaired Child," presented by Myra J. Staum.
- (3) "The Effect of Early Music Training on Achievement of Aural Musical Skills," presented by Jane Wyss.

Southern Division: Dr. Gene Simons, Southern Divisional Leader, participated in a general SRIG session held during the Southern Divisional Conference in Mobile, Alabama in March. Dr. Simons presented general information about the Early Childhood Music SRIG and invited interested persons to join our membership.

EARLY CHILDHOOD MUSIC SRIG SESSION PROPOSAL, 1986 MENC ANAHEIM CONFERENCE

The following proposed meeting organization was submitted to MERC for approval for the Early Childhood Music SRIG session at the 1986 MENC National Conference in Anaheim. The proposal currently is under consideration along with other SRIG proposals, and results of the MERC Executive Committee review will be announced in September.

The main topic area for the session will be "The Young Child's Musical Development--Implications of Research for the Practitioner." The objectives of the session will be

- (1) to summarize findings of early childhood music research published between 1970 and 1985,
- (2) to derive implications for teaching from such research,
- (3) to recommend avenues for future research in the field.

A five-member panel will address the topic. Panelists will include Dr. Barbara Anders (Arizona State University), Dr. Dorothy McDonald (The University of Iowa), Cheryl Parr (preschool teacher, San Antonio, Texas), Dr. Shirley Shelley (The University of Maryland), and Dr. Gene Simons (The University of Georgia).

The discussion will be organized around three areas of concern; three panelists will summarize research findings in each area:

- (1) Development of Musical Perception and Listening Skills (Dr. Simons)
- (2) Development of Vocal Abilities (Dr. McDonald)
- (3) Development of Rhythmic Abilities (Dr. Shelley)

Following each research summary, panelists will respond to the findings with regard to implications for the teaching/learning process and suggestions for further research. Following the panel discussion, the audience will be encouraged to direct questions to panelists for further discussion. In addition, bibliographies of discussed research will be provided as hand-outs to interested audience members. As a post-convention activity, research summaries presented by the panelists will be printed in our SRIG newsletter.

VICE CHAIR NAMED

In October, 1984, Dr. Albert LeBlanc, National Chair for the Society for Research in Music Education, requested that each SRIG designate a vice-chair who could assume chairmanship responsibilities should a vacancy occur. Dr. Gene M. Simons of The University of Georgia has been appointed Interim Vice-Chair until the next election of officers is held in the Spring of 1986. Dr. Simons has been instrumental in the formation and continued organizational work of the Early Childhood Music SRIG, and his assistance to the National Chair is greatly appreciated.

THE PITCH RANGE AND CONTOUR OF INFANT VOCALIZATIONS: AN ABSTRACT

by Donna Brink Fox
Eastman School of Music

The purpose of this longitudinal study was to record and analyze infant vocalizations to determine pitch range and contour characteristics produced by infants at monthly intervals from 3 months to 9 months of age. Of particular interest were the infant vocal behaviors which might relate to existing reports of vocal development in toddlers and pre-school-age children.

Subjects for the study were 12 infants, six male and six female, from white, middle-class home environments who were recruited through personal contacts. The vocalizations of each infant were recorded on audiotape in seven monthly visits in the home, with observational and developmental data also collected by means of a recording information form. A total of 84 one-hour recordings were made, and after these audiotapes were edited to include only those vocalizations defined as pleasurable, a total of 1122 segments of vocalizations were available for analysis. Three representative samples were chosen from each session for analysis using analog-to-digital conversion and computer graphics display techniques.

The pitch range and contour characteristics were computed for each individual vocal segment, with results of the analysis presented in case study reports for each infant. Composite results revealed a range of fundamental frequency from 196 Hz to 1035 Hz (G3 to G6), with 82 percent descending contours. This range was one half-step lower and a perfect fifth higher than ranges previously reported for infant vocalizations. The computer analysis procedures used to identify the pitch and contour characteristics were unique to the study.

While it was not possible to define stages of vocal development based on the data, it was clear that each of the infants displayed highly individual vocalization patterns. Recommendations for further research were made in the areas of vocal interaction with primary caregivers, since the vocal characteristics of the adult were frequently imitated by the infants. A retrospective look at the analysis of an infant who was later identified as hearing impaired indicated an atypical vocal range, suggesting a role for vocal behavior in the early diagnosis and treatment of auditory handicaps.

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The SRIG welcomes your contributions to this Newsletter. Articles, announcements, news of current research or projects in early childhood music may be sent to the National Chair (see the address at the top of the Newsletter). DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEXT NEWSLETTER IS SEPTEMBER 1, 1985.

WE ARE WHAT WE EXPERIENCE

by Glen Fifield
Utah State University

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The principle that we are a composite of the various experiences we have throughout life is universally accepted. Although the importance of talent cannot be overlooked in musical pursuits, natural aptitudes require proper and sufficient environmental experiences in order to develop. Ashley Montagu (1974) stated: "There exists a vast body of scientific evidence which indicates, not that genetic potentials or environmental ones are more important than the other, but that both are of greatest importance for the adequate development of intelligence" (p.60).

Evidence from research also leaves us to conclude that those experiences we have early in life have the greatest influence upon our total quality of life. In his book *IBG THIRD FORCE*, a condensation of the ideas of Abraham Maslow, Goble (1970) wrote: "The early years are the important ones-- on this point, virtually all schools of psychology agree" (p. 8).

Curious about the childhood experiences of our great musicians, this writer made a rather thorough study of the early environments of fifteen noted musicians. This research dealt primarily with evidence related to the following areas: (1) parent(s) who sang or played musical instruments, (2) the presence of musical instruments in the home, (3) parent(s) who encouraged musical expression of the child, and (4) church and/or social musical influences in the environment of the child. A scale of one to five was used to rate the level of influence each of these conditions played upon the environments of the subjects. The results of the study may be found in the table following this article.

Concluding evidence shows that in most examples the subjects were almost totally surrounded with music during their earliest years. Music was a way of life. Parents were not only supportive of the child's involvement, but active participants in music themselves. This is in solid agreement with current research which points out that the strongest environmental influences upon a child's musical awakening are parents who provide quality experiences in music. Also, musical instruments were present in each child's environment, and the early childhood experiences of all fifteen musicians in this study attested the presence of rich musical involvement outside the home.

This research is a small sampling of musicians taken primarily from the Classical period of music history. A subsequent study is encouraged and should include many more noted musicians from all periods of musical history (especially 20th Century), musicians from cultures other than the Western world, performing musicians in addition to composers,

music educators, and patrons of music. It is this writer's conviction however, that these findings are indicative of what would undoubtedly be found in a more expanded study.

The importance of this information to music educators is to prick awareness of the impact musical experiences have upon the lives of children, especially young children. The music educator must assume the responsibility for providing proper quality and quantity to the musical environment.

We are what we experience. Bennett Reimer (1970) writes: "The best preparation for more enjoyable musical experiences in the future is the most enjoyable musical experiences that is possible in the present" (p. 124). It is imperative that we take the challenge.

Environmental Influences Upon the Early Childhood of Noted Musicians

Level of Relative Influence (weak 1 2 3 4 5 strong)

Musicians Name Date of Birth Place of Birth	Facilities they or play musical instruments	Presence of musical instruments in home	Parental encourage- ment, expression of the child	Church and/or musical influences
1. Palestrina 1514, Italy	No extant evidence	No extant evidence	5	5
2. Purcell 1659, England	5	5	5	5
3. Bach 1685, Germany	5	5	5	5
4. Handel 1685, Germany	No extant evidence	4	3	5
5. Haydn 1732, Austria	4	5	5	5
6. Mozart 1756, Germany	5	5	5	5
7. Beethoven 1770, Germany	5	5	5	5
8. Weber 1786, Germany	5	5	5	5
9. Schubert 1797, Italy	4	5	5	5
10. Mendelssohn 1809, Germany	4	5	5	5
11. Schumann 1810, Germany	No extant evidence	3	3	4
12. Wagner 1813, Germany	No extant evidence	3	3	4
13. Brahms 1833, Germany	5	5	5	5
14. Tchaikovsky 1840, Russia	3	4	4	4
15. Debussy 1862, France	No extant evidence	3	2	3

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CALLS FOR PAPERS

THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN MUSIC EDUCATION will sponsor a session to disseminate the results of research projects at the MENC National Convention in Anaheim, April 9-12, 1986. Researchers whose projects are chosen for presentation will prepare a poster describing their projects and will be available during the session to discuss their work with interested music educators. They will be asked to furnish 200 copies of an abstract describing their project and 12 copies of a complete report of the project, two of which go into MENC National Archives. Participants also must respond to post-convention inquiries about their work, including requests for copies of their report.

Those who wish to submit a project should comply with the following guidelines: Submit four copies of an abstract no longer than 600 words summarizing the project. Also submit four copies of a full report of the project. There is no limit on the length of the full report. The author's name and institutional affiliation should appear only on the cover page. All submitted materials must include the title of the project, and each submission should include a self-addressed, stamped postcard and letter-sized envelope.

Submissions should be sent to Carol Rogel Scott, MENC Program Chairperson, School of Fine and Performing Arts, Seattle Pacific University, Seattle, Washington 98119. Submissions must be postmarked by August 1, 1985 and received by August 15, 1985. All submissions will be screened by a panel of judges. Applicants will be notified of the committee decision by November 1, 1985.

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMISSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF MUSIC EDUCATION invites papers on the topic "Reaching the Young Child Through Music." The seminar will explore models for parent involvement or institutional involvement in preschool music. Papers showing the use of music to meet multi-cultural needs and papers which illustrate effective models of research in early childhood music will be welcome. The seminar will be held from June 30 to July 4, 1986 in Kecskemet, Hungary.

A maximum of twelve papers will be selected. Presentation format will be lecture-demonstration, and each participant will be expected to use video, film, or tapes to show their model in action with young children.

Procedures for submitting papers are as follows:

- (1) Papers are not to exceed 2000 words in length.
- (2) Three copies of the full text must be submitted in English.
- (3) The paper must be accompanied by three copies of an abstract of the paper, not to exceed 200 words.

- (4) The author must indicate how he/she plans to show the model through media and what equipment is needed: video (u-matic, Beta, VHS), slides, cassette tapes, reel-to-reel (half track stereo or full track stereo, 9 1/2 or 9 cm/sec), 16mm film.

- (5) Papers must be typewritten, double-spaced.

- (6) If a multi-author paper is selected, only one author will be invited.

- (7) The name, position, and complete address of the person submitting the paper must appear at the top of the first page.

- (8) The following statement must appear at the top of the first page of the paper: "This paper is submitted for consideration for the seminar Reaching the Young Child Through Music, June 30th - July 4th, 1986."

- (9) Papers must be postmarked AIR MAIL no later than October 31, 1985.

- (10) It is a condition of acceptance of a paper that the writer will present the paper in person and that the copyright is vested in the International Society for Music Education. It is also a condition that, if selected, the writer will attend the entire seminar.

Papers should be sent to: Carol Rogel Scott, School of Fine and Performing Arts, Seattle Pacific University, Seattle, WA 98119, USA.