

Choral Music's Gender Trouble: Males, Adolescence, and Masculinity
by Joshua Palkki

*"If you scratch the surface of sexism and misogyny, you almost always find gender."
-Riki Wilchins, *Queer Theory, Gender Theory: An Instant Primer**

*We are men and we like to sing in big block chords and close harmony.
Our songs all sound the same, like bad rewrites of "there is nothing like a dame"
and though our repertoire consists of drinking songs and sailor songs and barbershop quartets
we thank god every day from our head down to our toes that we are not sopranos or altos.*

These lyrics from Kurt Knecht's "Manly Men: Men's Chorus Extravaganza" poke fun at stereotypes of all-male choirs. Although these words make light of the situation, they also point out long-held, underlying social constructs including narrow views about singing, masculinity, and heteronormativity. In study after study, singing has been coded as a feminine construct, and scholars posit that this has caused many males to stop singing during their K-12 school experience.¹ Additionally, overly simplistic tropes about male choral singers abound. Some choral conductor-teachers assume that male choirs should perform a certain type of repertoire and respond positively when treated like a "team" with "masculine," "coach-like" leadership.² Clearly parallels exist between the camaraderie and culture of a sports team and that of a male choir, but these two groups strive toward different ends: a sports team hopes to *defeat* an opponent, while a male choir *creates* an artistic product through collaboration.³

Singing and Masculinity

In the twenty-first century, do overgeneralizations about male choirs accurately reflect the contemporary needs and attitudes of male singers? Researchers who study how educational settings perpetuate masculine norms challenge teachers to avoid false generalizations. In exploring the complexities and diversity of the lives of young men, researchers Blye Frank, Michael Kehler, Trudy Lovell, and Kevin Davidson asserted that, "an uncritical view of boys as a unitary group bound by an abundance of testosterone is... an inaccurate way to represent

boys.”⁴ In light of this view, choral conductor-teachers might ask themselves: does the male choir paradigm perpetuate antiquated stereotypes, and if so, whom do these stereotypes affect?

This article asserts that choral conductor-teachers can resist outdated conceptions about singing and masculinity and replace them with an inclusive approach that embraces a spectrum of masculinities in the choral context. A different perspective could stay current with (or even ahead of) trends and social norms to align better with current conceptions of masculinity, and it may even attract more men to choral singing.

Clarification of terminology used throughout this article may be helpful at this juncture. An important distinction is between *sex* and *gender*, which often are used incorrectly or confused as synonyms. *Sex* refers to the biological distinctions that separate males and females, whereas *gender* is a set of socially constructed ideas regarding what behaviors and physical attributes can be considered “masculine” or “feminine.”⁵ Scholars contend (and this author agrees) that gender and sexuality do not exist as binary categories but rather as fluid, ever-changing definitions.⁶ As Judith Butler wrote, “*gender* is not a noun, but neither is it a set of free-floating attributes, for we have seen that the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence.”⁷ According to Butler, biology does not create gender, but rather gender becomes legible through attributes such as the clothes one wears, the mannerisms one uses, and the pitch of one’s voice—all attributes that play a prominent role in choral music.

Similarly, *gender* and *sexuality* are distinct terms. *Sexuality* “describes how (and with whom) we act on our erotic desires. Sexuality is analytically distinct from gender but intimately bound with it, like two lines on a graph that have to intersect.”⁸ Finally, *heteronormativity* is an assumption that, unless stated, everyone is heterosexual and therefore, in some sense, “normal.”⁹

Thus, American men face potentially constraining social prescriptions for their sexual and gender identities.

Masculinity: A Spectrum

Close your eyes and think of an adult male. What does this person look and act like? You may have imagined someone tall, broad-shouldered, rugged, tough, strong, muscular, or commanding. If so, what you have imagined is a standard masculine prototype. This stereotype has power and is defined in opposition to femininity—society generally values masculine attributes more than feminine ones—a phenomenon known as *hegemonic masculinity*. Ellen Jordan asserted that young boys learn lessons about how to become the male prototype (or how they will never live up to hegemonic masculinity) in schools every day.¹⁰

A hidden curriculum exists in schools through which students learn, often without their teachers realizing it. Michael Apple posited, “Because of the school’s economic role in differentially distributing a hidden curriculum to different economic, cultural, racial, and sexual groups, linguistic, cultural, and class differences from the ‘normal’ will be maximally focused upon and will be labeled as deviant.”¹¹ In applying this broad concept to gender specifically, Riki Wilchins asserted that:

We are subject in daily life to a continuous dressage of gender. In this continuous drill, each individual's every move is weighted with gendered meaning.... Gender conformity is made possible through a sense of permanent visibility, a strong consciousness of shame before others...and the continuous dance of gender that attaches binary meaning to every facet of our waking lives.¹²

One of the many social norms that students learn in educational contexts is culturally created¹³ and enforced *gender roles/norms/stereotypes*: what is typical for boys as distinct from what is

expected from girls.¹⁴ Schools are especially important sites for generalizations surrounding gender roles, in that schools may teach negative lessons like patriarchy, but can also challenge gender stereotypes.¹⁵ Teachers, knowingly or unknowingly, play a role in this gender socialization process when, for example, they call on male students more than female students or fail to include the writings, artworks, and perspectives of women or transgender people in their courses. Children seem to absorb perceptions about masculinity and femininity early in life.¹⁶ This is especially significant in vocal and choral music, because when they are as young as age five, boys may “understand male gender in opposition to female and how boys may rely on gender stereotypes to form a male musical identity.”¹⁷

The process of performing masculinity is diverse and unique. Several scholars,¹⁸ including Ronald L. Jackson II and Jamie E. Moshin, have explored the notion that, “there is a liminality that accompanies maleness and masculinity, as much as there is for femaleness and femininity. This makes it difficult to take a quick snapshot of masculinities, because they are always fluid and in motion.”¹⁹ Similarly, a study profiling Canadian adolescent males who resist hegemonic gender roles described how they navigate a “plurality of masculinities.”²⁰ Men who resist societal notions about gender roles demonstrate the spectrum of masculinities possible in modern society.²¹

Adolescence and Gender

The fact that adolescents grapple with emerging gender and sexual identities further compounds this socialization process. Social norms have long associated masculine men with heterosexuality and more feminine men with homosexuality. These overly simplistic correlations persist because they are often accepted and repeated in the choral context without critical examination, and even though there is no evidence to support such a connection. Adolescence

can be a challenging time for students as they navigate puberty, choices about social groups, and the power differential between themselves and adults. In the middle and high school years, students begin to decide who they will be in the future. Adolescents may define activities based on their conceptions of the distinctions between masculinity and femininity (e.g., basketball as masculine vs. cheerleading as feminine). Adam Adler and Scott Harrison asserted that choral music may provide welcome relief from the daily pressure adolescents may feel to perform masculinity in a certain way: “Adler (2002) found that, for boys who participated in voluntary choir activities, choir represented a much-needed escape from the masculine proving ground of the playground and sports.”²² Daily social interactions may be arduous for students who choose activities that do not fit neatly into the gender binary; for example, for boys who participate in choir.²³ (This certainly was the author’s experience in middle and high school!)

GLSEN’s (Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network) 2011 survey of American students reinforced the notion that schools reinforce the gender binary and strict gender roles. Sixty-one point four percent of students reported frequently hearing negative remarks about gender expression such as boys not acting “masculine enough,”²⁴ and as a result of this nonconformity, many boys are bullied or called homophobic slurs by their peers.²⁵ As Frank Abrahams wrote, “I contend that young men in middle school are fearful that if their peers pronounce them ‘gay,’ they will indeed be gay. This is profoundly significant.”²⁶ It should be troubling for choral music educators to consider the fact that every day students face taunting and bullying for simply expressing who they are.

Society is changing—quickly—and choral conductor-teachers can help reform the dialogue rather than allowing the status quo to endure. Consider the complicated contemporary terrain of gender and sexuality that students traverse in expressing themselves. The option reject

simple binary distinctions like “male” and “female” is increasingly popular. As an example, at the time of this writing, Facebook has more than fifty options for gender identity/expression, and users may choose multiple words or phrases to describe themselves.²⁷ Choral conductor-teachers can play a significant role in the dismantling rigid gender stereotypes:

Breaking down stereotypes and releasing students from their gender straightjackets is one critical way in which [conductor-teachers] can open up space for all students who define themselves as outside of the mainstream to find support and to be valued for who they are and not for what society tells them they should be.²⁸

An increasing number of transgender youth are “coming out of the closet” in school, and choral music educators must be prepared to work with them in a respectful manner, including using their chosen names and pronouns and engaging them in a dialogue about which voice part they should sing and what concert attire they should wear.²⁹

Heteronormativity, Singing, and Femininity

Many choral conductor-teachers have long failed to acknowledge heterosexual privilege and heteronormativity in choral music and music education.³⁰ As Louis Bergonzi’s 2009 *Music Educators Journal* article reminds music teachers, small oversights still contribute to a culture of heteronormativity:

One of the first actions we can take as educators is to identify the ways through which we provide privilege for heterosexual students based on our acceptance of the idea that although heterosexuality is certainly more common, it is not normal for some of our students.³¹

Music education researchers have explored why singing has consistently been labeled a feminine activity—for example, Scott Harrison completed a study in 2007 in which the singing

voice was rated as the third most feminine instrument after the flute and clarinet.³² Harrison, who has written extensively on issues of gender, masculinity, and music participation, argues that several factors influence boys' choices about singing, including "gender role rigidity, homophobia, and the avoidance of femininity."³³ His research focused on how, based on dominant, stereotypical notions of masculinity, many boys have grown away from vocal activities.³⁴ Choral music is, in some ways, even more "gendered" than instrumental music, although the music education research community has long been fascinated by the sex stereotyping of instruments. Several choral conductor-teachers and music education researchers have written about the use of treble clef (all female) and bass clef (all male) choirs in school.³⁵ Harrison suggested that the only long-term solution is to address larger social issues about what masculinity and femininity mean—a process that can begin with choral conductor-teachers. Harrison and Adam Adler wrote,

As music educators we must recognize the value in the creation of communities of learners in which we strive to educate not only the students, but also the parents, administrators, and other teachers, about the goals and values of our art. The changed community would be one where a sense of ownership exists and where artificial masculinization of the arts [is] removed and replaced with more conducive structures.³⁶

By heeding the advice of researchers and choral singers alike, choral conductor-teachers can be part of a cultural shift; rather than propagating stereotypes, conductor-teachers can help enact positive change. In a study by Andrea Ramsey about the experiences of students in a high school all-male choir, participants expressed more progressive views of masculinity and attitudes toward gender-sexual diversity than have appeared in previous literature on males and singing.³⁷ One participant in Ramsey's study who identified as gay said that the male choir accepted him

unabashedly and affirmed his non-heterosexual identity. Another participant spoke eloquently about the life lessons he gleaned from his choral experience:

I think deep down we all know that... one thing we really loved about [choir]—was that we got to talk about deep poetry and be vulnerable. And as a high school guy, that's not something I think we found anywhere else—that vulnerability and ability to talk openly about emotion.³⁸

This participant pointed out the fact that it was his high school choir teacher who modeled such behavior: “He lets us understand that it’s okay to come out and say what you’re feeling, you know?”³⁹ Teachers such as this one model inclusive teaching. This is not to say, however, that males “should be” overly emotional, as that would only be as prescriptive as older stereotypes. This example merely contrasts the limiting, hegemonic assumptions about conflating male choirs with sports teams (see note 1).

Problematic tropes regarding masculinity have long existed in choral music. Though admittedly satirical, “Manly Men” exposes misogyny in its rejection of women (sopranos and altos) and about the types of stereotypically “macho” (and heteronormative) texts/repertoire chosen for many male choirs. This may be a systemic problem connected to music teacher training. Julia Eklund Koza’s 1993 exploration of choral methods textbooks and articles uncovered that “references to gender reflected and reinforced discourses that are both misogynistic and homophobic.”⁴⁰ She examined several texts in which athleticism and masculinity were assumed characteristics for all boys and that if these masculine attributes were validated in the choral classroom, boys would want to sing. Koza’s article also tackles the problem of homophobia in choral music education.

Choral music education scholars continually have discussed recruitment of male

singers,⁴¹ and since the early twentieth century, American choral conductor-teachers have worked to attract more males into choral ensembles.⁴² Steven Demorest suggested that male singing is viewed as un-manly in American culture,⁴³ and studies in Australia echo similar themes.⁴⁴ Despite decades of successful male choir performances and countless workshops and articles about increasing the number of male singers in school choral programs, little seems to have changed. A recent study by Kenneth Elpus revealed that for the past 30 years the male/female balance in high school choral programs nationally has remained constant at 70% female and 30% male nationally.⁴⁵ While this statistic also means that the percentage of boys singing in high school has not *decreased*, for the many people who have written about and worked on this issue, it certainly can seem disappointing that this gap has not closed. If it is true that a common strategy for attracting boys to singing has been to make choral singing more masculine, then perhaps choral conductor-teachers can identify this learned coding of gender roles as one reason for the lack of growth in male singing. Another study by Koza about the “missing males” in choir suggested that strict definitions of masculinity could decrease male interest in singing.⁴⁶

In discussing recruitment and citing a critical *genderist* approach,⁴⁷ Harrison contented that “counter-stereotyping presents both a problem and a solution,” stating that “achieving greater numbers of male involvement with boys who are popular, well liked and enjoy high status can assist in overcoming the negative aspect of stereotyping”⁴⁸ (translation: choral teachers should pander to the popular boys at school so that the other popular boys will want to join choir). What about the boys who do not enjoy popularity or high status? Why do choral conductor-teachers dishonor those students who already are likely struggling socially in school? Perhaps clinging to a narrow definition of masculinity in choral music has stifled broader views

and ignored social trends, including a widening understanding about, and acceptance of, transgender people,⁴⁹ and increasing recognition of equal rights for gays and lesbians.⁵⁰ It does not need to be this way. The next section describes how choral conductor-teachers can use writings and research on male choirs, gender norms, and social shifts to reinterpret and reform masculinity in the choral context. Perhaps in exploring the underlying assumptions and words used in rehearsal, choral conductor-teachers can be a part of this social dialogue—a dialogue upon which meaningful actions can be based.

Some Ideas and Suggestions

The choral music education community should begin discussing these dilemmas openly, even though doing so may seem difficult and daunting. In a study exploring adolescent male singers, Martin Ashley concluded that, “teachers with the necessary subject knowledge and *willingness* to confront gender issues can have a significant impact, and that young people of both sexes are amenable to possible changes that might result.”⁵¹ Teachers need to realize that remaining silent about these issues, or allowing stereotypes like “boys will be boys” to persist in the choral room, only compound the issue. Choral conductor-teachers should take responsibility for the well being of *all* of their students, both in and out of the music classroom. Choral conductor-teachers may be especially influential in middle and high school when students remain enrolled in a music program over a number of years, during which time strong relationships can be cultivated.⁵² During this time choral conductor-teachers can make strategic and influential choices about masculinity in the choral context. The next section outlines specific ideas choral conductor-teachers can use when considering masculinity within the choral music experience.

(1) *Modeling a spectrum of masculinities through repertoire selection.* Given that choral music has a text, one action choral conductor-teachers can take to combat hegemony and

heteronormativity is to explore the text of the repertoire chosen for study and performance. Too many choral texts (as satirized in “Manly Men”) reinforce stereotypes about masculinity.

Choral conductor-teachers can strive to provide balance in repertoire selection. A good mixture of repertoire includes variety in aspects such as language, tempo, historical period, mode, and voicing. Equally important is a consideration of choral texts that carry influential messages. Choral conductor-teachers should bear in mind that these texts may inadvertently reinforce gender stereotypes. Many books and articles discussing male choirs mention the importance of choosing repertoire that will appeal to boys’ masculinity. Take this suggestion from the book *Sing 6-7-8!*: “*Make sure that the music you choose does not emasculate the boys. No self-respecting young man wants to sing about clouds and rainbows.*”⁵³ This is just one example of the blatant examples of hegemonic masculinity in choral music that this author argues are unnecessary and harmful.

Many choral conductor-teachers have long been convinced that male choirs want to sing pirate songs, sea chanteys/sailor songs, and barbershop quartets. Male choirs need not dwell on one type of repertoire. Andrea Ramsey, a composer who has published many pieces for adolescent singers, wrote, “Young men need an outlet for sensitive expression beyond male gender stereotypes of sea chanteys/work songs!”⁵⁴ As someone who has conducted male choirs in K–12 and university settings, this author recognizes the importance of singing up-tempo pieces such as “*Gaudeamus Igitur*” (the rousing academic hymn arranged for men’s voices by Marshall Bartolomew) and “*Vive L’amour*” (arr. Robert Shaw and Alice Parker) that have become staples of the bass clef choir repertoire. Such pieces, however, should not be overly represented in the curriculum for male choirs, for they may reinforce conventional masculinity.

Text matters, so choral conductor-teachers should study lyrics carefully before choosing

to teach them. Assuming that choral conductor-teachers have a vested interest in the content and meanings of the texts with which they work, an appropriate question becomes: what do the lyrics say about gender roles and masculinity? A balanced program for a male choir should mirror the spectrum of masculinities that may accurately reflect the lived experiences of male singers. The male choirs with which this author has worked enjoyed singing slower pieces that enabled them to explore more sensitive lyrics. His seventh and eighth grade men's choirs appreciated learning and performing pieces such as "Shoshone Love Song" by Roger Emerson (a beautiful and seemingly heteronormative love song in which each singer may choose whether to sing "'he' [or] 'she' is fairer" in the refrain) as much or more than they enjoyed the more up-tempo pieces. Similarly, a university men's choir enjoyed "Die Rose Stand im Tau" (op. 65, no. 1) by Robert Schumann, a slow expressive piece. But this fast/slow and "manly"/sensitive binary is only one aspect to consider. Quirky/humorous pieces (e.g., "Two Tongue Twisters" by Noel Goemanne, "I hate flowers" by Judith Cloud), serious pieces (e.g., "Dies irae" by Z. Randall Stroope), pieces with an uplifting message (e.g., "Rest Not" by Laura Farnell), and light-hearted patter songs (e.g., "O Mister Moon" by Joshua Shank) present a few of the many facets of the non-hegemonic experience mirroring a spectrum of masculinities. Other pieces contain texts that this author considers problematic (and often misogynistic), such as "I Wish I Was Single Again," which includes the lyric "I married me a wife and she ruined my life," and "I Bought Me a Cat," in which the narrator sings, "I bought me a wife."

Many composers now are writing specifically for adolescent male students using texts that they can understand and to which they may easily relate. Consider the music of Jim Papoulis, whose poignant lyrics depict the adolescent experience and are set to interesting and substantive music. For example, the text of his male choir piece "We All Have a Right" was

written for adolescent males with changing voices, and the text of the piece challenges and encourages singers to be themselves without fear. Choral conductor-teachers should continue to search for pieces such as this—pieces with texts expressing the wide variety of emotions and experiences in life—and continue to encourage and commission composers to write pieces that speak poignantly to the lived experiences of male students who represent a broad spectrum of masculinities.

(2) *Modeling a spectrum of masculinities through the structure of choral programs and choice of recruitment tools.* The structure of our choral programs may reveal underlying gender biases. For many high school choral programs, an auditioned mixed choir is the “elite” ensemble, with all other choirs serving as “feeder” groups. This model, which also appears in some children’s choir organizations, seems to be mostly unfair to females.⁵⁵ Because there is often an abundance of female singers in high school choral programs, the level of competition for soprano and alto spaces in the “elite” ensemble is often much higher than for tenor and bass positions.⁵⁶ Many choral directors now have implemented single-gender (or, to use less gendered language, “treble clef” and “bass clef”) choral ensembles at the secondary level.⁵⁷ Consider, then, how a bass clef choir is viewed in a tiered program as described above. In such a hierarchy, treble and bass clef choirs seem to be devalued, because they can be seen as simply stepping-stones to the advanced co-ed choir. In addition to recruitment, voice part assignment is another gendered aspect of choral music that deserves thoughtful attention. Since high voices have been labeled as feminine,⁵⁸ is it any wonder that many American choirs lack tenors? Choral conductor-teachers can have male singers explore all parts of their voice (including the treble countertenor range) to help trouble the narrative that singing higher notes is de-masculinizing.⁵⁹

To create investment in male singing, programs can be structured so that treble and bass clef choirs are valued just as highly as mixed ensembles. For example, a secondary choral program could have curricular, tiered treble and/or bass clef choirs after an initial experience in a co-educational choir (e.g., a beginning mixed choir, emerging treble and bass clef choirs, and advanced treble and bass clef choirs). This is not a new idea—it is being implemented in several successful programs in North America such as Lyons Township High School in Western Springs and LaGrange, Illinois. More schools might re-evaluate their programs in light of potential gender biases.

Recruitment for ensembles can aid in resistance to masculine stereotypes. In his article about recruiting male singers, Steven Demorest described an annual “boys only” workshop held at the University of Washington at which boys participated in concentrated rehearsals and sectionals, heard male choir performances, and sang in an evening concert. The author recommended the replication of this successful program, “because it contributes in a very positive way to the boys’ perception of singing as a male activity.”⁶⁰ Mark Lucas chronicled a similar annual event at the University of Oklahoma that has been in place since 2006.⁶¹ In 2004, the Indiana Choral Directors Association initiated a similar middle school choir festival that attracted hundreds of middle school boys the first year. These festivals can be successful in part because, away from the potential social complexity of a co-ed environment, boys can discover that singing is indeed something that *all* types of males do and may begin expanding their views about what activities they can pursue through adulthood. Care must be taken, however, to ensure that such festivals do not become overwrought with stereotypes that would only serve to give participants a narrow view of hegemonic masculinity. A variety of repertoire with varied texts, an abundance of teaching tools (e.g., kinesthetic, aural, visual, geared towards different types of

learners), and sensitive and careful choices about language will help model for these young singers a spectrum of masculinity.

(3) *Modeling a spectrum of masculinities through words and actions.* The words and actions of educators can send powerful messages to and have lasting influences on students. The way to make sweeping social shifts is to begin with incremental change. Choosing a variety of metaphors and stories to share with bass clef choirs can address many forms of masculinity. Sports analogies could be balanced with jokes and also references to dance, film, theatre, visual art, popular music, or television shows. Serious chats about maturity and motivation can be balanced with class inside jokes. In choosing pop culture references, choral conductor-teachers can refer to role models of many types of males such as football players, dancers, comedians, actors, popular music artists, YouTube stars, and reality TV personalities (including those from *The Sing Off*, *The Voice*, and *American Idol*) who express the full range of behaviors in this ubiquitous experience of performing masculinity.

Conductor-teachers should choose gender pronouns carefully, especially when discussing romantic texts. Every teacher interacts with students who may be questioning their sexuality and/or gender identity/expression, or have already shared their gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or queer/questioning identity with family, friends, and/or people at school. Though it may seem like an insignificant detail, the choice to say, “When you’re singing this phrase, picture a person you think is really attractive” instead of “when you’re singing this phrase, pretend you’re singing it to your beautiful girlfriend” can reveal to students that you (may) reject hegemonic and heteronormative assumptions. Similarly, inclusive language that honors those who identify outside the binary notion of gender can help transgender or gender variant students

feel more at ease. Instead of saying, “Let’s have all the men sing here,” say, “Let’s have the tenors and basses sing here,” or in a co-ed choir, “Let’s have all the low voices sing here.”

Finally, choral conductor-teachers must trust and encourage their students as they construct their own unique male identities. As students in Ramsey’s study about the high school male choir cited above demonstrate, many boys are able to construct for themselves a unique (perhaps progressive) definition of masculinity. This means that teachers must be aware of new social constructs and realize how the social climate that students navigate today differs from what the teachers themselves may have experienced in school. All of this may be difficult to understand and can be unnerving, and it may mean that some teachers will need to challenge themselves and explore whether they are allowing students to be truly who they are—without reservation or qualification.

Choral music education can be part of a groundswell of social change. Choral conductor-teachers can be part of a shift that shows male students that the most important thing is to be true to themselves, not to conform blindly to antiquated stereotypes. Choral conductor-teachers can be voices of change in the complex, multifaceted experience of redefining masculinities through choral music in the twenty-first century and beyond.

A Short List of Non-heteronormative and Non-misogynistic Repertoire for Bass Clef

Choirs

Alexander, Elizabeth	If you can walk you can Dance (If you can talk you can sing)
Brahms, Johannes; arr. Stroope	Mainacht
Cloud, Judith	I hate flowers (from <i>Words from an Artist's Palette</i>)
Emerson, Roger	Can You Hear the Bells?
Farnell, Laura	Rain Music
Farnell, Laura	Rest Not

Farthing, Scott	Come Travel with Me
Goemanne, Noel	Two Tongue Twisters
Choplin, Pepper; arr. Hayes	Walk a Mile
Memley, Kevin A. (arr.)	America, the Beautiful
Mulholland, James	Think on Me
Papoulis, Jim	We All Have a Right
Patriquin, Donald (arr.)	J'entends le Moulin
Ramsey, Andrea	Cover Me with the Night
Ramsey, Andrea	The Roof
Rents, Earlene (arr.)	Loch Lomond
Robinson, Karen	High Flight
Runestad, Jake	Dereva Ni Mungu
Sametz, Steven	Dulcis Amor
Shank, Joshua	O Mister Moon
Stevens, Halsey	Remember Me
Stroope, Z. Randall	Dies irae
Takach, Timothy	Paper Cranes
Takach, Timothy	It Is Not the Fact That I Will Die That Mind
Takach, Timothy	Empty

¹ Julia Eklund Koza, "The 'Missing Males' and Other Gender Issues in Music Education: Evidence from the 'Music Supervisors' Journal, 1914-1924," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 41:3 (1993): 212–32, doi:10.2307/3345326; Adam Adler, "A Case Study of Boys' Experiences of Singing in School" (Ph.D dissertation, University of Toronto, 2002); Alfonso Elorriaga, "The Construction of Male Gender Identity through Choir Singing at a Spanish Secondary School," *International Journal of Music Education* 29:4 (2011): 318–32; J. Terry Gates, "A Historical Comparison of Public Singing by American Men and Women," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 37:1 (1989): 32–47; Lucy Green, *Music, Gender, Education* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Clare Hall, "Gender and Boys' Singing in Early Childhood," *British Journal of Music Education* 22:1 (2005): 5–20, doi:10.1017/S0265051704005960; Scott Harrison, "Boys on The Outer: Themes in Male Engagement with Music," *Thymos: Journal of Boyhood Studies* 4:1 (April 1, 2010): 39–53, doi:10.3149/thy.0401.39; André-Louis Heywood and Carol Beynon, "Finding a Voice: Why Boys (don't) Sing," *The Phenomenon of Singing* 6 (2013): 108–23; Robert Legg, "Reviewing the Situation: A Narrative Exploration of Singing and Gender in Secondary Schools," *Music Education Research* 15: 2 (June 1, 2013): 168–79, doi:10.1080/14613808.2012.737774;

Miroslav Pavle Manovski, "Snapshot Reflections: Targeting Young Boys Singing Girls' Songs in School.," *GEMS (Gender, Education, Music, & Society)* 6:3 (2013): 23–33.

² Andrew Crow, "Role Playing and Teamwork in the Male Choir," *ChorTeach* 5:4 (Summer 2013): 1–3; Jefferson Johnson, "The What, Why, and How of Young Adult Male Choirs," *Choral Journal* 52:10 (2012): 28–37; Roger Emerson, *Sing 6-7-8! - Choral* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 1998); Nancy Smirl Jorgensen and Catherine Pfeiler, *Things They Never Taught You in Choral Methods: A Choral Director's Handbook* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 1995).

³ I am reminded here of an apropos lyric from the musical *Rent* by Jonathan Larson: "The opposite of war isn't peace, it's creation."

⁴ Blye Frank, Michael Kehler, Trudy Lovell, and Kevin Davidson, "A Tangle of Trouble: Boys, Masculinity and Schooling—future Directions," *Educational Review* 55:2 (2003): 120.

⁵ Scott D. Harrison, "Boys on The Outer: Themes in Male Engagement with Music," *Thymos: Journal of Boyhood Studies* 4:1 (2010): 39.

⁶ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. (New York, NY: Routledge, 1990); Anne Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2000); Bronwyn Davies, "The Discursive Production of the Male/female Dualism in School Settings," *Oxford Review of Education* 15:3 (January 1989): 229–41. Davies argues that in Western society masculinity and femininity are seen as being opposites and that people are expected to conform to one or the other.

⁷ Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 33.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁹ Michael Warner, *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

¹⁰ Ellen Jordan, "Fighting Boys and Fantasy Play: The Construction of Masculinity in the Early Years of School," *Gender and Education* 7:1 (March 1995): 69–86, doi:10.1080/713668458.

¹¹ Michael W. Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004), 144.

¹² Riki Anne Wilchins, *Queer Theory, Gender Theory: An Instant Primer* (Los Angeles, CA: Alyson Books, 2004), 69. Wilchins also wrote: "While the last 30 years have seen new rights granted to women, gays, and transgender people, this new access and privilege has still left issues of primary gender—of masculinity and femininity—remarkably untouched. Gender stereotypes appear as pervasive, "natural," and inevitable as ever" (p. 97).

¹³ Kristopher Wells, Gayle Roberts, and Carol Allan, *Supporting Transgender and Transsexual Students in K-12 Schools: A Guide for Educators* (Ottawa, ON, CA: Canadian Teachers' Federation, 2012), 4. "Gender roles can change with time and may be different from one culture to another. For example, many Indigenous communities have rich histories of multiple gender traditions." This is an important point, because conductor-teachers should bear in mind that the gender strictures of our society are specific and not "normal" or pervasive as some may think.

¹⁴ Elizabeth J. Meyer, *Gender and Sexual Diversity in Schools: An Introduction* (Springer Science & Business Media, 2010), 54; Susan Basow, "The Hidden Curriculum: Gender in the Classroom," in *Praeger Guide to the Psychology of Gender*, ed. Michele Antoinette Paludi (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2004), 117–31.

¹⁵ Jeffrey J. Kuzmic, "Textbooks, Knowledge, and Masculinity: Examining Patriarchy from within," in *Masculinities at School*, ed. Nancy Lesko (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2000), 105.

¹⁶ Ellen Jordan, “Fighting Boys and Fantasy Play: The Construction of Masculinity in the Early Years of School.”

¹⁷ Hall, “Gender and Boys’ Singing in Early Childhood,” 16.

¹⁸ Michael S. Kimmel, *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men* (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 2008); Russell West, “Men, the Market and Models of Masculinity in Contemporary Culture: Introduction,” *Subverting Masculinity: Hegemonic and Alternative Versions of Masculinity in Contemporary Culture* (Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Rodopi, 2000), 7-26; Victor J. Seidler, *Young Men and Masculinities: Global Cultures and Intimate Lives* (London, UK: Zed Books, 2006); Kaja Silverman, *Male Subjectivity at the Margins* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1992).

¹⁹ Ronald L. Jackson II and Jamie E. Moshin, *Communicating Marginalized Masculinities: Identity Politics in TV, Film, and New Media* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2012), 3.

²⁰ Frank et al., “A Tangle of Trouble,” 125.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 125.

²² Adam Adler and Scott Harrison, “Swinging Back the Gender Pendulum: Addressing Boys’ Needs in Music Education Research and Practice,” in *Research to Practice: A Biennial Series: Questioning the Music Education Paradigm*, ed. L. Bartel, (Toronto, ON, Canadian Music Educators Association, 2004), 283.

²³ Adler and Harrison, “Swinging Back the Gender Pendulum.”

²⁴ “National School Climate Survey (PDF).” GLSEN. <http://glsen.org/nscs>, p. xiv. Accessed 2 July 2014.

²⁵ Scott D. Harrison, “Engaging Boys: Overcoming Stereotypes - Another Look at the Missing Males in Vocal Programs,” *Choral Journal* 45:2 (September 2004): 24–29.

²⁶ Frank Abrahams, “Changing Voices—Voices of Change: Young Men in Middle School Choirs,” in *Perspectives on Males and Singing*, ed. Scott D. Harrison, Graham F. Welch, and Adam Adler (Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Springer Netherlands, 2012): 82.

²⁷ Peter Weber, “Confused by All the New Facebook Genders? Here’s What They Mean,” *Slate*, 21 February-2014,

http://www.slate.com/blogs/lexicon_valley/2014/02/21/gender_facebook_now_has_56_categories_to_choose_from_including_cisgender.html (accessed 26 April 2014).

²⁸ Wells, Roberts, and Allan, *Supporting Transgender and Transsexual Students in K-12 Schools*, 14.

²⁹ Kathleen E. Rands, “Considering Transgender People in Education: A Gender-Complex Approach,” *Journal of Teacher Education* 60:4 (2009): 419–31, doi:10.1177/0022487109341475; Jacob Berglin, “‘I Could Sing Tenor’: Options, Outcomes, and Perceptions of a Transgender Student in a High School Choral Music Program” (Poster Presentation, CIC Music Education Conference, University Park, PA, 10 October 2014); Susan Kuklin, *Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak out* (Somerville, MA: Candlewick, 2014); J. Michele Edwards, “Transgender Choral Voices” (Feminist Theory & Music 10: Improvising and Galvanizing, Greensboro, NC, 2009); Paul Caldwell and Joshua Palkki, “Creating Safe Space: LGBTQ Singers in the Choral Classroom” (American Choral Directors Association National Conference, Salt Lake City, UT, 2015).

³⁰ Louis Bergonzi, “Sexual Orientation and Music Education: Continuing a Tradition,” *Music Educators Journal* 96:2 (December 2009): 21–25, doi:10.1177/0027432109350929.

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- ³³ See Scott D. Harrison, "A Perennial Problem in Gendered Participation in Music: What's Happening to the Boys?," *British Journal of Music Education* 24:3 (2007): 267–80.
- ³⁴ Harrison, "Boys on The Outer," 39.
- ³⁵ Randi Sue Carp, "Single Gender Choral Ensembles, Attitudes and Practices: A Survey of Southern California High School Choir Directors" (DMA dissertation, University of Southern California, 2004); Michael D. Zemek, "Where's the Evidence? Finding Support for Separating Middle and Junior High School Choirs by Gender," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 29:1 (November 1, 2010): 15–21, doi:10.1177/8755123310378451; Nancy Smirl Jorgensen and Catherine Pfeiler, "Successful Single-Sex Offerings in the Choral Department," *Music Educators Journal* 94:5 (2008):, 36–40.
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- ³⁷ Andrea L. Ramsey, "Swagger, Gentlemanliness, and Brotherhood: Explorations of Lived Experiences in a High School Men's Chorus" (PhD dissertation, Michigan State University, 2013).
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, 172.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, 205.
- ⁴⁰ Julia Eklund Koza, "Big Boys Don't Cry (or Sing): Gender, Misogyny, and Homophobia in College Choral Methods Texts," *The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning* 4–5:4–1 (1993): 48.
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- ⁴² Koza, "The 'Missing Males' and Other Gender Issues in Music Education."
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- ⁴⁴ Harrison, "A Perennial Problem in Gendered Participation in Music"; Harrison, "Boys on The Outer."
- ⁴⁵ Kenneth Elpus, "National Estimates of Male and Female Enrolment in American High School Choirs, Bands and Orchestras," *Music Education Research* 17:1 (2015): 88–102.
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- ⁴⁸ Harrison, "Boys on The Outer," 49–50.
- ⁴⁹ Jacob Bernstein, "The Growing Transgender Presence in Pop Culture," *The New York Times*, 12 March 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/13/fashion/the-growing-transgender-presence-in-pop-culture.html> (accessed 17 November 2014); Monica Hesse, "When No Gender Fits: A Quest to Be Seen as Just a Person," *The Washington Post*, 20 September 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/when-no-gender-fits-a-quest-to-be-seen-as-just-a-person/2014/09/20/1ab21e6e-2c7b-11e4-994d-202962a9150c_story.html (accessed 25 September 2014).
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- ⁵² Bergonzi, "Sexual Orientation and Music Education: Continuing a Tradition."
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- ⁵⁴ Andrea L. Ramsey, "Middle School R & S Session: Composers Roundtable" (presented at the American Choral Directors Association National Conference, Dallas, TX, 13 March 2013).
- ⁵⁵ Patricia O'Toole, "A Missing Chapter from Choral Methods Books: How Choirs Neglect Girls," *Choral Journal* 39:5 (1998): 9–32.
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- ⁵⁸ Martin Ashley, "Should I Be Singing This, and If So, How High?: Theoretical Approaches to Boyhood and Masculinity," in *Applying Theory to Educational Research: An Introductory Approach with Case Studies*, ed. Jeff Adams, Matt Cochrane, and Linda Donne (Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons, 2012), 145–55.
- ⁵⁹ Referring to and use of professional recordings by groups like the King's Singers and Chanticleer, male choruses that sing SATB repertoire, can be helpful in demonstrating to students that vocal range and gender and not inextricably linked.
- ⁶⁰ Demorest, "Encouraging Male Participation in Chorus," 41.
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