

EXAMINING CULTURAL APPROPRIATION IN THE PREPARATION AND PERFORMANCE OF CHORAL MUSIC

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SETTING THE FRAMEWORK

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- Think about the demographics of your choir. Consider age ranges, gender identities, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, etc.
- Think about what styles of music your choir sings. What styles are considered "standard" for your ensemble? What styles are considered "non-standard?"

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- Have you had a situation where your choir director or choir members were reluctant to perform a piece of culturally specific music?

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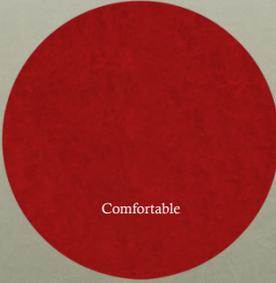
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- Have you ever performed a piece of culturally specific music and gotten negative feedback?
- Have you ever witnessed a choir other than your own perform a piece of culturally specific music and thought to yourself, "They should not have done that!"

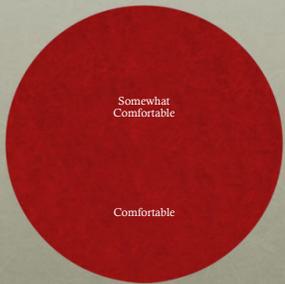
THE "INSIDER" VS. THE "OUTSIDER"

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Comfortable

THE "INSIDER" VS. THE "OUTSIDER"



Somewhat Comfortable

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THE "INSIDER" VS. THE "OUTSIDER"



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- “Members of one culture (outsiders) take for their own, or for their own use, items produced by a member or members of another culture (insiders)” (Young, 2008).
- “...the use of one’s culture’s symbols, artifacts, genres, rituals, or technologies by members of another culture—regardless of intent, ethics, function or outcome” (Rogers, 2006)

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- “is also inescapably intertwined with cultural politics” (Rogers, 2006)
- “is shaped by, and in turn shape[s], the social economic, and political contexts in which they occur” (Rogers, 2006)

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 - Object Appropriation

SUBJECT APPROPRIATION

- Occurs when an outsider represents members or aspects of another culture. This sort of appropriation would occur when an outsider makes the culture or lives of insiders the subject of a painting, story, film, or other work of art.

CONTENT APPROPRIATION

- Occurs when an artist uses the cultural products of another culture in the production of his or her own art...Musicians who perform the songs of a culture that is not their own have engaged in content appropriation. Subcategories include *style appropriation* and *motif appropriation*.

OBJECT APPROPRIATION

- Occurs when the possession of a tangible object (such as a sculpture) is transferred from members of the culture that produced it to the possession of outsiders. An example would be the transfer of artifacts from minority aboriginal cultures to public and private collections.

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- If the act of cultural appropriation is “inescapable,” then how do we navigate the arts without being offensive or harmful?
- Is there a such thing as “acceptable cultural appropriation?”

WHAT IS “ACCEPTABLE?”

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- Cultural Exchange

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- Cultural Appreciation

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- Cultural Exchange
- Cultural Appreciation
- Cultural Consumption

CULTURAL EXCHANGE

- “Cultural exchange” is defined by Rogers (2006) as “the reciprocal exchange of symbols, artifacts, rituals, genres, and/or technologies between cultures with roughly equal levels of power.”

CULTURAL APPRECIATION

- “Cultural appreciation” is when “elements of a culture are used while honoring the source they came from. It is important to note that appreciation involves respect and value.” (Fragoso, 2016)

CULTURAL CONSUMPTION

- This is a term the presenter (Dilworth 2018) is using to define instances in which we harmlessly (and sometimes unknowingly) interact with culture outside of our own. Such examples include watching a film, listening to music, eating food.

OBJECTIONABLE CULTURAL APPROPRIATION

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- Cultural Appropriation as Profound Offense

OBJECTIONABLE CULTURAL APPROPRIATION

- Cultural Appropriation as Theft
 - “Outsiders taking (without proper permission) property that belongs to insiders” (Young, 2008)
- Cultural Appropriation as Assault
 - Causing harm to a culture or members of a culture, and in some cases threaten the viability of a culture (Young)
- Cultural Appropriation as Profound Offense
 - Offense to one’s moral sensibilities (Young)

EXPLORING CULTURE IN CHORAL MUSIC

- “Make sure you know the history and context of the music you sing and the elements you mix in it” (Cho, 2015)
- “If you are uncertain about the performance practice for a piece, or question if it is appropriate for you to perform, ask the community from which it comes for their opinion?” (Cho, 2015)
- “Don’t use culture as a gimmick” (Cho, 2015)

EXPLORING CULTURE IN CHORAL MUSIC

- “Recognize and acknowledge your relative privilege and realize that your group may have a greater responsibility to show respect when borrowing elements of a less powerful culture than they have when exploring yours” (Cho, 2015)
- “Make a point to support the cultural communities from which you borrow when they need support” (Cho, 2015)
- Commit to performing the music well (or as well as you can” (Cho, 2015)

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- Examine your intentions
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- Be honest, trustworthy, and vulnerable
- “Handel, with care”

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