

AN EVALUATION OF THE SUMMER CHORAL WORKSHOP
IN ADULT EDUCATION
IN NORTHEASTERN UNITED STATES

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by
Charlotte B. Barnhart
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Because of the abundance of leisure time today, adult education, a relatively new field, has become an important facet of our society.

From adult education, various adult workshops have arisen throughout the United States in many different areas of study.

The purpose of this study is twofold: (1) to examine the parallel between leisure time available today and the need for adult education, and as a result to tell how to better organize choral workshops in the New Milford area, and (2) to give the differences between workshops and adult education.

The roots of adult education in the United States extend back to the New England town meeting of the seventeenth century.

In actuality, adult education dates back to the establishment of farmers' and merchants' institutes in England and the United States in the early nineteenth century as concomitants of the Industrial Revolution.

Religious groups in rural United States led in the encouragement of adult education. The Chautauqua Movement of the 1870's was one such venture which sought to improve human understanding through reading and discussion.

The Smith-Lever Act in 1914 formed the first real

milestone in the twentieth century in this country of the new adult education movement.

The adult education movement takes many forms. Included in its scope are activities ranging from those designed to overcome inadequacies in childhood education, to those which provide citizenship education and offer vocational training, to those undertaken for purely cultural enhancement.

The quality of the use of leisure time is extremely important to the quality of our culture. Music was cultivated for the sake of pleasure. One of its greatest attributes was that it provided for a rewarding use of leisure time.

Industry and educators today are concerned for the need for education for leisure. The continuing problem has been the need for a different attitude toward uses of time away from the job so that people can use that time in a way satisfying to themselves, and for the community. Organized labor has contributed support for the arts to help make this leisure time a rewarding experience.

The New Milford Choral Workshop was organized to fill a need expressed by area citizens. This was a lack of background in rudiments of music which they felt would improve their participation in choirs and other choral groups.

In three evenings of concentrated work, sixty-five conferees proved by their responses that it was a worthwhile endeavor, and one which should be continued.

It was evident that people wanted to learn, that there

was a real need in their lives for this use of leisure time. There is music in everyone. It is up to the music educator to see that this potential for enjoyment and participation is allowed to become reality.