

In This Issue...

Bullying:

A Conflict Management Issue for Teachers, Parents and Child Care-Givers

Chodzinski's and Burke's aim of this article is to inform and increase the reader's awareness of a common, serious problem, occurring in and around schools – bullying. The article provides information that will help those involved in school life recognize the characteristics of a bully, become aware of the symptoms of bullied victims and will provide a basis from which care givers can understand and implement workable intervention strategies.

Raymond T. Chodzinski
and Fran Burke 1

Opera:

A Natural Component of Italian Courses

Opera, an important part of Italian culture, is an ideal topic of study in Italian classes. This article presents ideas for a special unit about opera that can be used in high school or college Italian courses. While the discussion focuses on opera in Italian, suggestions for exposing students of other languages to opera are also offered.

Keith Mason 13

Bullying: A Conflict Management Issue for Teachers, Parents and Child Care-Givers

Raymond T. Chodzinski
and Fran Burke

Bullying is a form of violence that is prevalent in most schools. For years it has been an accepted form of what might be termed "mild violence". Often it transcends condemnation and consequence. Unfortunately, it has been observed that teachers and parents have suggested that bullying is simply a stage that children go through. Many of us learned to accept that there are bullies and that there will always be bullies. What we need to pass on, however, is that while bullies may be a fact of life, we know that there need not be victims.

If you punish a child for being naughty, and reward him for being good, he will do right merely for the sake of the reward; and when he goes out into the world and finds that goodness is not always rewarded, nor wickedness always punished, he will grow into a man who only thinks about how he may get on in the world, and does right or wrong according as he finds it of advantage to himself.

Emmanuel Kant

The recent rise in reported rates of violence in young people has prompted school boards in Canada and throughout the world to reconsider their policies on addressing violence in schools. This rise has been attributed, in part, to an increase in awareness of violence in schools and to the need to address its outcomes more directly. It is well known that schools now report violent acts more often and tend to involve

police in episodes that might formerly have been left for in-house consideration. The most recent wave of seemingly unprovoked violent acts against students and teachers in schools and elsewhere raises serious questions as to the safety and sanctuary of children in school and on the street. Recently a group of bullies attacked a young Vancouver girl, resulting in her tragic death. The seemingly unpredictable and unrelated shootings recently committed in the U.S. by young boys causing the deaths of several school children and teachers as well as numerous injuries have generated alarm and fear in the hearts of parents and child caregivers. Recent headlines report that a fifteen-year-old girl was hung from a tree while others looked on

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Mosaic

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Bullying

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simply because she was going to tell an adult about an impending group misadventure. In Welland, a kindergarten child was bitten and slapped on a school bus by an older child. A Halton area teacher interviewed for this article reported that a child in Grade 2 was beaten up by a group of Grade 4 students because he would not give up his Spice Girls' postcards. Too familiar are headlines that describe gangs of adolescent and even younger, boys and girls harassing and intimidating seniors and children on the streets and in the malls. Even more threatening is the increase in violent child-related deaths as a result of gang disputes and random shootings. The alarming increase in reported abuse and violence against teachers and other adults in authority is unparalleled.

Carey (1998) reporting on recently released statistics about violence and crime in large Canadian centres explains that juvenile crime in Toronto was down 1.4 per cent from 1996. However it is also noteworthy that youth crime has more than doubled in the past decade. The report indicates that according to Stats Canada violence by juvenile females has increased twice as fast as for male offenders of the same group. Albeit male youth violence outstrips female violence by a 3 to 1 ratio. While one cannot argue a direct link between bullying and extreme episodes of violence, it is known that bullying is a serious form of violence that occurs repeatedly in our homes, our schools and our communities, and can lead to tragic outcomes. It is not the intent of this paper to discuss bullying within the context of gender, language, racial, ethnic or culturally motivated behaviours. It must be acknowledged that bullying in many cases involves misperceptions and misconceptions about individuals and groups and that

The language graduate who never reads a professional journal and participates only minimally, if at all, in professional meetings, will stagnate. There is an onus on the profession in all areas to upgrade and keep abreast of current developments in the field.
— Peter Heffernan

often this is the basis for extreme bullying. While to some, bullying may not be perceived as a serious or dangerous threat, we caution that all too often bullies who are unchecked as a child grow up to be bullies as an adult.

For the purposes of this discussion bullying is described in terms of transgressions that may be attributable to matters relating to a personal need to usurp power over someone else, express anger or rage, right a perceived injustice, or prove a point to gain a hollow victory and achieve misdirected self-esteem. In many cases bullying is best described as plain "bad form" and "ill directed antagonistic behaviour" which may often have no apparent direct antecedent. While the violent acts mentioned earlier are not bullying as such, bullying is an insidious and pervasive form of violence that according to many, may in some instances, if not checked, be the platform on which more serious acts of violence are based.

Child-initiated violence against peers, teachers, parents and authority is increasing. Recent extreme episodes of child violence seem incomprehensible and for the most part unpredictable.

Teachers are all too familiar with the notion of zero-tolerance policies to deal with violent students. They support stricter enforcement and employ the variety of personal and group management strategies advocated by the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training. Workshops, professional development days, and curriculum kits draw attention to school violence policies. Policies that affect the conduct of school personnel and visitors, codes of conduct for teachers and students, support systems for victims, counselling and rehabilitation strategies for aggressors and offenders rate high on school meeting agendas. Better and more rapid reporting mechanisms are in place. Responsibility

and accountability for violent acts and bullying have become highly prioritized school discipline policy goals. Recent attempts to amend Canada's *Young Offenders Act* in ways that would enable more stringent enforcement and thus accountability of young transgressors have been met with high public approval. Still, the fact remains that violence in schools continues to be a high priority for teachers and parents. Educators continue to monitor student behaviour and try to implement the variety of strategies they have learned. Unfortunately, many will say that it is just not working. Teachers are tired; many are afraid to try to cope with disruption in the classroom, on the playground and in and around the school. When teachers share concerns about teaching, one of the main issues continues to be an awareness that there are more children of all ages who show an increased lack of self-discipline, lack of personal responsibility and general disregard for authority and structure. Many teachers state that simply getting children to stay on task requires a level of energy and ingenuity that takes away from the time available for instruction, sharing, and other appropriate school activities. Aside from the many socio-economic conditions that affect school life, overcrowding, with more students and fewer teachers, less adult support and an ever-changing core program, simply exacerbates the situation.

Talk and Walk

There is probably not a school team anywhere that does not agree with the principle that the talk and walk goals of every school should be creating a learning environment in which every child enjoys the right to learn and play without fear of physical or verbal violence and abuse. Schools should be places of kindness and hospitality. They should be communities of peace, sharing, and cooperative engagement. While "might is right" is often upheld as an ideal appropriate to hockey and the World Wrestling Federation, it is

not the guiding principle that schools encourage or uphold. As the popularity of video games and movies that promote winning in terms of the number of bloody kills increases, and as reported violence in homes and on the streets seems to be getting worse, educators find the challenge of establishing the foundation for cooperative and collaborative school life ever more difficult. It seems that today, more than ever, the value of sharing and understanding of each other's life predicament requires serious attention as a part of the school curriculum and perhaps more importantly as a priority parenting responsibility. School committees that attempt to deal with "Violence in Schools" and the subsequent professional development workshops which inevitably follow, more often than not tend to address the more overt forms of violence and anti social behaviour that affects an individual's right to exist within a peaceful environment.

It is important to reiterate that parents should support teachers in their efforts to discipline children. Even more importantly, all parents must take primary responsibility for teaching children how to behave and how to conduct themselves within the context of societal constructs.

This paper addresses the simple proposition that bullying is a common form of violence in schools and in society at large and that teachers and parents need tools to assist them in helping students to work out conflicts in a safe and non-injurious manner. Obviously, this is not a new concept. For as long as children have been going to school, both children and teachers have had to deal with bullies in the playground and to and from school. So why the fuss? The fact is that bullying has become a major problem in schools. Research has linked bullying to more aggress-

sive forms of violence later in life. (Burke 1997) Bullying is more frequent and it is more serious. Teachers argue that children who bully disrupt their classrooms, cause trauma for other children, and in some instances create high levels of stress for victimized teachers. Unfortunately, bullying will not be stopped overnight. This paper offers some insights and strategies, but we must admit that society may have to change drastically in terms of understanding that it is society's responsibility to instruct children in non-violent behaviour and to enforce codes of conduct in a manner that befits a just society. It is important to reiterate that parents should support teachers in their efforts to discipline children. Even more importantly, all parents must take primary responsibility for teaching children how to behave and how to conduct themselves within the context of societal constructs.

What is bullying?

A major research project by Olweus (1993) exposed school age bullying for what it is: peer aggression. He attempted to identify children who were bullies and victims and to determine the mechanisms that underlie bullying and victimization. This much quoted Norwegian study focused on the extent to which bullying (defined as exposure to repeated negative actions over time on the part of one or more other students, intended to harm the victim) formed the basis for identifying certain characteristics (p.9). These actions were identified as being of two distinct types. The first included direct physical aggression and verbal aggression, while the second component included acts of social isolation, exclusion, and intimidation. Thus, pushing, shoving, kicking, hitting, mocking, teasing, screaming and yelling would be considered Type I violence acts of bullying. Gossiping, spreading rumours, humiliation, excluding, threatening or cajoling and various forms of harassment would fall into the Type II cate-

gory. Stein (1995) makes the case that harassment of any form is bullying. The point is well made that the antecedents of peer sexual harassment are deeply rooted in the bullying mentality and "that behaviours children learn, practise and experience begin at a very young age." (p.149)

Bullying is linked to truancy, emotional stress, perceived physical and psychological safety, humiliation, shame and feelings of intense anger and fear.

[...]

Victims studied voiced real fear, and often shared thoughts of depression and suicide.

Other studies, Garrity, Jens, Porter, Sager and Short (1994) defined bullying as negative behaviour that include three social interactional features:

1. repetitive negative actions targeted at a specific victim,
2. direct confrontation caused by a perpetrated imbalance of power, and
3. effective manipulation of emotional responses such as fear, inadequacy etc..

Studies by Ziegler and Rosenstein-Manner (1991), Pepler, Craig, Ziegler and Charach (1993), Hoover and Hazler (1991) and Rofes (1992) show that bullying is a universal transgression with similar outcomes and effects. What's more, it would seem that there is a consistent level of bullying that can be interpreted in statistical frequencies as high as one in five students. Burke (1998) surveyed the literature and found that as many as 15 to 20% of all students are involved as either a victim or a bully. Research from Scandinavia, England, the United States, Australia, Japan and Canada suggests that frequencies of bullying behaviour occur once every seven minutes. Bullying in schools has been shown to be prevalent as early as Kindergarten, and continues well

on into the post secondary school experience. Bullying is linked to truancy, emotional stress, perceived physical and psychological safety, humiliation, shame and feelings of intense anger and fear. Besage (1989) and Olweus (1993) found bullied victims often felt trapped in a situation without a successful way out. Victims studied voiced real fear, and often shared thoughts of depression and suicide.

Who are the bullies?

Bullies have been characterized in a variety of ways, but there are some consistent patterns. Previously-mentioned studies show bullies to be individuals whose behaviour is difficult to change, in that they typically demonstrate aggressive tendencies towards others at an early age. They are thought to have unwarranted high levels of esteem, often attributed to their success in maintaining power over perceived weaker individuals. They rarely if ever show signs of guilt or shame, embarrassment, or empathy for others. Marni and Spear (1991) explain they are less tolerant and more irresponsible with respect to socially accepted forms of behaviour. Studies conducted by Olweus (1993) and Smith and Sharp (1994) show that bullies were often good communicators, had fast verbal responses, were able to talk their way out of trouble and were quick witted, with excuses and explanations for anti social behaviour. "It is always the other guy" (Chodzinski, 1995).

Garrity *et al* (1994) reported that although boys and girls appear to bully in the same degree, the type of aggressive behaviour may vary. Harassment in any form is considered bullying (Stein, 1995). Studies reported here show that physical strength and size are strong correlates of bullying behaviour. While boys tend frequently to use direct bullying tactics (that is, those behaviours that are easy to see), girls tend to use indirect bullying tactics such as social alienation, intimidation, malicious gossip, note writing and

peer manipulation. Notwithstanding the general descriptions provided in the research, one must state the obvious: that boys and girls are capable of bullying in any form. Both genders use extortion as a common form of bullying (Burke 1998). According to consistent data found in her search of the literature, students holding or displaying consistent negative attitudes towards authority, adults, structure, parents, and school can be attracted to bullying behaviour.

While boys tend frequently to use direct bullying tactics (that is, those behaviours that are easy to see), girls tend to use indirect bullying tactics such as social alienation, intimidation, malicious gossip, note writing and peer manipulation.

The Olweus (1993) and Besage (1989) studies showed that with bullies there is a strong link between levels of home supervision, the degree of social freedom and lack of accountability, lack of explicit love and affection, poor discipline and lax parental control. Batsche and Knoff (1994) go so far as to suggest that bullying is inter-generational, and that a bully at school well might be a victim at home. In this study, bullies reported coming from homes where parents practised authoritarian forms of discipline (often physical) and were described as hostile, permissive, inconsistent, vindictive and controlling. Samenow (1989) stated that research pertinent to his study of children and adolescents with aggressive personality and antisocial tendencies leads to a conclusion that "aggression at age eight is the best predictor of aggression at age nineteen, irrespective of IQ, social class, or parents' aggressiveness" (p.35). Research clearly shows a trend of bullying behaviour leading to eventual criminal conviction. The American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and

Local nursery school scene of protest

Child who slapped and bit a girl should be suspended: girl's family

WELLAND/Tribune Staff

A city mother frustrated with staff at her daughter's nursery school took her message to the streets yesterday.

Tammy Culliton says her four-year-old daughter Holly was slapped and bitten on the arm by another child on the bus at Rainbows Nursery School last week.

She believes the child has been bullying others, the staff at the school so he realizes violence is not acceptable.

Short of doing that with one of the children, she says she will do it with him while he's at school.

Culliton, her husband and about 30 placard carriers held an information outside the Kent Street school, which is in St. Luther's Church.

Tammy Culliton says she will keep up the heat until the school does.

Holly—the Cullitons' first child—just started nursery school

weeks ago.

is supposed to prepare for school. She is afraid of

Culliton's complaint is the only one FACS has received about Rainbows End.

Godfrey says the agency has a responsibility to all the other parents at the school up

Two teens charged with torturing girl for snitching

CLEARFIELD, Pa./Associated Press

A 15-year-old girl was strung up from a tree and a friend was

West R.

the Susquehanna

Boy, 15, shoots self in front of girlfriend

'Normal, ordinary kid' orders girlfriend off bus and shoots self in head

ONALASKA, Wash./Associated Press

A 15-year-old boy described as "a normal, ordinary kid" ordered his girlfriend off a school bus at gun-

had a nine-millimetre semi-automatic pistol in his hand when he boarded the bus shortly before 8 a.m. and demanded the girl get off with him.

The driver pleaded with the girl to remain on the bus, Borden said, screaming, "Don't go! Don't go!"

When the girl got off, the driver immediately notified school officials and the girl's parents.

The boy and girl went to the boy's

lanning to run got angry at racked out and then to dis- their plans. group with Kim- by putting the around 80- it. At istry she was es. round open clear. er on cry. e rain- she about," ked her the kids

Youth (1993) argues persuasively that the single most prevalent predictor of a child's involvement in violence is a history of previous violence, including having been a victim of abuse. Stein (1995) argues that harassment, in any form, is a direct form of bullying. "Often it happens while many people watch." As others have argued, repeated non-condemnation over time solidifies its place as an acceptable part of the social norm. Zeigler and Rosenstein-Manner (1991) cited in Ross (1998) have shown that bullying in schools occurs most frequently in the following locations. The school yard 81%, hallways 57%, classrooms 50%, lunchrooms 37%, washrooms 28%, on the way to school 27% and on the way from school 35%.

Possible characteristics of a bully

A bully:

- has a need to demonstrate or confirm his/her power over others
- is classified as a type of manipulator
- exaggerates his/her aggression, cruelty and unkindness

- controls by implied threats
- victimizes other people, capitalizing on their powerlessness and apparently gaining gratification by exercising gratuitous control over them.
- is very quick to anger and to use force
- displays a positive attitude toward violence
- shows little empathy for his/her victim
- adopts antisocial ways of achieving her/his/their ends (peer respect or material goods) because such tactics have proven effective in the world in which they live
- is not anxious and insecure, but has a positive (often unrealistic) self-image that reflects a strong need to dominate with power and threat
- is not a loner, but almost always has a small network of peers who encourage, admire, and model her/his bullying behaviour
- tends to be a least average or slightly below average academically
- comes in all sizes, and can even intimidate victims who are

physically larger if there is an imbalance of power

- lacks compassion for her/his victims, and feels justified in her/his actions

Marini (1997) makes the point that in addition to the characteristics summarized above bullies tend to demonstrate a general lack of empathy and social skills essential to the development of functional social relationships. Marni and Spear 1997 capture the essence of current research on characteristics with seven distinguishing profiles. These include: (a) power differentials between bullies and victims, (b) repeated aggressive acts over time, (c) use of imitation to increase anxiety and fear, (d) predatory type acts of violence and aggression, (e) ritualistic patterns of dominance, (f) focused unprovoked assaults and intimidation, (g) chronic receptiveness of bullying acts over long duration.

The debate as to whether bullies are made as a result of environment or bred as a result of genetic coding will continue. The facts as expressed in the research tend to support the notion that bullies are antisocial, exploitative and often violent individuals who may incorporate more or less of any of the vast spectrum of characteristics and social-environmental presses that have been identified with bullies. The universal finding is that for whatever reason, bullies tend to be highly aggressive individuals who try to exploit others for their own gratification. The leap from bullying type, antisocial behaviour to more aggressive violent acts against others is not a hard one to envision. It leads one to the common sense speculation that early identification and intervention should be primary proactive goals on the agenda for parents, educators and community caregivers.

Who are the victims?

A paper on bullying as it relates to school life would not be complete without reference to two important components of the equation, victims and peer pressure. Victims

of bullying, sad to say, may be the reason why bullying is so successful. Studies referenced previously found that victims were often submissive, insecure, anxious and sensitive. According to studies, these traits provide a breeding ground for bullying behaviour and often unwittingly encourage aggressive assault. This is because the outward reactive signs to bullying such as crying, whimpering, helpless gestures, and withdrawal validated the behaviour and encouraged more of it. This description is not to be construed as blaming the victim; rather it demonstrates that behaviours perceived as weakness by the bully actually encourage further provocation. Innocence often begets ill will (Chodzinski 1998).

Bullies tend to be highly aggressive individuals who try to exploit others for their own gratification.

Olweus (1993) described a personality pattern of anxiousness and physical weakness as prime pickings for the bully. Unfortunately, it was found that parents, teachers and adult caregivers were, more often than not, less likely to be supportive of these so-called anxious children. Findings of this study suggest that bullied individuals left to fend for themselves became accepting of being bullied. Some subjects in Besag's study even came to believe they deserved to be bullied. Not surprising is the fact that bullied individuals often were students described as less popular, less social, and less attractive. Fear of reprisal and repeated violence tend to silence victims. Often they will stay away from school or pretend to be ill. What is worse, they may succumb to blackmail and/or submit to doing a bully's bidding for fear of exposure as a victim. The effects of bullying are often long term and provide a framework on which to build and validate negative perceptions of self.

Possible characteristics of a victim

The passive victim

- is lonely and abandoned
- is often less-than-average in physical strength (males)
- commonly reacts by crying (at least in the lower grades) and withdrawal
- does not cause bullying due to provocation
- usually has a negative attitude towards violence and violent means
- is likely to have difficulty in asserting her/himself in a peer group
- is often anxious and insecure
- is negative about her/himself as a result of repeated harassment
- is usually chosen to be picked on less because of looking different and more because of isolation and personality type
- often relates better to adults (parents, teachers) than to peers

The provocative victim

- is both anxious and aggressive
- often has problems concentrating
- can behave in ways that cause irritation and tension around him/her
- often provokes many students, thus causing negative reaction from a large part of, or even the entire class.

The surrogate victim

- is the witness of victimization and fears the spread of the attack on her/himself

The vicarious victim

- is the bystander, witness or other who perceives her/his vulnerability, fears the same fear as the victim, dreads the victim's dread, but frequently silences the impulse to speak out in support

Peer Involvement

Studies show that it is important to understand the social context of bullying and to what extent social

factors play a role in the occurrence and frequency of bullying behaviour. Olweus (1993, 1994) explains this phenomenon in terms of four social behaviour factors:

- (a) social contagion
- (b) weakening of control or inhibition against aggressive tendencies;
- (c) decreased sense of individual responsibility;
- (d) perception of the victim.

One can easily discern that each of these conditions, if exacerbated, could lend itself to an increase in bullying behaviour. In the case of social contagion, peers are said to witness and mimic bullies by behaving more aggressively themselves. Weakening of inhibition of aggressive tendencies revealed that students exposed to bullying behaviour witnessed that bullying was rarely punished and that the bully somehow gained personal advocacy, validation and power without condemnation. This led to increased antisocial behaviour on the part of the witness. A decreased sense of individual responsibility is displayed in the lack of regard for the victim and an obvious lack of guilt or remorse shown by the bully. Thus perception of the victim as a victim becomes less likely. It was shown that students who were exposed to repeated bullying of other children, tended to jump on the bandwagon so to speak and to literally condemn the victim as being a worthless individual who almost begged to be beaten up (Burke 1998).

Pepler and Craig (1995) attempted to validate the Olweus findings in a study that comprised 164 children ages 6-12 in a large urban city in a middle class area. It was found that 21 per cent had been observed as bullies, 33 per cent as victims and 46 per cent as bully victims. Results showed that peers were involved in some form of informal cooperation in more than 85 per cent of the incidents. It was reported that in most episodes peers were seen to be reinforcing the bullying even though

30% were documented as taking pleasure in the act. While on direct questioning it was found that children/peers tended to say they did not enjoy watching bullying nor did they think they would participate, it was observed that most in fact participated in some way in the majority of bullying acts as few as 11% of peers intervened to stop the bullying activity.

A victim will frequently *not* tell he/she is being bullied because he/she:

- fears reprisals
- suffers shame, degradation and humiliation
- is unable to perceive how to go about changing the same situation due to low self-esteem and feelings of helplessness
- is unwilling to publicize her/his unpopularity
- has an inability to explain due to emotional or intellectual constraints; is perhaps too confused, afraid, or upset
- feels that seeking help will confirm the taunts of being incompetent, a baby or stupid and so he/she fears the loss of respect from parents and staff due to her/his inability to cope
- believes the bully will claim that it is only a game
- may feel this is her/his lot in life, especially if he/she has little self-esteem
- has no confidence in an adult's ability to help

Warning signs of victimization

The victim may:

- wish to change routines, routes to school, school bus
- be late for school, hang back, stay behind late at school
- have nervous tics
- have nightmares
- flinch, be jumpy, be forgetful, suffer from distractibility
- be underachieving
- 'mislay' books, equipment, belongings
- demand extra money
- refuse to go to school

- experience bed-wetting
- lack confidence, withdraw from social activities
- suffer from psychosomatic illnesses, non-specific pains, headaches, and stomach upset
- bite her/his nails
- experience a personality change – may be snappy, withdrawn, tired, show indications of not sleeping, weepiness, outbursts of crying, loss of appetite
- have torn and damaged clothing and belongings
- walk in her/his sleep
- have bruises and cuts
- fear the dark, sudden noises, physical contact with others

Prevention

The research is clear that intervention is required. Common sense dictates that it is adult caregivers who must model and teach youngsters about proactive intervention strategies. While peer mediation may appear as a panacea for the interventionist who desires direct involvement on the part of the participants in the bullying scenario, there are other interventions that may be more desirable and productive and need to be included. That is to say that adults must be active and responsible in dealing with the causes, episodes and outcomes of bullying behaviour. Sometimes drastic interventions are required. Suspension may sound like a plausible remediation. However, for the bully it is often simply achieving the goal that was intended. In retrospect, perhaps more time in school for the bully, with constant supervision and added work responsibilities, in addition to counselling, may seem more appropriate. Unfortunately, time to supervise and counsel means more staff and that, in itself, is one of the contributing problems.

Olweus (1993) implemented an intervention program based on his research findings. Strategies were established based on several important aspects of his proactive approach. The basic premise was that there was increased awareness and involvement by all team members

and that implementation of strategic measures be at the classroom and school levels. These measures include:

- (a) school-wide intervention measures such as school conferences and professional development;
- (b) increased parent contact and involvement;
- (c) regular class meetings and awareness activities;
- (d) implementation of cooperative learning strategies as a primary instructional focus;
- (e) class meetings which involve parents and community caregivers as well as children and teachers.

Teachers know that students need to know they are respected, cared for, and wanted.

Notwithstanding other interventions, the study points out what may seem to many all too obvious. Clear rules about bullying behaviour must be discussed and displayed. Ramifications for intentional aggressive behaviour should be consistently enforced and appropriate consequences applied. Peer mediation should be used as a counselling intervention. Olweus encourages school officials to consider the notion that repeat offenders should be moved to another school and that parents of the offender be coached as to how to handle transgressors. This Norwegian landmark study showed that for this intervention program, reported or observed bullying was decreased by half the number of cases reported prior to the start of the study. The reduction in bullying behaviour was equal for both boys and girls. Furthermore it was found that antisocial behaviours such as vandalism, fighting, pilfering, drunkenness and truancy were markedly reduced and social climate (defined as discipline, social interactions and relationships) improved as did positive attitudes to work and school.

Kauffman's et. al (1993) study broadens the vision provided by Olweus and others by suggesting that interventions must be implemented not only at school and classroom levels but also at a society level. The plan for schools, school boards and community include:

- establishing consequences for aggression and teaching children non-aggressive response to problems
- stopping aggression early before it endangers others, by restricting access to the instruments of aggression
- restraint and reform of public displays of violence and aggression
- interventions designed to change life experiences that predicate aggression
- attractive and focused educational and instructional opportunities for school involvement.

Aggressive youngsters need to learn that there are other ways to deal with problems and that esteem and street face can be had without resorting to violence and abusive behaviour.

Chodzinski (1995) emphasized that children, particularly those at risk, require special interventions that attempt to change and redirect the way they handle situations and events. Often this means intervening at the home level. Children at risk, particularly potential school dropouts, are susceptible to resorting to aggressive behaviour because in so many cases it is the only way they have learned how to survive. Streetwise kids usually have little tolerance for cooperation and sharing ideals. These values need to be recentered, with structure put in place to solidify a new paradigm. Aggressive youngsters need to learn that there are other ways to deal with problems and that esteem and *street face* can be had without resorting to vio-

lence and abusive behaviour. The notion of negotiation, problem solving and cooperative resolution of conflict-laden issues is a concept often beyond the immediate grasp of children who bully and behave in antisocial ways. The fact is that, more often than not, behaviour other than aggressive behaviour is construed as weakness and can put these children at risk. Changing the cycle takes more than understanding and guidance. It takes empathy, care, and patience. The notion of external control and safety is paramount if we are to encourage students to change. They must know that they will be protected if they risk change.

In accordance with Goldstein's (1981) approach to working with aggressive adolescents, we are inclined to promote the notion that while counselling continues to be an important component of the interventionist repertoire, the training of specific life skills and values clarification clearly presents itself as a viable change medium. We suggest that class meetings and parent training will work if they are appropriate. It is important to understand that bullies need to be taught how not to bully, and that victims need to be taught how not to become victims. Teachers need to be taught how to do this. It is most important that teachers be provided with opportunities to implement the strategies, and be supported by parents and the community.

What is important is that while we can extrapolate what needs to be done and who needs to do it, few educators, let alone students, have ever been adequately trained to do what is now known to be required.

Teachers know that students need to know they are respected, cared for, and wanted. In most circumstances, teachers do an outstanding job of communicating this. But there are some students who need to learn somehow what

they have not learned; that is, that they are loved, wanted and most important, capable. Unfortunately, while teachers may try, they cannot be expected to fill the void that so often provides children with the assumption that they are not. This is one of the primary reasons why children bully. Students in general must be taught about what bullying is and how to determine if it is happening. They should be able to identify a bully and know why he or she is a bully. They should be taught what a victim is and how to identify the behaviours associated with being a victim. Students must be instructed in the responsibilities of the group toward bullies and victims and be shown how compliance comes in a variety of forms and behaviours. Strategies for dealing with bullies must be established and reinforced, as also must be strategies for caring and healing victims. Prosocial skills such as impulse control, anger management, negotiation and communication, as well as safe expression of feelings, need to be explored within an atmosphere of mutual respect and care. What is important is that while we can extrapolate what needs to be done and who needs to do it, few educators, let alone students, have ever been adequately trained to do what is now known to be required.

Implications for teachers

Teachers should

- be knowledgeable about bullies and victims
- know that a school-wide prevention program is essential
- be knowledgeable about assertive consequencing for bullying
- know that remediation of bullying and victimization is through learning prosocial skills
- be familiar and know how to use and teach intervention strategies
- involve outside agencies
- involve parents, administration, and teachers in bully/victim issues

- know that teachers and other school personnel, not just students, are also victims of bullying

The First Step

Burke developed and implemented a three-part workshop based on Maines and Robinson's (1992) concept of a "no blame approach" to the prevention of bullying. Essentially these workshops aim to establish that schools can do much to create an atmosphere within schools, which discourages bullying behaviour and supports peer pressure to actively challenge it. The no blame approach encourages both pupils who bully and those bullied to engage in solution finding. The approach is non-punitive, seeks to empower students, requires adult facilitation and supervision, provides a structure for exploring problems faced by students and recognizes that students have a right and the ability to be involved in the direct participation of conflict resolution. While it is recognized that many teachers have been inundated with policies and procedures and have attended workshops on fighting violence in the schools, these workshops provide a different opportunity to explore strategies that have worked.

Rather than punish and reward, the extension of the concept of "no blame" is to "diffuse and reuse".

The notion of fighting violence in schools seems somewhat paradoxical. Punitive measures in some way have a tendency to enhance the esteem of the bully and may in fact result in even more serious transgressions on the part of the offender. It is not uncommon that bullies suspended or chastised become mini-heroes/heroines and may be inclined to commit revengeful acts in order to bring upon them even more seemingly unmeritorious rewards. Rather than punish and reward, the extension of the concept of

"no blame" is to "diffuse and reuse" (Chodzinski 1998).

Strategies shared with workshop participants include how to teach and involve students in mediation and reflection. The influence and power of empathy, positive regard for others and unconditional acceptance and unselfishness are used within a context of peer pressure blatantly employed to diffuse and dissuade an individual from harming another. The no blame system requires full cooperation from staff. It involves policymaking and rule implementation along with consistent reinforcement. Students and teachers work together. Awareness about bullying and the notion that it will be targeted must be made clear. In effect, bullying must be clearly seen as a target. Training days, sensitivity days, and bully-proofing days are all important aspects of the program. Care-giving agencies, community workers, celebrities, and parents must be encouraged to be active partners. Classroom meetings are held on a regular basis. The common *who? what? when? where? why? and how?* paradigm can effectively be applied to classroom circle meeting agendas. The basic premise is that by learning competencies, skills and personal qualities, conflict resolution skills emerge. Burke's workshops emphasize eight building blocks of class meetings. These include: discussion within the circle; providing praise, compliments and encouragement; creating a focused agenda; developing and using appropriate communication skills; learning about separate realities, role playing and brainstorming; applying the principles of Alfred Adler's premise of an individual's mistaken goals of behaviour; finding and applying non-punitive solutions. In this way, it is hoped that students can learn to discuss issues of concern with each other, learn and practise problem-solving behaviours in place of punishment or blame as well as to learn and practise collaboration and cooperative skills for building positive, safe, school communities. The

The invitational and collaborative classroom help students develop ⓪	teaches students important life-skills ⓪
Three Empowering Perceptions:	Four Essential Skills:
<p>A perception of personal capabilities.</p> <p>"I am capable."</p> <p>A perception of significance in primary relationships.</p> <p>"I contribute in meaningful ways, and I am genuinely needed."</p> <p>A perception of personal power of influence over life.</p> <p>"I can influence what happens to me."</p>	<p>Intrapersonal skill: the ability to understand personal emotions, to use that understanding to develop self-discipline, self-control and to learn from experiences.</p> <p>Intrapersonal skill: the ability to work with others through listening, communicating, cooperating, negotiating, sharing and integrity.</p> <p>Strategic skill: the ability to respond to the limits and consequences of everyday life with responsibility, adaptability, flexibility and integrity.</p> <p>Judgment skill: the ability to develop wisdom and evaluate situations according to appropriate values.</p>

Knowledge and Skills Required for Bully Prevention			
Knowledge/Skill Who, What, Why, Where, When, How?	Bully	Target	Peer
Active Listening	✓	✓	✓
Anger Management	✓	✓	✓
Appreciating Diversity	✓	✓	✓
Asserting Self-Defense	✓	✓	✓
Body Language	✓	✓	✓
Bullying	✓	✓	✓
Conflict	✓	✓	✓
Conflict Resolution/Negotiation	✓	✓	✓
Consensus Building	✓	✓	✓
Decision Making	✓	✓	✓
Democratic Principals	✓	✓	✓
Empathizing	✓	✓	✓
Expressing Appreciation	✓	✓	✓
Giving Compliments	✓	✓	✓
I Statements	✓	✓	✓
Passive, Assertive, Aggressive Behaviour	✓	✓	✓
Peer Mediation	✓	✓	✓
Personal Responsibility	✓	✓	✓
Problem-Solving	✓	✓	✓
Smoothing	✓	✓	✓
Social Responsibility	✓	✓	✓

Figure 1 (Burke 1998a)

knowledge skill base of the *who/ what/ why/ where/ when/ and how/* instructional component is expressed in the chart. (See Figure 1).

The end product of the intervention is to reduce the rate of bullying and to strengthen the esteem of those victimized. According to Burke (1998) a model for guiding classroom discussion focusing on bullying might include the following:

- teaching what bullying is and developing empathy and understanding for the victim
- discovering the power of peer pressure and its effect on the situation, the transgressor and the victim
- examining codes of conduct and behaviour and establishing rules about bullying
- developing an appreciation for ownership of the problem
- showing commitment to the notion of helping victims and bullies alike
- creating a bully-proofed school and training peer mediators
- learning how to employ creative problem-solving
- knowing when and how to seek and obtain adult help
- learning how to relate to each other and join together (the power of the group)
- practising empathy, compassion, understanding and the courage to speak out

Johnson (1994) provides a format for conflict resolution that can be easily incorporated into the classroom circle meeting. Students should be taught how to jointly define the conflict, exchange positions and interests, reverse perspectives, develop at least three agreements that allow mutual gain, and then reach an integrative agreement that provides for a win/win situation.

Discussion regarding the non-punitive approach often results in emotional sharing, revealing feelings that suggest that when a transgressor is not punished mediation is somehow perceived as a reward for bad behaviour (Chodz-

inski 1998). Workshop participants are encouraged to share with students that a victim can realize "silent power" when acceptance, understanding and even forgiveness bring about a change of behaviour in the bully. Participants who completed the workshops developed by Burke expressed confidence and a renewed commitment to try and implement strategies and policies designed to proactively intervene in the area of school violence and bullying behaviour in particular. Teachers were armed with direct instruction on how to conduct class meetings about the prevention of bullying. The session provided a forum whereby for the first time teachers could openly talk about bullying as it affected them. They developed many strategies and shared awareness of how participants could teach youngsters various strategies to deal with bullies and victims alike. Workshops provided opportunities for discourse whereby adult caregivers spoke out against bullying and worked towards divesting bullies of their power. It was not surprising to learn about the fear and concern that many teachers hold with respect to violent acts by children (Burke 1998).

Similar to student victims, teachers feel somewhat frustrated when consistent offenders are not punished.

Professional leadership development workshops for teachers, nurses and community care workers (Chodzinski 1998) revealed similar findings. Many caregivers feel victimized by child bullies and are frustrated by the lack of direct intervention on the part of administrators, parents and other teachers. Similar to student victims, teachers feel somewhat frustrated when consistent offenders are not punished. Sometimes counselling seems inappropriate for repeat offenders. Collectively comments sound like this: "they disrupt the class, the school and me, let alone themselves." To help teachers cope

with this notion, teachers are invited to develop ways to implement perhaps one of the best-known non-punitive intervention and prevention strategies; that is, "walkabout leadership and supervision."

Chodzinski (1998) contends that "the mere fact an adult or peer mediator is visible and on site to deal with any transgression is perhaps the best "one-minute deterrent" to school-based bullying behaviour". Unfortunately, this concept flies in the face of current reductionist thinking. Chodzinski contends that schools need to provide more direct supervision, not necessarily intervention, of all aspects of a child's free time as well as instructional time. Increased teacher or trained adult supervision on playgrounds, gym areas, walkways and hallways, including pre-entry and end-of-day release time scheduling is required. One or two adults to supervise a recess or lunch period that may involve hundreds of children playing in open and closed spaces is clearly not enough. Simply put, this means that more adults need to be more visible, on supervision duty at critical free times before and during school time. The same proposition applies to parents. Simply put, more time in now, means less time out later. Schools need to address the fact that teaching children to mediate is one thing, but adult intervention and prevention are still primary people management tools. Crowd management is an essential skill in the management of bullying behaviour. Creating "non-opportunity" for bullying to occur is the way of the wise child caregiver. What are needed are not fewer teachers, larger schools and crowded classrooms and portables, but a lower student-to-teacher ratio in classrooms that are suitable for caring, sharing, and instruction. The popularity and proliferation of new private schools is being driven by the fact that many parents are leaving public education because they fear that their child's education is suffering. In many instances

the choice is made because behaviour management and discipline are considered to be more stringent and structured at a private school. Whether or not there are fewer bullies in private school remains to be seen.

Workshops such as the ones described above help teachers and other caregivers to begin to explore and learn new ways to *diffuse and reuse* the energy that each child (whether he or she be a bully, victim, onlooker, bystander or simply a student) brings to the classroom. It is a matter of justice, honour and equity that we do everything in our power to ensure that schools are safe and productive communities.

Post Script

Recent episodes of extreme violence should not dissuade us from understanding that most child violence is a result of some form of learning. Most often, child violence can be defined in terms of purposeful, albeit misdirected, goal-centered action. It is either responsive or proactive but seeks to rectify some perceived imbalance of justice and unfairness. Very often children are expressing anger and rage. Moreover, they are unable to deal with frustration, rejection, misunderstandings and harmful realities of their world. The notion of feeling unwanted, unloved or unaccepted plays a significant role in how a child reacts to another individual. Social convention suggests that, for a western society at least, assertiveness is a socially acceptable form of telling and getting. Aggression is not. Children need to be taught and shown the difference. While we may debate theories of morality such as those proposed by Piaget, Kohlberg, Gilligan, and others, the fact is school children need to learn and abide by common citizenship rules and procedures for ethical, moral and social conduct. It is the adults of the community who are charged with the responsibility of instruction and witness. Thus, while these seemingly unreasonable acts of violence against

peers and adults cannot be condoned under any circumstance, we need to reach out and try to understand the provocation. While it may be in many of our natures to suggest the the strictest punitive measures be used to punish these acts, we must remember that it is some aspect of an adult world that gave them the wherewithal to consider and commit violent acts in the first place. What is needed is strong community action to ensure that children are given the message that they are loved and wanted. They must learn to realize that harming others is wrong, and that in harming others they are harming themselves and their communities.

The guiding principle for this paper is the recognition that we can diffuse and reuse the incredible energy that is waiting to be tapped in every child. It seems that this notion which is so simple and talked about so often somehow gets lost in translation. Finding fault is easy. Finding solutions is the challenge.

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Opera: A Natural Component of Italian Courses

Keith Mason

Opera, an important part of Italian culture, is an ideal topic of study in Italian classes. This article presents ideas for a special unit about opera that can be used in high school or college Italian courses. While the discussion focuses on opera in Italian, suggestions for exposing students of other languages to opera are also offered.

Introduction

Because opera is such a rich part of Italian culture, its inclusion in the Italian curriculum is entirely natural and logical, as well as educationally sound.¹ The introduction of opera offers a perfect opportunity to break away occasionally from regular textbook instruction to introduce students to authentic samples of Italian culture. It also offers an opportunity to develop the seven multiple intelligences as described by Gardner (1993). This article provides background information for Italian teachers who would like to present opera to students. It is based on my personal experiences pulling together materials from many sources in order to present a special opera unit to a secondary-level Italian 2 class. Presented below are the following:

- A list of important Italian operas with their dates and composers
- Specific options for integrating opera in the course
- Sample activities in the appendix that can be utilized with students.

The etymology of the Italian term *opera* may be traced back to the Latin noun *opus* (singular), *opera* (plural) meaning "work" (i.e., a piece of work, not labour) (Devoto 1979:291). While the Italian word is the general lexical item for a piece of work, its meaning has been extended to refer to a musical

score presented in play form. As Bruno (1989:20) stated:

The important place opera holds in Italy's culture should not be underestimated. It is opera's unique mingling of art, literature, and music that has taken the Italian language to every corner of the globe by such performers as Caruso, Gigli, and Pavarotti.

His description of opera makes it all the more appealing for coverage in the Italian class.

Rationale

The publication in 1996 of *Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century* by a special task force has caused foreign language professionals to look at our practices for teaching language. Currently, language-specific standards are being finalized, including Italian. One of the recommendations of the new standards includes making connections between language and other disciplines. With this in mind, the inclusion of opera in Italian courses can be rationalized as follows:

- Opera is an important part of Italian culture.
- Exposing students to opera in Italian serves as a bridge between Italian language and music, especially when students do not receive music instruction.
- The accessibility of opera is facilitated by its availability on television, cable networks,

video, and numerous recordings.

- Opera allows use of authentic texts to learn about Italian culture both in oral and written form.

According to Barker (1987:676), Among the contributions made to Western Civilization by Italians, that idiom of musical theatre we call opera has been noteworthy for its capacity to be assimilated into the traditions of other linguistic and national styles of expression while yet retaining a special identification with the nation that first generated it.

Opera serves as a perfect bridge between Italian language and music, art, and drama. By exposing students to opera, they are introduced to music and drama via recordings, to art through costumes and to scenery via videos or live performances. Opera lyrics expose students to Italian language, including dialectal variation. Careful planning by the instructor makes opera accessible to students. Regardless of whether students can actually attend live opera performances, other sources abound for using opera in the class and curriculum: recordings, video and laserdisc recordings, guest speakers (the music teacher), librettos, the internet, teacher-created handouts, television, and cable programs. Music stores and mail order music sources can be approached for recordings and videos. In addition, professional and popular literature such as books, the magazines *Opera World* and *Opera Canada*, other magazines, and newspaper articles can all be consulted when developing an opera lesson or unit.

According to Bruno (1989:20), Opera, therefore, is very much part of Italian cultural life, but the student is also aware of and curious about the opera he hears or has heard about in the United States. Opera is also accessible in the United States in the larger cities and on many college campuses; it is broadcast both live and from recorded performances. And since the last decade, opera has been regularly appearing on television. Increasingly, opera's superstars advertise and appear on talk shows. Even Miss Manners has put in a word for

opera in a column entitled "Dressing for a Night at the Opera." As suggested by the title of her column, opera is surrounded by a mystique as well as misconceptions. In the Italian class, a unit on opera places opera in a cultural context and provides variety while enlivening the proceedings and enriching the Italian experience.

A number of post-secondary and graduate Italian programs in the United States include one or more opera courses in their curricula. While such courses provide in-depth treatments of opera intended for advanced students, it is important to remember that opera can also be treated in other areas of the curriculum: high school and college Italian language courses, high school and college music courses, and advanced Italian conversation, culture, and literature courses at the college level.

Opera should be included not only in music and Italian curricula, but also in other language courses. There are several operas which are suitable for languages such as French, German, and Spanish, including *zarzuelas*, Spanish musical dramas.

Opera: Background for Teachers of Italian

Attention to the multiple intelligences has been noticeable in the language field. Gardner (1993) and others have outlined the seven intelligences which are given below, along with examples of opera-related activities and skills that foster these intelligences in students.

Multiple Intelligences: Opera-Related Tie-Ins

1. Verbal-linguistic

- Analysis of aria lyrics for grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation
- Analysis of plot, story, characters of an opera
- Reading of authentic texts from books, magazines, or newspapers about opera in the Italian language

2. Logical-mathematical

- Identifying symbolism in song lyrics or operas
- Counting measures of music

3. Visual-spatial

- Commenting on visual cues from operas (scenery, costumes, personal characteristics, colours)

4. Bodily-kinesthetic

- Role-playing scenes from an opera; replicating a dance seen in a video of an opera

5. Musical-rhythmic

- Listening to operas with target language librettos
- Viewing operas to hear Italian music in context

6. Interpersonal

- Discussing lyrics, music, opera plots, characters in pairs, triads, or groups

7. Intrapersonal

- Writing essays, doing written exercises or taking tests based on operas and arias, TV or video programs about opera in Italian that focus on students' own feelings about the stimulus

It is desirable to foster all our students' abilities; the multiple intelligences framework accommodates more students than the more traditional approaches to language learning.

The following section specifies ways for the teacher to develop a unit and materials about opera in Italian. The idea behind presenting an entire opera unit is supported by recent recommendations in the *Standards* report for bridging language with other subject areas in the spirit of language across the curriculum. At the same time, opera allows teachers to expose students to an important part of Italian culture.

Integrating the Opera Unit into the Regular Curriculum

Bruno (1989:21) pointed out the teacher's difficulty in choosing when and how to present opera. He explained that it can be either

presented informally during part of a lesson or formally as a specific unit of study. The latter could include the history and components of opera. To overcome the fact that opera can sometimes be a "hard sell" to younger students who may find this type of music totally unfamiliar or foreign, teachers can take steps to encourage the successful coverage of opera in the Italian class. Such steps include:

Ice breakers

Choose arias, operas, or singers that are familiar to students. Bruno (1989), for example, used "La donna è mobile" from Verdi's *Rigoletto* as sung by Luciano Pavarotti as an ice breaker since most students are familiar with both the song and the singer. One opera that lends itself easily as an ice breaker is *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* by Rossini (1816). Music teacher Kenneth Hess finds that this opera is an appropriate choice because students are often familiar with music from the score, especially the overture. It is also a great first exposure to opera because it is a comedy. Music from this score was used in a Looney Tunes segment *The Rabbit of Seville* with which many students are familiar.

The Four Seasons by Vivaldi, not an opera but a concerto, was integrated into my opera unit because I believed that the recognition factor would be an added advantage as an ice breaker. I played a different season suite at the end of each of four consecutive classes reviewing the names of the seasons in Italian (*la primavera*, *l'estate*, *l'autunno*, and *l'inverno*).

Able Assistance

This implies that students need help in appreciating and understanding opera. The following suggest teacher guidelines for able assistance.

- Preview operas to determine suitability for students, considering age, interests, appropriateness of themes for younger students, etc.

- Carefully select an opera or a selection of arias.
- Provide adequate background about the opera or arias that will motivate students to want to learn and will invite success with the material.
- Offer assistance with the interpretation of lyrics; their meaning, their importance in developing the story, and comments on dialectal variants when necessary.
- Use good stereo equipment for playing opera music, but be considerate of neighbouring classrooms for noise because opera voices tend to carry.

When can an opera unit occur within the context of class planning? Ideally, it will occur when the textbook mentions music or opera. For example, in *Oggi in Italia* (Merlonghi, Merlonghi, Tursi, and O'Connor 1996), Lesson 15 has music and opera as a theme. In *Italiano in diretta* (Pease and Bini 1989), one chapter offers a few pages on opera. *Adesso* (Danesi 1992) treats music in Chapter 16. A look at textbooks available for teaching Italian is useful in deciding a possible place for an opera unit. Some pedagogical materials exist for opera in Italian including Mollica (1992:141-142) with brief biographies in Italian about Vincenzo Bellini, Pietro Mascagni, and Giuseppe Verdi.

As part of an introduction to Italian opera, present students with the full names of composers and when they lived. As a follow-up step, expose students to the major works of each composer. Titles of each opera and their English equivalents, as well as discussion later of settings, characters, and important arias are all worth considering. Fragments of arias can be used that exhibit themes, vocabulary, or structures that students have studied in order to reinforce them. See David (1995:123-155) for 30 synopses of operas, 14 of which are Italian, and Sutherland (1997:102-122) for a description of notable operas through the ages, including Italian operas. The chart

below can be used to introduce the composers in birth order. Note that although Mozart was Austrian, not Italian, his inclusion is justified since he wrote several important operas in Italian such as *Le Nozze di Figaro* (1786), *Don Giovanni* (1787), and *Così fan tutte* (1790).

Famous Composers of Italian Opera

In Birth Order:

Claudio Monteverdi	1567-1643
Antonio Vivaldi	1678-1741
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	1756-1791
Gioacchino Rossini	1792-1868
Gaetano Donizetti	1797-1848
Vincenzo Bellini	1801-1835
Giuseppe Verdi	1813-1901
Ruggero Leoncavallo	1858-1919
Giacomo Puccini	1858-1924
Pietro Mascagni	1863-1945

Developing the opera unit

I started by compiling materials from several sources as background information. A number of resources are available for developing Italian opera units. These include:

- Music teachers
- Recordings, including the liner notes and librettos accompanying compact discs, cassettes, and LPs⁴
- Music stores and services
- The internet
- Professional and popular literature; journal articles, magazine articles, and books
- Professors in college/university departments of Italian
- Videos of entire Italian operas or of a particular composer or singer, including information provided in packaging or even as a part of the program (documentaries, interviews, etc.)

After reviewing all the materials available, the next steps that I took were to:

1. prepare a packet with a selection of readings and activities for students to complete; see Mollica (1984:23-24) for a word search and crossword puzzle dealing with Italian opera
2. choose arias for students to listen to including lyrics whenever possible
3. locate videotapes of entire operas for review and decide on one to show the class

Opera Concepts to Teach

Precisely which opera concepts are appropriate for students? The following list recommends a few concepts:

- What is opera?, including a definition and description with examples
- The importance of opera as an important part of Italian culture and history
- The concepts of *aria* (i.e. songs) versus *recitativo* (sung dialogue)
- Types of voices: soprano, mezzo-soprano, contralto, tenor, counter-tenor, castrato, baritone, bass, etc.
- Famous composers of Italian opera
- Famous operas, who composed them, how they were received, character development, song analysis, themes

Appendix A suggests a list of operas in Italian and Appendix B, operas in other languages. Teachers can present opera using a variety of approaches, as follows.

The aria approach

Choose various arias by several composers to expose students to a variety of works. Arias can be chosen with a common theme or to help students understand a character. This accommodates the student attention span, especially in adolescent learners. Arias can also serve as a logical precursor to the study of an entire opera.

The entire opera approach

It is helpful to expose students to an entire opera. This way, students can hear and/or see the entire work from beginning to end, encompassing the development of story, plot, and character. The selection of the opera is of utmost importance. Careful consideration of the performers is also strongly recommended. (Recall the icebreaker recommendation made earlier whereby students are more likely to accept singers, songs, or operas with which they are familiar.)

The combination approach

Expose students to several arias, then to an entire opera as a culmination. This approach can be considered the most comprehensive treatment of opera.

Regarding opera recordings, a gargantuan number exists, making it impossible to provide a reliable list of recommended recordings in this article. Instead, I offer some guidelines for locating and selecting recordings, especially for those teachers who may be new to opera.

1. Survey

Ask colleagues and friends about opera and recordings, singers, or specific operas they recommend.

2. Research

Consult music teachers, music stores, Schwann record catalogues, mail order music sources, the internet, libraries, books, and magazines such as *Opera World* and *Opera Canada* for information about opera.

3. Listen

Borrow recordings from friends or the library and check them out. Build up your own collection for class and personal use.

4. Select

Choose arias to use with students.

I found the activity of researching the operas to be presented extremely enjoyable. The discovery of information, arias, recordings, and videos was quite rewarding. As a head start, you may

wish to consult David (1995) and Sutherland (1997) for recommendations of recordings or singers. It may be helpful to note that world renowned singers are good bets and worth exposing students to: Luciano Pavarotti, Bryn Terfel, José Carreras, Plácido Domingo, Joan Sutherland, Beverly Sills, Maria Callas, Marilyn Horne, and Kiri Te Kanawa. Recordings by most of these singers are quite easy to purchase. Even popular singers such as Michael Bolton ("My Secret Passion: The Arias") and Barbra Streisand ("Classical Barbra") have recorded opera arias.

The unit that I presented was comprised of a packet of photocopied materials. See Appendix C for suggested activities. I used a number of arias including "Vesti la Giubba" from Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci*, "La donna è mobile" from Verdi's *Rigoletto*, all sung by Luciano Pavarotti, "Miei rampolli femminini" from Rossini's *Cenerentola* sung by Bryn Terfel, "E lucevan le stelle" from Puccini's *Tosca* sung by Riccardo Casinelli, and "Una furtiva lagrima" from Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore* sung by Plácido Domingo. I showed students the entire *Tosca* on video from the 1985 Metropolitan Opera House production with Plácido Domingo in the principal male role.

Special Projects

Here are some opera-related assignments:

- *Extra-curricular Activities*: students take a trip to attend an opera/performance.
- *TV/Video*: Students are assigned to watch an opera on TV or cable such as PBS or Bravo.
- *Overview of key composers and their works*: Students do research about one or several composers and write up a report in Italian. Alternatively, students could write a summary in Italian of one specific opera. This could provide natural practice of the past tense.
- *Readings*: Students read about opera or composers from the in-

ternet, newspapers, recording liner notes, or magazines such as *Opera World* or *Opera Canada*.

- The internet: Students are given an assignment to research opera using the internet. The search could be a general "see what you can find" or be made very specific.

Evaluation

Evaluation can be done via quizzes, tests, in-class activities, homework assignments, or a combination of these. Certain aspects of Italian opera can be tested, with teachers deciding what is most appropriate for their students. Special projects could include having students listen to opera recordings in or out of class and doing activities related to the opera or the composer. Special readings about a specific opera can also be used, in order to encourage students to express their own views of an opera.

Summary

As Barker (1987:690) concluded regarding opera:

What those Florentine esthetes of the 1590's unleashed upon us was to become not only a major category of Italian entertainment but also one of the most absorbingly complex and multi-faceted genres of cultural expression our Western world has ever developed.

Teachers can encourage students to understand and enjoy the target culture of the language they are studying. Coverage of opera in the Italian curriculum is a logical option at both the secondary and post-secondary levels. Students can be exposed to an interesting aspect of Italian performance arts. While music and other language classes can certainly treat opera, it is clear that opera serves as a uniquely natural component of Italian courses.

Notes

1. I would like to thank Isabel Bustamante-López, Kenneth Hess, and Kevin L. Mason, Jr. for their influence on this article.

2. A review of publications of the mid-1980's is found in Barker (1987). The author discusses six texts dealing with opera in general, Italian opera in particular, and composer-specific studies on Puccini and Verdi: Ashbrook (1985), Conati (1984), Kimbell (1985), Lindenberger (1984), Robinson (1985), and Rosselli (1984).

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Appendix A Operas in Italian

<i>Opera</i>	<i>Composer</i>	<i>Year</i>
Aida	Verdi	1871
Il barbiere di Siviglia	Rossini	1816
La Bohème	Puccini	1896
Cavalleria rusticana	Mascagni	1890
The Coronations of Poppea	Monteverdi	1642
Così fan tutte	Mozart	1790
Don Giovanni	Mozart	1787
L'elisir d'amore	Donizetti	1832
Lucia di Lammermoor	Donizetti	1835
Madama Butterfly	Puccini	1904
Norma	Bellini	1831
Le nozze di Figaro	Mozart	1786
L'Olimpiade	Vivaldi	1734
Orlando Furioso	Vivaldi	1727
Ottone in Villa	Vivaldi	1713
I Pagliacci	Leoncavallo	1892
Rigoletto	Verdi	1851
La serva padrona	Pergolesi	1733
Tosca	Puccini	1900
La Traviata	Verdi	1853
Il Trovatore	Verdi	1853
Turandot	Puccini	1926

Appendix B Operas in Other Languages

<i>French</i>	<i>Composer</i>	<i>Year</i>
<i>Carmen</i>	Bizet	1875
<i>Les Contes D'Hoffman</i>	Offenbach	1881
<i>Faust</i>	Gounod	1859
<i>Les Huguenots</i>	Meyerbeer	1836
<i>Manon</i>	Massenet	1884
<i>German</i>	<i>Composer</i>	<i>Year</i>
<i>Die Fledermaus</i>	Strauss, J.	1874
<i>Der Rosenkavalier</i>	Strauss, R.	1911
<i>Das Rheingold</i> (<i>The Ring Cycle</i> , 1)	Wagner	1869
<i>Die Walküre</i> (<i>The Ring Cycle</i> , 2)	Wagner	1870
<i>Siegfried</i> (<i>The Ring Cycle</i> , 3)	Wagner	1876
<i>Die Götterdämmerung</i> (<i>The Ring Cycle</i> , 4)	Wagner	1876
<i>Spanish</i>	<i>Composer</i>	<i>Year</i>
<i>Evita</i>	Webber/Rice	1975
<i>Las labradoras de Murcia</i>	Rodriguez de Hita	1769
<i>Las segadoras de Valleca</i>	Rodriguez de Hita	1768

Compositori e opere

Trova nel diagramma il nome e cognome del compositore e dell'opera che ha musicato. Le parole possono essere ricercate sia da sinistra a destra [→] che da destra a sinistra [←], o dall'alto in basso [↓] o dal basso in alto [↑], oppure diagonalmente sia verso il basso [↘ ↙] che verso l'alto [↗ ↖], purché sempre in linea retta. Le lettere rimaste, inserite consecutivamente nelle caselle, daranno il nome e cognome di tre grandi tenori contemporanei.

- VINCENZO BELLINI
- Norma
- GAETANO DONIZETTI
- Don Giovanni
- RUGGERO LEONCAVALLO
- I Pagliacci
- PIETRO MASCAGNI
- Cavalleria Rusticana
- GIACOMO PUCCINI
- La Bohème
- Manon Lescaut
- Gianni Schicchi
- Tosca
- GIOACCHINO ROSSINI
- Il barbiere di Siviglia
- Semiramide
- GIUSEPPE VERDI
- Un ballo in maschera
- La Forza del destino
- Otello
- Rigoletto
- La Traviata
- Il Trovatore



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Key for Activity I:

1. H 2. E 3. D 4. I 5. G 6. A 7. J 8. B 9. C 10. F

Key for Activity II:

1. I 2. E 3. H 4. I 5. G 6. F 7. C 8. A 9. A 10. D 11. E 12. A 13. I 14. I 15. B 16. J

Appendix C: Activity Samples

I. Italian Opera Composer:
Name Match

Match the first name of each composer with his last name.

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. Pietro__ | A. Leoncavallo |
| 2. Antonio__ | B. Puccini |
| 3. Gioacchino__ | C. Verdi |
| 4. Vincenzo__ | D. Rossini |
| 5. Gaetano__ | E. Vivaldi |
| 6. Ruggero__ | F. Monteverdi |
| 7. Wolfgang__ | G. Donizetti |
| 8. Giacomo__ | H. Mascagni |
| 9. Giuseppe__ | I. Bellini |
| 10. Claudio__ | J. Mozart |

II. Name the Composer

Indicate for each opera the letter corresponding to the name of its composer.

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 1. <i>Aida</i> __ | A. Puccini |
| 2. <i>L'elisir d'amore</i> __ | B. Vivaldi |
| 3. <i>Don Giovanni</i> __ | C. Rossini |
| 4. <i>Rigoletto</i> __ | D. Bellini |
| 5. <i>I Pagliacci</i> __ | E. Donizetti |
| 6. <i>Cavalleria Rusticana</i> __ | F. Mascagni |
| 7. <i>Il barbiere di Siviglia</i> __ | G. Leoncavallo |
| 8. <i>Tosca</i> __ | H. Mozart |
| 9. <i>La Bohème</i> __ | I. Verdi |
| 10. <i>Norma</i> __ | J. Monteverdi |
| 11. <i>Lucia di Lammermoor</i> __ | |
| 12. <i>Madame Butterfly</i> __ | |
| 13. <i>La Traviata</i> __ | |
| 14. <i>Il Trovatore</i> __ | |
| 15. <i>L'Olimpiade</i> __ | |
| 16. <i>The Coronation of Poppea</i> __ | |

III. General Questions

- When was the composer born? Where? When did he die? Where?
- What are some operas that the composer wrote? In what year was each opera written?
- Who are the main characters in opera X?
- When did opera X take place?
- Where does opera X take place?

Keys for Activities I and II can be found on page 18.



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