

Critique of “Karaoke for Quads”

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In the article Karaoke for quads: a new application of an old recreation with potential therapeutic benefits for people with disabilities, A.I. Batavia and M. Batavia (2003) present the possible benefits of the use of karaoke to help those with disabilities. They specifically address the needs of quadriplegics and offer a promising course of research to find out the therapeutic benefits of karaoke.

#### **Strengths of the Article**

The article had many great components to it. It was well written and easy to read and understand. The authors presented many compelling arguments as to why karaoke may be valuable with those with disabilities. They suggested that people with quadriplegia are not physically able to actively participate in many recreational activities, but that karaoke would give them an opportunity to be involved rather than a bystander. They also described the possible health benefits karaoke could have to one’s respiratory system, including greater respiratory strength and increased respiratory control. Most importantly they addressed the “cathartic effects of singing” and said “the physical act of singing itself is likely to achieve benefits in terms of personal satisfaction and physical/emotional relief” (A.I. Batavia & M. Batavia, 2003, p. 298). Another strength of the article was their proposal on how to gather research on the topic. It seemed as though they had considered all aspects of the research and have a sound plan to implement their ideas.

#### **Weaknesses of the Article**

Although there were many good aspects to this article, there were several things that could have been done better. First, the authors seemed to make some of their opinions appear as facts. For example they say, “the fact that many people enjoy karaoke suggests that they are

likely to engage in such activity on a regular basis and thereby derive ongoing therapeutic benefits over an extended period of time” (A.I. Batavia & M. Batavia, 2003, p. 298), but give no source as to where they got this supposed fact. Do they think many people enjoy karaoke because they themselves enjoy it? How many people participate in karaoke and how often are they doing it? The answers to these questions would help the article have more weight. Another example is when talking about the therapeutic effect of singing they say “anyone who has sung in a choir or musical group will testify as to the cathartic effects of singing” (A.I. Batavia & M. Batavia, 2003, p. 298). Would everyone, or even the majority of people, who has sung in a musical group really “testify to the cathartic effects of singing”? Possibly. Though both these statements may be true, the article would improve if there were scientific data to back these claims.

### **Application of the Article**

This article has great potential and presents a wonderful idea. Because it is just a theoretical article, it would be most helpful to implement the research ideas suggested to find out if karaoke is really as beneficial to those with disabilities as the authors believe it could be. After seeing the results of the studies, I believe many different organizations could use karaoke as part of their therapeutic process. As mentioned in the article, karaoke machines are not too expensive and relatively accessible (A.I. Batavia & M. Batavia, 2003) which would make karaoke a reasonable recreation option. I believe it could be used in mental hospitals, recreation centers, schools, retirement homes, and many other settings.

### **Personal Reaction**

I loved this article and think using karaoke as a means to help those with disabilities is a genius idea. I’ve grown up with music, especially singing, being a huge part of my life. My

participation with choirs and other singing opportunities has been a big part of my social, emotional, spiritual, and physical growth. Karaoke is something I love doing and I often wish I could do it more often. Reading this article has given me many ideas on how I could use karaoke to help those I work with. I work in an senior assisted living facility currently, and while reading this article I thought of several of my residents who would love to sing karaoke as part of their activities. I believe it would be a very therapeutic experience for them as it has been for me.

## References

- Batavia, A. I., & Batavia, M. (2003). Karaoke for quads: A new application of an old recreation with potential therapeutic benefits for people with disabilities. *Disability and Rehabilitation, 25*(6), 297-300.