Career Intentions and Experiences of Pre- and In-Service Female Band Teachers

Doctoral Dissertation

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine pre- and in-service female band teachers’ perspectives regarding their experiences in realizing their professional goals. Domains of inquiry included: gaining entry into the profession, confidence and self-efficacy, and mentorship. A fourth domain, issues surrounding gender, emerged during the study and was analyzed accordingly.

The study utilized one-on-one interviews with pre- and in-service female band teachers. Findings indicated that numerous outside factors affected the career paths of the participants, resulting in several of the women pursuing middle, elementary and multi-grade level jobs. These factors included: the jobs available at the time of the initial job search, family responsibilities, the perceived time commitment thought to accompany high school band teaching positions, and the desire to witness musical and social growth in students.

All of the in-service participants expressed a belief that the Good Ol’ Boys’ Club existed, but many felt as though its influence was declining. Some of the participants shared that they believed women should be afforded the same opportunities as men; but regardless, several of the participants experienced challenges in being a woman in the band teaching profession. These challenges included: the struggle to network with those in power, fitting in at professional development events, and gaining respect from students
and colleagues. While some of the women found their gender could be an asset, they also
found themselves restricted by the social constructs and stereotypes of their gender.
Dedication

To my parents, Michael and Diana Fischer –

Thank you for encouraging me to be seen and heard.

Now you have a book on the subject.
Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I must thank my partner, Adam, for his endless support throughout this process. It is not easy to deal with an exhausted doctoral student with writer’s block and he did it with grace, love, patience, and (hardly) a complaint. Thank you, my love!

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Tom Batiuk, thank you for granting permission for the use of the image of Dr. Harry L. Dinkle (of Funky Winkerbean fame) in Chapter Two.

Perhaps most importantly, thank you to the women who shared their stories with me for this study so that I may, in turn, share them with others. Your contributions to the musical world are most appreciated.
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Fields of Study

Major Field: Music Education
# Table of Contents

Abstract................................................................................................................................. ii  
Dedication............................................................................................................................... iv  
Acknowledgments .................................................................................................................. v  
Vita................................................................................................................................................ vi  
List of Illustrations ................................................................................................................... viii  
Chapter 1: Introduction .......................................................................................................... 1  
Chapter 2: Review of Literature ............................................................................................ 13  
Chapter 3: Research Method and Design ............................................................................. 38  
Chapter 4: Participant Portraits ............................................................................................ 52  
Chapter 5: Findings ................................................................................................................ 71  
Chapter 6: Discussion ........................................................................................................... 143  
References............................................................................................................................... 167  
Appendix A: Recruitment Letter -- Pre-Service Teacher ....................................................... 177  
Appendix B: Recruitment Letter – In-Service Teacher............................................................. 178  
Appendix C: Informed Consent Script – Pre-Service Teacher .................................................. 179  
Appendix D: Informed Consent Script – In-Service Teacher .................................................... 181  

vii
List of Illustrations

Illustration 1. Dr. Harry L. Dinkle .................................................................................. 21
Chapter 1: Introduction

For the past several decades, women have earned the majority of music education degrees in the United States, giving the illusion of a highly feminized profession (Block, 1988; Higher Education Arts Data Services, 2009). As such, it may seem unwarranted to examine the role of women in music; but the reality is that women are poorly represented in several areas of the profession. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the teaching of band (Delzell, 1993; Leonhard, 1991; Sheldon & Hartley, 2012). At the middle school level, women comprise just over one-third of the band teaching force (MENC, 2001); however, as grade levels increase, the representation of female band teachers declines. This seems especially true for the high school level, where Delzell (1993) found that, in the state of Ohio, only approximately 21% of high school band teachers were women. Although this number is higher than figures from other states (Greaves-Spurgeon, 1998), it is far from equitable.

Some may argue that in disciplines outside of music there are more men than women teaching at the high school level. As such, it would not be unusual for women to be a significant minority in secondary band teaching. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Department’s 2011 Current Population Survey, however, women comprise 58% of the nation’s high school teaching faculties. Even science, a field often cited as lacking women, has a larger presence of female teachers than band, with women comprising 28%
of high school physics faculties, 47% for chemistry and 52% for biology (National Science Foundation, Division of Science Resource Statistics, 2004).

Data show that a discrepancy exists in the presence of male and female teachers in the band classroom. It is still unclear why or how this phenomenon came to be. Some have posited that the military background of bands in America has been a contributing factor in this disparity of gender (Delzell, 1993; Jackson, 1996; Gould, 2005; Greaves-Spurgeon, 1998; Zdzinski, 2005). Others have attributed the lack of women in high school band teaching positions to be due to the time commitment that is thought to be needed to dedicate oneself to the job, citing that women choose to teach lower grade levels so that they can bear and raise children (Delzell, 1993; Koza, 2005; Robinson, 2012; Sears, 2010). Although both arguments have merit, these assumptions are rooted typically in theory—or are the hypotheses of women already in high school band teaching positions—and lack the voices of women who, for whatever reasons, are not teaching high school band.

Background

Military Band Traditions

Through the late 19th century, it was common for music in the public schools to be taught by the classroom teacher, a position held traditionally by a woman who received training in education (with limited music experiences, if any) at Normal Schools – precursors to today’s Schools of Education (Mark & Gary, 2007). Curricula at the time were almost exclusively vocal and fit well within the perceptions and expectations of women held at the time – that women were delicate and affective in nature (Macleod, 1993; O’Neill, 1997).
Around this time, concert and marching bands began to emerge as popular means of making and listening to music. It became evident that teachers needed specialized training in music and instruments. Consequently, the demand for music supervisors grew. Given the role men already played in the Normal School training of teachers (Lagemann, 2000; Varga, 1991), it was a seemingly logical progression for men to take on the role of music supervisor, as “someone who could organize the program, teach the various instruments, and then conduct the school band and orchestra” (Macleod, 1993, p. 299).

At the collegiate level, marching bands were designed to boost morale in times of war. Many university marching bands were military bands affiliated with local ROTC-type programs and consisted of all men, clad in military uniforms (Madsen, Plack & Dunnigan, 2007; Shellahamer, Swearingen, & Woods, 1986). It was not until the end of the 19th century that the military influence of marching bands began to decline. At this time, marching bands’ associations with college athletics increased, merging military tradition with entertainment during sporting events (Shellahamer, Swearingen, & Woods, 1986). Marching bands at all levels have changed very little since this decline of military influence (Jones, 2010).

Following World Wars I and II, there was a saturation of instrumental music teachers in secondary schools by military personnel, almost all of which were men (Mark & Gary, 2007). There was also a desire by some to make music seem less “feminine” (Macleod, 1993), leading many secondary schools to expand their instrumental music programs to include marching bands. Consequently, male band teachers were charged with recruiting young boys to join bands by making the ensembles “appear masculine;”
attracting the boys “through their desire for uniforms and their inherent love for the military” (Macleod, 1993, p. 301). Marching band as we know it today and its physical demands evolved directly from this apparent desire for uniforms and military-influenced performance.

It is not surprising, then, that early marching bands had an established tradition of all-male participation (Macleod, 1993; McCarrell, 1973). Even as more women attended college and university concert bands became increasingly co-educational, participation in marching bands often remained available to men only. Over time, this began to be a problem, for, “as women began to enter the field of instrumental music, they found ‘no marching band experience’ a handicap in their professional advancement, and began to wonder why they were denied equal preparation in their field” (Wright, 1973, p. 58). It was not until Title IX was signed into law in 1972 that many universities allowed women into their marching bands.

Traces of militarism persist in school bands today, particularly in marching bands. In some parts of the country, though, the prevalence of marching bands and drum corps has all but extinguished; however, the presence of women in the high school band classroom has not increased. Additionally, the majority of students in high school marching bands are female (Snyder & Hoffman, 2001), so it is not illogical to presume that many of these women may someday be interested in teaching marching band.

Family Commitments

As mentioned previously, it is often assumed that women choose to not be high school band teachers because of the time commitment associated with the position (Delzell, 1993; Koza, 2005; Robinson, 2012; Sears, 2010). It has been theorized that
such a role is not conducive to family planning and a woman’s perceived responsibilities in the home, and therefore, may influence women to teach middle or elementary school band or general music. However, findings from studies in other fields with similar male to female ratios indicate otherwise. For example, Cech, Rubineau, Silbey, and Seron (2011) found that amongst pre-service engineering students, there is no difference between the desires of men and women to start and maintain a family. It is possible that family planning concerns are less salient with college-age students than when they enter the field and begin their professional careers, prompting male and female participants to respond similarly on such surveys. Alternatively, it may be that the assumption that women do not wish to teach high school band because of their family commitments is unfounded.

**Choice of Instrument**

The instruments women tend to play may also be a contributing force to the lack of female high school band teachers. Instruments are highly stereotyped by gender, a phenomenon that has plagued music education for decades. Findings by several researchers in this area have shown consistently that girls prefer playing flutes, violins, and clarinets, whereas boys tend to play drums, trumpets and low brass instruments (Abeles, 2009; Abeles & Porter, 1978; Conway, 2000; Delzell & Leppla, 1992; Griswold & Chroback, 1981).

A child’s primary instrument may be of little concern when she is twelve years old; however, this choice may have implications for securing a job in the future. For example, when hiring a new band teacher, some schools look for brass specialists, others for woodwind specialists or, occasionally, that an individual plays a specified instrument.
While this may be perfectly legal, it must be taken into consideration that gender stereotypes of instruments do exist and that when a job is posted for a percussion or brass specialist many of those candidates—and potentially the new hire—will be male.

Upon investigating this topic empirically, Kopetz (1980) found that the majority of high school principals indicated that they would most like to hire a trumpet specialist. Considering that the trumpet has been shown to be an instrument favored by males (Abeles, 2009; Abeles & Porter, 1978), this decision has significant implications for gender equity in the workforce. Incidentally, Kopetz (1980) also found that although trumpet was the instrument of choice the majority of the time, in cases where administrators were asked whether they would hire a female trumpet player or a male candidate on any other instrument, they preferred to hire a male teacher. It should come as no surprise, then, that the participants of Greaves-Spurgeon’s (1998) study of women in high school band teaching positions stated that getting hired for their jobs was the most difficult part of their careers.

**Statement of the Problem/Need for the Study**

There is a small, yet established, body of research investigating gender equity in the teaching of band. Several researchers have examined the lack of women teaching band at the high school level (Greaves-Spurgeon, 1998; Jones, 2010; Sears, 2010). Others have focused specifically on collegiate female band professors (Feather, 1980; Gould, 1996; Jackson, 1996). These studies have all focused on the travails of women who eventually obtained these upper-level teaching positions. With the exception of Robinson (2012), no extant research has yet examined the experiences of women who were trained to teach high school instrumental music but ended up teaching in another area of K—12.
music. Robinson’s study of elementary general music teachers who had been on a “band track” as music majors was groundbreaking in the sense that it began to address some of the issues surrounding the culture of band teaching. Although the role gender played in shaping these women’s decisions was discussed, it was not the focus of the inquiry and, therefore, received minimal attention in the presentation of narratives.

To date, the career intentions and professional experiences of middle school and multi-grade-level\(^1\) female band teachers have been fundamentally ignored. It is possible that the events that occur in a middle school band teacher’s career path differ from those who teach solely at the high school or collegiate level, where the majority of the body of research is focused. Due to the lack of research in this area, this study was designed to explicate the factors affecting the career progression of women in band by focusing on those teaching band at the middle school and multi-grade levels, rather than those holding preeminent suburban high school jobs. Additionally, the career intentions of pre-service teachers were also examined to help elucidate the way gender intersects career intentions and goals of this population.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine pre- and in-service female band teachers’ perspectives regarding their experiences in realizing their professional goals. Domains of inquiry included: gaining entry into the profession, confidence and self-efficacy, and mentorship. Research questions centered on the following domains:

Domain I – Gaining entry into the profession

\(^1\) For the purposes of this study, “multi-grade level” is defined as teaching responsibilities transcending traditional school grade levels housed in one building (i.e. teaching grades 7-12, 5-12, etc.).
How do women choose the grade level they teach? What factors influence this decision? What grade level(s) do female band-track educators most desire to teach when first entering the profession? Are women applying for high school band jobs? If so, are they receiving, taking, and succeeding in such interviews?

Domain II – Confidence and self-efficacy

To what extent are pre- and in-service female band teachers confident in their perceived teaching abilities? What experiences and skills do in-service female band teachers attribute to their success as teachers? In what ways have female band teachers had to develop a “masculine” professional persona to gain entry/acceptance into the profession?

Domain III – Mentorship

What is the role of same-gender mentorship on the professional development of pre- and in-service female band teachers? What relationships do pre- and in-service female band teachers have with other women in the profession? Have in-service teachers been asked to serve in a mentorship capacity? If so, do they feel a responsibility to oblige? Are other female band teachers easily identifiable in the profession?

These domains were rooted in the current body of research literature (Cech et al., 2011; Gould, 2005; Greaves-Spurgeon, 1998; Koza, 2005; McKeage, 2004; Robinson, 2012; Sears, 2010; Silvey, 2011); however, additional domains were also allowed to emerge from data collection and analysis.
Definition of Terms

Feminist Research

As Lather (1991) explains, “Very simply, to do feminist research is to put the social construction of gender at the center of one’s inquiry” (p. 71). Feminist research is inherently political in that it challenges accepted beliefs and power structures, attempting to eliminate all forms of sex-based inequality (Hawkesworth, 2006; Lather, 1991). No one method or paradigm is required to do feminist research; however, it is often the intention of the feminist researcher to raise the consciousness of women regarding their status in their respective cultures (Hawkesworth, 2006; Lather, 1991).

Interview Methodology

The premise of interviews in research is that some phenomena exist that cannot always be observed (Patton, 2002). Instead, researchers can ask individuals to share their observations and experiences by means of a participant interview. Multiple forms of interviewing exist in qualitative research. These variations of structured and unstructured interviews include informal conversational interviews, the general interview guide approach, and the standardized open-ended interview (Patton, 2002; Schwandt, 2007). This study utilized the general interview guide approach in that topics to be discussed were outlined at the beginning of each interview and served as a “basic checklist during the interview to make sure that all relevant topics [were] covered” (Patton, 2002, p. 342). Questions were open-ended and were presented at differing times based on the natural flow of the conversation.
Narrative Analysis

Originally derived from the analysis of written texts, narrative analysis is a qualitative research method used for interpreting personal narratives, life histories, or stories generated in research (Patton, 2002; Schwandt, 2007). In doing this, the researcher looks for emerging themes and patterns in the way in which a story or personal narrative is shared (Glesne, 2011; Patton, 2002; Schwandt, 2007). This can include: how personal narratives are organized by participants, choice in language used, as well as the intersection of the researcher’s story with those of the participants (Patton, 2002).

Narrative Approach

A narrative approach is used in presenting a researcher’s interpretation of the participants’ narratives. Emergent themes and patterns are identified, described, and subsequently supported with “evidence,” which in the case of this study included excerpts of the participants’ narratives (Glesne, 2011; Yin, 2009).

Sex and/or Gender

There is controversy and inconsistency in the body of literature regarding the appropriate use of the terms gender and sex. Many authors use the terms interchangeably, much as they do male/female, boy/girl, and masculine/feminine (Eros, 2008). Others use the classifications of gender and sex to differentiate between biological and socially constructed characteristics of individuals (Hawkesworth, 2006; O’Neill, 1997). O’Neill (1997) explains,

The category of sex has been used to refer to biological distinctions (i.e., hormonal, anatomical, or chromosomal differences) between males and females, such as the criteria used to identify the sex of a newborn infant, whereas the
category of gender has been used to infer the social traits and characteristics that
are learned through socialization processes. (p. 48)

Sex and gender are used inconsistently in music education research. The term sex
appears to have been favored in the 1970’s and 1980’s (Abeles & Porter, 1978; Griswold
& Chroback, 1981). Throughout the 1990’s and the early years of the twenty-first
century, though, the term gender appears more frequently and often interchangeably with
sex (Conway, 2000; Delzell & Leppla, 1992; Johnson & Stewart, 2004; O’Neill, 1997;
Robinson, 2012). Given the nature of this study and the role social factors play in career
development, I have opted to use the term gender rather than sex.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited by the information the participants chose to share with me,
the researcher, and by default you, the reader. The “goodness” of the data is reliant upon
the perceptions and interpretations of the participants (Glesne, 2011). While all accounts
by the participants are thought to be truthful, it is possible that recall error, personal bias
and the emotional states of the individuals may have affected their responses (Patton,
2002). Additionally, data were collected from a small sample. The addition of
participants may have further supported or discredited identified themes. The narratives
collected are believed to be true and accurate; however, additional steps were taken to
strengthen the trustworthiness of this study. These procedures can be found in greater
detail in Chapter Three.

The results of this study are not intended to provide broad generalizations about
women in the profession of band teaching. Instead, this study should be regarded as nine
women’s experiences with their career development, which may or may not be similar to those of other women or men in the profession. Data presented in this study should serve as a foundation for further inquiry.
Chapter 2: Review of Literature

In recent decades in the United States, women have earned the majority of bachelor degrees in music education (Block, 1988; Higher Education Arts Data Services, 2009) and have comprised approximately one-half of instrumental-track music education undergraduate student bodies (Leonhard, 1991). Additionally, the majority of K-12 teachers in the United States have historically been women (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). As such, it would seem that the profession of music teaching would be highly feminized. This might be true for elementary music teaching, as women have comprised nearly 70% of that workforce (MENC, 2001). However, in the area of band teaching, women have been very poorly represented, particularly at the high school level. Nationally, high schools with fewer than 1,000 students have reported that 23% of their instrumental teachers (both band and string) were women (Leonhard, 1991). For larger high schools, the presence of female instrumental teachers dropped to just 11% (Leonhard, 1991). Given that there has been a more equitable distribution of gender in orchestra teaching (Delzell, 1993), one might expect those numbers to be even lower if band teachers were to be isolated.

Figures such as these vary by state. In the state of Ohio, for example, findings from a 1993 study indicated that women comprised just 21% of the high school band teaching population (Delzell, 1993). This figure included multiple-grade level teachers,
though. Consequently, many of these “high school band teachers” might not have held primary responsibilities at the high school level and could have spent the majority of their teaching time at the elementary and middle school levels or even in different music content areas (Delzell, 1993).

At the collegiate level, the numbers have been far worse for women. Over the last 30 years, women have comprised less than 10% of university band faculties in the United States, with little growth occurring (Block, 1988; Gould, 1996; Gould, 2005; Hartley, 1995). Several researchers have investigated the dearth of female band teachers at the collegiate level and found that female college band professors felt that women are discriminated against in higher education hiring practices (Feather, 1980; Hartley, 1995; Jackson, 1996; McElroy, 1996). Others have shown that women were optimistic that the rates of females hired for collegiate band positions would increase (Hartley, 1995), despite the stagnation of such rates over several decades (Gould, 2005; Hartley, 1995; McElroy, 1996). It is likely that the majority of those who have graduated with music education degrees and have pursued teaching as a career have gone into K-12 music education, though, and not collegiate band directing. It is because of this that the present study focused on women in middle and multi-grade level teaching, rather than higher education.

The rates of women in band teaching positions at the high school level have been so low, it might not be unreasonable to question whether women were even interested in teaching band at this grade level. There is a lack of empirical data on this topic in band; however, there is evidence that undergraduate string music education majors—regardless of gender—most preferred to teach at the high school level (Gillespie & Hamann, 1999).
Aside from the possibility that women preferred to teach music in areas other than high school band, several other reasons have been cited often to explain the paucity of women in the band teaching profession. These arguments have included: the historical all-male military tradition of bands (Delzell, 1993; Gould, 2005; Greaves-Spurgeon, 1998; Jackson, 1996; Zdzinski, 2005), the influence of the types of instruments women tend to play (Hartley, 1995; Kopetz, 1980; Leimer, 2012; Zdzinski, 2005), family responsibilities (Delzell, 1993; Fitzpatrick, in press; Koza, 2005; Leimer, 2012; Robinson, 2012; Sears, 2010), and the lack of female role models in the profession (Cheng, 1998; Gould, 1996; Grant, 2000; Hartley, 1995; McKeage, 2002). Each of these ideas will be presented further in this chapter.

**Paucity of Women in Band**

**Military Tradition**

Early formal music education in the United States began as a vocal endeavor and was typically taught by a young student’s classroom teacher, who was almost always a woman (Lagemann, 2000; Mark & Gary, 2007). By the mid-to-late 1800’s, classroom teachers trained at Normal Schools, where the curricula often included music training, typically taught by a male instructor (Mark & Gary, 2007). At the time, conventional social expectations limited the types of music performance opportunities available to women (Macleod, 1993). Given their perceived delicate, affective qualities, women who made music were to do so in a way that did not disrupt this nature (Gould, 2003; Green, 1997; Macleod, 1993; O’Neill, 1997). As such, many women who studied music in their normal school training studied vocal music (Macleod, 1993; Mark & Gary, 2007; O’Neill, 1997).
If instruments were studied by young girls and adult women, they were often learned in private, outside of public school or normal school training (Mark & Gary, 2007), and were limited to instruments that would not contort a lady’s face or be too large for her to manage (Cheng, 1998; Green, 1997; Jackson, 1998; Macleod, 1993; O’Neill, 1997). Keyboard instruments, the guitar, and the harp were the most socially acceptable instruments for a woman. Macleod (1993) explained why this was:

Their volume was relatively soft and delicate sounding, and the melody was in a high range, corresponding to the soprano voice. The posture the lady assumed while playing was natural and graceful; she did not have to sit awkwardly or distort her features. She could usually remain seated while playing and perform adequately without much physical exertion. (p. 292)

Over time, the violin also began to emerge as a socially acceptable instrument for women to play, followed next by the cello (“side-saddle,” of course) and then the flute (Macleod, 1993; O’Neill, 1997). Other wind instruments remained off-limits to women due to the necessity to purse one’s lips to blow air through a mouthpiece (Macleod, 1993).

After the Civil War, town bands began to form and created a following (Mark & Gary, 2007). Rarely did women perform in these groups, though, as many perceived it to be inappropriate for men and women to work together, particularly if such work involved expressing emotion or touring (Green, 1997; Macleod, 1993). Women’s orchestras and bands were created and, over time, such ensembles began to include both men and women (Cheng, 1998; O’Neill, 1997).
The increasing popularity of bands eventually led to the addition of instrumental music study in the public K-12 school curriculum. By the early twentieth century, school bands began to emerge, often modeled after John Philip Sousa’s (1854—1932) ensembles, as he was in the peak of his career at the time of the school band movement (Mark & Gary, 2007). It became evident that the classroom teachers, who up until this time were charged with teaching vocal music, would not be capable of teaching instrumental music. To rectify this, many school districts hired part-time teachers who performed in town bands (Mark & Gary, 2007). Over time, these part-time positions evolved into full-time jobs that necessitated specialized training in music and band instruments. Simultaneously, the demand for music supervisors grew. Given that social constructs prevented women from playing certain instruments (Green, 1997; Macleod, 1993; O’Neill, 1997) let alone serving in supervisory roles (Lagemann, 2000), it was a seemingly logical progression for men to take on the role of music supervisor, as “someone who could organize the program, teach the various instruments, and then conduct the school band and orchestra” (Macleod, 1993, p. 299).

Marching bands, initially designed to boost morale in times of war, were also popular in the United States, particularly in the years before and after World Wars I and II (McCarrell, 1973). Many universities affiliated with local ROTC programs established their own marching bands, which consisted solely of men often clad in military uniforms (Madsen, Plack, & Dunnigan, 2007; Shellahamer, Swearingen, & Woods, 1986). As the popularity of American football increased in the United States, university marching bands began to become more associated with athletics than with the military (Mark & Gary, 2007; Shellahamer, Swearingen, & Woods, 1986). Many of the military uniforms
remained, even as marching bands took on new roles in providing entertainment during sporting events and at holiday parades (Shellahamer, Swearingen, & Woods, 1986). The marching band as it is today has changed very little since this merger (Jones, 2010).

Over time, enrollment in town bands began to decline and so instrument manufacturers, hoping to maintain their business, began to lobby for the expansion of school music programs via the addition of marching bands and band contests in the public schools (Mark & Gary, 2007). Given the military origin of the marching band tradition and the desire by some to make music “less feminine” in general, men were the desired candidates to teach these bands (Macleod, 1993, O’Neill, 1997). Consequently, as military bandsmen returned home from World Wars I and II, they found many secondary schools in need of instrumental music teachers, and they were the perfect candidates for the jobs (Mark & Gary, 2007).

Although many K-12 school band programs were co-educational, college concert and marching bands often excluded women (Macleod, 1993; McCarrell, 1973). Over time, this began to be a problem for women who attempted to pursue a career in instrumental music teaching. Upon graduation, they would find that “‘no marching band experience’ [was] a handicap in their professional advancement, and began to wonder why they were denied equal preparation in their field" (Wright, 1973, p. 58). It was not until Title IX was signed into law in 1972 that many universities allowed women into their marching bands.

A century has passed since the school band movement took root. In that time, women have established themselves as less than a quarter of the high school band teaching population (Delzell, 1993; Leonhard, 1991). Even though women comprised
half of the nation’s instrumental-track music education majors (Leonhard, 1991) and have been the majority sex in middle and high school band programs (Abeles, 2009; Snyder & Hoffman, 2001), they have not made further gains in establishing themselves on the podiums of high school band rooms. It can be argued that the military origin of marching band has, indeed, affected the public perception of high school band teachers, producing stereotypes that are almost always male.

**Stereotypes & Status**

**Stereotypes.**

Researchers have cited the military influence of bands as being a contributing factor to the poor representation of women in high school band teaching positions (Delzell, 1993; Gould, 2005; Greaves-Spurgeon, 1998; Jackson, 1996; Zdzinski, 2005). Indeed, when one considers the stereotypical images of band teachers, it is possible to see how the military origin of marching bands has affected the social expectation of what a high school band teacher should look like.

Stereotypes, including gender stereotypes, are subtly reinforced through media and other message transmitters (Million, Perreault, & Cramer, 2002). Gender stereotypes reinforce social expectations of male- and female-appropriate behavior, including those surrounding occupations, emotions, and family roles (Million et al., 2002, p. 165). Those who veer from conventional stereotypes draw the most attention and are often classified in terms of their “other”-ness, e.g., a “male dancer” or “lady band director” (Alexander, 2011; Bartleet, 2002; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000; Green, 1997; Koza, 1992; Million et al., 2002). By labeling something or someone as “other,” the conventional stereotype is again reinforced.
The gender stereotyping of musicians, conductors and music teachers is not a new phenomenon. In a study examining illustrations found in popular elementary general music textbooks, Koza (1992) found that 68.9% of the music-related individuals (including both children and adults) were males. Of the adults identified as “professional musicians,” 78.1% were males.

Two decades later, McWilliams (2003) had similar findings when she investigated gender equity in the depiction of females in *The Instrumentalist*, a trade magazine for band teachers. In a two-year period, the magazine published 368 images of band conductors at all grade levels or those labeled as “wind band experts.” Of these, just 9% were female. Of the individuals identified as college band professors, just 6% were female, and these were actually repeat images of the same two women. Six female high school band teachers’ (11% of the total high school band teacher population) images appeared in *The Instrumentalist*; however, once again, there were repeat images. The same woman was included four times, bringing the total number of female high school band teachers shown in the *Instrumentalist* over the span of two years down to three.

It would also appear that female expertise was valued less than male expertise, at least when it came to revenue from advertising. In the same study, McWilliams (2003) found that females were included in advertisement images just 7% of the time. Within these advertisements, eight images of female college band conductors were presented at various times, but this time, they were all of the same person – Mallory Thompson, Director of Bands at Northwestern University. Further reinforcing the stereotype that band conductors are men is the fact that all of the 109 “other” wind band conductor
images in advertisements were men (McWilliams, 2003). This included images of a pair of hands holding a baton, drawings of conductors, and cartoons.

The military influence of bands was also apparent in McWilliam’s (2003) study as, in a handful of images, male conductors wore military-style apparel. The stereotype of the male band teacher in an officer’s uniform has made its way into popular culture, too.

In the movie Mr. Holland’s Opus, the first time we saw Mr. Holland conduct his band publically, he was in full uniform marching with the group. Likewise, the cartoon Funky Winkerbean has featured reoccurring character Dr. Harry L. Dinkle, a high school band teacher who was the self-proclaimed “World’s Greatest Band Director” (see Illustration 1.). Dinkle’s image has been reproduced on posters that are available for sale and can be seen on the walls of many band classrooms across the United States, ensuring that the military-inspired male band teacher stereotype lives on for generations to come.

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Illustration 1. Dr. Harry L. Dinkle.
Of note is the fact that Dinkle referred to himself as a “director,” not a teacher. This is not exclusive to band teaching, as orchestra and choir teachers are also commonly referred to as directors. No extant research was found investigating this topic; however, the language used to describe ensemble teachers may be significant. In no other public school teaching capacity is the educator in the room titled anything but “teacher,” except for in the music ensemble classroom. People have the tendency to classify occupations by gender (e.g., nurse/woman; doctor/man) (Banaji & Hardin, 1996). Since “teacher” is an occupation traditionally held by women, it may be that the use of the term “director” is a way to masculinize the ensemble teacher by giving him or her a more authoritative label.

Social scientists have examined the significance of status in gender roles and occupations. Eagly et al. (2000) explained that, “in relation to gender roles and stereotypes is the tendency for the specific roles occupied by men to be higher in hierarchies of status and authority than the roles occupied by women” (p. 141). In many ways, the high school band teacher position is a position rich with social status. High-profile, public appearances are regularly a part of the job, as is receiving applause and cheers. In some school districts, marching band teachers are paid a stipend in addition to their regular salaries, elevating such positions to a higher financial status as well, surpassing even their orchestra and choir peers. Teaching, in general, has been perceived by some social scientists to be a rather low-status job (Eagly et al., 2000; Johnson, Middleton, Nicholson, & Sandrick, 2010). It may be that the position of the high school band teacher is the highest status-producing position in all of teaching. Given that men traditionally have held higher-status positions than women (Eagly et al., 2000), it might
be that men were naturally drawn to the position of “band director,” whereas women have opted for positions labeled as “teacher,” such as “general music teacher.”

**Gender Stereotypes of Instruments**

It is also possible that a contributing factor to the dearth of female band teachers is the instruments they tend to play. Several researchers who have studied issues surrounding women in band have included this topic in their own reviews of literature (Gould, 1996; Hartley, 1995; Hartley & Jagow, 2007; Jones, 2010; Leimer, 2012; McKeage, 2004; Sears, 2010). Other researchers have also given direct attention to the gender stereotyping of instruments. Areas of this type of research have concentrated on the aforementioned historical reasons for gender stereotyping of instruments (Green, 1997; Macleod, 1993), the ways in which children associate instruments with certain genders (Abeles, 2009; Abeles & Porter, 1978; Conway, 2000; Delzell & Leplla, 1992; Griswold & Chroback, 1981), the extent to which teacher bias could influence students’ decisions in selecting instruments (Bazan, 2005; Johnson & Stewart, 2004), and the potential effect an individual’s primary instrument could have on her career path (Kopetz, 1980).

There is evidence that children and adults alike have perceived certain instruments to be classified as masculine or feminine (Abeles, 2009; Abeles & Porter, 1978; Conway, 2000; Delzell & Leplla, 1992; Griswold & Chroback, 1981). In a study of 2,001 middle school instrumental students enrolled in nine middle schools across the United States, Abeles (2009) found that just over 85% of the girls played flutes, violins, clarinets and cellos while nearly 73% of the boys played saxophones, trombones, trumpets and percussion instruments. These findings were congruent with previous
research that indicated that girls leaned towards playing flutes, violins and clarinets; boys tended to play drums, trumpets and low brass instruments (Abeles & Porter, 1978; Conway, 2000; Delzell & Leppla, 1992; Griswold & Chroback, 1981). Findings from some research have indicated that female students were beginning to branch out and play traditionally male instruments, such as the trumpet (Delzell & Leppla, 1992; Million, et al., 2002); however, these findings contrasted with Abeles (2009), who found that it was the male students who were more willing to play “female instruments” than vice versa.

It is possible that gender stereotypes for musical instruments will persist. There is evidence that a strong influence for young girls when choosing an instrument has been to study what their mothers played as children; for boys, what their fathers played (Graham, 2005). Consequently, gender stereotypes that existed decades ago may perpetuate into future generations. Additionally, students who attempted to study instruments that crossed traditional gender lines sometimes have found themselves the victims of peer bullying and have retreated back to their respective gender’s socially acceptable instruments (Bazan, 2005; Conway, 2000; Eros, 2008).

The role of teachers in promoting gender stereotypes of instruments has also been investigated. Results have been mixed. In his examination of instrument assignment practices of beginning band teachers, Bazan (2005) asked participants to cite the instruments they believed students most preferred to play. Results indicated that, “participants believed boys most preferred trumpet (39%), percussion (29%), and saxophone (13%) and least preferred flute (91%). They perceived girls most preferring clarinet (46%) and flute (33%) and least preferring trombone (41%) and other low brass (48%)” (p. 16). It may be that, if band teachers believe students want to play certain
instruments, they will be more likely to assign those instruments. Johnson and Stewart (2004) investigated this very topic by examining the ways in which gender bias might influence teachers’ decisions when assigning students to instruments. They provided pre- and in-service teachers images of students and asked the participants to determine what instrument would best suit a given student based on his/her physical attributes. One group of participants was shown images of the students’ entire heads and necks; the other group was shown the same images, but cropped so that only the mouth area of the student was visible. The latter group was not able to determine the genders of the students. Results indicated that student gender was not a significant influence in the instrument assignment made by participants in either group.

Just as wind band experts, important historical figures and conductors have been stereotyped by gender in classroom textbook and trade magazine images, so have been instruments. In Koza’s (1992) examination of elementary general music textbooks, she found that none of the textbooks included illustrations of females playing the tuba, timpani, bass drum or organ. The saxophone, trombone, trumpet, bassoon, clarinet and double bass were also highly stereotyped, with females shown as playing each of these instruments less than 10% of the time. Likewise, McWilliams (2003) found that The Instrumentalist printed images that reinforced gender stereotypes. In the two years of issues that were examined, the instruments most commonly associated with females were flute, clarinet, oboe, bassoon, horn and keyboard percussion. Males were commonly associated with non-keyboard percussion, trumpet, saxophone and trombone.

It is possible that the gender stereotyping of instruments may have an adverse effect on a woman’s ability to get a job teaching middle or high school band. While wind
instruments are given equal opportunity in the concert band setting, other common ensembles like jazz bands and some types of marching bands have limited instrumentation. An individual whose primary instrument is the flute, for example, would not be welcome in many jazz ensembles or a drum and bugle corps. This could affect the marketability of that individual to secure a band teaching job, especially since many school districts look to hire teachers with experience in at least one of these two areas (Alexander, 2011; Hartley, 1995; McKeage, 2004). The instruments most typically left out of these ensembles—flute, clarinet, oboe, bassoon and French horn—are instruments commonly associated with females (Abeles, 2009; Abeles & Porter, 1978; Conway, 2000; Delzell & Leppla, 2002; Griswold & Chroback, 1981).

The hiring preferences of school administrators were the topic of Kopetz’s (1980) doctoral dissertation. In his study, he asked principals to evaluate the resumes of candidates for a hypothetical high school band and orchestra teaching job. The resumes were virtually identical, aside from the candidates’ names and primary instruments. Results indicated that of the four possible primary instruments Kopetz submitted for review (clarinet, oboe, trumpet and violin), principals most commonly wanted to hire the trumpet player, followed by the clarinetist, oboist and violinist, in that order. Incidentally, trumpet was the most stereotypically “masculine” instrument of the four, followed by clarinet, oboe, and violin, which was the most “feminine” (Abeles & Porter, 1978). Although trumpet was the most preferred instrument for the band/orchestra teacher candidate to play, in instances where the school principals were to choose between a female trumpet player and a male on any other instrument, they opted to hire the male candidate.
It may be that trumpet was selected as the most preferred instrument for a teaching candidate to play because of its versatility. The trumpet can be found in concert bands, jazz ensembles, marching bands, and drum and bugle corps, potentially providing those who perform on the instrument a broad set of skills. There is evidence, though, that individuals who play stereotypically “masculine” instruments were perceived to be more dominant and held more leadership qualities than individuals who played stereotypically feminine instruments (Million et al., 2002). As such, it may be that the administrators in Kopetz’s (1980) study chose to hire trumpet players and male teachers because of their perceived dominance and leadership characteristics.

**Social Role Theory & Professional Role Confidence**

Associating the stereotypically “masculine” trumpet with dominance and leadership (Million et al., 2002) may not be surprising when one considers the implications of social role theory. Social role theory “argues that the beliefs people hold about the sexes are derived from observations of the role performances of men and women and thus reflect the sexual division of labor and gender hierarchy of the society” (Eagly et al., 2000, p. 124). Consequently, these beliefs lead to the social construction of gender roles. These gender roles, which are applicable to all aspects of an individual’s life, dictate that men are to exhibit agentic leadership skills whereas women are expected to embody communal, social-type qualities (Eagly et al., 2000).

The implications of gender roles in the workplace are great. The perception that women are compassionate, nurturing and caring can lead to their work in many female-dominated occupations, such as nursing or teaching (Eagly et al., 2000, p. 127). Conversely, men are perceived to be assertive, confident and exhibit leadership and are,
thus, better suited for positions in professions such as management or law. As such, women have less power, status and fewer financial resources (Eagly et al., 2000, p. 126).

As previously discussed, in many ways the role of band teacher, particularly “high school band director,” can be construed a high-status teaching job. As findings from some research have shown, people in higher status occupations are more likely to be perceived as agentic than individuals of lower status occupations (Eagly & Steffen, 1984). Accordingly, one might conclude that the position of band teacher is best suited to an agentic individual, stereotypically a male.

It is possible that women can deviate from gender roles by exhibiting agency and confidence; however, there may be repercussions. In investigating women in business management roles, Rudman and Glick (1999) found that many of the women were “held to a higher standard of niceness than men” (p. 1004) and that, although technically proficient, their perceived deficiencies in interpersonal skills ultimately cost them their jobs. To be hired initially, the women had to promote their agentic qualities; but, to keep their jobs and receive positive evaluations, the women needed to be communal in nature. Likewise, other research indicated that women who were successful in male-dominated professions were less liked and more personally criticized than equally successful men (Demaiter & Adams, 2009; Heilman, Wallen, Fuchs, & Tamkins, 2004).

It is important to note that gender roles begin to emerge early in childhood (Eagly et al., 2000). From a young age, children learn that females are to be sensitive, selfless, humble and nurturing and that males are to be assertive, confident, independent, and dominant. As children grow older, females often experience a drop in self-esteem and
self-efficacy about their perceived abilities as they begin to embody their socially constructed gender role (Eagly et al., 2000; Orenstein, 1994).

In her book *Schoolgirls*, Orenstein (1994) examined the ways in which young women’s self-esteem and confidence limited their academic achievement. As the young women of the study matured, they began to doubt themselves, became passive and non-participatory in their classes and, in turn, their grades began to drop. Orenstein found that teachers reinforced this phenomenon by rewarding male students with attention for speaking out in class, but ignored female students who had learned that a “good” student was quiet and non-disruptive.

It is possible that the very culture of band teaching and learning reinforces young women’s passivity. Students are often not asked to think critically; instead the conductor makes the decisions. Questions are not asked of or by the students, and fear can permeate the band room (Allsup & Benedict, 2008). Yet, this traditional band culture might create a paradox. Allsup and Benedict (2008) explained, “The role of director requires us to act without fear, to be invulnerable and resolute. This is the first lesson we learn as young conductors” (p. 165). What happens, then, when a woman stands on a podium for the first time to conduct a band? She will be expected to be assertive, confident and demanding. She may fail miserably, as she is being asked to complete a task for which she has spent many years of her life learning how not to do.

Research in this area is limited. In an investigation of undergraduate conductors’ perception of their instrumental conducting curricula, Silvey (2011) found that gender was, indeed, a significant factor in predicting students’ self-ratings of conducting and rehearsal skills. Female students consistently rated their own conducting, rehearsal and
time management skills significantly lower than their male counterparts, regardless of actual ability. The extent to which this affects pre-service female band teachers’ self-efficacy and potential career choices is a phenomenon that warrants further investigation. It is possible that women lack the confidence that many men exhibit and, as a result, may hold themselves back by not applying for jobs in band teaching.

Like Silvey (2011) in conducting, Cech et al. (2011) have found that men tend to rate their math skills higher than do women, even though both genders have statistically similar abilities. This finding has led the authors to identify professional role confidence—the confidence of an individual in his or her ability to “fulfill the expected roles, competencies, and identity features of a successful member of their profession”—as a potential factor in gendered persistence in engineering (p. 642). After surveying and tracking 288 undergraduate engineering students at four universities over a four-year period, Cech et al. (2011) found that male students were significantly more confident in their expertise and career-fit (both factors of professional role confidence) than were the female students. These factors contributed greatly to a student’s professional role confidence, which in turn was a predictor of the student’s persistence in engineering.

It may be that professional role confidence is a contributing factor to the dearth of female band teachers in the United States. No extant research was immediately apparent that investigated this particular phenomenon.

**Family Responsibilities**

As social role theory argues, women have certain gendered characteristics they are expected to embody, including those of caretaker and nurturer. Consequently, it is women who have been assumed to take on the role of primary caretaker of children.
Many jobs, including that of band teacher, were established at times where that assumption—that women would manage a household and take care of children while men would work outside of the home—was typically true. (Demaiter & Adams, 2009). As Demaiter and Adams (2009) explained:

[A traditional male worker would be] without obligations that would limit the time he could devote to employment. The vast majority of jobs were not designed to be combined with other duties, like caring for others and managing a household. They were not structured to accommodate childbearing, breastfeeding, and child rearing, and while change has clearly occurred, jobs and child rearing are not easily combined. (p. 33)

Accordingly, women in male-dominated professions such as information technology (IT), civil engineering, as well as band teaching have expressed experiences of professional struggles and feelings of personal conflict in maintaining a successful career while taking care of a family (Bartleet, 2002; Demaiter & Adams, 2009; Fitzpatrick, in press; Gould, 2005; Robinson, 2010; Sears, 2010; Watts, 2009). Some women cited feeling resentment from their colleagues when they could only work a 40-hour work week (Watts, 2009), whereas others had arranged for “part-time” work (for which they were compensated financially as such), just to find themselves still putting in full-time hours (Demaiter & Adams, 2009; Fitzpatrick, in press; Watts, 2009). Even with reduced work hours, other women have expressed feelings of “mommy guilt” and have struggled to find the balance between work and family life (Bartleet, 2002; Fitzpatrick, in press; Sears, 2010; Robinson, 2010).
It may be that the perceived time commitment often attributed to band teaching may preclude some women who want to have families from applying for band teaching jobs. In investigating why several recent graduates of the instrumental music education program at Michigan State University had pursued jobs in elementary general music teaching, Robinson (2010) found that several of the participants were concerned about their work/life balance and wanted to have time to raise their families. For two of the participants, the decision to teach elementary general music was made after witnessing other band teachers struggle to maintain their personal lives. A third participant expressed the belief that, as a band teacher, she would be required to spend more time with other people’s children than her own; this was something in which she had no interest. Lastly, a fourth participant’s husband wanted to be a high school choir teacher and would have had similar demands placed on his schedule as she, if she were to pursue a job teaching band. This participant chose to obtain an elementary general music position that she believed would “compliment rather than fight” his schedule.

Other researchers have examined this phenomenon and have found that female band teachers have had difficulty balancing the dual roles of being a “director” and a mother (Fitzpatrick, in press; Sears, 2010). In a qualitative study, Sears (2010) interviewed eleven high school band teachers whose years of teaching experience ranged from three to twenty-three. Some of the participants did not have children, but still struggled to take care of their households and maintain social lives. The participants who did have children expressed having feelings of guilt for leaving their children while they went to work and band events, but also felt guilty for not dedicating enough time to their jobs. One participant decided that she would no longer participate in her high school’s
competitive marching band program and, as a result, was transferred involuntarily to a middle school. Other participants believed it was possible to raise a family while teaching band, but cited supportive administrators and spouses as critical to their successes in this area.

Fitzpatrick (in press) has also investigated the struggles of band teacher motherhood. In a prolonged engagement case study, she found that the participant was able to balance her family and work lives due to administrative support and the restructuring of her job responsibilities, spousal support, and inherent attributes such as organizational, time management and multi-tasking skills. The participant expressed having feelings of guilt for leaving her child for extended periods of time and experienced feeling that she lacked the time to accomplish all that she believed was demanded of her.

While valuable, both Sears (2010) and Fitzpatrick (in press) examined the family responsibilities of women who were able to obtain positions teaching high school band. Additional studies have examined this phenomenon with female college band professors (Gould, 1996; Jackson, 1996). It may be that some women who train to be high school band teachers never obtain or apply for those positions due to family responsibilities or their preconceived ideas concerning the responsibilities of motherhood. While Robinson (2010) investigated this with elementary general music teachers, no extant research exists on this topic with women who teach band at the middle school level.

**Role Models & Mentors**

Some have posited that the problem of the dearth of female band teachers is a perpetual one in that the lack of visible role models precludes other women from entering
the profession of band teaching (Gould 2001; Grant, 2000; Sheldon & Hartley, 2012). This is not just true in high school and college concert band, but in jazz settings as well (Alexander, 2011; McKeage, 2002). The assumption of this argument is that role models can be influential in making certain goals seem attainable or feasible (Gould, 2001). It is important to note that there is a difference between role models and mentors. While they serve in some similar capacities, a mentor-protégé relationship is consensual, whereas the influence of role models can be extracted from a distance, to the extent that a role model may not even be aware of his or her influence (Grant, 2000; Krajcovic, 2011). It is possible, if not likely, that a mentor is a role model, but a role model is not necessarily a mentor.

The significance of role models in female band teachers’ careers has been investigated by some (Gould, 2001; Grant, 2000). Using survey and interview methods to investigate the ways in which role models affected the careers of female college band professors, Gould (2001) found different results based on the number of years the participants of her study had been in college band teaching positions. Women who had been college band professors for more than 15 years—and, thus, had completed their undergraduate studies prior to the passing of Title IX—reported not knowing any other female band professors in the early years of their own careers. Conversely, most of the younger participants knew of other women in the profession. Just one participant, though, cited a female college band professor as being influential in realizing her career goals.

When it came to the notion of serving in the position of role model, many of the participants in Gould’s (2001) study expressed discomfort. Mid-career professors were generally more welcoming to the idea than were beginning professors; however, most
limited their perceptions of this role to their relationships with students (p. 16). A large majority of the participants were unaware that they might be role models and, even then, understood the concept only in terms of formal mentoring activities.

Grant (2000) investigated the influence of mentoring and gender-specific role models on the career development of female college band professors. Twelve women at four different stages of their careers were interviewed twice for the study. Results indicated that many of the participants’ mentors began as role models for the individuals. Several of the participants identified Mallory Thompson by name as being a visible role model in the profession. Mentoring was something that was valued by all of the participants; however, several expressed that it was more important for them to have mentors that were a good fit personally than it was to have a same-gender mentor.

The significance of being able to identify role models by name has been recognized by some (Fischer, 2012; Gould, 2005; McKeage, 2002; Zdzinski, 2005). In examining the lack of women in collegiate jazz ensembles, McKeage (2002) spent four months observing, interviewing and completing focus group sessions with three undergraduate instrumental music students who all participated in performing jazz in high school and/or college. Although all three participants considerably enjoyed listening to and performing jazz, none could identify a female instrumental jazz musician by name. Likewise, in a qualitative study that investigated the ways in which pre-service band-track music education majors perceived band teaching to be a masculinized profession, Fischer (2012) found that just one of the five participants in the study could identify a female high school band teacher by name.
It is the lack of identifiable women in the masculinized profession of college band teaching that prompted Gould (2005) to refer to female college band professors as “nomads.” Like the female band teacher who has to negotiate through a profession that was constructed for males, “nomads exist as outsiders in established societies” (Gould, 2005, p. 152). To rectify this, Zdzinski (2005) recommended that instrumental music teacher educators work to support female students entering the profession of band teaching. He suggested sharing the successes of local female band teachers with undergraduate students so that such role models become readily recognizable by name and location. Additionally, he suggested pointing out to undergraduate students positive role models not just in band conducting and K-12 teaching, but also in instrumental music teacher education.

**Summary of Previous Research**

There is a small, yet established, body of research investigating gender equity in band teaching. A majority of the work in this area has been dedicated to examining the career experiences of high school and collegiate female band teachers. There is evidence that the military tradition of bands, lack of female role models, family responsibilities and gender stereotypes of instruments have affected the presence of women in high school and collegiate band teaching positions. These studies have all focused on the travails of women who were eventually able to obtain these upper-level teaching positions. While these findings are noteworthy to date, the career intentions and professional experiences of middle school and multi-grade level female band teachers have been fundamentally ignored. This begs the question, what about these teachers? The percentage of women teaching at the middle school and multi-grade level is not much higher than that of the
high school level. Accordingly, the purpose of this study was to examine pre- and in-service female middle school and multi-grade level band teachers’ perspectives in realizing their professional goals.
Chapter 3: Research Method and Design

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine pre- and in-service female band teachers’ perspectives regarding their experiences in realizing their professional goals. Domains of inquiry included: gaining entry into the profession, confidence and self-efficacy, and mentorship. Research questions centered on the following domains:

Domain I – Gaining entry into the profession

How do women choose the grade level they teach? What factors influence this decision? What grade level(s) do female band-track educators most desire to teach when first entering the profession? Are women applying for high school band jobs? If so, are they receiving, taking, and succeeding in such interviews?

Domain II – Confidence and self-efficacy

To what extent are pre- and in-service female band teachers confident in their perceived teaching abilities? What experiences and skills do in-service female band teachers attribute to their success in teaching? In what ways have female band teachers had to develop a “masculine” professional persona to gain entry/acceptance into the profession?
Domain III – Mentorship

What is the role of same-gender mentorship on the professional development of pre- and in-service female band teachers? What type of relationships do pre- and in-service female band teachers have with other women in the profession? Have in-service teachers been asked to serve in a mentorship capacity? If so, do they feel a responsibility to oblige? Are other female band teachers easily identifiable in the profession?

Method Overview

Given the domains of inquiry, research questions for this study, and my desire to take an in-depth look at the phenomenon of women in band teaching, I determined that the most effective methodology would be a multiple case study design that utilized semi-structured interviews (Yin, 2009). The qualitative nature of such a design allowed me to contextualize findings in regard to participants’ socio-cultural environments, as well as shed light on the complexities surrounding participants’ involvement with the profession (Glesne, 2011; Yin, 2009). Each participant was interviewed once in person, with further communication occurring via electronic mail. This included member checks, clarification of statements made in interviews by the participants and follow-up questions by the researcher.

Participant Selection

Participants were selected using a purposive sampling strategy. Thus, each participant was selected for her “relevance to the research question, analytical framework, and explanation or account being developed in the research” (Schwandt, 2007, p. 269). This strategy was appropriate for this type of research, as it was not my
intention to produce broad generalizations from findings. Within this purposive sampling framework, a maximum variation strategy was employed. This ensured that participants were selected who “cut across some range of variation” (Glesne, 2011, p. 45). Consequently, this procedure strengthened the results of the study, since common patterns and themes were found over a greater variation of participants. In the case of this study, multiple criteria were established to select participants ($N = 9$):

**Pre-Service Band Teachers ($n = 3$):**

Pre-service band teacher participants were in their final years of undergraduate study at a large, Midwestern university. Two of the participants were completing their teaching internship at the time of the interviews. The decision to select participants who were near completion of their undergraduate degrees was intentional, as the participants’ career plans were, most likely, more salient than their peers who were just beginning their studies. Moreover, given the role gender associations play in instrument selection, and the effect that this may have on a woman’s experiences and development as a band teacher, participants were selected whose primary instruments represented each of the following families: brass ($n=1$), percussion ($n = 1$) and woodwind ($n = 1$).

**In-Service Band Teachers ($n = 6$):**

To achieve maximum variation, multiple criteria were used to select participants in this group. These criteria included: types of school districts, years of teaching experience and grade levels taught.

Cumulatively, the participants represented each of the following types of school districts: private ($n = 1$), rural ($n = 2$), suburban ($n = 2$) and urban ($n = 1$). The participants’ time in the profession ranged from four years of teaching experience to over
thirty years. The choice to seek participants who had already completed several years of
teaching was purposeful, as these individuals would have had longer career paths and,
potentially, more related experiences than those just entering the field. Half of the
participants ($n = 3$) in this group taught solely at the middle school (grades 6-8) level.
The other half of the participants ($n = 3$) taught at the middle school level, but also held
some elementary and high school teaching responsibilities (grades 5-12).

**Interview Method**

Upon receiving approval from my university’s Institutional Review Board, I
contacted potential participants via email to seek their participation in this study (see
Appendixes A and B). After the potential participants responded in the affirmative,
interviews were scheduled at a time of convenience for the participants. Interviews were
conducted over a four-week period from mid-January to mid-February of 2013. All
interviews were face-to-face, with the exception of one participant who was on maternity
leave from her school; that interview was completed over the phone. Interviews with the
pre-service band teachers occurred in my office on The Ohio State University’s main
campus. In-service band teacher interviews were completed in the participants’
classrooms. Each participant gave her verbal consent to have the interview audio
recorded and transcribed (see Appendixes C and D). Interviews ranged from 31:01
minutes to 57:21 minutes in length and were recorded on a Sony ICD-UX200 Digital
Voice Recorder.

Prior to the start of each interview, I shared with the participant some statistical
information regarding the percentages of women in band teaching, as well as my own
perspectives and interests on the subject. In doing this, I established context for the study
and attempted to develop a positive rapport with the participants (Glesne, 2011; Lather, 1986b; Yin, 2009). In some cases, the participants asked about my teaching experience, further developing our relationship. Topics at this time included the rates of women earning bachelor degrees in music education versus those teaching band, my experiences with female band mentors, seeking employment and establishing myself as a band teacher. Sharing this information—the experiences and biases I brought to the study—with the participants aided in creating transparency about the purpose and scope of the project, as well as helped to establish trustworthiness and transparency (Glesne, 2011; Lather, 1986b; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Interview questions were developed from the extant body of research and the overarching guiding domains of inquiry established for the study. Potential interview questions were reviewed by music education faculty members at a large, Midwestern university, as well as by two in-service female band teachers familiar with the project. As per the consultants’ suggestions, some questions were re-worded and/or modified for clarity.

It is important to note that not all participants were asked all questions verbatim, nor were questions asked in a consistent order. Using a general interview guide approach, I was able to ensure that all topics were covered, but addressed in an order that was appropriate for the natural flow of conversation (Patton, 2002). In doing this, I was free to probe deeply into certain subject areas, depending on the participants’ responses (Patton, 2002). This flexibility is inherent to qualitative research and allowed for a focused inquiry on this topic (Glesne, 2011; Patton, 2002). In the case of this study, all
interview questions addressed issues surrounding the domains of inquiry identified at the beginning of this chapter. Interview questions and prompts included the following:

Pre-Service Teachers:

- How did you come to be a music education major?
- Describe your career plans.
- In what ways might your personal life plans influence your career plans?
- What professional or personal experiences do you believe are most important to your career goals?
- What challenges do you believe you may face in obtaining the job of your choice?
- The majority of band teachers in the United States are men. How do you believe this may impact you as you begin your career?
- What do you believe are your strengths as a teacher?
- What do you believe are your weaknesses as a teacher?
- Do you currently or have you had a mentor in the profession? Please describe your relationship with this person.

In-Service Teachers:

- How has it come to be that you are a band teacher at this grade level?
- When you were training to be a teacher, what did you most desire to teach?
- What challenges did you face in obtaining the job of your choice?
- In what ways have your personal life plans influenced your career plans?
- What experiences did you have prior to becoming a band teacher that most helped you with your career?
• Often, people will refer to the “Good Ol’ Boys Club.” Do you believe such a club exists? Why or why not?

• Some female band teachers describe having to create a “masculine” persona to gain acceptance by their students and/or colleagues. Explain how this may or may not pertain to you.

• Describe a time where you felt your gender was an asset to you professionally.

• Describe a time where you felt your gender has held you back professionally.

• Do you currently or have you had a mentor in the profession? Please describe your relationship with this person.

• In what ways have you found yourself in a mentorship role? Please describe these situations.

Upon completion of a given interview, the interview was transcribed. All digital recordings were destroyed upon completion of the transcriptions.

Data analysis consisted of coding the transcriptions and looking for emerging patterns and themes (Glesne, 2011; Yin, 2009). Some codes emerged throughout the data analysis process; others were determined a priori. Operational definitions for codes were as follows:

A priori:

Available Jobs – Open jobs at the time(s) the participant was seeking employment

Career Preference – Expressed career goals and desires (i.e. type of classes taught, grade level of students, etc.)
Family – Responsibilities or desires related to caring for or spending time with spouse, children, parents or other relative(s)

Female Mentor – A female music teacher serving in some capacity as a mentor to the participant

Job Seeking Process – Topics related to the process of applying for a job (i.e. attaining interviews, interview questions, perceptions about the process of applying for jobs, etc.)

Male Mentor – A male music teacher serving in some capacity as a mentor to the participant

Peer Support – The ways in which fellow female band teachers support or do not support each other’s work in the field

Perceived Ability – The ways in which a participant describe their strengths and weaknesses as a teacher or musician

Perceived Time Commitment – The extent to which a participant believed band teaching was or was not an investment of personal time

Professional Development – Types of resources participants used to continue their band teacher education

Professional Persona – The ways in which the participant described her personality as a band teacher

Professional Role Confidence – The confidence of a participant to “successfully fulfill the roles, competencies, and identify features” of band teaching (Cech, et al., 2011, p. 641)
Self-Efficacy – The self-perceived ability of a participant to accomplish tasks and goals, as well as how the participant believed her peers perceived her

Teaching Responsibilities – Courses and grade levels for which the participant was responsible for teaching

Emergent:

Gender as an Asset – Experiences where a participant felt her gender was an asset to her professionally

Gender Should Not Matter – The belief expressed by a participant that her gender should not be a contributing factor to her social or professional acceptance

Good Ol’ Boys’ Club – Discussion related to the existence of an exclusive network of men in band teaching

Limitations – Participant experiences where gender was a hindrance to professional growth

Social Construction of Gender – Perceived expectations participants felt pressured or obligated to meet, based on the social construct of their gender

Women’s Organizations – Professional music or band organizations whose memberships were inclusive only to women

**Trustworthiness Criteria**

Qualitative researchers measure the quality of a study not in positivist terms of validity, but rather in terms of its trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Given that no research is neutral, it is imperative that procedures are in place to minimize researcher bias and flawed methodology (Glesne, 2011; Lather, 1986a; Yin, 2009). Several steps were taken to ensure the trustworthiness of this study. These included member checks,
an external audit, negative cases, a researcher’s journal and the clarification of researcher bias. These methods are outlined in greater detail below.

**Member Checks**

Upon completion of the transcription of each interview, I sent the respective participant a copy of her interview transcript via email. Verbatim transcripts were sent and I asked participants to add or omit text as needed or, in some cases, to clarify a topic about which I had a question (Glesne, 2011). In no cases did a participant choose to omit text, but one participant did opt to clarify some of her responses. In this case, I did not delete the original narrative, but instead included the clarifications verbatim as footnotes in the transcript. These notes were coded along with the original text.

**External Audit**

To further establish trustworthiness, an external, expert audit was completed (Glesne, 2011; Schwandt, 2007). The expert, Allison², was a mid-career female band teacher responsible for instructing students in grades five through twelve, with the majority of her teaching responsibilities occurring at the high school level. She had taught on both the East and West coast of the United States and had experience teaching in a poor, rural school district as well as a wealthy, suburban school district outside of a large city.

Throughout the study, Allison periodically audited my research journal, procedures, and codes. Because my interpretation of data was limited by my own schema, Allison also examined the transcripts for the possibility of additional codes, patterns, and themes that I may have omitted or neglected (Glesne, 2011).

² All names have been changed to protect the anonymity of participants.
I sent Allison excerpts from five of the participant interviews. These were selected at random and included my coding analysis – both a priori (with operational definitions) and emergent codes. She audited my codes, checking for plausibility and bias. She did not disagree with my coding, but added commentary and additional codes. Allison’s additional codes focused on issues surrounding social role theory, as well as the pre-service participants’ questioning of their own abilities. Upon rereading those interviews and reflecting on Allison’s codes, I agreed with the additions she made and subsequently included them in the findings of this study.

Additionally, Allison raised questions regarding the clarity of some of the participants’ statements. As such, I contacted the participants with her questions. Their subsequent responses helped to clarify their narrative and aided in the proper coding of their interviews.

Allison’s familiarity with research in educational leadership proved invaluable. Early in the stages of this study’s development, she encouraged me to consider mentorship and role models as a domain of inquiry. I included these in the study and, together, we discussed our own biases in these areas. We both had experiences with female band teachers/mentors in high school and college and both found those mentorships to be meaningful as we entered the profession.

Additional content of Allison’s audit is included in the presentation of findings in Chapter Five.

**Negative Cases**

Throughout the interview and coding process, I purposely sought to identify negative cases – instances that did not fit within a given theme or pattern (Patton, 2002;
Schwandt, 2007). These disconfirming cases were no less important than confirming cases, and added depth to this research endeavor by challenging accepted patterns and shedding light on additional possible theories related to the topic (Patton, 2002).

Additionally, by seeking out disconfirming cases, my own biases became more apparent to me, allowing me to keep my subjectivity in check (Glesne, 2011).

**Researcher’s Journal**

Reflexivity—also known as critical subjectivity—is crucial for the researcher, who must understand her “psychological and emotional states before, during, and after the research experience” (Lincoln, 1995, p. 283). These states of being affect the researcher’s constructed view of reality, including the interpretation of data. Consequently, my biases could have potentially affected the ways in which data were interpreted. To minimize this, I utilized systemized reflexivity, a method of construct validity “which reveals how a priori theory has been changed by the logic of the data and . . . contributes to the growth of illuminating and change-enhancing social theory” (Lather, 1986b, p. 271). This was accomplished through the maintenance of a researcher’s journal. This journal allowed me to log my behavior and emotions throughout the research process, helping me keep track of my assumptions, positions, and prejudices (Glesne, 2011, p. 77; Patton, 2002).

**Clarification of Researcher Bias**

In addition to keeping a researcher’s journal and clarifying my own perspectives and interest on the subject, I also sought to establish trustworthiness through the clarification of my own biases. This is critical, as my own credibility affects the quality
of this study. As Patton (2002) explains, information about the researcher should be included “because the researcher is the instrument in qualitative inquiry” (p. 566).

The first teaching job for which I received an interview was at a large suburban high school in Western New York. The job description included teaching music theory, music appreciation, pull-out band lessons and the school’s “second” band. The interview went well and I was invited to meet later that same day with the school district’s superintendent. Following the interview with the superintendent, the high school’s principal informed me that he would hire me on the spot if it were not for my size. I did not get the job.

At the time, I was too naïve to realize that I was experiencing discrimination. While I suppose that comment could have been made to a man, the reality is that not very many men are a petite five-foot-two. It was really about my gender. I had graduated from a high school where my band teacher was a woman. In college, my university’s assistant band professor was also a woman. The struggles of being female in a male-dominated profession were not something that was on my radar at age twenty-one. In fact, it was not until several years later, when a friend (and fellow female band teacher) asked me if I had ever been discriminated against for being a woman in the profession that I realized that, yes, I had. Through our subsequent discussion it turned out that she, too, had experiences like mine, as did two other female band teachers who were also present for the conversation.

I do not begin to assert that all women in band teaching are discriminated against. I do believe, though, that many young women may not realize that they are in the minority in band teaching and that they may have difficulty gaining entry into and/or
receiving support in the profession as a result of their gender. I recognize that external factors such as family responsibilities and a genuine interest in working with young students may also have an influence on a woman’s career path in band teaching. Regardless, my own prior experiences as a music educator and now music teacher educator have shaped my interest in this topic and were the catalyst of this inquiry.

**Communication of the Findings**

The results of this study are presented over two chapters. Chapter Four is comprised of participant profiles. By understanding each participant’s educational background, teaching responsibilities, work environment, and other related details, a more contextualized portrait of the individual in her own socio-cultural environment should assist in informing findings (Glesne, 2011; Yin, 2009). Although entire transcripts are not presented, all data were obtained during the interview process and informed the narrative.

A priori and emergent themes are presented in Chapter Five, accompanied by related vignettes. This narrative approach was selected to give voice to the participants, a primary characteristic of interpretive research (Lincoln, 1995; Patton, 2002).
Chapter 4: Participant Portraits

Introduction

This chapter consists of individual participant profiles. Because each participant brings her own life experiences and perspectives to the focus of this inquiry, these portraits are provided to give voice to the women and help the reader contextualize the findings that will be presented in Chapter Five (Glesne, 2011; Lincoln, 1995; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2009).

The Participants

In-Service Teacher: Beth

Beth was in just the first five years of her teaching career, but already she had built a reputation as a go-getter in the Ohio band world. She taught in a small, rural Ohio town where she was the only band teacher, grades five through twelve. This was exactly the type of job she wanted upon graduating from college and she looked forward to building her band program in the years to come.

By the time Beth was a sophomore in high school, she knew that she was going to study music education in college. She thrived in her large suburban high school’s well-recognized band program and her band teacher supported her decision. Beth’s high school band teacher was active in the Ohio Music Education Association (OMEA) and had many professional connections across the state. Even after Beth went to college at a
large, public university in the Midwest, he stayed in touch with her, providing her with a list of names of fellow band teachers across Ohio – people with whom he felt she should be acquainted. At his suggestion, she contacted those teachers and asked to work at their band camps. Many hired her, and she soon found herself working as many as five band camps a year.

Beth’s high school band teacher also helped her network at conferences by introducing her to people he thought she should know. At one conference, she met a female band teacher who has now come to be her mentor. This teacher, who was also active in OMEA and was close to retirement, mentioned that she knew of a job opening in her region and that Beth should apply immediately. Over sixty people applied for that job, but due to her experience from the band camps, Beth had the credentials to secure an interview and clinch the job. She had five weeks left still of student teaching, but was already employed for the following school year. She was in the same job at the time of our interview.

The high school from which Beth graduated was larger than the town in which she taught. She had gone from being a self-proclaimed “city slicker” to being “as far rural as you can be.” Her school district was in a remote location and she struggled to have a social life. Colleagues and friends would set her up on blind dates occasionally, which she described as “horrendous.” She joked about writing a book on these experiences. Regardless, she was not ready to leave her job on the off chance that she would meet the love of her life in another town. She said she was too practical for that.

To her relief, Beth was able to meet her mentor about once a month for dinner and conversation. They would sit and chat for up to five hours at a time, often talking shop.
and discussing their experiences as women in band teaching. Beth realized that she was outnumbered in the profession. She had pointed this out to others, including her high school band teacher, and noted that many male band teachers were surprised to realize just how few women teach band, especially at the high school level. Beth shared with me that her mentor was hopeful thirty years ago that more women would enter the field, but that not much had changed since. Beth was optimistic that there would be change and more women would become band teachers, but added that realistically, she did not expect “massive change.”

**In-Service Teacher: Kate**

Spending time with her family was a priority for Kate. Her job, teaching band grades five through twelve at a private school in a suburb of a large city in Ohio, allowed her to be home with her two young children most evenings and weekends. That particular career path was not an easy decision for Kate, as early on in her career, she most desired to teach high school band in a large suburban program.

Kate graduated from a thriving band program at a large suburban high school in the Midwest. A brass player, she was active in her school’s concert and marching bands, as well as the jazz ensembles. Her senior year of high school, Kate became the school’s first female head squad leader for the marching band. It was the mid-1990’s and at the time, she did not realize the significance of that achievement, but looking back, she is proud of her accomplishments. Throughout high school, Kate performed in regional and state concert and jazz bands, and was even invited to perform in national jazz bands, often earning the top chair in her section. Kate was aware of the research that indicates
that few women participate in jazz bands (Alexander, 2011; McKeage, 2004), but said that she never experienced sexism in the jazz world.

For college, Kate enrolled in a large, public university in the Midwest where she continued to perform in concert, jazz, and marching bands. In addition to studying music education, Kate studied performance. She took nearly every gig that was offered to her, gaining experience in everything from ballet to jazz combos to orchestras. She attributed much of her success as an educator to her performance experiences and believed that a good band teacher must also be a good musician.

By the time she graduated from college, Kate wanted to be hired as an assistant band teacher at a large suburban school band program where she would one day “move up” and become the “head director.” Instead, she took the job that was available to her, teaching band grades six through twelve in a small rural community. Her high school band had thirty students.

For the first time in Kate’s life, she felt that she was treated differently because of her gender. The rural community in which she taught had what she described as an, “Old Boys’ Network of Townies.” Kate shared with me that a school groundskeeper who wanted his daughter to make the sports team she coached blackmailed her. He threatened to sabotage the marching band practice field if his daughter was cut from the team. Kate received no support from her administration when she reported the man.

Conversely, Kate described using her gender to her advantage with her students in that community. Many of Kate’s students had parents who worked long hours and she believed that, as a consequence, the parents did not have as much time to spend with their children at home. Kate was able to tap into her students’ need for nurturing and was able
to connect with the children. She believed it was easier for her to do this than it was for her male colleagues.

After a few years of teaching in the rural community, Kate left her job and returned to her alma mater to earn a master’s degree in music education. While working towards her degree, she accepted a position assisting with the marching band at a large, well-recognized suburban high school. This was the type of school at which she had always wanted to work. One day, Kate found herself copying drills with another woman who was also assisting with the band. In the course of their conversations, they began to discuss the time commitment involved with teaching high school band at a large suburban high school. The woman described being away from her family often and not knowing her own children until they were old enough to be in the marching band. This story affected Kate and, when she was strongly encouraged to apply for a full-time band job that had opened up at that same high school, she opted not to take the position. She was not going to have children so that she could wait thirteen years to get to know them. It was a choice she was not willing to make.

Kate was happy with her job at the private school. Since it was a smaller school, she enjoyed getting to know her students personally and see them grow as musicians. The school had a pep band, but no marching band, which helped Kate maintain the work-life balance she desired. Outside of school, she directed a chamber ensemble that was highly respected in the local instrumental music community. She believed that her work with the chamber group had established her reputation as an outstanding music educator more so than her work at the private school.
As our interview came to an end, a group of young children who appeared to be in first or second grade walked by the band room wearing paper hats. Kate smiled at me and said:

I will tell you one last thing – one thing that’s great about being at THIS particular school. My son is able to go here. He was probably in that group that just walked down the hall. And so I get to see him occasionally and that does take the pressure off of being the mom and the director . . .

I’m here and I’m loving what I’m doing, and I get to see my kids.

**In-Service Teacher: Kristi**

Kristi was a band teacher at a suburban school district located outside of a medium-sized city in Ohio. While she was considered the head high school band teacher, she was also responsible for team-teaching the seventh and eighth grade bands. In addition to her concert bands, Kristi directed the high school marching band.

After attending a small, private liberal arts college in the Midwest where she earned a bachelor’s degree in performance on a brass instrument, Kristi decided to pursue a master’s degree in music education. For this, she enrolled at a medium, public university in the Midwest to complete her graduate degree. While she was in school, Kristi was mindful of her career goals. In the summers, she worked at a nationally recognized camp for the fine arts. During the school years, she was a graduate assistant for her university’s band program. When it came time to student teach, Kristi was encouraged to take both a band and general music rotation, but she refused. She knew that she had a passion just for band teaching and, instead, insisted upon middle school
and high school band placements. At that time, middle school band was what she most wanted to teach.

After substitute teaching for a semester, Kristi began applying for full-time positions and was hired eventually as a band teacher at a parochial high school in a medium-sized city in Ohio. She was proud of the fact that she was the first female band teacher at this school. After working there for two years, she decided to use the reputation she had established for herself professionally to apply for a position that had opened up in the district where she student taught. The interview process went well and she was hired as an assistant band teacher. After five years, the head band teacher retired and Kristi was promoted to become the district’s new head band teacher.

When I spoke with Kristi, she was on maternity leave from that job. She had two very young children at home, but felt fortunate to work for what she described as a “family friendly” school district. Her school principals and district superintendent all had young children, so she believed there was support for her desire to have a family. Her husband was also supportive of Kristi’s career choices and worked with her to ensure that she could meet her work obligations, including Friday night football games and weekend events.

Kristi had a heightened awareness of the fact that she was a woman teaching in a male-dominated profession. She described knowing other female band teachers who had left their teaching positions to move to other cities because their husbands found work there – even when the wives had the more lucrative careers. She was skeptical of these decisions. At football games, fellow band teachers who did not know Kristi assumed that her assistant band teacher, a man, was the head teacher. Incoming freshmen would ask
her to hold things for them while they march. She always refused and told me that she has never seen the students ask the male teachers to hold anything. Kristi loved teaching band, but struggled when I asked her to identify a time where she felt her gender was an asset to her professionally. She responded, “I don’t really feel there’s EVER an advantage to being a female band director.”

**In-Service Teacher: Lois**

Growing up in the Northeast, Lois was active in music. She sang in her church choir and played clarinet in the school band up until high school, when she switched to bassoon. In the summers, she went to a music camp at a university in New England. There, she met her private lesson instructor and her passion for music was reinforced. When it came time to go to college, she enrolled at that same university and studied music education.

In college, Lois sang in the jazz choir, played clarinet in the marching band, and refined her skills on bassoon in the concert bands and orchestras. She student taught band and choir at the high school level and enjoyed both experiences. After graduation, Lois moved to the Midwest to earn a master’s degree in bassoon performance at a large public university.

Before her first year of graduate study was over, Lois realized that she missed teaching. She most wanted to be a high school band teacher, but opted to finish her performance degree first. She struggled to find employment, which she attributed to the fact that she had a master’s degree but almost no teaching experience. A part-time job teaching choir opened up in a geographically large school district on the outskirts of the
suburban sprawl of a large city in Ohio. Lois jumped at the opportunity and has remained in the school district ever since.

Lois’ responsibilities in the school district’s music department evolved over the eighteen years she had been teaching. This was due in part to the fact that her school district was among the most rapidly growing districts in the state of Ohio. Originally hired to teach choir, Lois eventually took on a few primary general music classes, then elementary strings, some middle school general music, elementary band, and then finally a middle school band program, where she taught full-time at the time of our interview. There was some resistance by her colleagues when she was asked to take on band responsibilities. At the time, she had heard that this might have been due to the fact that she was a woman teaching band, but she was not certain that was the case. It could have just been because the head band teacher at the district’s high school, a man, was not consulted prior to her receiving her band teaching assignment. Either way, after a successful first year of band, she gained the acceptance of her colleagues and considered them to be friends.

Lois believed that it could be difficult for women to establish themselves in the band world. She cited the ability to network with those in positions of power—high school principals, athletic directors, and other band directors—who are typically male as a way to gain entry and acceptance into the profession of band teaching. She has seen her male colleagues talk to administrators about sports and other things that they were interested in; topics to which she could not relate. As a result, Lois believed that men get hired for band directing positions, in part, because they can establish a collegiality with superiors that is not otherwise accessible to many women.
In-Service Teacher: Roxanne

Roxanne was the most seasoned band teacher to participate in this study. At the time of our interview, she was in the middle of her thirty-fourth year of teaching and declared proudly that she was “living [her] dream.” Her middle school band program at a large suburban school district outside of a large city in Ohio was respected highly by many music educators in the area.

Growing up on a farm in a small town in the Midwest, Roxanne was immersed in music. Her parents loved music and, although they were not trained formally, they took great strides to ensure that their daughter was afforded the opportunity to study the art. Roxanne went to summer music camps, where she was inspired to achieve high levels of music making. She sang in the school choir, played flute in the band, and sought additional performance opportunities wherever she could. Family meant a lot to Roxanne, but she knew that she wanted to leave her small town. Upon graduation from high school, she headed to a large, public university in the Midwest where she majored in music education.

In college, Roxanne’s primary instrument was flute, but she studied voice as a secondary instrument and took all of the general music classes that were offered at her university. She believed strongly that those experiences were crucial to developing her abilities as a teacher. By the time she was ready to graduate with her bachelor’s degree, Roxanne anticipated teaching elementary general music with some beginning band responsibilities. She hoped to be married and have a large family.

Her first teaching position was at a small school district in her home state, where she was responsible for teaching all of the district’s band classes, grades five through
twelve. After a year, she took another position, and then another – each at a progressively better school district – until she settled in to a position that she held for five years, also as the district’s only band teacher, grades five through twelve. During this time, she married and gave birth to a daughter.

Near the end of her seventh year of teaching, Roxanne’s husband took a position at a college in Ohio, prompting Roxanne to seek employment near the university. She knew she did not want to be the only band teacher in her school district anymore, so she purposely sought a position where she would be a part of a multiple-person department. There was an opening in a suburban school district where she would be responsible for middle school band, assisting the high school band, and assisting the marching band. Roxanne interviewed and was offered the job. A few years after moving to Ohio, Roxanne and her husband divorced, but she chose to stay where she was.

Roxanne had a busy work schedule, but loved her job. She believed that instrumental music teaching, regardless of grade level, was a particularly demanding job. She supported this assertion with the notions that band teachers had to be experts in all instruments and willing to commit a lot of personal time to their jobs, including being available on weekends and after school. She struggled with the latter at times in her career. Being a single mother, there were occasions where she had to leave meetings and rehearsals to bring her daughter to a doctor’s appointment. At the time, she had colleagues who did not understand that there were things that no one else could do for her child. At the time of our interview, she felt as though she worked with what she called “Progressively Minded Males;” men who worked with their spouses to co-parent. She was pleased to see this type of change occur.
In-Service Teacher: Susan

Susan had been teaching middle school band in an urban school district in a large city in the Midwest for approximately fourteen years. She loved her job and felt as though teaching in an urban setting was a calling for some people, including herself. Teaching music was not always what she thought she’d be doing, though.

Susan credited her own middle school band teacher for having a major influence on her life and career. When she wanted to switch instruments as a sixth grader, he would not let her outright quit the clarinet, but instead offered to teach her a secondary instrument, the alto saxophone. This opportunity sparked a passion in Susan for learning instruments, something that she still enjoyed at the time of our interview.

The middle school Susan attended was in the same urban school district in which she taught. When it was time for high school, though, Susan’s family moved to a nearby suburb where she was part of a large, active band program. She continued to make music, performing in the school concert and marching bands. Upon graduating from high school, she enrolled in the nearest college, a large public university in the Midwest, where she matriculated as an engineering major.

One of Susan’s friends from high school encouraged her to try out for the university’s marching band. She was hesitant since it was a totally different style band from what she was used to, but she did audition and was accepted. Playing cymbals in the band was a great experience—Susan loved marching band—and so, after a year, she changed majors and studied music education.

Susan almost did not student teach. She had nearly completed her degree program and thought that perhaps she did not want to teach at all. One of her professors
encouraged her to take the internship anyway, just in case she ever changed her mind. She student taught in a suburban school district where she connected with the high school students, but not so much with the middle school students. After completing her degree, she enrolled in the same university’s master’s program in counseling. While she was completing an urban middle school internship for her counseling program, Susan kept finding herself stopping by the band room to see what was going on. She realized that she did like middle school students after all and, more than anything, liked teaching music. She decided to pursue a career as a band teacher.

Susan’s job search was relatively easy. She believed that the timing was right for her, as there was a big demand for educators fourteen years ago, when she began teaching. Susan was offered a job teaching band at a high school, but the school year had already started and she was concerned that it would be messy to start there mid-year, especially in the middle of marching band season. Instead, she opted to teach band at a middle school. She had remained at that grade level since.

Susan cited her desire to maintain a work-life balance as to why she had chosen to continue teaching at the middle school level. She was not interested in the time commitment she believed accompanies a high school band job. Susan was active in her church community and had additional hobbies. She liked her schedule as it was currently.

Susan struggled occasionally with feeling as though she did not “fit” in the music education world. She would sometimes avoid in-service conferences, including the annual meetings of OMEA. She believed those conferences were boring, and was disappointed that there were not many sessions dedicated to the needs of urban teachers.
Although she did occasionally go to conferences and has enjoyed catching up with former college classmates, ultimately Susan felt like she did not belong in that world. Gesturing to herself, she pointed out, “I’m not your typical band director.”

**Pre-Service Teacher: Ashley**

At the time of our interview, Ashley was completing the final semester of her undergraduate studies, student teaching at a suburban school district near her large, public university. She was a dual major, earning bachelor’s degrees in percussion performance as well as music education. In addition to her primary instrument, Ashley also had extensive experience with piano and alto saxophone. Her choice to play the latter was pragmatic. Knowing that she would someday be a music teacher, Ashley thought it would be good for her to gain some experience performing on a wind instrument.

Ashley was from a small town on the East coast. Her high school band program was quite small—just one band for the whole school—but she took private lessons at a young age and excelled musically. Ashley began to be accepted into regional and then statewide bands and orchestras and found that she really enjoyed performing. It was those experiences that led her to major in music in college.

Ashley was not bothered by performing on an instrument traditionally played by men. Throughout elementary and middle school, no one picked on her for being a girl who played percussion because she was always the best in the section. Even in high school, when she was performing in ensembles outside of school, she was still one of the top players. She did not have to fight to gain acceptance – she was able to hold her own. Additionally, Ashley’s private percussion teachers were women. Being a woman in the percussion section was not an unusual thing for her.
This tradition of studying with women continued into college. At her university, Ashley’s studio teacher was a woman. She explained that this was not an intentional decision, but that she just liked working with the professor and thought she was nice at her audition. While in college, Ashley realized that she was not necessarily the best performer in her studio, but she never felt like she was teased for being a female percussionist.

Ashley’s immediate plans after graduation were to obtain a teaching job. She was most interested in teaching beginning band or general music. She liked the content of the general music curriculum and the fact that lessons could be diverse and employ different teaching strategies. She was drawn to that kind of variety, as she felt band teaching could be redundant, particularly at the upper grade levels. She liked working with beginning instrumentalists, though, helping them to progress on their instruments. Overall, she felt drawn to younger students—elementary and primary school ages—and would be happy with any job at those levels.

Ashley was basing her job search around where she had professional connections and/or family. This included the region around her university as well as several states on the East coast. Although she would one day like to have a family of her own, at the time of our interview, that was not Ashley’s priority. If she does have children one day, she did not anticipate that decision affecting her career. Ashley explained that her mother worked while she was growing up and so she knew firsthand that it was possible to have both a family and a successful career.
Pre-Service Teacher: Jennifer

When I met with Jennifer for our interview, she was in the middle of her junior year of undergraduate studies at a large, public university in the Midwest. As a woodwind player, Jennifer had gained performance experience by playing in her university’s concert bands, chamber ensembles, and fife and drum corps. She had not performed in the university’s marching band, but had four years of marching band experience from high school.

Jennifer’s decision to major in music came from encouragement from her immediate family and members of her hometown church. She was successful in music and enjoyed performing around her community. Additionally, as she went through the ranks of a popular, national organization for young women, she found that she enjoyed working with and being a role model for the younger girls. This prompted her to concentrate her undergraduate studies not just on music, but on music education.

Given the state of the economy, Jennifer’s most lofty career goal was to “get a job.” She preferred to teach high school band, but was trying to keep her options open and planned to include middle school band, orchestra, and general music teaching positions in her job search. As for graduate school, she was not certain what she would do yet, but was considering a master’s degree in music education, conducting, or academic administration.

Family plans were not something that Jennifer was concerned with at the time of our interview. She was hoping to teach in Ohio so that she could be close to her immediate family, but was open to the idea of moving out of state if her dream job were available. She realized that the job market would be competitive and worried that she
might have to teach at a school where she had multiple responsibilities, such as band with a section or two of choir and orchestra.

Jennifer had a female band teacher in high school, a woman who she considered a mentor and with whom she still kept in touch. As a result, Jennifer was surprised when I told her that just 20% of high school band teachers were women in the state of Ohio. She joked that this might work in her favor when applying for jobs, as some schools might want some diversity in their staff. On a more serious note, though, she expressed the belief that, in the eyes of an employer, her skills would surpass her gender and that they would recognize that she was competent and worthy of a job teaching band.

**Pre-Service Teacher – Matilda**

Matilda was student teaching at the time of our interview. Her assignment—middle and high school band in a large, wealthy suburb—was among the most coveted internship placements at her large, public university in the Midwest. Career development was fresh on Matilda’s mind when we met, as she was entering a period of uncertainty as she began to apply for teaching jobs.

Growing up in a suburb of a medium-sized city in the Northeast, Matilda played a brass instrument in several of her school’s ensembles, as well as a regional youth orchestra. When she enrolled in college, she first chose to major in music education, switched to performance for several years, before finally returning to music education. This last decision was made based on the enjoyment she got from interacting with other people as well as the fact that she could not see herself working professionally in a practice room, isolated, for multiple hours a day.
Since she had three years of lessons under her belt from her performance degree requirements, Matilda was free her senior year to play a secondary instrument in the university’s marching band. The decision to play in this ensemble was pragmatic. Since the Northeastern community in which Matilda grew up did not have an active marching band, she believed it would be important for her to gain that type of experience if she was to pursue a career in teaching band in Ohio. She learned a lot, while also having a great time.

At the time of our interview, Matilda was most interested in obtaining a position teaching middle school band. She had come to this decision based on a variety of factors, including her preference to refine her teaching skills before working with high school students, as well as the amusement she got from the sometimes-goofy personality characteristics of middle school students. Matilda believed that there was a nurturing quality about some women that guided them to younger children. In this case, this quality—which she described as a “maternal instinct”—had drawn her to middle school students.

The job search process and its related uncertainty were stressful for Matilda. She knew that there were many strong teachers applying for a limited number of positions. Knowing that her student loan payments would begin in a few months regardless of whether or not she had found a job was something she thought about every day. Matilda’s mother wanted her to move back home to the Northeast, but she had heard some horror stories about a lack of jobs there. Additionally, she felt as though her time as an undergraduate had helped her network with the teaching community in the region of her university. In her opinion, her best option was to stay put.
Further complicating her job search was the fact that Matilda was in a committed relationship with a boyfriend who was graduating with her – also with a degree in music education, also interested in teaching band. When Matilda told me about her boyfriend, she seemed embarrassed to say that he was affecting her job search. When I asked her about this, she expressed the concern that I would judge her. She did not want to be seen as simply following him around, letting the man do the work; but at the same time, it was a priority for her that the relationship survived and flourished. She was conflicted and living with uncertainty; but for the time being, she chose to remain optimistic that everything would work out.

**Summary**

Although each woman had her own career intentions and experiences, there were some patterns and themes that emerged across the narratives shared by the participants. These patterns and themes, along with negative case analyses, are presented in the findings in Chapter Five. Discussion, conclusions, and implications are provided in Chapter Six.
Chapter 5: Findings

Organization of Chapter

This chapter is organized by the domains of inquiry and research questions outlined in Chapters One and Three. Findings will be presented alongside related vignettes from participant interviews, my research journal and discussions with the external auditor. In addition to the a priori domains of inquiry, a fourth domain, Issues Surrounding Gender, emerged throughout the course of this study. The themes and patterns from this domain will also be presented in this chapter.

A Note on Intersectionality

It became evident throughout the course of this study that factors other than gender played a role in several of the participants’ professional careers. For example, Roxanne perceived the profession quite differently than Beth, a possible consequence due to the fact that there was a thirty-year age difference between the two women. As will be discussed further, Roxanne believed that her own professional persona had “evolved” over the years, evidence of a notable intersection between age and gender.

Likewise, the intersection of ethnicity and gender became apparent as the study progressed. Eight of the participants were white; however, Susan was black. Susan did not conceive of gender as an asset or a hindrance in her professional career. Although she offered great insight into many of the research questions, gender was not something
Susan thought about often, due in part to her ethnicity. It is notable that there are even fewer band teachers of color than there are women in band teaching. Walking into a room of band teachers, Susan might not just be the only female, but she very well might be the only teacher of color. As she herself pointed out, Susan was, “Not your typical band director.” This constant reminder of seeing herself as “other” made Susan feel as though she did not “fit” in the profession, to the point that she no longer attended some professional development conferences.

Also of concern to Susan was the lack of support she felt from the music education community when it came to the needs of urban music teachers. Susan was the only participant in this study to have taught band in an urban school district. She has had to struggle to figure out what “works” with her students. She has performed popular music with her students and had pictures of R&B, rap, and popular music artists hanging in her classroom. She pointed out that she did not know who many of the artists even were, as she was limited by her own classical music training.

Rather than concern herself with things she could not change concerning her ethnicity, gender, or school in which she taught, Susan focused her attention on her students. This student-centered approach to teaching was evident in that she redirected our interview several times to the needs of urban schoolteachers rather than discuss some topics surrounding gender. She explained, “Just the kids influence me. No one but the kids and whatever the Lord is telling me. Of course, whatever my curriculum is [laughs]. The National Standards are what guides me [laughs].”

Issues surrounding the intersection of sexual orientation and gender did not arise over the course of this study. To the best of my knowledge, none of the participants
identified as LGBTQ; however, it is possible that sexual orientation might have affected the perceptions of the women. This intersection, as well as the related complexities surrounding the ways in which age, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation all intersect with each other warrants further investigation.

A Priori Domains

Gaining Entry Into the Profession

How do women choose the grade level they teach? What factors influence this decision?

The participants in this study chose the grade level(s) they taught in a variety of ways, with several different factors influencing their decisions. These factors included: job availability, family responsibilities, perceived time commitment, and the desire to see musical and social development in students over time.

Job availability.

For Lois, choosing the grade level she taught was a matter of what positions were available at the time of her job search. Although she thought she was going to be a high school band teacher, no such openings were available in the city in which she was looking for a job. She had student taught both band and choir, so when a part-time choir position became available, she jumped at the opportunity. It was a matter of employment versus unemployment, and it was better to have a part-time job teaching choir than no job at all. She explained:

There was an opening in the district where I work now for a half-time assistant to the choir director. And what happened was I got a call. I was doing a band camp at a nearby suburban school district. And they- the principal called me and said,
“We had a position for a half-time band assistant but we have already filled it. But your name popped up for assistant choir. Would you be interested?” And I said, “Yes.” Thankfully, I had choir experience. It just wasn’t my degree or whatever.

This became a trend for Lois—taking the job that was available—as she found herself in her current middle school band teaching position due to some changes in her school district’s staffing that would have left her unemployed otherwise. Luckily for her, she really wanted to teach band:

I started here half-time as vocal music classes and assisting. And then I started teaching kindergarten. And then an opening came up for half-time elementary with the half-time middle school choir. So I did that for a year. And then I ended up all elementary for a long time because that was what was open. And having a job and working is important. So I taught kindergarten, first grade, and fourth grade and fifth grade strings. And then eventually, fifth grade band. . . . I kind of got my foot in the back door as far as doing band . . . and [years later] they announced they were opening up this middle school the next year and so there was a band position here; orchestra, band, choir. And I applied for the band position and I got it. And then- so that’s how I ended up here.

For Lois, “having a job and working [was] important.” Kristi, on the other hand, felt adamant that she was not going to take just any job, but would only consider a band job:
You know, in this changing market there are more and more band directors that (sic) are having to pick up general music classes and those sorts of things, but I think- you know, I was really honest with myself in that I don’t want a job where I’m teaching general music . . . I don’t want to be a choir director, I don’t want to be a general music teacher. I want to be a band director and I knew that I was willing to put the work and the effort and have the tenacity to follow that, whereas I think other people will, you know, “I’ll take any job I get offered.” And I personally didn’t even apply for jobs that weren’t middle school or high school band based.

It is possible that some of the pre-service teachers in this study might have experiences more like Lois than Kristi. Although each of the pre-service teachers had a “most desired job” in mind, both Jennifer and Ashley expressed concern that the job market was competitive:

Jennifer: [A challenge to securing a job may be] competition in terms of who else is applying. I like to think that I have a decent chance, but I’m not the principal or the superintendent making the decision.

Matilda: I feel like I’m- there are a lot of really qualified people going out onto the job market. Maybe people who are more qualified or have more experience. And so that might be the biggest thing . . . I’m entering with already a lot of fish in the sea. And so I just may not be the most qualified fish, if you will.
Matilda also pointed out that her student loan payments would begin shortly after graduation regardless of whether or not she found a teaching position:

I also have a huge amount of student loans, which is really stressful to think about how they’re going to be recalled. And if I don’t have a job, then I’m going to have to take up waitressing or something to just pay the bills, and so that freaks me out . . . I think about it every day.

While Matilda was the only participant to mention student loans, it was possible that the other pre-service teachers also had student loans and held similar concerns. Regardless of their potential concerns, all of the pre-service teachers shared that they were trying to remain flexible in their job searches so that they could find a teaching position, regardless of the grade level and/or specific music subject area. Jennifer expressed her feelings about this:

I’ve tried to keep as many options open. And so I’m open to teaching middle school, I’m open to teaching orchestra. General music I think I could do. I think it would be fun. So, get a job in some capacity in teaching music . . . I would really like to teach high school band.

Family.

The desire to have a family was not at the top of Kate’s mind when she first began teaching; but, after a few years, it became the most significant contributing factor to her career path. She thought she wanted to teach band at a large, suburban high school with
an active marching band. When she was afforded such an opportunity, working as a marching band assistant teacher, she discovered that she was not happy. Kate explained:

It kind of dawned on me that one of the reasons I wasn’t happy with the marching band thing was the schedule. It didn’t leave a lot of room for family . . . one of the people I worked with there was telling me how she missed most of her kid’s childhood because she was always at rehearsal . . . and then I thought back to my high school band director. Same story . . . I was watching the other staff members and how they were juggling or not juggling- and they are amazing people. How they were doing it is just beyond me . . . but one said, “I’m not really balancing right now. It’s the band family.” And that was a priority I was not willing to make.

For Kate, the desire to spend time with her family accompanied concerns about the perceived time commitment associated with teaching marching band. Had there not been a marching band, she would have pursued a job that had opened in that same school district. Instead, she opted for a smaller, private school that did not have a marching band.

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3 Research Journal/External Auditor: March 5, 2013. Allison and I discussed the perceived time commitment involved with teaching marching band. We both agreed that this was a large time commitment, but also thought that it could not possibly be the entire reason why there are so few women in high school band teaching positions. Marching band was not very popular where I used to teach in NY; the district in which I was employed only had a parade band that performed two times a year. Allison’s band program on the West coast does not have a marching band program, either. Both of us still were/are in the minority in our teaching positions. I cannot help but wonder: When marching band is eliminated as a contributing factor, does the percentage of women teaching high school band increase?
Matilda also had concerns about maintaining family relationships while also teaching band. Although the topic of having children did not come up in our interview, she did express the concern that she would like to sustain her relationship with her boyfriend. This could prove challenging, as they were both graduating at the same time and both desired a job teaching band. She recognized that it was possible that her wish to continue her relationship might affect her job search. She shared her feelings of uncertainty in this vignette:

"It does influence me where he ends up . . . We’re both graduating this year and so it’s a really tough point where we don’t know where we’re going to be. Or, if we’re going to be on opposite sides of the country, or what’s going on there . . . You don’t want to be the girl that’s like, “I just follow my boyfriend everywhere;” but at the same time, it is a PRIORITY that you want the relationship to survive and flourish . . . I think not knowing where we’re going to BE, it’s very hard to feel stable and secure." 

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4 External Auditor: March 5, 2013. Is this also her questioning whether it’s reasonable for her to be thinking of family when she is considering jobs that include marching band, etc.? Allison later admitted that she may have read too much into this participant statement, explaining that she, too, had bias after “seeing other women give up their jobs due to the time commitment of teaching band.”

Research Journal: February 7, 2013. Matilda’s quote about maintaining her relationship while job searching received a lot of discussion at the OMEA graduate research roundtable today. One professor said that it would be “interesting to see if she steps aside so her boyfriend can have a job,” as they possibly will be competing with each other for employment. He told me that he has seen many of his undergraduates experience this and that usually the relationship OR the career survives, but not both. I think back to my friends’ relationships when I was in college and, yes, that seemed to be the case.
In our interview, Matilda gave no indication of whether or not she and her boyfriend had applied for the same job openings. Either way, maintaining their relationship while searching for employment was an enormous source of stress for her.

It is important to note that not all of the participants believed that their desires to have a family (if applicable) would affect their career paths. Susan, Beth, Jennifer and Ashley did not have children, nor were they in relationships. Additionally, each expressed a commitment to their jobs even if those statuses were to change. Kristi, who did have two young children at home, also dismissed the notion that having a family would affect her career. Out of school on maternity leave at the time of our interview, she told me, “I’ve definitely kept my hands in my band. I’m not completely gone out of it.” When I asked her if she anticipated changes to her career plans, she explained the support system she had established so that she could continue thriving in her job:

No. I’ve worked out a plan on how I can make it work. I know the first couple of years are going to be rough and always having a Friday night- you know, always have to have a babysitter Friday night or my husband needs to make sure he’s home, but I’m already working out those connections where I can get that. Our administration is very a family-friendly administration . . . so, I anticipate as they get older . . . they can come along with me on some events as long as I bring a babysitter⁵.

⁵ Research Journal: February 13, 2013. Hearing Kristi explain her plan for raising her family while still teaching band produced a flashback from when I was in high school. I distinctly recall my high school band teacher bringing her daughters with her to evening marching band rehearsals and parades. Perhaps that is the key to success as a woman in band teaching – finding the “family friendly” school district?
Kristi attributed her anticipated ability to maintain her current job while also raising two children to the “family-friendly” school district in which she was working. Other districts may be more or less supportive of her needs. Finding the right “fit” in a job is something that a number of the participants expressed as an important component to being successful in a teaching position. Roxanne explained her beliefs on this topic, “you have to choose to be a part of something that is aligned with your personal philosophy.” In the case of Kristi, her family-friendly school district enabled her to maintain her job while also raising a family.

**Perceived time commitment.**

All of the in-service participants expressed the belief that high school band teaching, in particular, was a time-consuming job. This assertion was brought up by each of the women, as I did not ask them directly about this. The ways in which the participants approached managing this perceived time commitment in their professional lives varied.

For Kate, the time commitment she believed accompanied taking a job at a large suburban high school was a deal breaker. To spend time with her family, she chose to take on a different, less flashy teaching position. Similarly, Susan opted to remain teaching at the middle school level, even though she thought she would one day “move up” to a high school band teaching position. Although she did not have children, Susan had many outside activities in her personal life that she favored over taking a job with a greater perceived time commitment.

Kristi and Roxanne also believed that high school band was a large time commitment; however, they were careful to select school districts that they believed
would support their personal life plans. Having had several years of teaching under her belt before securing her current job, Roxanne was able to handpick the type of job she took, making sure the district’s philosophy of music education aligned with her own. Kristi’s “family-friendly” school district allowed her the flexibility she needed to raise her children while maintaining her teaching schedule. She chose to leave a job for that district, a decision she made after acquiring first-hand knowledge of the school environment.

Conversely, Lois and Beth sacrificed some of their personal life commitments in order to fulfill the requirements of their teaching positions. Lois’ primary teaching responsibilities were at one of her school district’s middle schools; however, she assisted with the nearby high school’s marching band in the fall. To balance this work and her family responsibilities, she elected to give up some of her “outside” activities, such as teaching private lessons and serving as the assistant conductor of a local community band. Beth had also given up some personal life commitments, but in her case they were her social activities and graduate school plans. Beth described how her life changed since taking on her job:

Well, I have no personal life. I mean, I’m not married, I’m not dating and I don’t have kids. I’m about as boring in the realm of personal life, as you can get . . . So the plan was I was going to teach for three years, the bare minimum for any doctoral program, and then go to a large, public university on the West coast and do the master’s/PhD. But I fell more in love with teaching than I anticipated. Now, the whole personal life thing, it doesn’t really exist and I don’t know when it’s going to happen . . . I’m not ready to leave my job, whether it be for graduate
school or for another job just on the off chance that maybe I’ll meet the love of
my life . . . The position that I’m in, [the state of Ohio’s master’s degree]
requirement doesn’t scare me . . . and my concern with the master’s is that I don’t
want to leave my job to get a master’s. I don’t want to do one of those online
master’s . . . But now it’s like, “So this is what I’m doing the next 30 years, or am
I going to go to grad school, have a family, whatever?”

For Beth, her drive to obtain her desired career left little time in her life for much
else. She was uncertain about what she would do in the future, but for the time being, she
had no immediate plans to change her current career path.

It is interesting to note that none of the pre-service teachers discussed the time
commitment that is thought to accompany band teaching jobs. This could be for a number
of different reasons, including the fact that until they were in their own teaching
positions, the responsibilities of teaching band and its related time commitment were not
yet salient.

*Desire to see student development.*

A pattern that emerged throughout the study was the desire by many of the in-
service band teachers to witness musical growth in their students over time. Kate, Beth
and Kristi all taught some combination of elementary, middle, and high school band and
spent anywhere from six to eight years with their students. Over the course of that time,
they were able to see their students mature, developing as musicians and as young
citizens. Kate explained:
I teach 5-12 here. I like seeing them at that young age. I like working with them at that young age. I like working with them at that advanced age. The fact is that this is my eighth year here. My seniors- I met them when they were ten years old. That’s pretty amazing.

For Kristi, Beth and Kate, it was also important to be able to ascertain some level of control over their students’ musical development. These participants were able to ensure that their students learned music in the ways that they believed were best. Additionally, the women expressed the belief that this desire to see growth in young musicians was inherent to women and that many men would not have the same aspirations. Kristi shared:

There are different aspects in teaching middle school than when teaching high school and I think the part that I most like is having control over those students from the younger grades on what they’re learning and how they’re evolving. I don’t think I would want a job where I just- the first time I see these kids are as freshmen. So I enjoy the aspect of the whole development . . . I think that women like seeing that growth and development. I know there are many factors, but I think a lot of men would prefer to stay at the high school, drink coffee, and then just deal with their high school students. I think that that’s an option that, if given, they would prefer. Because middle school is a lot more work. High school is a big time commitment. There are a lot of aspects that make high school challenging, but middle school, you’re sweating. They make you sweat. You are working hard,
they are infuriating, they can make you crazy, but seeing that development, I think, is really rewarding.

Beth agreed:

I teach- it’s 5-12, a rural program. My kids only know ME as their band director. And I have seen- now I’ve only been there four years. After four more years after I’ll see my kids graduate it will be an even closer bond. But I’m the only band director that my fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth graders had. And so I like that. I’ve seen them grow up from the first squeaks and squawks to making music. And no, I don’t think so [that this is inherent to men, too]. I don’t feel that way. As much as I loved my high school band director, I don’t feel as though we had a personal, close bond as I was going through his program and with the things I was doing . . . I just don’t think that was a focus of his. I don’t think he cared. I shouldn’t say, “cared.” He didn’t care to have that relationship. He cared to make sure we were a good band. The interpersonal relationships were not a focus.

Susan also expressed the desire to see growth in her students. Although she only had her students for three years while they were in middle school, she explained that she “like[d] being able to start them out and see that growth.” Susan also shared that, for her, seeing the growth in her students went beyond witnessing musical growth. Witnessing her students develop into young adults was, in many ways, “more important to [her] than teaching the music.”
Both Matilda and Ashley expressed that they were interested in teaching beginning instrumentalists. They did not, however, indicate that seeing growth in their students was the motivation for these decisions. Instead, they indicated a preference for the typical social development of the age group as well as the content of most music curricula at those grade levels. These two elements will be discussed in greater depth later in this chapter.

**What grade level(s) do female band-track educators most desire to teach when first entering the profession?**

A majority of participants most preferred teaching high school band when they first entered the job market. Jennifer, a pre-service teacher, was open to virtually any music teaching job, but most hoped to take on a high school band position. Beth, Susan, Lois and Kate all thought they would be high school band teachers in large, suburban programs, but for the reasons discussed in this chapter, all took slightly different career paths. They shared their initial career goals with me:

Jennifer: So, my plan is to graduate with my four-year BME and I’ve tried rather than to say, “I want to teach high school band, only this. Nothing else.” I’ve tried to keep as many options open . . . but I would really like to teach high school band.

Kate: I realized I could do the high school thing, and do it decently. And so I went to college and then I think at my college in particular, the goal was, “I want this BIG [high school] contest band. I want 300 or 400 kids in my program.” They kind of- I don’t think the university does this intentionally, and I don’t know if
they do this now- but that’s kind of- if you’re in band, that’s kind of the picture
they paint for you . . . And I totally bought in. That’s what I wanted.

Lois: I always thought that- when I was in it, I always thought I was going to be a
band director someday at a high school. Like that was- everyone leaves their high
school and thinks, I’m going to be a band director.” And so I thought I knew
that’s what I wanted to do.

Susan: I had in my head, “Oh, I’m going to teach in a suburb and I’m going to do
high school.” I was going to teach high school. Even when I did my student
teaching, I didn’t really love my middle school experience, but I really connected
with the high school students.

Not every participant wanted to teach high school band. Matilda was hoping to
teach middle school band, as she felt drawn to the personalities of the students at those
grade levels. Kristi thought middle school band was something she really wanted to do,
for similar reasons as Matilda. She enjoyed the fact that her job allowed her to work with
middle school-age students while she also taught at the high school level:

When I was training I thought middle school was something I really wanted to do.
And even today I really enjoy that age. We team teach in my district. So I’m
considered the head high school director, but I go to the middle school and team
with the other teachers there. And so I do love that grade, the seventh and eighth
grade.
Ashley preferred to teach younger students and, as a result, was looking for jobs teaching elementary general music. She was open to the idea of elementary school band, also due to her desire to work with young children. It was interesting to me that Ashley described her desire to work with “that age group” in terms of her desire to not work with high school students. This will be discussed later in this chapter.

Incidentally, Roxanne (who spent her entire career working with high school and middle school students) initially thought she would teach elementary general music as well. She had studied extensively as a vocalist and felt well-prepared for such a position:

I sing a lot. I came close to finishing- well, I took all the general music classes that were offered at my undergraduate institution and I sang. I took secondary voice applied, etc. That has been CRITICAL for my teaching . . . I actually thought I was going to end up doing an elementary general music/beginner band kind of position.

Roxanne explained that, although she initially wanted to teach elementary general music, as her “life shook itself out,” she “ended up having a whole different level of passion” for teaching middle school band than she had anticipated.

**Are women applying for high school band teaching jobs? If so, are they receiving, taking, and succeeding in such interviews?**

All of the in-service band teachers had applied for one or more high school band teaching jobs and most had received interviews for at least one of those positions. Success in those interviews varied, though.
Roxanne, who began her career in the late 1970’s, was certain that there were jobs she was not offered due to her gender. She told me about an interview she had in the mid-1980’s for a high school band teaching position:

The principal, he was- he had a reputation for being notoriously nasty. And I knew this going in, but it was a higher profile program and I wanted the position. And anyhow, in this interview, the principal asked me how I was going to control lippy six-foot-four trombone players. And my response was, “Well, according to my study of the state revised code, I can’t physically beat a child into submission, so I think we’re talking about a battle of wits, and I think I’ve managed to win all of those up to this point.”

Roxanne did not get the job. Although all of the in-service teachers expressed the belief that the profession of band teaching was becoming more welcoming to women, Kristi shared a similar story as Roxanne – a story that occurred twenty years later, in 2004:

I interviewed a lot when I was first looking for a job, and I do feel that there were interviews where they would ask me questions that they would never ask a male.

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6 Research Journal/External Audit: February 28, 2013. I am really struggling to remain positive throughout this study. Roxanne told me today that she thinks the profession is getting better, citing the fact that people are not allowed to discriminate against women anymore. Well, yes, it’s technically illegal now, but her story from the mid-1980’s was EXACTLY like what happened to me in 2003. I feel as though I was discriminated against, even if legally that was not the case. Do I think things are getting better? No, I don’t. I feel furious about this – why do the same things keep happening over and over again? Allison agrees that not much has changed, but thinks the reason why some people say that things are better for women in band teaching is because it is more pleasant to think that way than it is to question if any progress has actually been made.
The marching band that I conduct now is 150 students and we’re a great band. I love working with them. And I was interviewing for a job of a marching band that had about 100 kids in the high school band and one of the principals asked me if I would be scared in front of all those kids. And I’m in this interview thinking, “They would NEVER ask a man if he would be scared in front of 100 kids in marching band.” So there have definitely been times like that where you have interactions with people. You know, obviously, I did not get that job, but if that’s the attitude they have, obviously that’s not a job I want.

In addition to the feelings of discrimination that Kristi and Roxanne experienced, the potential of unspoken bias in interviews was also on the minds of many of the participants. Even though Roxanne was comforted by the fact that now there is legislation that prevents the discrimination against women for being pregnant, that exact concern was fresh on the mind of Beth. She worried that if she were to change jobs in the near future, hiring committees would question her commitment to the job:

Let’s say I wanted a large suburban job- let’s say hypothetically I went and applied for that job. I could see it on their end- they could see, she’s a twenty-something female. You know, we don’t know if she’s married or not, we can’t ask her if she’s married or not, but she’s in a prime baby-making age, right? So they could make assumptions, if that’s what she’s going to do. Is she really going to want to do this job to the full extent if she’s going to want to start having kids in the next year?
Kristi, too, was given some related job search advice:

When I was interviewing for jobs, one of my supervising teachers for my student teaching told me not to wear my engagement ring in interviews . . . My husband bought a really big engagement ring. And she said that if a principal sees you wearing an engagement ring that big, he’s going to think you don’t have to work and, at the first opportunity, you are going to be out of there. And so don’t wear that in an interview. I think some principals DO have that opinion – that a female band director isn’t going to be there for the long haul or she isn’t going to be able to handle a classroom.

Not all of the participants expressed concern over discrimination nor did some experience gender bias in the hiring process. Susan was offered the first high school band teaching job for which she applied, while Kate was strongly encouraged to take on a position at a large, thriving, suburban high school band program. Beth clinched her dream job with ease. Both Kristi and Roxanne eventually were offered jobs with which they were highly satisfied. Overall, the in-service participants of this study applied for high school band teaching jobs and, depending on the individuals on their hiring committees, had varying levels of success.

Although all of the in-service teachers had applied for at least one high school band teaching job, none of the pre-service teachers had yet applied for such a position. The topic of working with high school students did come up in our interviews, though. The content of those interviews will be explored further in the presentation of the Confidence & Self-Efficacy domain.
Confidence & Self-Efficacy

To what extent are pre- and in-service female band teachers confident in their perceived teaching abilities?

In general, the in-service participants were far more confident in their teaching abilities than the pre-service participants. This was not surprising, as the in-service participants have persisted in the profession, gaining experience and subsequent self-assurance in the years they have been teaching.

In-service teachers.

All of the in-service participants described themselves as naturally confident. It is unclear, though, whether their confidence was due to their success as teachers or whether their successes were the results of their confidence. Susan felt as though she had “developed confidence over the years,” whereas Lois believed that, to get a job in band teaching, it was important to have the confidence to network with the appropriate people. She described building a relationship with her former principal: “You have to find a happy way to connect. My principal was really into rock music and pop . . . So whenever we talked, we talked about rock . . . so we had a connection that way.”

Likewise, the ability to network is what Beth identified as her biggest strength professionally:

I feel like I’m confident going to conference and talking to whomever I need to.

Going to conference does not intimidate me walking up and introducing myself to whomever, whether it be the executive director of OMEA or some professor I would like to study with. I’m not intimidated by that.
Kristi and Roxanne attributed their successes as band teachers to their high levels of self-efficacy and/or confidence.

Kristi: If I were not confident and not aggressive, I don’t feel they would take me as seriously as the head director or seriously in my job . . . I had a lot more experience, I felt a lot more confident, I was a lot more “with it” . . . before I student taught.

Roxanne: I have a personal energy level and project confidence. The early days of my teaching, I can remember hours upon hours of me writing lesson plans . . . there are no shortcuts to becoming confident in your skill.

Kate, Lois, Susan and Beth expressed that the belief that they had high levels of assertiveness and/or professional role confidence:

Kate: It takes a certain personality to lead a group and that strong personality—alpha personality—is not found in everybody . . . when I’m on the podium, it’s Alpha Kate.

Lois: I’m pretty assertive anyways . . . but I’ve seen other people who are in- not only just band, though, also in other areas of music. And I’ve thought, you need to be more- come on you got to stand up for yourself. Otherwise, they’re just going to walk all over you.

Susan: I wouldn’t say that I lacked confidence . . . It wasn’t so much like I couldn’t do it, I just didn’t want to . . . I could say that I’ve developed confidence over the years. My natural personality is chill, but I can’t necessarily be chill like that at work.
Beth: I’m an atypical female . . . my high energy, in-your-face is atypical . . . but just as far as being assertive and confident, yes, I am.

Susan was the only in-service participant who indicated that her levels of professional role confidence had increased since becoming a teacher. Between highlighting their achievements as band teachers and musicians, as well as describing their philosophies of education, it was very clear throughout this study that all six in-service teachers had high levels of professional self-efficacy, including Susan. Also of note is the fact that several of the participants associated confidence with their personalities; this will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

**Pre-service teachers.**

The pre-service teachers had varying levels of self-reported professional role confidence. Additionally, each of these participants had some components of their teaching about which they were less confident than others. For Matilda and Ashley, their perceived strengths and weaknesses as teachers had influenced their decisions of what kind of music teachers they most hoped to be.

Matilda was admittedly very critical of herself. When I asked her to describe her strengths as an educator, she identified several areas, slowly. However, upon being asked about her weaknesses, the rate of her speech increased and the list was quite lengthy. When I addressed this behavior with her, she explained:

I’m notoriously hard on myself. Everyone that knows me- my boyfriend is constantly like, “You’re doing that thing again.” I think I’m a perfectionist and so I become very critical of myself in terms of things that I can improve on. And so
I’m constantly logging that instead of necessarily logging what I do well . . . It makes me very hesitant sometimes. Because I- I don’t know. There’s this apprehension that I might be wrong or that I might fail. And so it’s been very difficult for me to- to put myself OUT there enough to take that risk. To realize that, even if I fail, no one dies.7

This fear of being wrong had also affected Matilda’s student teaching experience. Although she was highly respected by her music education professors, Matilda admitted to worrying constantly about her abilities. She did not feel free to contribute and participate in her student teaching and struggled with the fear of over-stepping her bounds or talking when she should not be talking. Additionally, Matilda was intimidated by the curricular demands placed on high school band teachers, which contributed to her decision to pursue a job teaching middle school band. She shared that, “It’s more approachable for me to refine my teaching and teaching techniques in a situation that is a little less technically demanding.”

Ashley had similar concerns as Matilda. She was more nervous about her middle school band student teaching assignment than her elementary general music placement. She explained that this was because she struggled to remember the fundamentals of every

7 Research Journal: January 22, 2013. The interview with Matilda went very well today. She was incredibly insightful – I suspect I will be quoting from her interview many times in the write-up. One thing I am concerned, though, is that I found myself wanting to mentor her. She seemed as though she needed guidance, direction and support. I fear that Matilda will never get a job in band if she does not become more confident in her abilities. It is going to be difficult to remove myself emotionally from this project. I want to help these young women entering the profession. But then again, who’s to say that I know what is best for them? Besides, I find myself limited by my own insecurities in some areas. Do women ever outgrow these fears?
instrument. She believed that general music teaching used a different, less technical, set of skills. Additionally, Ashley explained that she enjoyed working with young students, which contributed to her decision to pursue a job teaching elementary general music or beginning band.

Upon further discussion of this topic, though, it came to light that Ashley held some concerns that had pushed her away from working with upper grade levels. She shared that she believed that, “high school students are kind of sassy and mean.” Consequently, she did not want to “deal with them” and as such, had decided to dedicate her career to working with younger students. Ashley shared with me that she perceived classroom management to be easier in the general music classroom than in the band room:

I’m not saying that- not downplaying what general music teachers have to do, it’s just like there’s less technique that they’re trying to figure out, like what’s going on and stuff. And they’re all- all the students are kind of doing one thing, whereas in band, you have the brass doing one thing, the woodwinds doing one thing, the percussion doing God knows what. And then- so it’s just more to keep your eye on at a time. So I think I’m more nervous about that. Less comfortable with it is the word.

Classroom management was daunting for Jennifer, too. She described classroom management as “scary” for her to think about, particularly when it came to working with...

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8 External Auditor: March 5, 2013. *Is this her questioning her ability to handle them?* Ashley had told me that she thought classroom management was easier with younger students, but it was Allison who prompted me to consider why Ashley believed this.
male students. She explained, “I’m used to groups of 15 girls, so when you throw in boys, and they’re a little more rambunctious, and they’re taller than me, it’s just kind of unsettling.” Although she realized that, “they’re probably not as scary as they seem,” working with male students was Jennifer’s greatest self-reported fear when it came to teaching band. It is interesting to note that Jennifer’s concern about working with tall male students was exactly the hypothetical scenario that was posed to Roxanne in her failed interview in the mid-1980’s.

It is important to stress that the pre-service teachers possessed higher levels of self-efficacy in some areas of their music teaching. All three participants communicated the belief that they were capable musicians, and all expressed confidence in their abilities to teach their desired grade levels and preferred music content areas. It was the lack of confidence in other areas of music teaching, though, that contributed to the intended direction of their career paths.

**What experiences and skills do in-service female band teachers attribute to their success as teachers?**

All of the in-service music teachers were active in music performance and music teaching prior to becoming band teachers. Many of them believed these experiences helped them achieve success as music educators.

Kristi, Lois and Beth all worked at high school marching band camps during the summers of their college careers. Kristi and Beth cited these experiences as being helpful to their success as teachers. Kristi also cited her work at a nationally-recognized fine arts camp as also having a positive impact on her teaching skills:
Yeah, [I had taught at camps]. I also taught at a large, nationally-recognized camp for the fine arts. I was one of the counselors there. I was also a graduate assistant in band for my graduate degree . . . I worked their marching band and their university band and non-major band and different things like that. And that really help solidify what I was doing. And then I’ve taught private lessons since I was in high school. So I’ve had that interaction.

Not only did Beth and Kristi gain teaching experience this way, they were able to network with potential colleagues. Kristi described this as getting “your foot in the door and working on making a name for yourself and all that.” Indeed, Beth attributed the ease with which she secured a job to the fact that she worked at numerous band camps across the state of Ohio. Her name had begun to circulate as an up-and-comer, plus she had a list of well-known references. Both worked to her advantage during the job search process:

I sent out these dorky little postcards [to several band directors who had very strong programs] and said, “My name’s Beth. I am a music education student. I want to work your band camp. Basically, I’m cheap labor.” And so I started to work. I would work three to five marching band camps, like in competitive marching band. And so I worked every summer. Instead of having a normal college-kid part-time job I would do three to five band camps a year . . . So the reason I got it [her job] was because of the names of all those band camps, because the guy who hired me was the band director for 24 years and became a
principal. And he’s the one that hired me . . . so when I put those names on there, I had the snobby, brat kid’s resume.

Conversely, Kate did not work at many band camps while she was completing her undergraduate studies; something that she grew to regret as she was seeking employment:

This is where I was completely lacking. I didn’t do summer band camps. I did only two years of that. And only one camp; my own high school camp. So I wasn’t getting outside of the box. I wasn’t getting out and experiencing new things. I didn’t go see what people were doing. I didn’t know I was supposed to. They probably told me, I just wasn’t paying attention . . . I should have done more, but I didn’t. I just didn’t know.

Kate, Susan, Beth and Roxanne also participated in marching band in college, partially as a fun activity, and partially because they knew they would someday be teaching band and felt that they needed to have that experience. Roxanne even marched an extra season in college because, as she explained, she “didn’t have the experience in high school.” This decision was most likely a good one – all of the in-service participants have either been assigned to work with their school district’s marching band(s) in some capacity or have worked at other high school’s marching band camps at some point in their careers. 

Research Journal: February 11, 2013. It is surprising to me that the large, public university that the pre-service teachers attended does not require their participation in marching band in order for them to earn their music education degrees. When I told Susan that Jennifer was a woodwind player, not in marching band, not working at band
Several of the women indicated that experience with performance helped them achieve success as music teachers. Kate, Kristi and Lois all held either a bachelor’s or a master’s degree in performance and some of them still performed in their communities. Kate expressed having strong feelings towards a music educator’s ability/responsibility to perform:

I have friends- some of my best friends- they hit their three years of lesson maximum and then they were done. Well, what sort of message does that send to your kids? That you don’t like music enough to play it, but you think it’s important enough to teach to them? I had a big issue with that. So, the musician side of me was very much developed; the teacher side was not.

Both Kate and Lois served in leadership roles in chamber and community ensembles, which also helped them garner attention professionally. Lois found it too difficult to balance her community ensemble with the time commitments for her family and job, though, and had to step down:

[My husband and I] had long discussions about what were the ramifications [of my job]. There was a point where he said, “You’re doing too much.” He was right. And so I did drop other things . . . I used to play with a local community band and I was their assistant director for that. And I ended up dropping that, not just because of family, because it was too- I was doing too much.

camps aside from her high school’s camp, but wanted to teach high school band, she actually laughed out loud. Susan expressed that she was concerned that pre-service teachers were lacking in practical experience. I have to say that I agree, but the curriculum is already so tight. What goes?
Not only did Kate credit her experience directing a local chamber ensemble as garnering her attention, but she believed that role has helped her be accepted into the profession of band teaching as a knowledgeable resource:

The chamber ensemble, you can see those banners up there. We’ve been very successful the last several years. THAT I feel has gotten me acceptance, if you will. . . . people see what I’m doing with the chamber ensemble and when it started to go really well, people were like, “Oh! Hey Kate! How about this?” And I started to get more emails about asking about questions about adjudicated events, or participation in certain OMEA things. Like, officer roles. I started getting emails. I was like, “That’s very flattering. I don’t want to do any of that.”

[Laughs]

In addition to instrumental music performance experiences, Lois and Roxanne both had sung extensively in their churches from the time they were children. While Lois sang for fun and did not connect those experiences to her teaching skills, Roxanne attributed her ability to project her voice in a large classroom to her years of singing. She was critical of young teachers who were lacking in that area:

You do have the tool of intensity . . . and some of it comes through. Singing. Singing, singing, singing, singing, singing. Some of them- I just had- I’ve had a couple of student teachers, but in particular in the last six years or so, I had one who had the WEAKEST vocal projection on the podium. Now, you can’t long-
term sing and holler over everybody’s band. BUT, you must enunciate, you must have a way to harness attention and charisma.

Additionally, Roxanne believed she was a successful music teacher due to her early experiences with music. Although her parents were not formally trained musicians, they sang frequently at home and exposed Roxanne to different types of musical recordings. She described that they went “to a reasonable degree of personal inconvenience” to ensure that she had the opportunity to take private music lessons. Additionally, Roxanne credited her mother and father—who parented as equals—with giving her the critical thinking skills she needed to have success as a band teacher:

There are a number of times just because of- by nature, I was raised by very strong, independent people who co-parented, even though I’m a child of the late 50’s. Both of my parents taught me to think ahead and anticipate whatever came to big organizational tasks. Like, you know, especially when you’re talking about instrumental music education, at some point you’re moving bodies and stuff. You’re moving bodies and stuff all the time and sometimes if that has not been a part of your nature, then you don’t think that way.

**In what ways have female band teachers had to develop a “masculine” professional persona to gain entry/acceptance into the profession?**

The in-service teachers varied greatly on this topic. Although some of the women did feel as though they had to develop a “masculine professional persona” to gain acceptance in the band world, others rejected the word “masculine,” and another said
altogether that, no, this did not pertain to her. Regardless of whether or not they believed their professional personas were “masculine,” the language the women used to describe their characteristics as teachers was consistent. Words like, “assertive,” “confident,” “aggressive,” and “alpha” were used by many of the participants when describing their behavior on the podium. Many of the women expressed that these traits were part of their natural personality, though, and not an act they had to embody to be accepted into the profession.

Kristi was the only participant to assert that, yes, female band teachers had to develop or embody a “masculine” professional persona to gain acceptance by their students or colleagues. She explained how this pertained to her:

You have to- in the profession, to be taken seriously and to be successful, I think that you have to have a little bit masculine, aggressive demeanor, especially with high school. To be taken seriously as a high school marching band director with your colleagues, the other band directors, and professionals. I take on that persona. I’m aggressive and a Type-A personality, but I think if I weren’t like that, they wouldn’t take me seriously. It wouldn’t have been as easy for me to make the connections and be as successful as I am if I wasn’t like that . . . If you’re mousy and don’t have that, the kids will eat you alive and you won’t get acceptance from the other directors. Part of being a marching band director is that first, second quarter you go over and talk to the other band director. And there’s that- you know, you see the same directors over and over again. And in the league I feel that I’m known, respected, and they know me, but if I were not confident and not aggressive, I don’t feel they would take me seriously as the head director
or seriously in my job. With the kids there’s always that. I’m not aggressive with
the kids, but I’m assertive with the kids and confident and there’s that respect
level.

Lois agreed partially with Kristi. Although she did not feel that the label
“masculine” was necessarily appropriate, she did describe herself as “pretty assertive
anyways.” Beth also did not like the term “masculine” to describe her professional
persona, but felt that her personality was well-suited for being a band teacher:

Masculine. I don’t particularly prefer that term, but just as far as being assertive,
yes . . . I’m not remotely passive at all, in any capacity. So I would say that’s fair,
but I don’t feel that I have to create that persona, because I think that’s naturally
my personality. It’s not that I became this director and I felt I needed to morph
into this headstrong, assertive female. I feel I just naturally am that way. And
maybe that’s why I’m drawn to that and I wouldn’t touch an assistant position. I
don’t know. But I don’t feel I need to put on that air. And the women band
directors that I know come similar. They can be very assertive.

Kate agreed that, for her, her natural characteristics contributed to her success as a
band teacher. Initially, she described these not as gendered attributes, but rather as
personality traits. As our conversation continued, though, she began to identify her own
“alpha role” as being inherently stereotypically masculine:

I do believe it takes a certain personality to lead a group and that strong
personality—alpha personality—is not found in everybody. And just as not every
man is like that, not every woman is like that. I do think that alpha personality is more dominant in males . . . [In my chamber ensemble] I was very careful to balance this, make sure everybody felt good about themselves. It hasn’t been until the last few years where I was like, “No. This is my band and you’re going to do it my way.” And now I very much feel that alpha role. And I have many friends who are in the band and who are band directors. Some of them female and some of them male and I don’t see that alpha role in any of them . . . [Success with] THAT [band] I feel has gotten me more acceptance, if you will. Not necessarily high school teaching. It’s harder to break in with high school teaching . . . But people see what I’m doing with the chamber ensemble and when it stated to go really well, people were like, “Oh! Hey Kate! How about this?” And I started getting emails . . . It wasn’t until the success happened. I don’t think if it was the masculine personality or if it’s the success. I think it’s probably the success, which is hard to have without that masculine personality. I think they’re very much intertwined.

Roxanne and Susan both rejected the idea that they had to create “masculine” professional personas to gain acceptance into the profession. Like the other women, though, both associated “masculine” with “confident.” Roxanne believed that her conductor persona had more to do with “personal energy level, presentation and projecting confidence” than anything else. She expressed concern that some of the pre-
service female band teachers were too quiet and reserved on the podium and that this may hold them back professionally.\(^{10}\)

Susan also agreed that confidence was necessary to be a successful band teacher. She described her natural personality as “chill,” but explained that she “can’t necessarily be chill like that at work.” Unlike the other participants, both Susan and Roxanne believed that their work environment and age, respectively, allowed them to be less assertive in their jobs than other women had to be. Susan explained:

I can see some people doing that [creating a masculine professional persona]. I think some people would maybe more so do that maybe in that suburban type of environment. I feel like the city is pretty comfortable. It’s like, “Hey man, we’re all out here trying to MAKE it.” You know? And get through the year and have success and build a program.

Roxanne, the elder of the participants, may have had to create such a persona in the past; but she believed that doing so was not important to her success anymore, now that she had reached the later stages of her profession:

Now, I have to say that I’ve probably had to- my- my conductor persona has gone through several evolutions . . . and now that I’m kind of in the grandma chapter of

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\(^{10}\) Research Journal: January 23, 2013. *Roxanne mentioned today that she felt as though young female teachers are too quiet. They don’t project an authoritative presence, particularly on the podium. It made me think of Peggy Orenstein’s Schoolgirls, where she discusses that girls are taught from a young age that being a good student means to sit quietly and follow instructions. Boys are rewarded with attention for speaking out, being curious, and stealing the teacher’s attention. Perhaps this timid behavior on the podium can be traced back to this phenomenon?*
this, I get to be a little more warm and fuzzy and get to be a little more lighthearted.

It is interesting to note that, while some of the participants may not have believed that they needed to develop a “masculine” professional persona, all understood the question to mean the same thing: that “masculine professional persona” equated to confidence and assertiveness on the podium.\footnote{Research Journal/External Auditor: March 5, 2013. Interesting that the in-service women perceived “masculine” to equate to “confident.” In our interview, Ashley told me that her college percussion professor would sometimes say things like, “Stop playing like a girl” but that this was ok, since she (the professor) was also a girl. This appalled me and Allison, who pointed out in her audit that “Girl = weak; implies male = confident.” It would seem that this interpretation of masculine/feminine spans multiple generations and levels of teaching experience.}

**Mentorship**

*What is the role of same-gender mentorship on the professional development of pre- and in-service female band teachers?*

Approximately half of the participants, both pre- and in-service, had female mentors at some point in their careers. The remaining participants also had mentors, but they identified men in these roles. Regardless of the genders of the mentors, the relationships the participants had with their identified mentors ranged from that of student to colleague to close friend. Most of the participants were still in touch with their mentors, and many had sought career advice from these trusted others.

Beth’s mentor, a female band teacher near retirement, had a significant role in Beth’s professional growth. Not only was it her mentor that first told her about the teaching position she eventually earned, but it was she who helped get Beth actively
involved with OMEA leadership. Through her mentor, Beth was able to network with music teachers all over the state of Ohio, earning name recognition with even the most seasoned band teachers. Additionally, Beth’s mentor served as sounding board for ideas Beth had about her teaching. Perhaps most importantly, Beth was able to vent to her mentor about the struggles of being a woman in a male-dominated profession. Beth described their relationship for me:

And my mentor was one of the directors that I worked for my last two years of doing [band camps]. My high school band director introduced us at conference, actually. And he just said, “Beth, I’ve talked to you about her before, you need to meet her.” And we ran into each other a little later. The three of us were in the same spot at the same time. So that’s how it started is I worked her band camp and then as I was finishing up she was like, “Hey Beth, have you looked at jobs?” And so a long story short, we now teach about an hour away from each other, which in my world is close. In rural Ohio, that’s close. And we’re in the same OMEA district, which means we get a lot of the same large group events and we know a lot of the same people just because we’re in the same area. But she and I- we probably catch dinner easily once a month. And depending on what’s going on, it’ll be sometimes more. In the middle of marching band, it’s a lot more. When we’re out of marching band maybe a little less frequently. But I would say I easily talk to her once a week with, “How would you do this or what’s your experience with this?” Our meals, we would have dinner for five hours, have a couple glasses of wine and I would pick her brain, because she’s close to retiring. And so her perspective is- you know, she’s got a long-term perspective of the
profession, especially from a female point of view. And so we’ve had a lot of discussions about that. And so she’s probably one of my number one mentors, but like you mentioned, they’re all men.

Jennifer also had a female mentor in the profession – her former high school band teacher. As a high school woodwind player, Jennifer sat near the front of the concert band and was, therefore, granted access to her teacher that other students did not have. They formed a bond:

We got along really well, which is interesting since my brother had her and did not like her whatsoever. And so I came into high school terrified to death of this new band director who I didn’t know. My freshman year I was, you know, this scared little freshman. But my sophomore year I had gotten into the top band and was sitting first chair and all of the seniors were like, “What happened here?” [Laughs] And I learned that I could make a snide remark and if she laughed it was ok. And I did an honor band and so I got to see her not just in class but outside of class. And so that was kind of how I was able to warm up and be able to ask questions and talk to her. And she would talk about the band program and what we needed to work on and that kind of stuff . . . I worked at the band camp there the last two years and so she’s going to get an invitation to my recital. So that kind of stuff.

Jennifer anticipated maintaining her relationship with her mentor as she entered the job market in the near future. Ashley had a similar relationship with her private
teacher from high school. As she began looking for job postings online, she contacted her mentor with questions about searching for employment. Although she appreciated the assistance her college professors were able to give her, she felt as though she had a more personal relationship with her mentor and had found her to be helpful with career advice:

I guess I consider my private teacher from high school one of my mentors. Like, I’ve started sort of browsing job websites. I know not a lot of stuff is posted, but I’ve asked her how I’d go about job searching. And she’s been the one I’d go to in terms of- if you hear of any opening and blah-blah-blah, contact me and- she’s usually the one I turn to with any music education job-related questions.

Obviously many of the professors are great for questions here. But I have a more personal relationship with my former private teacher. So she’s been helpful to any questions or concerns I’ve had so far.

Kristi and Lois identified several women as mentors, but also looked to them as role models. One woman, in particular, was who Kristi “aspired to be” – a woman who was active in OMEA and had developed a successful band program, while simultaneously raising her children. Kristi’s mentor would come to her school to hear her band and would allow her to “throw ideas off her.” Lois, too, has had a mentor/role model relationship with several women in the profession. One of her mentors, her former cooperating teacher from student teaching, was the woman who first shared with Lois the notion that it can be difficult for women to persist in the band world. Lois’ mentor shared stories with her about state meetings where she would be the only woman in the room, enduring raunchy behavior:
She was the only [female band director] in the area. And she said, and I remember having this conversation: Is it hard to be a woman and be a band director and that sort of thing? And she said, “It’s gotten a lot better.” She goes, we go to these [OMEA-type] meetings and you will have all these guys at this table or whatever. . . And she said, “Yeah. It’s come a long way. I’ll never forget, we’re having this meeting and this guy next to me has this- they’re passing around this raunchy picture and they just went around behind me and to the next guy and around.” And she’s like, “It was a phallic thing of a guy playing trombone but it was his::”

At the time, Lois was shocked to hear this story, but later found it helpful to understanding what she might experience as a female band teacher. As a result of her relationship with this mentor, Lois felt prepared to enter the band world and was not surprised to discover it was a male-dominated profession.

The remaining participants identified men as their primary mentors. Roxanne, Kate and Lois all had mentors who were men that were colleagues. After over three decades in the profession, Roxanne still keeps in touch with her mentor. She described their relationship as beginning after “he saw that [she] was a very kid-centered individual.” She believed the two of them were “kindred spirits.”

Susan and Matilda also had male mentors, but they identified theirs as former teachers. Susan remained in touch with her middle school band teacher, a teacher who first sparked her interest in learning to play musical instruments. Even at the time of our interview, she would call him for advice for working with her students:
It [my mentor] is my middle school band director, but he’s retired now. He’s always willing to come and help, you know . . . So he definitely is because, like I said, a lot of what I- I model a lot of what I do off of what I learned from him.

Matilda, too, kept in touch with a former teacher – one of her college professors. He had helped her though some difficult times in her life and she found his mentorship reassuring. He also helped Matilda improve her self-efficacy:

It was a professor. He’s my favorite. I don’t know. I mean, he knows a lot about education, but he is also such- he understands people, he understands what makes you tick. And I think for me, he brought a lot of things to light about myself that are good, which was a new concept for me. And I mean, also, he brought a lot of perspective about how sometimes we just have those days. And it’s ok.

Although I asked the participants specifically about their relationships with mentors, several of the participants identified women in the profession with whom they do not have personal relationships, but who they looked to as role models. This will be discussed further in the section dedicated to the visibility of female band teachers.

**What type of relationships do pre- and in-service female band teachers have with other women in the profession?**

The participants of this study had a variety of different relationships with other women in the profession of band teaching. These relationships ranged from barely any contact with other women to support group-type networks to a “frenemies” relationship.
Not surprisingly, given their neophyte statuses in the profession, the pre-service participants had come in to contact with fewer fellow female band teachers than their in-service peers. Aside from her high school band teacher, Jennifer had not established any strong relationships with other women in the field. She had noticed that there were more men than women in her college courses—at times she was the only female in a class—but she said that this “didn’t concern” her. Matilda, too, had come in to contact with just a few female band teachers, but fortunately, one of those teachers was also student teaching in band in the same school district as she. Consequently, Matilda bonded with this fellow student teacher as they discussed their experiences and concerns with teaching.

Kate and Kristi also sought out friendships with other female band teachers. Since they had each been teaching for several years now, they had been able to build professional networks of like-minded women. It could even be that, unbeknownst to me, they were even friends with each other, as Kate pointed out that I was probably going to talk to most of her friends for this study since there were only a handful of female band teachers in the state of Ohio.

Kristi described spending time with her female colleagues at conferences, often people-watching for fun. She and her friends would joke about being able to identify the type of music teacher someone is based on how they dress for conferences (she assured me that they were almost always correct). Kate also labeled her relationship with her network of female band teachers as that of “friends.” She described how they have helped her:

And, you know, it’s just very encouraging. These two women in particular have been very encouraging. I find them to be awesome people. I don’t always agree
with everything that they tell me or things that they do or whatever, but they’re both great band directors. Great people. Unbelievable people. It’s always been kind of like, “Oh, they’re doing this! It’s possible!”

Beth, on the other hand, has had some difficulty forging friendships in the band world. Beth’s primary mentor, a woman near retirement, had been highly influential in her career, as has another woman who Beth also considered a mentor. The latter individual was in her seventeenth or eighteenth year of teaching – another seasoned educator. It was Beth’s relationship with a third individual—a fellow band teacher Beth’s age—that could be described as that of “frenemy.” When asked if she felt camaraderie with other women in the profession, Beth shared:

I have a hard time connecting with female directors that are my age. And there are some female directors that don’t want anything to do with it. And I don’t know if it is a personality clash, if it’s a headstrong personality clash, if I can connect with the band teacher who is close to retirement, because I’m not a threat to her . . . But I have a friend and she is in a very different position. I’m a head director, director of bands, I’m in charge of all of it. It’s a small program, but I call the shots. I don’t have a boss, whatever. Whatever the hell I want to do is what happens. And she’s in a very different position. She’s in a larger program; she’s an assistant. And I know she struggles with that, because when my band does well, it automatically makes me look good . . . And for her program, when the school that she’s affiliated with does well, she’s not the one whose name is called . . . So, we have commonalities, but there are some times that it does feel like that rivalry.
We’re basically the same age, same area of life if you will, and then similar situations personally . . . So I do feel that way. But I feel when they are older than me by a certain amount, I don’t have that. Because, again, I’m not a threat to my mentor who is about to retire. I’m this fourth-year teacher. I don’t know what I’m doing. With the other mentor, it’s the same thing. I’m not a threat to her because she’s secure in her profession and who she is as a teacher and who we are collectively . . . With this girl, yes [it’s a lack of confidence], but I’m sure I’m equally guilty.

None of the other participants reported having this type of relationship with their peers; however, Beth was the youngest of the in-service band teachers by about six years. It may be that this situation was unique to Beth. It is also possible that the other in-service teachers have had similar relationships in the past, but have since moved on, establishing new connections in the field.

**Have in-service teachers been asked to serve in a mentorship capacity? If so, do they feel a responsibility to oblige?**

There seemed to be a positive relationship with the in-service participants’ years of teaching experience and the degrees to which they had served as mentors. Beth, for example, was still finding her own place as a band teacher and had not yet served in a mentorship capacity.

Although Kristi, Susan and Kate were all mid-career teachers with nearly forty years of combined experience, none of them considered themselves to be “mentor” material, but instead identified themselves as resources:
Kristi: I don’t consider myself to be an expert on anything, but I always make myself available to people that have questions.

Susan: I’m just willing to help people. I know how it is being a first- or second-year teacher . . . I like to help people because I know how it was for me. And I had people there to help me.

Kate: I don’t know if I’d call it more of a mentor, but more of a resource . . . I’ve never been a mentor-mentor . . . So yeah, no. I don’t think so. I help people out. I’m more of a resource than a mentor.

Although all three of the women considered themselves to be confident and successful band teachers, none felt comfortable labeling herself as a “mentor” to others in the profession. Lois, on the other hand, was eager to discuss her role as a mentor. She was the second-most experienced participant in the study and believed that it is a good thing for young women in the profession to be mentored by other female band teachers. Although she believed there are many benefits to same-gender mentorship, Lois did not feel obligated to serve in a mentorship capacity. She explained that this was because she had “not had the problems that other women have had,” and could, therefore, not necessarily provide empathy for a young, female band teacher.

Lastly, Roxanne, the self-proclaimed “grandma” of the group, had found herself in the role of a mentor “all the time.” She loved mentoring young band teachers, both male and female. She took this responsibility very seriously and has even sought to teach mentoring skills to her high school students. She explained:
I take very seriously my opportunity to be a mentor and be a role model. And that’s actually part of the teaching aspect behind my flute choir. We’re down in numbers this year, but traditionally that group has been right around 20 people. We do community work, we start meeting after marching band is done. We do community service besides OMEA, solo, and ensemble, we do- we have sponsored-mentorship projects where the older students work with younger students in the school district. The- you know, it’s important to teach people- to teach youngsters- to teach people that are new in our profession that you win with people.

For Roxanne, it was important to share knowledge with others. She explained this sense of obligation by telling me about a role model of hers, a professor she knew who was still teaching, even though he was in his mid-90’s:

He learned so much from what everyone had taught him. He felt this huge burden to keep that bed of knowledge alive, to keep sharing it. It was such a gift that you can’t keep it yourself. You just feel compelled to keep giving it.

It should be noted that all of the in-service participants referenced student teachers and field experience students when I asked them about mentorship. It would seem that, for them, mentorship is often an “official” role in which a young teacher is assigned to work with an experienced educator for a teaching internship. This is particularly noteworthy, as many of the participants’ own mentors were not their student teaching
supervisors. It may be, then, that some of the participants have mentored young teachers, but may not have realized it.

**Are other female band teachers easily identifiable in the profession?**

Roxanne, citing the many years she has spent perusing concert programs at the annual Midwest Clinic, believed that, yes, it is getting easier to identify women in the profession of teaching band. At the national level, this may indeed be true, but at the local level, many of the participants struggled to identify fellow female band teachers. The same woman’s name was mentioned by many of the pre- and in-service participants: Mallory Thompson, the Director of Bands at Northwestern University. And while she can be and is a role model for many women in the profession of band teaching, the reality is that her role as a college band professor is not immediately attainable by many of the participants of this study. What about female band teachers at the local level? Are they easily identifiable?

Of the pre-service participants, just Jennifer was able to identify a female high school band teacher by name. This was, of course, her own high school band teacher. When asked to identify another, Jennifer struggled with the task and came up short. Neither Ashley nor Matilda was able to identify a female high school band teacher by name. Ashley struggled to name a female middle school band teacher, too.

12 Research Journal: January 25, 2013. *Interesting that Jennifer had a female high school band director. She is one of the only pre-service band-track students I know that could name a female high school band teacher by name. I wonder if this will help or hurt her as she enters the work force? Or, will it even matter? I believe having a female high school band teacher and a female assistant band director in college gave me a skewed perception of the profession. On the one hand, I am grateful for having such role models in my life, but on the other hand, I was all the more shocked to be so greatly outnumbered in my profession.*
When I shared this information with Beth, she was not surprised. She told me that, thirty years ago, her mentor noticed that there were not many female band teachers and that, today, not much has changed. Beth described the time she addressed this issue with her former high school band teacher, a man:

I actually studied- it was two years ago in the state marching band finals. If you want the real numbers you could look them up, but I think there were- let’s say there are 120 bands at state marching band finals, of which only 18 of them had head female band directors. And of those most of them were at small schools. And I remember- I talked to my high school band director about it. I’m like, “Look in the program.” He said, “That can’t be true.” I’m like, “Sit here and count off- let’s count the female band directors. Ready, set, and go.” And I could tell him all of them. He was like, “You’re right.” But it was not in his thought process . . . So he said it came up in [an OMEA] meeting, because they were so surprised by it. So, would I like there to be change? Yes. Am I optimistic there will be? Yes. Am I realistically thinking there will be massive change? Not necessarily.

Beth saw this phenomenon as being cyclical. She justified that assertion by explaining that women were not typically teachers at large suburban school programs. Consequently, administrators begin to assume that they do not want to be in those positions or that they “will not be able to put their full energy into it” due to family responsibilities. As a result, the administrators continue to hire men and the problem perpetuates.
It may not always be a positive thing when women are identifiable in the profession of band teaching. Although Matilda could not identify a female high school band teacher by name, she knew of several female middle school band teachers, mostly due to her student teaching assignment. Matilda did not look to them as role models, though, “because they’re crazy.” I asked her to explain what she meant:

They’re legitimately really high strung people and at the same time- I don’t know, I was talking to another music education student who is in the same district, who is band, who is female. And we were like, “Does this mean we are suddenly going to become these high-strung, running-around-like-a-chicken-with-our-heads-cut-off women?” I don’t know. It’s hard to see- there are very few calm, cool, collected women in the profession. [Pauses] So, maybe that’s the other thing. Looking at mentors, looking at role models, it’s hard to see myself progressing because I feel like I don’t have necessarily a strong female educator to look up to. Not that they’re bad teachers, but you know what I mean. Especially in the high school realm.

Matilda identified a key distinction when it comes to the importance of mentorship. For her, it was not a matter of being able to identify female band teachers; it is about being able to identify the right female band teachers. Unfortunately, those were difficult to identify.
Emerging Domain

Issues Surrounding Gender

Although the topic of this study was inherently about gender, additional themes and patterns surrounding issues of gender in band teaching emerged that I did not anticipate. These themes have been grouped into one domain, *Issues Surrounding Gender*, and will be discussed further in this section.

Disconnect between pre- and in-service teachers

Although the pre- and in-service teachers shared similar perspectives in previously discussed domains, there was a distinct difference between the two populations in two key areas. The first of these was the recognition that women are greatly outnumbered by men in the profession of band teaching. The second pattern that emerged was the distinction between whether an individual’s gender should matter when it comes to the job search process versus whether it actually does.

*Lack of women in the profession.*

It was evident during the interview process that all of the in-service participants were aware that band teaching is a male-dominated profession. Kate joked about there being, “all five of us,” whereas Roxanne nodded emphatically that, yes, she had noticed that there are not many women in the profession. Beth bluntly wanted to know, “Where the hell are all the female band directors?” Regardless of their opinions as to how or why this phenomenon exists, the in-service teachers all were in agreement that, yes, they were outnumbered greatly by men.

This was news to the pre-service participants, though. In all three cases, it was clear that I was the one breaking the news to the women that band teaching is a male-
dominated profession. They responded in different ways to this information. Jennifer wanted to know additional statistics about women teaching elementary general music and thought that perhaps she could use this information to her advantage when applying for band jobs, via affirmative action. Ashley, who said that she “never really thought about it,” also brought up the topic of elementary general music teaching. She did not think gender would affect her, since she was making plans to enter a profession that was already dominated by women. Matilda also did not realize how greatly outnumbered women are in band teaching, but was not entirely shocked when presented with the information. She thought that it was “an interesting subject that [she] hadn’t thought much about.” Upon my bringing this news to her attention, she began to reflect on some of her own struggles relating to and networking with male in-service band teachers.

It is unclear when the in-service band teachers realized that men greatly outnumber women in band teaching. Regardless of whether it was a sudden epiphany or a gradual realization over time, all of the in-service participants knew that they were unique in being female band teachers, whereas the pre-service participants had no idea.

*Gender should not matter.*

Also of note is that two of the pre-service teachers were adamant that gender should not be a factor when it comes to being hired or not hired for a job. Jennifer and Matilda believed passionately that merit and fit should matter more to a hiring committee than whether a candidate is a man or a woman\(^\text{13}\). While many of the in-service teachers may have agreed with that sentiment, none brought it up in our interviews.

\(^\text{13}\) Research Journal/External Auditor: March 3, 2013. *Allison and I discussed how we had no idea the profession of band teaching was male-dominated when we were in college.*
Jennifer was optimistic that teaching positions would be offered to candidates based on merit:

Hopefully when they’re doing interviews, it’s not about, “Well we need to hire a man because he can handle the tuba player that’s six feet tall;” it’s about, “Well, she’s competent and I think she’ll do a better job.” So, I like to think that it won’t really matter anyway.

Matilda agreed with Jennifer that merit should surpass any issues of gender. During our member check, Matilda chose to clarify her thoughts on this particular subject:

I don’t see a difference in male or female, I see good educator or bad educator. I see unqualified or qualified. I think maybe the reason women limit themselves is because they or others start to see them as something different. To me, there is no woman/man issue, it should simply be whomever is better qualified or if they would be happy doing what they do. I don’t know if some women use the high percentage of men in high school jobs as a sort of excuse for sticking with middle school or if men are discriminatory or something, but I think the biggest issue is

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*Her public school band teacher was a man, but in high school she studied her instrument privately at a local university where the director of bands was a woman. Allison also had a female assistant band director where she went to college. She had no idea that she was so badly outnumbered until she struggled to establish herself as a band director in a small, rural community. Why don’t we talk about this in undergraduate training? Or, is it possible that this issue was addressed with us, but like Matilda and Jennifer, we believed that gender shouldn’t matter and it wouldn’t affect us? When was it that we realized that gender did matter? I must also keep in mind this assumption I am making. Gender does not affect everyone in the same way. It may very well be that some pre-service female band teachers will never experience any challenges related to their gender.*
that people see a difference at all. If your desire is to be a high school band
director, you should do it and work hard to get there regardless of gender.

In this vignette, it is evident that Matilda recognized the complexity of the issue
of gender in band teaching. She firmly believed, though, that “you are only a victim if
you decide to be,” and that gender should not be used as an excuse for getting or not
getting a job\textsuperscript{14}.

This particular issue—how things should be—did not arise in many of the other
interviews, both pre- and in-service. Many of the in-service participants expressed the
desire to see more female band teachers, but aside from that, did not discuss their
perspectives on how things should be for women. Just Kate chose to bring up this topic,
but for her, it was a distinction of how things should be versus how they really are. She
discussed this in context of her struggles to raise her family while maintaining her career:

There ARE demands. There are social demands on the family. There’s very much
a social construct about the mom is a mom . . . My husband is great, but he works.
You know? And so that’s where I am right now. I do think there are different
demands. Not that there should be, but that there are.

\textsuperscript{14} Research Journal: January 28, 2013. \textit{It was hard not to take Matilda’s email
personally. I do believe that my gender held me back in obtaining a high school job for
which I interviewed well. However, as she also pointed out, I did persist in the profession
and eventually obtained a high school band job. Incidentally (but probably not
coincidentally), it was at an all-girls high school. I cannot help but wonder – What will
Matilda have to say about this topic in a year or two?}
Kate’s dilemma was not the same scenario that Matilda and Jennifer highlighted, but it does bring to light the issue that sometimes an individual’s reality is not necessarily the way it “should” be. It can be difficult to reconcile such a conflict. Although she initially wanted to be a band teacher of a large high school program, Kate also wanted to be a mother. In our interview she indicated that, regardless of social expectations, she believed that there were certain things that only a mother could do. This informed her decision to take a job at a small, private school:

The mom’s role, at least socially- if you read about research and all that stuff, it’s still the mom who shapes the person at the younger ages. You know, those formative years, it’s the mom that is very much that person who helps shape them into the character they’re going to be, the moral values they’re going to have and I- I didn’t want to leave that up to a nanny.

**Good Ol’ Boys’ Club**

When I asked the in-service participants if they thought that a “Good Ol’ Boys’ Club” existed in the band world, all of them responded in the affirmative. With the exception of Susan, each of the in-service participants was also quick to express the belief that the club was “dying out” or that things were “getting better.” Kate thought things had improved greatly since she first started teaching:

I do think it exists. I don’t think it’s to the extent it was when I first got into teaching. I think it’s gotten significantly better. I think people are more aware of it. I think it’s one of those things- you know, the more they talk about something,
the less scary it is, or whatever. I- I don’t know why it exists. I’m sure there’s some history, going back to Sousa if you have to.

Roxanne also agreed that the Boys’ Club culture exists, but that its population had declined as the social demands on men and women had evolved to the point that more men were taking on responsibilities in the home:

I’ve seen it exist, certainly, in my career . . . And I have to say, the- some of the peers I worked with early in my career- I have had opportunities to work with what I would call Traditional Males and Progressively Minded Males. Now, toward the end of my career, my contact is with progressively minded males.

Lois saw improvement, too, but struggled to identify exactly what she had witnessed. She questioned if such a Club would ever be completely extinguished, as it was easy to pass behaviors from one generation to the next:

I think it does [exist], but I think it’s dying out . . . I do think there’s still those people who have that feeling of- it’s not so much that it’s the anti-girls club. I think the old boys’ club- I think it does exist, but I think what’s happening is those people are retiring out of it. But I think that if they have passed those things on to the next person, then it stays going. That’s what I think I’ve seen.

Beth, Kristi and Susan all referenced OMEA conferences as “The Place” to witness the Good Ol’ Boys’ Club in action. Beth suspected the key to disbanding the Club was to increase the presence of younger teachers and women in OMEA leadership.
positions. She described that this was exactly the type of change that was beginning to occur:

Yes and no [it exists]. My goal is to infiltrate it . . . Yes, I do [believe it exists].

Right now as much? No. Fifteen years ago, yes. My window is OMEA leadership.
That’s all I know. I haven’t been out of state . . . I’m just saying, if you look at OMEA, it’s a lot of older men that have been doing a lot of stuff. Now, I know in the last five years, there’s been a big push . . . getting young blood, if you will, up in front to be more active.

Kristi referenced the increasing presence of women in band as a way of determining that the influence of the Good Ol’ Boys’ Club was declining. But she still believed that the Club was very evident at the Midwest Clinic and OMEA conventions, particularly at “happy hour” parties:

Yes. I think some things are changing, but you really need- it can be hard to break in. You know, I’ve met some outstanding band directors in my time. I know that there were several female directors before us that broke in and paved the way for us, but I still think there’s that Boys’ Club idea . . . The New Horizons\textsuperscript{15} party is just a prime example. I mean, when you go there and interact- it’s just- you can actually SEE the Ol’ Boys’ Club. And the New Horizons party- I think last year they were giving away gift cards to Victoria’s Secret and weird stuff. And you see

\textsuperscript{15} New Horizons is an international music organization dedicated to beginning instrumental music education for adult learners. According to the organization’s website, www.newhorizonsmusic.org, there are seven New Horizons band and orchestra chapters in the state of Ohio.
the groups of men and the talking- and I think OMEA is a good way to see it, because you can see interactions of people . . . I think through that people watching, you can really see that Ol’ Boys’ network- and then just experiences I’ve had, not necessarily with that, but with the male kind of attitude band director.

Susan was the only in-service participant who did not indicate that she believed the presence of the Good Ol’ Boys’ Club was declining. She described seeing the Club at her own school district level, as well as at OMEA conferences. Rather than cite organizational parties as Kristi did, Susan believed that the very nature of the OMEA conferences—the clinics offered and the type of ensembles selected to perform—reinforced the Good Ol’ Boys’ Club. She described the sessions as almost always being catered to the suburban band teacher, who was typically male:

Oh yeah [it exists]. Especially if you go to OMEA. I feel like it’s very evident there . . . I do feel like that exists. There are teachers that have been in this district for a long time. They’ll kind of huddle together if we have in-services and maybe not want to listen as well when a younger teacher is presenting something or something like that . . . But I do notice some of that at in-services. And at OMEA. And I didn’t go this time. I usually go when it’s local, but I had no desire . . . I try to be nice, be friendly. I just don’t feel like it’s- it’s not my scene . . . But it’s almost like I feel like I don’t FIT. You know? With that culture. I just do what I can here . . . That’s the thing with OMEA. They don’t address urban school issues . . . maybe they have ONE, two sessions. And some of the stuff they’re talking
about, I feel like that’s for an ideal [suburban] situation . . . I want to hear the REAL- what’s going on in the urban schools? That’s what I want to hear. Get strategies, tips . . . And who’s represented in the performing things? And I just don’t feel like they address those issues and therefore, that Ol’ Boys’ culture is kind of- I guess, exacerbated.

Although all of the in-service participants agreed that the Good Ol’ Boys’ Club existed, and most felt that its “enrollment” was declining, none of the women gave any indication that they believed it would one day be obsolete.

**Women’s Organizations**

Although it was not a topic I had planned to discuss, both Lois and Kate brought up the subject of women’s organizations in music and whether or not they were helpful or useful. Kate, who was already a member of the International Women’s Brass Conference, had recently joined the Facebook group for Women Band Directors International. She described not knowing how she felt about there being an organization of this type dedicated solely to women:

I don’t know how I feel about it. I can’t make up my mind. And I have a lot of friends- the International Women’s Brass Conference . . . whoever is in charge of it feels that it is a very important thing. More for professionals who play- not so much conductors and teachers, but for performing. There’s a lot of military performers in that group, conference or whatever. THOSE articles definitely talk more about the pioneering women, definitely talk about some equality issues that are not necessarily found in teaching. They’re also more informative about
techniques. The Women Band Directors International, I don’t KNOW. I just don’t know how I feel about it. I’m not buying into it yet. Maybe I should? I don’t know.

When I asked Kate to explain why she felt that maybe she “should” be involved with the group, she explained that she was in a very visible position with her chamber ensemble and that she did feel like she had “more of a responsibility” to make sure she represented female teachers very well.

Lois had also pondered the role of women’s organizations in band. She was approached to join the American School Band Directors Association recently and this prompted her to think about similar, gendered, groups:

So I think there’s an American women’s band director’s group. And I think this—this other director, I think she’s a member of the women’s band directors thing, which I’m not. And I remember being asked or encouraged to be in it, but I just wasn’t I don’t know. I feel funny about there being men or women clubs in anything. I really do. I think they’re- that makes it seem like you have to be separate. But my husband, on the flip side, I guess- I don’t even- I never really liked girls versus male Bible studies either. But my husband says that sometimes guys just want to talk about things that they just don’t feel comfortable around women talking about. And now that I’ve thought about it, I’m like, “You’re probably right.” And in this case, it’s the women who want to be able to talk about things.
None of the other participants mentioned professional memberships, nor did I ask. It is possible that some of the participants were members of women’s professional organizations. It is also possible though, that like Lois and Kate, they were uncertain about the role of such gendered organizations at a time where women are supposed to have achieved equality with men.

**Social Constructs and Stereotypes**

While only one of the participants (Beth) uttered the words, “glass ceiling” in our interviews, many shared stories and concerns about the difficulties of being a woman in a male-dominated profession. These experiences ranged from cases of mistaken identity to social implications of being a confident woman to the ways some men treat female band directors.

*“You let her line up your band?”*

Near the end of our interview, Kristi told me she wanted to leave me with one last story; one that she found funny, but disturbing at the same time. It involved an encounter she had with a male band teacher that ended with her being reminded that, although she had accomplished much in her career, she was still perceived as being an outsider in a male-dominated profession:

Last year was my first as the head band director. I line up the band, and our assistant is our announcer. And so the announcer from another school- and they’re not in our league, so it’s the first time for them being in our stadium- and he came over and wanted to know where the press box was. And my assistant director said, “I’ll take you, I’m heading out that way.” And he looks at me and said, “You let her line up your band?” So my assistant director said, “She’s the head band
director. She does whatever she wants.” And so that became one of our jokes for the rest of the ear. I’d say, “I’m going to go over to tend the children and make the biscuits and announce the band.” And so that’s our joke, that I’ll be tending the children and making biscuits. But you sail along for months and months and years with nothing happening and then you have something like that. And you’re just reminded that I have to work hard to get where I am.

“High schoolers respect men more.”

Two of the participants brought up issues surrounding how their students perceived them as female band teachers. Kristi had experienced her incoming freshmen treating her differently than they did the male band teachers at her school. To combat this, she drew her own personal line of tolerance and did not allow such behavior from her students:

When I first started, there were three high school band directors that worked with the marching band and every year on that first game, “Will you hold my sunglasses? Will you hold my cell phone?” Now, they’re not asking MALE directors, “Will you hold my shit?” They’re asking the FEMALE director. And that was one of the things. I would never hold anyone’s stuff. “No. Figure it out, put it in your pocket, leave it back in the stands, I’m not holding your stuff.” Because I think if you start that, then you become a pack mule and that was- you know, right there I draw the line . . . I have never seen a student, in my nine years of teaching, go up to one of the male directors and say, “Will you hold my cell phone while I’m on the field?” But I get that almost every year from the freshmen
coming up. And the upperclassmen chuckle about it, because they know. I’m not
going to hold their stuff.

Kristi insisted on maintaining her naturally assertive and confident persona on the
podium and, as such, reported that she was able to earn the respect of her students.
Matilda, who was just entering the profession of band teaching, was struggling to find
this balance. She believed that it could be difficult for a female band teacher to earn the
respect of her students. She stated, “I think that high schoolers respect- this sounds awful-
respect men more. There’s a certain level of authority that they give them that I think is
hard to EARN if you are a woman.” When I asked her why she believed this or how a
woman could earn that respect, Matilda struggled to explain her assertion. She replied,
“It’s just whether or not you’re a good educator . . . It shouldn’t have anything to do with
what sex you are.” Matilda believed that students should respect an individual who is “a
good educator,” regardless of his or her gender\(^\text{16}\).

“A headstrong female band director, she’s a big bitch.”

All of the in-service participants identified confidence as one of the most
important personality traits they embodied in their professional lives. Two of the
participants, though, discussed the implications of being too confident. They believed that

\(^{16}\) Research Journal: January 24, 2013. *After having such an in-depth interview with
Matilda, I am a little surprised with the results of her member check. Although in the
interview she admitted that she had not thought very much about gender affecting her
professional aspirations, she indicated several times that she did see a difference in how
male and female band directors were perceived and/or treated by their colleagues and/or
students. It seems to me that her stating that things “shouldn’t have anything to do with
what sex you are” was in conflict with what she was actually experiencing as a young
teacher.*
this was a double standard; that men had far more leeway in this area than did women.

Beth had discussed this issue with her mentor. Being a teacher in a small town, the
assertive behavior she felt she needed to be successful did not mesh well with what the
members of her school’s community perceived the role of women to be:

We’ve [my mentor and I] talked about this and the fact that a strong-headed male
band director is looked at as being- he’s just a good band director with high
standards. A headstrong female band director, she’s a big bitch. I mean, I’m sure
you’ve heard that. Now, they’re not going to put that in studies. JRME is not
 going to publish it, worded quite that way . . . I know when I took my job, they
were surprised to see a “headstrong spitfire,” as I’m often referred to, female band
director yelling at their kids. They were not used to that. So just within the
confines of school and my small town community that was very unusual for them.
And I know that there are some male band directors that do not like the fact that
my band, being taught by a female, will beat their band every time. They do not
like that all. And it’s simply because I’m female.

Kate also felt as though female band teachers could be perceived negatively if
they were too headstrong. Like Beth, she began her career teaching in a rural school
district; but this was still a concern for her, even though she was teaching in a suburban
private school at the time of our interview. She described the double standard she saw
and how it had altered the ways in which female band teachers have to behave:

It’s different. I mean, a guy can go tell somebody to F-off or whatever, but a
woman can’t do that. A woman cannot do that. And I THINK- I think that’s why
there are old-school band directors and there’s new-school band directors. You know what I’m talking about? Old School? Like, throwing things across the room. Women can’t do that. And you know why they can’t do it. They’ll be called a nasty name. And I think you have to have a certain touch. A certain way about you; a certain tact.

Kate and Beth handled this double standard in different ways. Kate had taught for about a decade longer than Beth and, in that time, had created her own methods of solving problems with “tact” and not relying on “headstrong” behaviors. Conversely, Beth had continued to be a “spitfire” and had learned to live with the label of “bitch.”

“It’s hard for the men to know how to deal with the women.”

The challenges of women trying to network with those in power—perceived by many of the participants to be typically men—was brought up by both pre- and in-service participants. Kristi and Beth shared that networking was often done at convention parties, typically at bars filled with groups of men standing shoulder-to-shoulder. Both expressed the belief that they were able to forge several professional connections because they were confident enough to walk up to those groups of men and engage them in conversation.

Lois and Kristi described other high-stakes networking as occurring at football games. It was at these games that band teachers, athletic directors and school administrators were expected to mingle with one another. Lois explained how one of her colleagues established himself with those with power in her school district, and how she struggled to do the same:
A lot of networking happens during marching band season that you don’t realize it happens until you do it. But we would go down to the field- and our band director really likes to be on the sidelines so he can see what’s going on so he knows what to call. He also loves watching the game. And that’s where the AD is, the athletic director, that’s where the coaches are, that’s where the principal is, that’s where the assistant principal is. And they’re all down there and they all stand in a row except for the coach. And they talk. And they don’t just talk about what’s going on in the game. They talk about how the Buckeyes do, and how this happened, and so on. And they’re talking sports and they’re talking about things that they’re interested in . . . But then, I come down and I’m like- I feel like I have to talk about what they’re talking about . . . I feel out of my water because they’re all talking about stuff I don’t really know anything about.

According to Lois, knowing the “right” things to talk about could be an asset or a detriment when it comes to hiring individuals for band teaching jobs. Lois described that, in her experience, men were often the ones doing the hiring and that the ability to relate to these males was crucial to clinching the job:

I’m not a sports fanatic. I don’t know all the stats of everything and I don’t know who played that yardage and- I know how football works. I enjoy watching the game. But I can’t tell you who the players are and all that. And I think that one of the things that endeared our high school band director to the principal and the athletic director is he is really into sports. So even in the interviews and stuff, he could talk about stuff that they related to . . . and I think that can be a hard thing
for people who are in a- who are applying for a position like- when making the
connections with somebody about things that they understand or know about. I
think if I’d gotten that interview and was talking about something that they didn’t
relate to, that I would not have gotten the position.

Lois had administrators to whom she could relate, and she expressed the belief
that those connections did, indeed, make her job easier. She shared the concern, though,
that this could very well be a “cyclical thing,” and that men would perpetually hire other
men, reinforcing the low presence of female band teachers.

Matilda has also experienced the awkwardness of not knowing what to talk about
with a male colleague. When I asked her how she thought the lack of women in the
profession of band teaching might affect her career, she thought for several seconds and
then shared:

I don’t know. [Pauses] Ok, so I played in a trio for an honor band with a male pre-
service teacher and a male in-service teacher, and then me. And maybe I was just
being over-sensitive, but I felt like they conversed much more easily. Like, they
were super-chummy and:: [Pauses] I think sometimes it’s hard for- I don’t have a
problem with it- but hard for the men to know how to deal with the women. Do
you know what I mean? Like, to converse with them.

Matilda’s concern extended beyond the potential difficulties of men and women
networking together, but also to how men perceive women in general and how they talk
about women when they are not present:
And, also, the women who teach in the district- they go and talk about them like they’re crazy and that they’re all over the place. And I just- it makes me wonder what- because they don’t talk about other guys that way. I don’t know. It makes me a little insecure about what they say about just women in general.

Matilda described her own perceptions of these women and that she would like to see calm, cool, collected women in the profession. It is worth noting, though, that it was this line of conversation that led to her assertion that “high schoolers respect men more.” It may be that she sees male band teachers respect men more than women and, as a consequence, transfers that observation to her own experiences with her students.

**Gender as an Asset**

Regardless of the difficulties many of the participants have had being women in band teaching, some of the in-service teachers expressed the belief that there were times where their gender was an asset to them professionally. These included: standing out as a young, successful teacher, being able to help their students with their problems, and building close relationships with some male colleagues.

Roxanne described how other band teachers perceived her in the early 1980’s. Everything she did—both good and bad—drew attention because, at the time, there were even fewer women in band teaching. When she did things consistently well, she became highly revered:

I would have to tell you that being a highly-motivated, very professional, and high-achieving woman in- especially my early days of my profession, did me a LOT- got me a lot of attention . . . Because there were not a lot of very successful
young women at the particular time in the early 80’s, everything that I did well
got lots of attention. So, I would say that the gender bias worked in reverse for
me. It worked in my favor.

Kate also believed that there were some advantages to being a female band
teacher. She explained that she was able to connect with her students in ways that some
male teachers could not. Although she was careful to point out that she was a demanding
teacher, she was proud to share that her students trusted her and would come to her with
their problems:

In this role here, I am finally- it’s taken me a few years. I am finally able to switch
personalities. When I’m on the podium, it’s Alpha Kate. I mean, that’s- boom.
That’s all there is to it. And that’s how it is and that’s how it has to be. The
second I step off the podium, I’m like the mom. Hugging everybody, you know.
Everybody is high-fiving it. And I’ve had many students, male and female, come
and talk to me to share some problems that I’ve eventually had to go to the
guidance counselor or whatever, but they felt comfortable coming to me with
those kinds of problems, those sensitive issues . . . They know what my
expectations are once I’m on the podium, but they know they can come talk to me
about other things, too. I think it’s very advantageous.

Kristi was pleased to have a similar dynamic with her students, but unlike Kate,
she did not view the establishment of those relationships necessarily as being an asset to
being a woman. Instead, she expressed that, “I don’t really feel there’s ever a time . . . I don’t really feel there’s ever an advantage to being a female band director.”

Beth disagreed with Kristi and did believe that there were times where it could be an asset to be a woman in band. She explained her rationale for this belief by describing how some of her male colleagues would come to her for support:

I feel oftentimes men are more willing to discuss issues with a female than they are with another man. And I feel because I’m female, I’m able to have very open conversations with my male colleagues that maybe a male-to-male colleague would not have. I don’t know, but that’s just an unofficial perception.

Although Kate, Beth and Roxanne were each able to describe a time where their gender was an asset to them professionally, the reality is that they and the other participants were able to describe several times where their gender was a hindrance to them professionally. It would appear that, while not everything is doom-and-gloom for female band teachers, there is still room for growth in gaining acceptance into the field of band teaching.

**Doing gender.**

One participant responded in what was, to me, an unexpected manner to the question of describing a time where gender was an asset to her professionally. Although at times in our interview, she acknowledged to being bothered by the idea that there were social expectations related to gender, when it came to identifying an advantage to being a woman in band teaching, she performed a social construct of gender – “The Helpless Woman:”
Okay. So I do sometimes do that girly thing, like I don’t know what I’m doing. “Can you help me?” I do that sometimes and I know I still do it. I don’t mean to, but I- Sometimes I just know that it’s- in a way, if I go to someone and say, [In a high-pitched voice:] “I have this problem can you help me?” When I was younger, I did it- I played the girl card a lot. And I don’t know- I just did. I mean, I was manipulative. But I was trying to get what I needed for- the way I knew how. So to go to somebody else and stroke their ego, which is what I was doing. Like the former high school band teacher when I first worked with him: “I’m not sure this is right, but do YOU think that we should- but YOU’VE been doing it longer.” And I think it was girly and making his ego inflate . . . There are women who will show whatever or they hike up their skirt thinking they’re going to get out of a parking ticket or whatever. I’ve never done that. Of course, I didn’t think I was all that anyways. So I can’t imagine trying to play that card.17 But more like the damsel in distress card, I think, is what I’ve done a lot of.

The participant may have been ashamed for doing gender in this way. In regards to the above vignette, she said, “I’m glad my name’s not going to be on the record for this.”

**Summary**

Many of the participants of this study had applied for high school band jobs and, in many cases were successful in such interviews. However, numerous outside factors

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17 External Audit: *Would she have done that if she thought she could pull it off?*
affected the career paths of the participants, resulting in several of the women pursuing middle, elementary and multi-grade level jobs.

The in-service participants of this study appeared to have much higher levels of professional role confidence than their pre-service counterparts. The in-service teachers often attributed this to their personalities, as many of them described themselves as naturally assertive and confident. Prior to becoming teachers, the in-service teachers developed their professional role confidence by gaining experience in teaching at marching band camps, refining their performance skills, singing publically and networking with other band teachers.

One successful female band conductor was recognizable globally, but identifying local female band teachers was a more difficult task. It appears that it can be difficult for some young band teachers entering the profession to see positive role models. Additionally, many of the participants in this study lacked a female mentor, which may or may not have affected their career experiences. All of the participants in this study had a mentor; however, many of the in-service participants were insistent that they, themselves, were not mentors, but merely resources for others who needed help. Some of the in-service participants had sought out friendships with other female band teachers, but these relationships sometimes turned into competitive rivalries.

Although many of the participants would like to see the Good Ol’ Boys’ Club dissolved and believed that women should be afforded the same opportunities as men, many experienced challenges in being a woman in the band teaching profession. These included the struggle to network with those in power, fitting in at professional development events, and gaining respect from students and colleagues. While some of
the women found their gender could be an asset, they also found themselves restricted by the social constructs and stereotypes of their gender.
Chapter Six: Discussion

Restatement of Problem/Purpose of the Study

To date, the career intentions and professional experiences of middle school and multi-grade-level female band teachers have been fundamentally ignored. It is possible that the events that occur in a middle school band teacher’s career path differ from those who teach solely at the high school or collegiate level, where the majority of the body of research is focused. Due to the lack of research in this area, this study was designed to explicate the factors affecting the career progression of women in band by focusing on those teaching band at the middle school and multi-grade levels, rather than those holding preeminent suburban high school band jobs. Additionally, the career intentions of pre-service band teachers were also examined to elucidate the way gender intersects career intentions and goals of this population.

The purpose of this study was to examine pre- and in-service female middle school and multi-grade level band teachers’ perspectives regarding their experiences in realizing their professional goals. Research questions centered on the following domains: Gaining Entry Into the Profession, Confidence and Self-Efficacy, and Mentorship. These domains were rooted in the current body of research literature (Cech et al., 2011; Gould, 2005; Greaves-Spurgeon, 1998; Koza, 2005; McKeage, 2004; Robinson, 2012; Sears,
2010; Silvey, 2011); however, an additional domain—Issues Surrounding Gender—emerged from data collection and analysis.

The remainder of this chapter includes a summary of the findings for each domain of inquiry as well as the emergent domain, discussions of the results and implications for the field of instrumental music education, and suggestions for future research and practice.

**Summary of Findings & Discussion**

**Domain I: Gaining Entry Into the Profession**

**How do women choose the grade level they teach? What factors influence this decision?**

The participants in this study chose the grade level(s) they taught in a variety of ways. Numerous factors affected this decision, resulting in several of the women pursuing middle, elementary and multi-grade level jobs. These factors included: the jobs available at the time of the participants’ job searches, family responsibilities, the time commitment perceived to accompany a band teaching job, and the desire to see musical and social growth in students over time.

**What grade level(s) do female band-track educators most desire to teach when first entering the profession?**

A majority \( (n = 5) \) of participants preferred to teach high school band when they first entered the job market; two of the women indicated that they desired to teach this grade level at large, suburban high schools. The remaining participants preferred obtaining middle school band \( (n = 2) \) and elementary school general music \( (n = 2) \) positions when they first entered the profession.
Are women applying for high school band jobs? If so, are they receiving, taking, and succeeding in such interviews?

Pre-service teachers were not at a point where they were applying for jobs yet; however, all of the in-service band teachers had applied for one or more high school band teaching jobs. Most in-service band teachers had received interviews for at least one high school band position. Success in interviews varied from being offered the job to being asked questions that may not have been asked of male candidates. Two of the participants expressed concern that hiring committees might worry that they would get pregnant and, consequently, become less dedicated to their careers.

Domain II: Confidence & Self-Efficacy

To what extent are pre- and in-service female band teachers confident in their perceived teaching abilities?

Although impossible to quantify in this type of study, the in-service participants of this study appeared to have high levels of professional role confidence, whereas the pre-service participants lacked confidence in several key areas. These areas differed by participant, but included: classroom management, instrument techniques and general teaching strategies. All but one of the in-service teachers attributed their professional role confidence to their personalities, as many of them described themselves as naturally assertive and confident. Only Susan described having to gain a confident persona as she taught, as she was naturally a “chill” person.
What experiences and skills do in-service band teachers attribute to their success as teachers?

Prior to becoming teachers, the in-service teachers gained experience in teaching at marching band camps, refining their performance skills, singing publicly and networking with other band teachers. All of the participants attributed their successes as teachers to one or more of these experiences. Roxanne also attributed her success as a teacher to her parents who engaged her in music early on and taught her to think critically.

In what ways have female band teachers had to develop a “masculine” professional persona to gain entry/acceptance into the profession?

Responses from the in-service teachers varied greatly. Some of the women felt as though they had to develop a “masculine professional persona” to gain acceptance from their students and colleagues, whereas others rejected the word “masculine,” but responded that, yes, they did need to be assertive. Susan did not believe that this pertained to her. Regardless of the extent to which the participants believed a “masculine professional persona” pertained to them, all equated such a persona with agency, confidence and assertiveness on the podium.

Domain III: Mentorship

What is the role of same-gender mentorship on the professional development of pre- and in-service female band teachers?

All of the pre- and in-service participants had a mentor, and just over half (n = 5) had a female mentor at some point in their careers. Regardless of the gender of their mentors, the participants sought advice on a range of issues, including: job searches,
teaching strategies, work/life balance and issues specific to being female in a male-dominated profession. Two of the participants with female mentors expressed the belief that it was helpful to have mentors who knew what it felt like to be a female band teacher in a male-dominated profession.

**What type of relationships do pre- and in-service female band teachers have with other women in the profession?**

The pre-service teachers had little contact with other women in the profession of band teaching, whereas several of the in-service participants sought out relationships with other female band teachers. These interactions ranged from that of friendships, support group-type networks, a formal mentor/protégé relationship and that of a “frenemies” relationship.

**Have in-service teachers been asked to serve in a mentorship capacity? If so, do they feel a responsibility to oblige?**

The younger the in-service participant, the less likely she had served or believed she had served in the role of mentor. Beth, who was in her first five years of teaching, had not been asked to serve in a mentorship capacity. Three mid-career participants were insistent that they were not “mentors,” but merely resources for others who needed help. The two participants with the most years of teaching experience described their roles as mentors in terms of working with pre-service teachers. All of the participants associated mentorship with formal assignments, such as student teacher/cooperating teacher. Roxanne felt a responsibility to share her knowledge with those in need, but Lois did not feel a sense of obligation to mentor others.
Are other female band teachers easily identifiable in the profession?

One successful female band professor, Mallory Thompson, was recognizable globally, but identifying local female band teachers was a more difficult task. Just one of the pre-service teachers could identify a female high school band teacher by name, and it was her own former band teacher. It also appeared that it could be difficult for young band teachers entering the profession to see positive female role models. Although Matilda knew of several female middle school band teachers, she believed they were “crazy” and did not want become like them.

Emerging Domain – Issues Surrounding Gender

Disconnect Between Pre- and In-Service Teachers

There was a distinct difference between the ways in which the pre-service and in-service teachers perceived the intersection between gender and the profession of band teaching. When it came to knowing that band teaching was a male-dominated profession, all of the in-service participants knew that they were in the minority, gender-wise. None of the pre-service teachers seemed to be aware of this. Additionally, two of the pre-service teachers expressed the belief that their gender should not matter when it came to the job hiring process. They felt that a candidate’s fit or competency should matter more than his or her gender. While this topic was not addressed directly by any of the in-service teachers, Kate did acknowledge that when it came to certain gender role expectations, there was a difference between what should happen and what actually does happen.
**Good Ol’ Boys’ Club**

All of the in-service participants believed that a Good Ol’ Boys’ Club exists in the band teaching world and, with the exception of Susan, all expressed that they believed the influence and/or size of the club was declining. Three of the participants identified OMEA conferences as The Place to witness the club in action, particularly at happy hour networking parties. Susan agreed that the club was visible at OMEA conventions but believed that it was the sessions and performances offered at the conventions that reinforced and “exacerbated” the club’s existence.

Although many of the in-service participants would like to see the Good Ol’ Boys’ Club dissolved and believed that women should be afforded the same opportunities as men, many experienced challenges in being a woman in band. These included the struggle to network with those in power, fitting in at professional development events, and gaining respect from students and colleagues.

**Women’s Organizations**

Two of the participants mentioned that they were approached to join the Women Band Directors International, a professional organization that is inclusive only to women. Neither had joined such a group before and both women expressed mixed feelings at the idea. Lois posited that a same-sex environment might make some women more comfortable, but struggled to accept the idea that men and women would need to be “separate.” Kate explained that she did not know yet how she felt about the organization, but expressed feeling as though she was under pressure to represent female band teachers well due to her visibility in conducting a highly respected chamber ensemble.
Social Expectations and Stereotypes

Several of the participants described experiences where their gender was a hindrance to them professionally. These incidents were not limited to just in-service teachers, but included one pre-service teacher as well. Kristi described being mistaken at a football game as a helper instead of the head band teacher and also believed that incoming freshmen students in her school district treated her differently than they did the male band teachers. Matilda agreed that students sometimes treat female teachers differently than they do male teachers and believed that it could be harder for women to earn respect. Beth and Kate both believed that there was a double-standard for women in that a confident, assertive man was a good band teacher, but those same attributes in a woman made her a “bitch.” Lastly, both Lois and Matilda described difficulties they had encountered in networking. Both believed that networking might be easier for males since they would, theoretically, have more in common with those in power (principals, athletic directors, other band teachers) who are typically male than would females. As a result, men would be more likely to be hired for premier teaching positions, earning titles such as, “Head Band Director.”

Gender as an Asset

Some of the in-service participants described occasions where, they believed, their gender was an asset to them professionally. Roxanne expressed the belief that because she was a woman, she naturally stood out in the profession and when she did things well, received accolades as a result. Although Kate described herself as “Alpha Kate” on the podium, she took pride in the off-the-podium nurturing environment created for her students that, she believed, only a female teacher could provide. Beth described
her view of gender being an asset professionally in terms of her ability to help men. She felt that some of her male colleagues were more likely to confide in a woman than another man. Lastly, one participant believed that her gender could be an asset to her professionally when she needed assistance with something. For those times, she would pretend to be helpless and would stroke her male colleagues’ egos until she received the aid she needed.

**Intersections with Gender**

Although she was able to bring insight to many of the domains of inquiry, gender was neither a hindrance nor an asset to Susan in her professional career. She admitted that gender was not something she thought about often. This may be because she was black and there are even fewer band teachers of color than there are women in band teaching. Additionally, Susan was the only participant who taught band in an urban school district. Susan perceived urban schools to have needs that differed from suburban and rural schools and, as such, redirected our interview to problems unique to urban schools on several occasions.

It is also important to note that a lack of discussion of certain topics does not mean that they were not influential in the participants’ professional careers. The subject of sexual orientation did not arise in any of the interviews, but it is possible that identifying oneself as part of the LGBTQ community may affect the ways in which the individual would perceive the profession of band teaching.
Discussion

Gaining Entry Into the Profession

Findings from the current investigation support previous studies (Gould, 1996; Sears, 2010; Robinson, 2010) in that family responsibilities and the perceived time commitment of teaching band have persuaded some of the in-service teachers not to pursue high school band teaching jobs at large suburban school districts. Feelings of “mommy guilt” (Bartleet, 2002; Fitzpatrick, in press; Sears, 2010) were present among some of the in-service participants; however, others did not communicate any such sentiment. All of the participants with children expressed the belief that finding a “family-friendly” school district was critical to maintaining a work/life balance. This is congruent with previous findings (Fitzpatrick, in press; Sears, 2010). For pre-service teachers, family plans were not a career-influencing factor, a finding similar to Cech et al. (2011).

Several participants provided comments that indicated that they pursued their current jobs because they wished to see musical and social growth in their students over an extended period of time. Although they did not discuss student growth directly, the participants in Robinson’s (2010) study expressed that they felt as though they cared too much about their students’ feelings and welfare to fit in the “hypercompetitive” band world. It may be that this desire to witness growth may outweigh some teachers’ desire to win band competitions and, thus, preclude them from teaching in many large suburban high school band programs.

None of the pre-service participants, but all of the in-service participants had applied previously for at least one high school band teaching position. In many of the
cases, the participants were granted interviews for the jobs. Success varied in this area, though, as some were offered the jobs, but others were asked questions at interviews that, most likely, would not have been asked of men. This supports other research (Greaves-Spurgeon, 1998; Sears, 2010) that indicates that sometimes women are granted courtesy interviews, only to discover that they are not being considered seriously for the positions.

**Confidence & Self-Efficacy**

In-service participants reported high levels of professional role confidence, whereas the pre-service participants exhibited a lack of confidence in at least one area of their teaching. These findings were not surprising, as the pre-service participants lacked the practical experiences the in-service participants had been able to gain over several years of teaching. It is worth noting that although the pre-service participants lacked confidence in one or more area of their teaching, they had managed to persist as music education majors and, therefore, may have had higher levels of professional role confidence than their peers who withdrew altogether from the music education program (Cech et al., 2011).

Matilda’s self-critical tendencies and fear of being wrong may make it difficult for her to increase her professional role confidence. In examining the ways in which passive behavior inhibits student learning, Orenstein (1994) has found that those who speak up have the luxury of learning from their mistakes. If Matilda could find a way to not worry about doing something incorrectly, she may achieve higher levels of success in her teaching, which could lead to an increase in professional role confidence (Cech et al., 2011). Likewise, Ashley and Jennifer expressed concern over managing a classroom full of students. Whereas Jennifer assumed that she would eventually “figure it out,” Ashley
opted to teach elementary general music where she presumed classroom management would be easier. This retreat to what is comfortable by avoiding risky situations is common in women (Krajcovic, 2011) and evident in other areas of music education (McKeage, 2002, 2004; Silvey, 2011; Wehr-Flowers, 2006). For example, researchers have found that, in jazz, females are less confident than males, exhibit more anxiety and, in turn, opt to not improvise or perform at all in jazz ensembles (McKeage, 2002, 2004; Wehr-Flowers, 2006).

It may be that some of the in-service participants of this investigation also lacked professional role confidence as they entered the profession of band teaching. Susan was, at first, unsure of what career she was most interested in pursuing and described herself as becoming more confident as she gained teaching experience. Other participants, who believed that they lacked confidence in certain aspects of their teaching, pursued training specific to those areas. This included enrolling in their university’s marching band, taking violin lessons and singing publicly. Consequently, many of the in-service participants attributed their success as teachers to some of these experiences.

Several of the in-service participants of this investigation described themselves as naturally confident. This is consistent with the existing body of research (Robinson, 2010; Sears, 2010) that indicates that successful band teachers are perceived to be assertive, confident or have a “Type-A” personality. When I asked the participants if they felt they had to have a “masculine professional persona,” some rejected the term “masculine,” but expressed the belief that an assertive or confident personality was necessary to gain respect from students or colleagues. This is congruent with research in other male-dominated fields that indicate women have to exhibit agentic behavior and
know the “right” things to talk about if they want to fit in or network with others in their professions (Demaiter & Adams, 2009; Denissen, 2010).

It is interesting to note that, although many of the in-service participants expressed needing to have an assertive, confident, or alpha personality to gain acceptance as a band teacher, many of the same individuals indicated that they were nurturing educators. This seeming conflict is not unprecedented. The participants in Sears’ (2010) study of female high school band teachers indicated that they, too, were assertive, tough and nurturing. It may be that, due to the stereotypes that exist of what a band teacher should look like and how they should act, female band teachers feel an obligation to embody a “masculine” professional persona. In turn, these teachers reinforce such stereotypes, making it difficult for women without this persona to achieve success (Gould, 2006; Sears, 2010).

The perceived requirement that a band teacher need be “alpha,” assertive and confident may be a remnant of the military tradition once associated with bands. Early bands were conducted by military officers who were, in many cases, veterans of war (Madsen, Plack, & Dunnigan, 2007; Mark & Gary, 2007; Shellahamer, Swearingen, & Woods, 1986). Presumably these men had worked their way through the ranks of the military and likely embodied the agentic attributes that are still expected of band teachers today. Given this century-old tradition and the fact that many of the women in this investigation as well as other related studies have been proud to be “alpha” (Sears, 2010), it is unlikely that the stereotype of the military-inspired “director” will be extinguished in the near future.
Conflicting with the current body of research in music education, two of the in-service participants expressed the belief that they did not need a “masculine” or assertive persona as a band teacher. Susan described that she was “naturally chill,” and that although she had to demonstrate confidence as a teacher, she did not think of her teaching persona as masculine or assertive. Roxanne indicated that this may have been true when she was younger, but now that she was approaching retirement, she was able to capitalize on her “warm and fuzzy” “grandma”-like presence and did not need to embody a “masculine” professional persona.

**Mentorship**

Consistent with other research in this area (Gould, 2001; Grant, 2000), all of the participants of this study had mentors; however, not all had same-gender mentors. Like the participant in Gould’s (2001) study, many of the participants of this investigation sought the advice of male and female mentors as they prepared to enter the profession of band teaching. Whereas Grant (2000) found that those participants who had been teaching the longest were less likely to have a female mentor than those who had been teaching the least amount of time, no such pattern was evident in this case. Several of the pre-service participants did have female mentors; however, several of the experienced in-service teachers did as well. Consistent with Gould’s findings (2001), all of the participants expressed the belief that having a mentor was important to their maturation as educators.

When it came to serving in the role of mentor, several of the participants indicated that they were merely resources rather than mentors. All associated mentorship with student teachers, a finding that is consistent with Gould (2001), who found that
participants were hesitant to identify themselves as role models or mentors and saw themselves in those roles only in formal capacities. Just two of the participants readily identified themselves as mentors to young music teachers. Roxanne felt strongly that her knowledge should be shared with others and believed it was important to teach mentoring skills to others, whereas Lois did not feel an obligation to serve in the role of mentor.

Aside from mentor-protégé relationships, the participants of this study described having additional relationships with other women in the profession of band teaching. These relationships ranged from that of friends to frenemies and both are congruent with existing research (Brock, 2008; Krajcovic, 2011). Although there is evidence that women value social relationships more than men (Brock, 2008; Eagly et al., 2000; Krajcovic, 2011), it is not unprecedented for women to compete with one another for recognition. Krajcovic (2011) describes this type of competition to be rooted commonly in one of the participating party’s insecurity or low self-esteem. This is much like Beth’s relationship with her “friend,” an individual who reportedly resented Beth’s accomplishments and who, as Beth described, had low self-esteem. Contrary to Brock’s (2008) findings, though, this competitive relationship—while probably unhealthy—has not led to any type of professional sabotage.

In addition to identifying friendships and mentors in the profession of band teaching, some of the pre- and in-service participants indicated that certain female role models inspired them. It is interesting to note, though, that these female role models were not fellow K-12 music teachers, but rather collegiate band professors. Also of note is that the only individual mentioned directly by name was Mallory Thompson, Director of Bands at Northwestern University. This is consistent with Grant (2000) who found that
the youngest participants of her study on the effects of mentorship on female collegiate band professors all identified Mallory Thompson, specifically, as a positive female role model. Perhaps not coincidentally, the only female band conductor to be featured in advertisements in *The Instrumentalist* from August 2000 to July 2002 was Mallory Thompson (McWilliams, 2003).

While it may be true that Mallory Thompson is a positive female role model, the reality is that many of the participants of this study will not pursue a career in collegiate band directing. Where are the role models at the local level? As in other studies (Fischer, 2012; McKeage, 2002), most of the pre-service teachers were not able to identify a female high school band teacher by name. The one individual who was able to accomplish the task identified her own former high school band teacher, but was unable to identify any other. In some ways, this may confirm the phenomenon of what Gould (2005) has referred to as “nomadic” women and Koza (1992) has called the “nameless women.” The nameless women are those whose photographs are shared in music textbooks and trade journals, but to whom no accomplishments are attributed. In the context of this study, the successful middle or high school female band teacher may exist, but she is without a name.

**Issues Surrounding Gender**

**Disconnect Between Pre- and In-Service Teachers**

As with this investigation, all of the in-service participants in Sears’ (2010) study knew that band teaching was a male-dominated profession. However, unlike this study, Sears’ participants excused the poor rates of women in band teaching because it was “history” or “tradition.” Just one of the participants of this study, Kate, indicated that
tradition might explain how men have come to hold the majority of band teaching positions. The remaining in-service participants did not share their beliefs as to how such a discrepancy has come to exist, but merely identified that they understood that they were in the minority. Interestingly, none of the pre-service teachers knew that band teaching was a male-dominated profession. This is congruent with the findings of Fischer (2012), who found that pre-service female band teachers did not perceive band teaching to be a masculinized field. Given the discrepancies that exist between the ways in which pre- and in-service female band teachers perceive the profession to be “masculine,” it is apparent that something may happen within the first few years of teaching that leads some women to alter their perspectives. It may be that once a teaching position has been obtained, it becomes easier to notice that women are outnumbered in band teaching. It is also possible that as children and young adults, many women are taught the virtues of equality and meritocracy—that women can do anything that men can do if they only work hard enough—only to discover that not everything is that simple in the professional realm. Further research is warranted in this area.

**Good Ol’ Boys’ Club**

All of the in-service participants of this investigation agreed that, yes, there is a Good Ol’ Boys’ Club in the world of band teaching. This finding was consistent with others in music education and other fields (Denissen, 2010; Robinson, 2010; Sears, 2010). Previous research has indicated that the Good Ol’ Boys’ Club can prevent women from growing in their careers by undermining women’s self-efficacy, making them feel uncomfortable around The Club, and prompting some women to become too intimidated to join the profession (Denissen, 2010; Robinson, 2012; Sears, 2010). None of the in-
service participants of this investigation expressed feeling this way; however, all of the in-service participants had persisted in the profession for several years. It is possible that others left the field of band teaching due to these experiences surrounding the Good Ol’ Boys’ Club.

Much like the participants in Sears’ (2010) study, the in-service teachers of this investigation indicated that things were “getting better” and that younger male teachers were more welcoming to women. It should be noted that one participant, Susan, did not share this belief and, instead, indicated that she felt as though the type of sessions and performances typically supported by OMEA at its conferences reinforced the Good Ol’ Boys’ Club’s existence.

**Women’s Organizations**

Two of the participants of this study expressed mixed feelings as to how they felt about band organizations for women. Both had been approached to join the Women’s Band Directors International (formerly the Women Band Directors National Association or WBDNA) and, while flattered, were unsure as to whether or not they would join. Lois explained that she did not necessarily like the idea of having a separate organization for women, whereas Kate repeated that she “was not sure” how she felt. Both of these responses were congruent with research in music education. Jackson (1998) found that some women thought that the WBDNA served a purpose and was helpful; however, others thought it was not helpful and was segregationist. One participant of Jackson’s (1998) study was adamant that she did not want to be labeled as a *female* director. Incidentally, this individual has changed her mind since attending meetings and evolved to believe that such organizations can be a useful forum for women in band.
Social Constructs and Stereotypes

Two of the participants in this investigation expressed the frustration that, to be socially accepted, women cannot say or do some of the things that men can. An assertive man is a great band teacher; an assertive woman is a “spitfire” or a “bitch.” This is consistent across male-dominated professions, as the expectation is that women will continue to do gender or act feminine even though they are doing a “man’s job” (Denissen, 2010). Gould (2003) explains that as a society, we punish those who do not perform gender correctly. As such, women who are agentic and successful in a man’s job are less liked and perceived more negatively than their communal counterparts (Heilman et al., 2004; Rudman & Glick, 1999). It may be that female band teachers are perceived much in the way as those who play cross-gendered instruments – as social deviants (Million et al., 2002).

Teaching band can be dichotomous in that the music educator must have one foot in the military-inspired band world, exhibiting agentic qualities, and the other foot in the female-dominated teaching world, exhibiting communal qualities (Eagly et al., 2000). It is possible that the participants who described themselves as both “alpha” and nurturing are attempting to balance their agentic attributes with communal characteristics to gain social and professional acceptance. Those female band teachers who do not exhibit communal traits would be seen as not performing their gender correctly and, as such, would be more likely to be personally criticized (Heilman et al., 2004).

Doing Gender

As gender is socially constructed, there are certain expectations of how gender can be performed (Gould, 2003). The participant who manipulated her male co-workers
into helping her with certain tasks reinforced the social construction of being female (i.e., the “damsel in distress”). In this social construction, women are to be helpless and needy (Eagly et al., 2000). By doing gender in this way, the participant did not just reinforce what it means to be stereotypically female, but she also reinforced what it means to be stereotypically male – that men are problem-solvers and providers (Eagly et al., 2000). It is possible that other participants have performed gender in this way, but were unwilling to discuss it publicly or were perhaps unaware that their actions could be perceived in this way. As it was with this individual, the participant did not want her name or her even her pseudonym associated with this behavior, indicating her awareness of performing gender to manipulate the behavior of others and advance.

**Gender and Ethnicity**

As indicated previously, Susan did not believe gender to be an asset or a hindrance to her professionally. In fact, it was something that she did not think about often, even though she expressed that she did not feel as though she “fit” in the band world. Susan indicated several times in our interview that she was not a typical band teacher. She was black and taught in an urban school district – two factors that distinguished her immediately from the other participants.

Although this study examined an oppressed population in band teaching, ethnicity was not an intended topic for this investigation. This was certainly due to my own schema and biased perception of band teaching. As a white woman, ethnicity did not even enter my mind as it related to this study until I met and interviewed Susan. Sheldon and Hartley (2012) have investigated gender and ethnicity trends among those in instrumental music education leadership positions. Not only is the band teaching

162
population predominantly male, it is overwhelmingly white. Unfortunately, there is a
dearth of research on this topic (Bruce & Maidlow, 1999). Researchers are encouraged to
consider this when planning to study similar topics in this line in inquiry.

Of additional concern to Susan were issues surrounding teaching in urban schools.
Much like the participants of Fitzpatrick’s (2011) study, Susan believed that teaching in
an urban environment required a special set of skills that were not provided readily to
undergraduate music education students. Given the frequency with which she directed
our interview back to the needs of the urban schools, it was evident that the desire to
ensure that future urban students received a quality music education was of greater
concern to Susan than her experiences as a woman in band.

**Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research**

This study was limited by the information the participants chose to share with me,
the researcher, and by default you, the reader. While all accounts by the participants are
thought to be truthful, it is possible that recall error, personal bias and the emotional
states of the individuals may have affected their responses (Patton, 2002). Additionally,
data were collected from a small sample. The addition of participants may have further
supported or discredited identified themes. Moreover, the results of this study are not
intended to provide broad generalizations about women in the profession of band
teaching. Instead, this study should be regarded as nine women’s experiences with their
career progressions, which may or may not be similar to those of other women or men in
the profession. Data presented in this study should serve as a foundation for further
inquiry. Such inquiry could include a survey grounded in the findings of this study,
which would help to determine if the themes and patterns from these nine participants
were representative of a larger population of female band teachers. Additionally, studies examining professional role confidence in instrumental music education could help illuminate the challenges faced by some in band teaching, particularly female pre-service teachers who may lack self-efficacy. Investigations tracking the enrollment of women as instrumental-track music education majors may provide insight into the motivations behind the persistence of some female pre-service band teachers. Likewise, tracking graduates of music education programs as they enter the job market may help illuminate the ways in which male and female band teachers gain entry into the profession.

Lastly, it may be that there are regional differences in the career intentions and experiences of female band teachers. The participants of this study all taught or planned to teach in the state of Ohio. Research examining the experiences of female band teachers in various regions of the United States or other nations may help to shed light on the status of women in band teaching elsewhere.

**Recommendations for Practice**

Results of this study should prove useful to teacher educators and pre-service band teachers. For example, the experiences in-service teachers’ reported as being important to their career success provide general guidelines for pre-service teachers’ activities beyond the prescribed music teacher education curriculum. Working at band camps, performing often and networking with in-service teachers may help to level the playing field for young female teachers who may find that they are limited by the experiences and ensembles commonly associated with their primary instruments. Additionally, two steps can be taken to ensure that young musicians and music educators are provided opportunities that may not otherwise be afforded to them, due to the fact that
the instruments they play are not represented in jazz or marching bands. First, in-service K—12 teachers and university faculty should be encouraged to expand the instrumentation of those ensembles, or provide “lab band” opportunities for students who may not otherwise “fit” in the traditional ensembles. Secondly, students—particularly music education majors—should be encouraged to develop proficient skills on a secondary instrument and, thus, could join these ensembles on such an instrument.

Given the gender stereotypes commonly associated with instruments, in-service teachers are encouraged to take steps to ensure that their own biases are not a factor when assigning students to instruments. Additionally, teachers should be aware that these perceptions do exist among their students, colleagues, and students’ parents, and should work to educate their communities to prevent the perpetuation of such stereotypes. These accommodations may include bringing in guest artists who challenge gendered assumptions (e.g., male flute player, female trombonist), as well as examining what teaching materials are presented to students in the form of posters and textbooks.

Gender stereotypes should be challenged, particularly in the presence of pre-service teachers who, as they gain entry to the profession of band teaching, may find they unknowingly transmit and reinforce such stereotypes. Passive students should be encouraged and supported to speak out in university classes and, in some cases, may benefit from extra podium time in conducting and methods courses. Pre-service male band teachers should be taught about the Good Ol’ Boys’ Club and the ways in which women and some men can feel ostracized and unsupported in the profession. Likewise, all pre-service band teachers would benefit from training specific in preventing the
promotion of gender stereotypes through labels such as “manly,” “girly,” or descriptors like, “you play like a girl.”

Lastly, consideration should be given to the ways in which female band-track music education students are supported professionally. Local role models are not always visible, and when they are, may not necessarily be positive representations of female band teachers. As such, universities or state music education associations may want to consider establishing formal mentor programs where successful veteran teachers can be paired with young educators. This could also prove beneficial for young teachers of color, who may also lack visible role models in the profession of band teaching.
References


Appendix A: Recruitment Letter – Pre-Service Teacher

Dear Ms. ______________________,

My name is Sarah Fischer and I am a doctoral student at The Ohio State University. For my dissertation, I am investigating the career paths and experiences of pre- and in-service female band teachers. The music education faculty at OSU suggested that I contact you as someone who may be able to assist me in my data collection process.

If you are interested, I will interview you at a time and place that is convenient for you. If you agree to an interview, you do not have to answer questions you do not want to, and you can end the interview at any time. The interview should approximately forty-five (45) minutes. My interview questions will be open-ended, allowing for you to share as much or as little information as you would like. Depending on your responses, I may ask clarifying or follow-up questions. Questions will focus on your career goals, as well as your perceptions of the profession.

Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or prejudice. Because results of this study plan to be published, all identifying information from the interview and programs will not be used, and you will not be identified in any way.

If you would be willing to participate in this project, please let me know by responding to this email. You may also contact me or my advisor, Dr. Daryl Kinney, at 614.247.6151. Additionally, you may direct any questions you might have about the study to Dr. Kinney or me. Once you have responded that you would like to participate, I will contact you to set up a time for our interview.

Thank you for considering participating in this research.
Sincerely,

Sarah H. Fischer
PhD Candidate, Music Education
The Ohio State University
fischer.536@osu.edu
Dear Ms. ________________________,

My name is Sarah Fischer and I am a doctoral student at The Ohio State University. For my dissertation, I am investigating the career paths and experiences of pre- and in-service female band teachers. The music education faculty at OSU suggested that I contact you as someone who may be able to assist me in my data collection process.

If you are interested, I will interview you at a time and place that is convenient for you. If you agree to an interview, you do not have to answer questions you do not want to, and you can end the interview at any time. The interview should approximately forty-five (45) minutes. My interview questions will be open-ended, allowing for you to share as much or as little information as you would like. Depending on your responses, I may ask clarifying or follow-up questions. Questions will focus on how it has come to be that you are in your current job, as well as your perceptions of the profession.

Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or prejudice. Because results of this study plan to be published, all identifying information from the interview will not be used, and you will not be identified in any way.

If you would be willing to participate in this project, please let me know by responding to this email. You may also contact me or my advisor, Dr. Daryl Kinney, at 614.247.6151. Additionally, you may direct any questions you might have about the study to Dr. Kinney or me. Once you have responded that you would like to participate, I will contact you to set up a time for our interview.

Thank you for considering participating in this research.
Sincerely,

Sarah H. Fischer
PhD Candidate, Music Education
The Ohio State University
fischer.536@osu.edu
Appendix C: Informed Consent Script – Pre-Service Teacher

**Title of Project:** Career Intentions and Experiences of Pre-- and In--Service Female Band Teachers

**Investigators:** Dr. Daryl W. Kinney & Ms. Sarah H. Fischer, PhD Candidate

**Dear Student:**
Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. As was stated in our initial communication, the purpose of this study is to investigate the career paths and perceptions of pre-- and in--service female band teachers. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time.

Participation will require you to complete a 45--minute interview. Interview questions will include topics related to your experiences as a band--track music education undergraduate student.
Although the interview will be recorded for data transcription, all identifying information from the interview will be removed from the transcript. Once transcribed, the recording will be deleted permanently. Data collection will remain in the sole possession of the interviewer and/or advisor, and you will have the opportunity to verify the material gathered from the interview. When I write about what I find out from this study, I may quote from your interview; however, if I do, I will do so in a way that will not allow anyone to figure out who you are. All information will be anonymous.

There are no negative consequences if you choose not to participate. Your decision to – or not to – participate will have no impact on your grade(s) or treatment in any of your courses. Likewise, what you say will have no impact on your grade(s) or treatment in any of your courses. You do not have to answer a question if you feel uncomfortable doing so, and you can stop the interview at any point.

I cannot offer you any money or promise that this research will help you personally. I hope, though, that your participation may benefit music educators in the future, by helping to shed light on how female band teachers pursue their career goals.

Please understand that your decision to do this interview with me should be entirely voluntary and you can withdraw or stop the interviews at any time just by telling me. Likewise, if you have any questions or concerns about this study later on,
or decide that you are dissatisfied with anything, you can say something to me or, if you prefer, Dr. Daryl Kinney, my advisor. For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1--800--678--6251.

In order for us to continue with the interview, I will need to obtain your verbal consent to participate in this study. You will also receive a copy of this script for your records. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Kinney or me at any time.

Dr. Daryl W. Kinney Sarah H. Fischer
Associate Professor PhD Candidate
The Ohio State University The Ohio State University
kinney.61@osu.edu fischer.536@osu.edu
Appendix D: Informed Consent Script – In-Service Teacher

Title of Project: Career Intentions and Experiences of Pre- and In-Service Female Band Teachers  
Investigators: Dr. Daryl W. Kinney & Ms. Sarah H. Fischer, PhD Candidate

Dear Teacher:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. As was stated in our initial communication, the purpose of this study is to investigate the career paths and perceptions of pre- and in-service female band teachers. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time. Participation will require you to complete a 45-minute interview. Interview questions will include topics related to your career path and experiences as a band teacher.

Although the interview will be recorded for data transcription, all identifying information from the interview will be removed from the transcript. Once transcribed, the recording will be deleted permanently. Data collection will remain in the sole possession of the interviewer and/or advisor, and you will have the opportunity to verify the material gathered from the interview. When I write about what I find out from this study, I may quote from your interview; however, if I do, I will do so in a way that will not allow anyone to figure out who you are. All information will be anonymous.

There are no negative consequences if you choose not to participate. Also, remember that you do not have to answer a question if you feel uncomfortable doing so, and you can stop the interview at any point.

I cannot offer you any money or promise that this research will help you personally. I hope, though, that your participation may benefit female music educators in the future, by helping to shed light on how female band teachers pursue their career goals.

Please understand that your decision to do this interview with me should be entirely voluntary and you can withdraw or stop the interviews at any time just by telling me. Likewise, if you have any questions or concerns about this study later on, or decide that you are dissatisfied with anything, you can say something to me or, if you prefer, Dr. Daryl Kinney, my advisor. For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of
the research team, you may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.

In order for us to continue with the interview, I will need to obtain your verbal consent to participate in this study. You will also receive a copy of this script for your records. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Kinney or me at any time.

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