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UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Greeley, Colorado

The Graduate School

PROMINENT WOMEN WIND CONDUCTORS IN HIGHER
EDUCATION: TRIALS, TRIUMPHS, AND
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING
GENDER EQUITY IN THE FIELD

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Arts

Jennifer Lee Grice

College of Performing and Visual Arts
School of Music
Wind Conducting

December 2021

This dissertation by: Jennifer Lee Grice

Entitled: *Prominent Women Wind Conductors in Higher Education: Trials, Triumphs, and Recommendations for Improving Gender Equity in the Field*

has been approved as meeting the requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Arts in College of Performing and Visual Arts in School of Music, Program of Wind Conducting

Accepted by the Doctoral Committee

Russell Guyver, D.M.A., Research Advisor

Wesley J. Broadnax, D.M.A., Co-Research Advisor

Jason Byrnes, D.M.A., Committee Member

Mitchell McGlaughlin, Ph.D., Faculty Representative

Date of Dissertation Defense September 15, 2021

Accepted by the Graduate School

Jeri-Anne Lyons, Ph.D.
Dean of the Graduate School
Associate Vice President for Research

ABSTRACT

Grice, Jennifer Lee. *Prominent Women Wind Conductors in Higher Education: Trials, Triumphs, and Recommendations for Improving Gender Equity in the Field*. Published Doctor of Arts dissertation, University of Northern Colorado, 2021.

This study investigated the past and present status of gender equity in the wind band conducting profession in higher education. Eight of the most prominent women in wind band conducting were interviewed on specific questions regarding their trials, triumphs, and recommendations for upcoming women conductors in the field. Interviewees included Andrea Brown, Paula Crider, Tonya Mitchell-Spradlin, Emily Moss, Catherine Rand, Courtney Snyder, Emily Threinen, and LaToya Webb. Discussion topics included personal musical journeys, role models/mentors, equity in the profession, challenges faced in their careers, personal score study/rehearsal techniques, how to help future women in the field, and other pertinent information.

In this study, it was found all of the women found success by working harder and overcoming challenges and obstacles in a male-dominated field. Most of the interviewees had a majority of male mentors/role models. They stated that had there been more women predecessors in the wind band conducting field, it might have facilitated their professional journeys. All of the interviewees had challenges or instances involving inequality and spoke openly of their strategies for overcoming these challenges. The interviewees provided insights on skills and networking strategies that helped them succeed along their journeys.

Keywords: music, conducting, conductor, leadership, women, equity, mentor, role model, Andrea Brown, Paula Crider, Tonya Mitchell-Spradlin, Emily Moss, Catherine Rand, Courtney Snyder, Emily Threinen, LaToya Webb

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the past and present status of women wind band conductors¹ in higher education. Prominent women wind band conductors at the collegiate level were interviewed. Barriers that they have overcome were discussed as well as how they succeeded in their journeys in this profession. These interviews provided information and insights for young aspiring female conductors. Issues discussed in this study included the following: gender equity of wind conductors in higher education, percentage of women attaining music degrees versus women teaching in higher education, and the percentage of women versus men in higher education wind band conducting jobs. The study also examined mentorship/role models, triumphs, and trials of the interviewees.

Elizabeth Gould has shown, in her research into past statistical data, that the percentages of women college band directors have always been under ten percent of all college band director positions. Gould stated that reasons for this disparity might have included “the historical precedence of men conducting bands, traditional socialization, discrimination, segregation, and

¹ Wind Conducting – will refer to any ensemble conducted with wind instruments which may include: Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, Concert Band, Marching Band, Pep Band, Jazz Band, Small ensembles, Chamber music, etc.; interchangeable with phrases – wind conductor, wind band conductor, wind band director, wind director

the lack of visible role models.”² Although more women seem to be entering the wind band conducting profession, there continues to be inequity in the percentage of women in these collegiate wind band positions compared to men.

Statement of the Problem

Collegiate wind band conducting has traditionally been a male-dominated field. A low percentage, consistently under 10 percent, of women have been represented in the conducting field when compared to their male counterparts. This low percentage of representation was not unique to music and the cultural biases were such that women had difficulty attaining acceptance in many professional occupations.

Deborah Rhode discussed women and leadership and the insights into the problems associated with women attempting to break barriers into more prestigious and leadership positions including lawyers, business leaders, and government agency leaders. She contributed to and edited a book that contained many contributions from influential women in the legal profession, law firms, corporate world, and professors at prestigious universities. The publication, *The Difference “Difference” Makes*, contained multiple articles by women leaders, which was an outgrowth of the ideas presented in the Women’s Leadership Summit. This summit was sponsored in part by the American Bar Association. Rhode began her article with the statement, “For most of recorded history, women were largely excluded from formal leadership positions.”³ Rhode’s research into the status of women throughout history found women were largely excluded from history in that only approximately 850 women were

² Elizabeth S. Gould, “Identification and Application of the Concept of Role Model: Perceptions of Women College Band Directors.” *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 20, no. 1 (2001), 14.

³ Deborah L. Rhode, *The Difference “Difference” Makes* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 3.

mentioned in encyclopedias as prominent people in history within a 2,000-year period. Although the number of women in professional areas had increased dramatically over the past few years, the percentage of women were not equal in higher level positions. The statistics offered in her book showed that although “Almost 30 percent of lawyers are women, but they represent only about 15 percent of federal judges and law firm partners, 10 percent of law school deans and general counsels at Fortune 500 companies, and 5 percent of managing partners at major law firms.”⁴ The statistics continued to show there is inequality in women’s representation in the political and corporate arenas. Rhode stated, “Women’s opportunities for leadership are constrained by traditional gender stereotypes, inadequate access to mentors and informal networks of support, and inflexible workplace structures.”⁵ In a separate book, *Women and Leadership*, Rhode commented on women in academia and the dismal statistics. One statistic pointed out that women in academia, while outnumbering men in student college graduates and postgraduates, held fewer positions as full professors or as university presidents. Not only did Rhode examine the injustice of inequality of women in better positions, she stated that “a competitive economy cannot afford to undervalue half its talent pool.”⁶

Jill Sullivan discussed the general cultural climate of the times prior to World War II where women who entered a field were not expected to rise to the top of professions. Men had traditionally held top leadership positions. The unique situation created by World War II gave women an opportunity to attain positions they would have been denied in the past. Since the men in the country went off to war, women were able to hold traditionally male positions in the country. Sullivan interviewed six women who were the United States’ first female military band

⁴ Ibid., 6.

⁵ Ibid., 7.

⁶ Deborah L. Rhode, *Women and Leadership*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 4.

directors and these interviews included many trailblazing firsts. Women in military bands during World War II were provided opportunities in areas that would normally be considered a male role. She stated, “when women had the opportunity to emerge into society and reveal on a world stage how competent they could be flying a plane, fixing an engine, driving a troop truck, commanding troops, or conducting a military band.”⁷ In an interview with Joan Lamb, the findings of her many accomplishments included starting an all-black band. These bands were not only segregated between men and women but between black and white women in the women’s bands. The US Army trained six women to be bandleaders during Lamb’s training. When they graduated, the female classmates were promoted to Master Sergeant, a lower rank than the men, because the rank of Warrant Officer the men obtained was not yet legislated for women graduates.⁸ Another woman band conductor from the World War II era who was interviewed was Mary Tamson Nelson Waterman. She was the first woman to receive the rank of Warrant Officer. Waterman stated:

They were putting a band together at Ft. Des Moines, Iowa to replace the men’s band; the men weren’t too happy about having to give up their band jobs. We practiced with them learning to maneuver, march, play music—reveille and retreat... We marched a lot and the shoes were terrible. We got blisters and I ended up in the hospital at one point. We had to get tetanus and smallpox shots and following one of these shots I passed out on the road when marching. The men eventually got reassigned and we took over.⁹

Women started conducting and leading bands due to societal phenomena such as times of war. World War II created a unique, but often temporary opportunity for women conducting and leading collegiate and military bands. President Roosevelt signed a bill that created a law to

⁷ Jill M. Sullivan, “Women Music Teachers as Military Band Directors During World War II.” *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education* 39, no. 1 (October 2017), 79.

⁸ Ibid., 90.

⁹ Ibid., 94.

allow for the formation of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps on May 15, 1942, which led to other military branches having women's band units.¹⁰

However, when the men returned from war, these conducting positions along with many other roles in society where women were filling in the gaps, the conducting positions reverted back to being male-dominated. This was especially true because military bands were segregated and comprised of all men or all women. Therefore, when the male veterans returned from the war years, they in turn became the wind band conductors. For example, Sullivan reported that although a women's Army band was reinstated and an all-female military band was formed, when the men came back from war they wanted to return to their pre- World War II status. She stated, "After the war, the American military again was predominately male, and all the women's military bands were decommissioned."¹¹

Sullivan pointed out that when the U.S. Congress passed Title IX, the Equal Opportunity in Education Act in 1972, it was "the first federal law prohibiting sex discrimination in educational and government-funded institutions which consequently provided the impetus for the integration of college and military bands... Public school bands today include both genders because of this law."¹²

Significance of the Study

In answering the interview questions about challenges prominent female wind band conductors in higher education encountered and how they overcame those obstacles, the interviewees provided insights and pathways to success for future women conductors entering

¹⁰ Jill M. Sullivan, "A Century of Women's Bands in America," *Music Educators Journal* 95, no. 1 (September 2008), 37.

¹¹ Ibid., 37.

¹² Ibid., 38.

the profession. The interviewees included some of the finest female conductors of our time; all are currently conducting in higher education with one having the status of professor emeritus. They are all still active in areas such as conducting their own ensemble, conducting honor groups, traveling, and being mentors/role models for upcoming young women. Participants in this study were drawn from those that are identified as trailblazers, mentors, and/or having high status positions with many years of experience as wind band conductors. Many of these women had to overcome difficulties in obtaining positions in the collegiate wind band profession. When they were entering the field, it was male-dominated. The women interviewed provided insights to aspiring women conductors by imparting information concerning how they maneuvered through the obstacles they encountered and how they obtained success. Aspiring women conductors seek and benefit from guidance from their predecessors through knowledge of their journeys and how their journeys compare to those of younger generations as it still remains a male-dominated field. Women entering the conducting field have much to learn from their predecessors. How did their predecessors become successful without female mentors/role models and how can their experiences help future generations? It is important to realize how women mentors/role models could promote women in the future. A comparison will be made of women wind band conductors between those with many years of experience versus those that have newer positions at the collegiate level.

Questions that will be asked of and answered by the interviewees include the following areas: background, mentorship, training, experiences, entering the wind conducting field, trials, triumphs, equity issues, family/balance, and advice for future generations (see Appendices D and E). Sample questions included

- Who are your mentors/role models, both past and present, and were any of them women?
- How important is leadership as a quality for any conductor? Were there any leadership roles that you held as a young student in high school or college that you think helped your career pathway?
- What should young conductors be sure to always and never do?
- What advice do you have for young conductors on balancing work and life outside of work?
- Do female successes in other fields, such as the first minority woman Vice President of the United States (Kamala Harris) and the youngest US inauguration Youth Poet Laureate (Amanda Gorman), enhance a female's ability to succeed in areas such as wind conducting? Do you think this will help women feel more comfortable applying for jobs that are in a male-dominated field such as wind conducting?
- What would you change, if anything, if you could go back? What would you tell the beginner conducting you?
- As a minority in the field, what advice do you have for future female conductors?

The significance of this study was to look at female wind conductors who have been very successful in the field and share their experiences so future generations might learn from them and reach greater heights in their career paths. Although there are acknowledged problems for female wind band conductors, there is an opportunity for more promising positions in the future.

As Marin Alsop, the first female conductor of a major American orchestra, stated:

We have to acknowledge that women were really, almost kept out of this profession. I mean, not just conducting in that leadership role, I mean, as leaders, women have been really kept at the fringes and only one or two let through now and then. But that can't be because there were no talented women, as we see, there were talented women that

weren't acknowledged, and there are dozens and probably hundreds of women who missed that window of opportunity, you know, I just want to say it out loud because I feel for them and, you know, I'm happy that young women are now getting opportunities because well, it should have happened all along the way. So, I don't think it's that suddenly, all these talented women popped out of the earth, I think they've been there all the time, but suddenly, they were able to get a foot in the door, and maybe even now the door is open for them. I was busy for 30 years saying, "Where are, why aren't there more women? What can I do?" And it's a matter of creating opportunities but suddenly, every orchestra wants a woman on the podium because it's part of what they "have to do," and I'm thrilled because it is an opportunity now. I just want to ensure that it's not just a trend and they're not just doing it because they have to do it, but because it's genuine and sustainable.¹³

Sondra Howe summarized why she believed stories are needed of successful women:

Although women had limited opportunities in the past, it is important to reflect on the lives and thoughts of the women who succeeded and include their experiences in the historical narrative, in order to understand the profession today, confront patriarchal values, and develop philosophies for the future. Music educators, both female and male, have many more opportunities for obtaining a quality education than they did in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The need for support of family and mentors within the profession. And they need leadership opportunities from the local to the state and national levels to obtain skills to make a positive impact on the profession.¹⁴

¹³ Marin Alsop, "Marin Alsop: No Longer A One Woman Show," *Articulate with Jim Cotter*. Season 6, Episode 10. <https://articulateshow.org/videos/marin-alsop-no-longer-a-one-woman-show/>. January 22, 2021; accessed 25 January 2021.

¹⁴ Sondra Wieland Howe, "A Historical View of Women in Music Education Careers," *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 17, no. 2 (Fall 2009), 179.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND

Review of Relevant Literature

With regard to the purpose of this study investigating past and present status of women wind band conductors in higher education, previous literature was examined. Some of the problems identified included inequity in the numbers of women in wind band conducting positions in higher education when compared to the men in similar positions, the challenges women had to overcome in seeking positions in the wind conducting field, and the difficulty, especially in the past, of having women role models and mentors represented in the field. Many publications have indicated that gender inequality has been, and remains, a problem for women seeking positions at higher education wind band conducting positions.

Inequity in Numbers

Researchers discussed in this chapter such as Bushman, Peterson, Shuttlesworth, Snyder, Turner, Zawel, Feather, Foley, Gould, Hartley and Sheldon, Jackson, and McElroy have compared have compared gender equity among women and men collegiate wind band conductors in the past by comparing the statistics relating to the percentage numbers between male and female positions held throughout various years. The percentage of women and men in the positions of collegiate wind band conducting in data reported in past literature has shown vastly skewed advantages in the percentages for men. There was clearly a male dominance in obtaining positions in higher education wind band conducting positions.

Surveys have been used to gather information on differences between men and women band directors. Feather's research involved sending surveys to female and male conductors to gather data on differences between the genders in band directing position in higher education in 1979-1980. Feather reported the data were unfavorable toward women. In comparison to their male counterparts in wind conducting positions in higher education, there were fewer numbers of women in professional music associations and fewer numbers of women in higher education wind conducting positions. Feather stated, "Data reported in the present study indicated that women comprised 1.25 percent of the population of band directors in higher education during the 1979-80 academic year."¹⁵

Equity issues in the number of band director positions were studied by Cheryl Jackson. She found in her research that the numbers of women band directors had increased in the two decades preceding her research but there were still equity issues. Jackson reported the data showed only 6.5% of women were in college or university band positions in 1995-1996.¹⁶ Her research involved telephone interviews with twelve women band directors across the United States. Jackson stated, "In the last twenty years, the numbers of women in college band directing positions have grown slightly, but a large disparity between the numbers of women and men continues to exist."¹⁷

In another research article by Jackson, she discussed women as leaders of collegiate bands from 1850-1980. Jackson listed the "firsts" or trailblazers in women teachers in music

¹⁵ Carol Ann Feather, *Women Band Directors in Higher Education* (Ph.D. Diss., The University of Mississippi, 1980), 74.

¹⁶ Cheryl Ann Jackson, *The Relationship Between the Imbalance of Numbers of Women and Men College Band Conductors and the Various Issues that Influence the Career Aspirations of Women Instrumental Musicians* (Ph.D. Diss., Michigan State University, 1996), 15.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 124.

education. One of those trailblazers was Nellie Agnes Hope (1862-1918); she taught at Macalester College in St. Paul and was considered the first woman appointed on the music faculty of a higher educational institution. Another trailblazer was Clara Baur (1835-1912) who was the founder of the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music.¹⁸ Women in the history of performing and conducting music have illustrated a frustrating journey filled with challenges. Women's music roles in music were gender-specific with women playing certain instruments and obtaining only certain professional positions. Instruments considered appropriate for women to play included harp and violin and singing was acceptable; positions of wind band conducting were not gender appropriate for women. Jackson stated, "With the passage of time and awareness of the situation through further research, a conductor of an instrumental ensemble will be judged exclusively by his or her ability to facilitate the ensemble into making beautiful music."¹⁹

However, equity between women and men conductors was moving in a forward motion, albeit slowly. There were times when it stagnated. In McElroy's research, she discussed that data showed women not only lacked in equity status but at times were even moving in a negative direction. However, she reported in statistical data from 1984-1996 that the percentages of women in the wind band conducting field were trending slowly upward and that the percentages of women band conductors in higher education rose from 3.81% in 1984-1986 to 5.63% in 1994-1995.²⁰ In her research on the inequity between women and men conductors, she selected her participants for the study from the CMS (College Music Society) 1994-1995 "Director of Music

¹⁸ Cheryl Ann Jackson, "Women as Leaders of Collegiate Bands, 1850-1980." *College Music Symposium* 38 (1998), 118-125.

¹⁹ Ibid., 125.

²⁰ Christina Jean Adela McElroy, *The Status of Women Orchestra and Band Conductors in North American Colleges and Universities: 1984-1996* (D.M.A. Diss., University of Missouri-Kansas City, 1996), 134.

Faculties in Colleges and Universities.” The participants chosen, both women and men, were then sent a questionnaire about how they achieved success in their professional journey. The directory from which the list of participants for McElroy’s study was chosen showed the disparity in the status of women and men in the music conducting field at the collegiate level. The directory included a large number of men versus a much smaller number of women.

McElroy stated:

Since the number of women listed as orchestra and band conductors in college music was so small, the entire population was included in the study.... Due to the much larger number of men conductors in both areas, a random sample of the male population was employed. The directory showed 752 male orchestra conductors and 1616 male band conductors... A random sample of 138 male orchestra conductors and 139 male band conductors was compiled.²¹

Gender inequity relating to university women band conducting positions was investigated by Hartley and Sheldon who researched data relating to university women band conducting positions from 1976-2000. They found women held only five percent of university band positions during those 24 years. They reported data showing the comparison between women and men as primary conductors at The Midwest Clinic International Band and Orchestra Conference²²: “Findings revealed that men overwhelmingly outnumbered women as primary conductors throughout the history of the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic.”²³

The percentage of women college band directors was barely over five percent as reported in Gould’s research.²⁴ In her later research, she again reported the data of college women band

²¹ Ibid., 6-7.

²² The Midwest Clinic is one of the most prestigious venues for the presentation of collegiate and public-school ensembles.

²³ Linda A. Hartley and Deborah A. Sheldon, “What Color Is Your Baton, Girl? Gender and Ethnicity in Band Conducting,” *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 192 (Spring 2012), 39-40.

²⁴ Elizabeth Gould, “Cultural Contexts of Exclusion: Women College Band Directors,” *Research and Issues in Music Education* 1/1, Article 3 (2003), 1.

directors and it had increased from the 2003 reported percentage barely over five percent to just under ten percent for women collegiate level band directors in the field. This showed an upward trend in numbers of women wind band directors in higher education; however, during the 2003-2005 timeframe, further research did not show a continuance of this upward trend.²⁵

More information involving statistics was reported in Foley's research where she reported that statistics of the past showed women band conductors at collegiate wind conductor positions had been between six to ten percent of the positions from 1992 to 2009.²⁶ Bushman and others were presenters on a Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic panel discussion and reported the inequity in numbers between men and women collegiate level wind band conductors—only ten percent of college level band directors were women.²⁷

Another area where gender inequality was evident was in the number of men compared to the number of women discussed in music history. In Hansen's book, he included two sections where he discussed leading conductors. One was called "Conductor Biographies" and the other was called "Twentieth-Century Conductor Biographies." In these two sections with over 40 names mentioned, only two women were included: Elizabeth Green and Barbara Buehlman.²⁸

Although there was an increase in numbers moving in a positive overall direction, the literature showed it was far from showing equity between women and men conductors. The data

²⁵ Elizabeth Gould, "Nomadic Turns: Epistemology, Experience, and Women University Band Directors." *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 13/2 (Fall 2005), 147.

²⁶ Megan J. Foley, *Patriarchal Killjoys: The Experiences of Three (Women) University Band Directors* (D.M.A. Diss., Boston University, 2019), 18.

²⁷ Catharine Bushman and others, "The Woman as Band Director: Cultivating Success On and Off the Podium," https://www.midwestclinic.org/2016_clinician_Courtney_Snyder.html, 2016., 1-2.

²⁸ Richard K. Hansen, *The American Wind Band: A Cultural History* (Chicago: GIA Publications, Inc., 2005), 316-317; 341-342.

history of the gender gap between women and men in wind band conducting positions in higher education demonstrated an ongoing problem for women striving to achieve in the wind band conducting field.

Historical and Cultural Challenges Dealing with Inequity

Another theme that emerged from the literature review was several challenges had made it difficult for women aspiring to obtain and succeed in wind band conducting positions in higher education. One issue was positions in higher education wind band conducting had been male-dominated as discussed in the previous section. The fact the numbers of wind band directors in higher education were so skewed toward the male side led to a 'Good Ol' Boy' network type of attitude. In the past, there was a stereotype that these positions were for men and the statistics shown in the previous section confirmed this idea.

Women have had a difficult time in being recognized as having the same skills as men. Lucy Green's research into the history of women's challenges in gaining recognition in the music industry revealed that from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, women were excluded from playing in orchestras with men. Women were relegated to certain instruments and often to religious music settings. It was not considered proper for women to play certain instruments and Green related a story about a women's troupe in Germany where the women were expected to 'entertain' the gentlemen after the performance. The scene was angry, the women were accused of not being real musicians, and it went to court. One of the musicians sat with her cornet, ready to play, to prove she was a musician at the hearing! Green revealed that even until 1904, music unions in the United States were able to exclude women from union-controlled orchestras. Ideas surrounding this exclusion included women were too frail to play in orchestras, women were biologically inferior, women would lower all wages, and women were

hysterical. One of the reasons why women could not play brass instruments was it would ruin their looks, but they could play certain instruments considered acceptable for women such as the harp. Fortunately, when unions became affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, the orchestras could no longer exclude women but women were still kept out of orchestras by what was called 'silent discrimination'.²⁹

World War II provided an opportunity for women to demonstrate their abilities as musicians and performers. Green stated in referring to women in orchestras,

The numbers of such players did not significantly increase until the Second World War, during which women were allowed to flood the major orchestras, for the ghastly reason that the ranks were depleted of men who were away fighting, or dead. After the war, however, many of the women were ousted.³⁰

One of the problems for women wind band conductors in the past was that the field had been dominated by men for so long it was hard to break into the profession. Cheng, in her research on gender-based obstacles, also found the problems for women wind band conducting included the 'Good Ol' Boy' club.³¹ Fischer-Croneis found through her research that all of her interviewees believed there was a 'Good Ol' Boy' club, although most thought it was getting better.³²

An overwhelming proportion of male conductors over the years were selected to have their ensembles perform at The Midwest Clinic: International Band and Orchestra Conference. Hartley and Sheldon noted that when ensembles with women conductors were selected for The

²⁹ Lucy Green, *Music, Gender, Education* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997), 66-70.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 67.

³¹ Marietta Nien-hwa Cheng, "Women Conductors: Has the Train Left the Station?" *Harmony* 6, (April 1998), 81-85.

³² Sarah H. Fischer-Croneis, "Career Intentions and Experiences of Pre- and In-Service Female Band Teachers," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 64/2 (July 2016), 197.

Midwest Clinic, they were generally middle school groups. In reporting the data of the number of women primary conductors of ensembles from the years 1947-2008 in comparison to the number of men primary conductors of ensembles from the same years, Hartley and Sheldon found 52 ensembles had females as their primary conductor in comparison to 550 male conductors of primary ensembles.³³

At The Midwest Clinic in 2016, a panel of women wind band directors from universities and public schools discussed the problems and challenges of women band directors. While women comprised the majority of students seeking a music education degree, the statistics revealed women at that time held thirty percent of middle school band director positions, twenty percent of high school band positions, and only ten percent of college level wind band directing positions. However, the statistics were higher for women obtaining choir and orchestra positions than for wind band conducting positions.³⁴

In addition to the disparity in numbers between male and female wind band conductors in higher education discussed in the previous section, Feather's research also found the women who did obtain positions had less prestigious positions in terms of sizes and types of institutions, unfavorable differences in education and professional rank for women directors, and unfavorable differences in workload and salaries for women directors.³⁵

Regarding salaries between women and men, Overland published in the College Music Society (CMS) the following, "It is a well-documented phenomenon that on average, women of all professions continue to earn lower yearly salaries than males who perform the same work....exacerbated by the underrepresentation of females within the highest ranks of

³³ Hartley and Sheldon, "What Color Is Your Baton, Girl?" 44.

³⁴ Bushman and others, "The Woman as Band Director," 1-2;

³⁵ Feather, *Women Band Directors in Higher Education*, 76-78.

academe.”³⁶ In reviewing the data from the NASM reports in NASM accredited schools, he found the typical disparity still existed in higher education between the gender populations. He charted the data in music faculty totals and gender composition from 2000-2014. The women faculty members salaries in higher education in music was lower than the male counterparts at the rankings of assistant, associate, and full professor.

World War II fostered social changes in American military bands. Hansen stated, “For the first time, female service bands were formed in the United States.”³⁷ Hansen reported there were several full-time female military bands and several volunteer drum and bugle corps during the war years. The women military bands were showcased marching in reviews and parades, playing for events such as graduations, war bond efforts, dances, radio-show broadcasts and hospitals.³⁸

Payne reported that since legislation was passed in 1972 eliminating sexual discrimination in the workplace, the percentage of females in all full-time university faculty went from twenty-two percent in 1972 to thirty-three percent in 1992. However, these gains were primarily in lower ranks and in community colleges. She stated women were still under-represented in many disciplines. She pointed out that research had shown sex-role stereotypes affected placement opportunities in music. Women obtained positions related to elementary music positions and public secondary school choral music positions while secondary level instrumental positions were overwhelmingly held by men at eighty percent.³⁹

³⁶ Corin Overland, Gender Composition and Salary of the Music Faculty in NASM Accredited Universities: 2000-2014. *The College Music Society*, 56 (2016).

³⁷ Hansen, *The American Wind Band*., 78.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 78-79.

³⁹ Barbara Payne, “The Gender Gap: Women on Music Faculties in American Colleges and Universities 1993-1994,” *College Music Symposium*, 36(1996), 91-102.

The percentage of women band directors was barely over five percent as discussed by Gould in the previous section. She also found that even though the female conductor could be as qualified, or more qualified, than male counterparts, the culture provided them with several problems in that there were not only fewer women but once hired, the women had lower salaries and ranks plus less prestigious positions.⁴⁰ While Gould's research from 2003-2005 showed an increase in women conductors, further research did not show a continuance of this upward trend. In 2005, Gould presented a view of the culture of women wind band directors in higher education that contained several serious obstacles. She referred to women conductors as leading a nomadic life, meaning they lived on the fringes, they were shunned by the accepted masses, they were marginalized, and they were not granted opportunities for advancement they would have been if they were white males. Gould also found women conductors were working with younger students while men were working with older students. This research acknowledged real problems and emphasized that now the work of educators is to solve these societal problems.⁴¹

Jackson also showed the inequity of numbers in each gender discussed in the preceding section and stated the issues involved not only historical data but cultural attitudes and gender issues. Jackson pointed out that William D. Revelli⁴² advocated for more women in performance ensembles and for women to pursue music band conducting positions and obtain positions in high school and university band and orchestras. Jackson inserted Revelli's quote in her research that stated a change of attitude must take place:

In the past, conductors of professional bands and orchestras, as well as school administrators, were of the opinion that members of the female sex were not adapted to the playing of wind or stringed instruments. The thought of a young lady playing the

⁴⁰ Gould, "Cultural Contexts of Exclusion," 1.

⁴¹ Gould, "Nomadic Turns, 150-154.

⁴² William D. Revelli (1902-1994) was the Director of Bands at the University of Michigan and served as the founder of CBDNA and was President of NBA and ABA.

oboe, bassoon, French horn, trombone, string bass, or trumpet brought shouts of protest from grandma and grandpa. However, with the advent of our school instrumental program this “moss-covered” tradition was swept aside...Women properly can teach instrumental music, and many are entering this field and will be found successfully teaching and conducting instrumental programs in the future.⁴³

However, on the other spectrum, music critic George Upton criticized women in music. He stated, “It does not seem that women will ever originate music in its fullest and grandest harmonic forms.”⁴⁴ Until 1940, men held the most instrumental music positions while most vocal and general music teachers in secondary schools were women. Much like the rest of the American economy during times of war, women in music entered, sustained, and advanced the professions until they were replaced when men returned from war. Pioneering women discussed in Jackson’s research included Nellie Agnes Hope, the first identified woman as a music faculty member in higher education. Jackson did point out, however, that other women preceded Ms. Hope such as Ms. Stevens at the Female Collegiate Institute in Newbury, Vermont. These women were active in the late 1800s. It was not until Title IX of the Higher Education Act of 1972 was passed that it became mandatory for marching bands and other groups to allow women participants. Jackson referenced four women band directors at the collegiate level in the late 20th century: Louis Jay Kaplan, Maxine Lane Lefever, Dorothy Ann Hill Kotzman, and Eva Diane Lyle.⁴⁵

Interviews with three women who held positions in wind band conducting in a university were conducted by Foley. In her final remarks, she stated:

Midway through the cultivating of the themes in this study, I came to the realization that the arena of band directing (as it is now) will always be a culture in which women will have to prove themselves in ways that men do not: they must prove themselves twice as good as men to be considered as competent; they will have to endure scrutiny of their

⁴³ Jackson, *The Relationship Between the Imbalance*, 23-24.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 17.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 17-28.

appearance on (and off) the podium and, potentially, consider family over career. I am left with questions I cannot answer: Why do we want to keep knocking on the door of a clubhouse that is not always unlocked for us? Is it enough to keep trying to put a foot in the door and demand to be let in?⁴⁶

What is expected of and criticized about a woman conductor is different than a male counterpart. Bartleet discussed some of these differences when it comes to appearance and attire when conducting. She stated she was conducting “when a lady approached me and said, ‘you might like to wear a longer jacket next time you perform. Your hips move when you conduct in a most unlady-like fashion’.” Bartleet doubted a male conductor would warrant such a statement.⁴⁷

Although few minorities are represented in conductors of wind bands, there are some. It was very difficult for historically marginalized individuals including women and people of diverse races. In Woods’ research on inequity in his study of five prominent African American trumpet players, he stated, “African-Americans have succeeded despite seemingly countless ploys created by Whites to stop or stifle their progress in both music and life.”⁴⁸ Woods, following a conversation with Tania Leon, an Afro-Cuban conductor, Leon stated she wanted to not be thought of as a woman or a black conductor, but instead wanted to be regarded as ‘a conductor.’ Woods concluded, “The musician must focus on artistry and execution when preparing to perform a piece of music, rather than the social climate of the ensemble in which the music is to be performed, and he or she must be able to withstand all slights, minor and major, unconscious and intentional.”⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Foley, *Patriarchal Killjoys*, 208.

⁴⁷ Byrdie-Leigh Bartleet, “Re-embodying the ‘Gendered Podium’.” *Journal of Music Research* 23 (Autumn 2002), 49.

⁴⁸ Demarr Ray Woods, *A Study of Prominent African-American Orchestral Trumpet Players from 1970 to 2018* (D.A. Diss., University of Northern Colorado, 2018), 28.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 74.

Gender-based obstacles in conducting were researched by Cheng. Although her background was Chinese, she grew up in the United States. She did various things to compete in the wind band conducting field including lowering her voice and changing her attire for conducting because of her gender. In pointing out the problems associated with females breaking into the traditionally male roles, Cheng pointed that Julliard did not allow women into their graduate programs until the 1960s.⁵⁰

Fischer-Croneis found issues for women seeking positions were influenced by not only the 'Good Ol' Boys' Club attitude discussed previously but that while the majority of music education majors in higher education were women, they did not often obtain positions for upper grade positions, particularly as band directors. Several reasons were discussed as to why the women had issues with these positions; they included time spent outside of the workday for higher grades, especially concerts for middle schools and high schools and practices for marching band. From high school band ensembles through higher education, the field was still dominated by males. One of the issues for women seeking positions was not being willing to move or seek positions outside of an area due to family and time constraints of being a band director, especially if marching band was part of the position. Some of the women participants in her research believed that to be successful in the higher levels in conducting they would need to have a more masculine persona or be assertive and overly confident.⁵¹

Women have had an uphill struggle to obtain positions in male-dominated conducting positions in higher education. The literature has shown an upward trend and it is looking up for a more equitable future. It has required laws and cultural changes as illustrated by the requirement

⁵⁰ Cheng, "Women Conductors," 82.

⁵¹ Fischer-Croneis, "Career Intentions and Experiences", 183-191.

of higher institutions to allow women in their marching bands with the passing of Title IX of the Higher Education Act of 1972.⁵²

Cultural events, movements, and individuals have had a positive impact on improving women's opportunities in the music field. For example, on an exit interview with Marin Alsop by Max Weiss he stated, "Of course, you had a hand in changing the perception of female conductors around the world." Alsop replied:

I hope so yeah. I think the #MeToo movement really kicked it into gear. Without that, I don't think we would have seen the dramatic changes we've seen in the last few years. It's only been the last five years that orchestras have been open to inviting women to guest conduct, women from a variety of backgrounds. There have been incredibly talented women and people of color around for centuries, but they simply were not given the chance. Because they were consciously kept out. The organizations and institutions haven't been open to them-until now. Suddenly everything is really transformed because of #MeToo and Black Lives Matter. *Finally*. It's great.⁵³

Research by Howe found prominent female musicians emphasized the importance of mentors, leadership, excellent education, and strong individual philosophies. Howe stated,

It is difficult to know if women are excluded from positions of leadership because of discrimination or the difficulty of changing traditional ideas of appropriate roles for women. Perhaps women make conscious choices to select less prestigious areas of the profession, like working with young children. They may avoid the extra responsibilities needed to move ahead in a competitive world because of the problems of balancing career and family, issues that have not been solved by society.⁵⁴

Three main themes were derived from interviews by Klena with successful women wind band directors. The first theme involved the changing or altering of behaviors to find success in their field such as masking their gender and performance attire choices. A second theme discussed discrimination experiences by the participants. The interviewees had all expressed situations where they had experienced overt and subtle discrimination. The third theme revolved

⁵² Jackson, *The Relationship Between the Imbalance of Numbers*, 121.

⁵³ Max Weiss, "Brava, Maestra!" *Baltimore* (August 2021).

⁵⁴ Howe, "A Historical View of Women", 177.

around the participants' interest in becoming role models and helping future women directors.

One of the challenges all of the interviewees discussed was the importance of attire. Klena's summary statements on attire from the interviews included

conductors should be aware of performance attire appearance from the back. Such a careful selection may prevent any visual distraction from the music. Additionally, practicality of the chosen attire must be considered to communicate non-verbally effectively through conducting. Also, the professionalism of the attire was absolutely critical since the purpose of the conductor has been to serve and uphold the integrity of the music. Finally, the selection of the attire should reflect the confidence, knowledge, and compassion of the conductor.⁵⁵

In her article "Motivating Girls to be Band Directors Begins in the Band Room," Virginia Allen gave strategies for success. She gave concrete examples of various opportunities for young women musicians including observing female role models and mentors by having female guest conductors, clinicians, and speakers; providing information on women trailblazers from the past and accomplishments of women band directors; exploring band director careers; having girls lead, go to camp, become drum majors, coaches, assistant workers; and discuss challenges, dreams and goals of the students.⁵⁶ Allen also composed a Grade 3 march for band with the title "Women of the Podium March" where the conductor in the illustration on the score cover was a woman who is wearing a dress. This was unique because most illustrations young people saw in music texts or literature were men. It was also positive that the composer was a successful woman and, by the presentation of her work, was a role model.

Jackson discussed challenges associated with discrimination through telephone interviews with twelve women college band directors; the older and more experienced women

⁵⁵ Pamela Lynn Klena, *Toward a More Inclusive Profession: A Qualitative Study of Female Wind Band Conductors* (D.M.A. Diss., The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2020), 54.

⁵⁶ Virginia A Allen. "Motivating Girls to be Band Directors Begins in the Band Room." *Teaching Music* 27, no. 4 (April 2020): 49.

directors related they had experienced more overt discrimination than the younger and less experienced women directors.⁵⁷

From the literature reviewed, several issues of inequity and problems inherent in a conducting and/or higher education positions detracted from making the positions more desirable for women such as time spent outside of the regular workday, the responsibility of having and taking care of a family, hostility from the work environment, and the need for more role models of the same gender. The problems and challenges faced by women aspiring to become successful wind conductors in higher education positions have been many. Throughout literature on women aspiring to be wind conductors in higher education or secondary school settings, the prevailing themes of the past appeared to be there was inequality in being granted a position. There was a need to promote strategies that helped aspiring young women see the possibilities of success with a professional music career.

Significance of Mentors/Role Models

One theme past literature explored was the significance of role models and mentors in the professional lives of successful women in higher education wind band conducting experiences. Several researchers including Jackson, Cheng, Gould, Grant, Sullivan, Anderson, Mullan, Smart, and Allen discussed the roles of role models and mentors. The research into the significance of role models/mentors was important because as seen in the percentage of women in the profession, not many women were role models and mentors for upcoming women conductors. As there were more men mentors than women, researchers and participants in studies concluded there was a need for women role models. Successful women conductors in the field considered themselves as part of the role model and mentor roles. Gould researched equity issues of women

⁵⁷ Jackson, *The Relationship Between the Imbalance of Numbers*, 112.

band directors in higher education through interviews and surveys. She mailed surveys to 38 women who had all held a full- or part-time college band position. She also interviewed 13 women college band directors individually and in small groups. Women with more than 15 years of experience had known no other women college band directors when they entered the profession. Women with less than ten years of experience knew of other women college band directors, but only one related to another woman conductor as having an influence on her. That influence was negative in nature as the woman had a position that was unfair with a heavy workload and less attractive working conditions than her male counterparts. Gould's research emphasized the importance of role models. She found that while women had mentors in their journeys, none she interviewed had women college band directors as mentors. The participants believed role models were important and most thought of themselves as role models.⁵⁸

In research with prominent African American orchestral trumpet players from 1970-2018, Woods found successful musicians he studied had a persistent desire to be the best in their fields and they also had important role models. Woods found the five interviewees "all received support from family, teachers, and friends at critical junctures in their careers: a band director or college instructor who personally advocated for opportunities, a colleague who shared information about job openings, etc."⁵⁹ Although these players did not represent women band conductors in higher education, they experienced similar problems in obtaining positions that were traditionally not attained, or were difficult to attain, by African Americans. These interviewees had obstacles and challenges similar to the women wind band directors in higher

⁵⁸ Elizabeth S. Gould, *Initial involvements and continuity of women college band directors: The presence of gender-specific occupational role models* (D.M.A. Diss., University of Oregon, 1996), 114-117.

⁵⁹ Demarr Ray Woods, *A Study of Prominent African-American Orchestral Trumpet Players from 1970 to 2018* (D.A. Diss., University of Northern Colorado, 2018), 78.

education. Woods reported that in large orchestras, only 1.2% of the performing musicians were African American.⁶⁰

Sullivan's research on women's roles in the history of our American musical journey was enlightening for future women musicians to know there were women blazing the trail throughout America's history. The women Sullivan researched were women performers and leaders in bands from the Civil War days, through the cultures of the early immigrants, from town female bands, and through bands during WWI and WWII. The women wind players and directors had opportunities to lead and excel during the World Wars when the men left for war. Sullivan suggested several ideas for current ensemble directors in public schools on how to promote the value that women had in the music industry in the past and to learn about the extraordinary women in music in the American heritage. Sullivan wrote,

From brass bands in the 1870's until the integration of males into the 14th Army Band in 1976, American women's bands enjoyed a century of popularity. This rich ancestry reminds us that both genders have a long history of leading and participating in bands in the United States. The women members of these groups paved the way for the large number of young women who participate in our school bands today.⁶¹

Sullivan's research extended to interviewing women who were pioneers in America's musical heritage and had been the first female band directors. Those interviewed all had experiences in musical leadership during World War II. War times provided opportunities for women as the men were fighting the war. As Sullivan stated,

For women in the United States, December 7, 1941, also became a symbolic end to women's place being in the home..... women had the opportunity to emerge into society and reveal on a world stage how competent they could be flying a plane, fixing an engine, driving a troop truck, commanding troops, or conducting a military band.⁶²

⁶⁰ Ibid., 81.

⁶¹ Sullivan "A Century of Women's", 38.

⁶² Sullivan, "Women Music Teachers as Military Band Directors", 79.

The interviewees from Sullivan's research mentioned how important role models are to aspiring and beginning women conductors and they personally had a desire to have an impact as role models for the future. Most of those interviewed mentioned role models in their paths toward success but at times, the majority of role models were men and some only had male role models. Successful women have expressed a desire and willingness to be a role model to those who follow the career path of conducting. One beneficial way to be a role model was for these prominent women conductors to inform aspiring women conductors how they overcame trials set before them on their journey to success. Interviews are a platform to accomplish this goal and the more interviews done with more and diverse prominent conductors, the more women would feel there was a place for them to succeed in the field.⁶³

The idea of a role model making a difference in the success of individuals was a predominant theme in the research. Anderson researched the American music success story of Barbara Buehlman in 2010. Buehlman became a role model for women striving to enter the field of women band directors. Buehlman's career spanned from 1960-1996 and she was a pioneer in music education. Her middle school groups were selected for honor bands and performing at major music events. She was the Executive Administrator of The Midwest Clinic for several years and received an honorary doctorate from VanderCook College of Music. She was the second female to be elected to the American Bandmaster's Association. Although she was a recognized leader, she still said there were certain opportunities or positions she did not attain due to her gender. One of the experiences denied to Buehlman was the opportunity to work with Glenn Cliffe Bainum, a music arranger. She was denied helping to set-up for The Midwest Clinic

⁶³ Ibid., 78-105.

because she was a female and housing could not be accommodated. She was also excluded from participating in marching band.⁶⁴

The life and career of Kathryn Belle Scott, the first woman associated with conducting a major university marching band, was researched by Jedd Smart. Kathryn Scott conducted the University of Alabama “Million Dollar” Marching Band from 1984-2002. Smart not only interviewed Scott but also interviewed others who were associated with her and included information from articles and outside sources. Kathryn Belle Scott had challenges indicative of the times such as discrimination against women in the conducting field and she had trouble finding a position. She graduated from the University of Alabama with a master’s degree in 1975 and went searching for her first band conducting position. In Alabama at that time, only fourteen out of more than two hundred secondary band positions were filled by women. Scott stated in her interviews, “female band directors were not plentiful at all in 1975, and they usually had a stigma attached to them.”⁶⁵ In interviews with other professionals in her field, comments were made about Scott’s groundbreaking status as a woman role model and trailblazer; she was a leader in breaking the gender barrier for those who followed.⁶⁶

While few women were available as role models earlier in research, Sarah Fisher-Croneis found some of the participants in her research indicated a particular female role model who inspired them. Mallory Thompson (Director of Bands at Northwestern University) was one of those role models listed.⁶⁷ Mallory Thompson was also singled out as a role model in Andria

⁶⁴ Timothy Todd Anderson, *Barbara Buehlman: A Study of Her Career in Music Education and as a Pioneer of the Female Band Director Movement* (D.M.E. Diss., Dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2010), 79-80.

⁶⁵ Jedd Russell Smart, *A Chronicle in the life and work of Kathryn Belle Scott: a key figure among female collegiate marching band directors* (D.M.A Boston University, 2014), 84.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 121-131.

⁶⁷ Fischer-Croneis, “Career Intentions and Experiences”, 196.

Mullan's research while interviewing female high school band directors. Mullan pointed out that while Mallory Thompson was considered a role model, other successful women band directors are needed to lead the way for future women in the field. Six interviewees specifically cited Mallory Thompson as an influence on their career.⁶⁸ Mullan wrote,

Mentors and role models were significant to all participants. High school band directors were noted most frequently as significant influences. However, college and middle school directors were also mentioned. Only two women reported working with a female high school band director. Dr. Mallory Thompson was also cited by several women as a significant role model. When it came to knowing other women who are high school band directors, most women were able to name two or fewer.⁶⁹

In research by Grant, where she interviewed twelve women conductors in four different career stages, Mallory Thompson was again mentioned in interviews as an important role model. Most of the interviewees did not have female role models outside of their families. The interviewees thought mentoring was important, especially mentoring from female role models. Grant wrote, "In a profession with a history steeped in military tradition, female role models have been few and far between."⁷⁰ This emphasis on needing role models, and particularly female role models, was a theme in interviews with women seeking success in the music profession.

The history of successful women musicians was reviewed by Sondra Howe starting with Julia Crane who started the Crane Institute of Music in the nineteenth century. This Institute was the first institution that included training for women to learn how to become music teachers in various settings as well as becoming music supervisors. She then researched prominent

⁶⁸ Andria M. Mullan, *A qualitative study of female high school band directors* (Ed.D. Diss., Saint Mary's College of California, 2014), 114.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 134.

⁷⁰ Denise Elizabeth Grant, *The Impact of Mentoring and Gender-Specific Role Models on Women College Band Directors at Four Different Career Stages* (Ph.D. Diss., University of Minnesota, 2000), 79.

successful women musicians since Crane and stated, “A historical survey of nationally prominent music educators shows the importance of quality education, guiding personal philosophies, positive supportive mentors, and leadership opportunities within the profession for developing a successful lifetime career.”⁷¹

Interviews with twelve successful conductors were included in Bruce Hangen’s conducting book. Two of the conductors interviewed were women; they were JoAnn Falletta and Madeline Smith. The last question that Hangen asked all interviewees was “What is your advice to emerging conductors that they should ALWAYS do and NEVER do?” Falletta answered this question by stating, “ALWAYS know the score, and study it even more. There’s ALWAYS more to learn! NEVER gloss over the score! NEVER get into an us-versus-them podium attitude! ALWAYS believe in making music together with fellow musicians.”⁷² Madeline Smith answered the same question on what to always and never do by stating,

NEVER say “it wasn’t my fault.” It’s only a waste of time and energy. Move the conversation forward. Artists can be sensitive and possessive about their work, and as soon as people get defensive and begin pointing blame on others, the creativity drives up. ALWAYS listen. Be everyone’s confidant and work towards a solution.⁷³

One of Klena’s three main interview themes, derived from interviews with successful women wind band directors, included the participants’ interest in helping future women band directors. Klena stated, “Continued honest, reflective celebration of women in the field of wind conducting has become imperative to preserving our history. Communicating the stories of trailblazers that came before will help to engender a passion toward more equal representation in the future.”⁷⁴

⁷¹ Howe, “A Historical View of Women”, 178.

⁷² Bruce Hangen, *Conducting Music Today* (Boston, MA: Berklee Press, 2020), 143.

⁷³ Ibid., 171.

⁷⁴ Klena, *Toward a More Inclusive Profession*., 53.

Summary

Past studies and research have shown a need for female role models who would give women aspiring to become wind band conductors' guidance by providing information on how their journeys reached success. Role models could provide strategies to future wind conductors on how to overcome obstacles and challenges they might encounter on their paths forward. In the field of wind conducting in higher education, it has been a white male-dominated domain. However, it is possible to succeed in this field and the statistics and culture are showing signs of improvement. Interviewing successful women wind conductors in higher education provides information on how they have succeeded in environments difficult for women to break through.

There was a need to investigate further how women have become successful and the specific elements that led to their success. Questions needed to be addressed regarding any obstacles successful wind band conductors had overcome such as hostile situations and environments, and if they changed in how they dressed, spoke, conducted, trained, interviewed, lived, had mobility, and interviewed. Although inequity has been a prevailing problem for women wind band directors in higher education, the field of music education needs to have successful women band directors point out problems they have faced, their solutions for overcoming obstacles, and insights on how to navigate a career path for women in wind conducting positions in higher education.

Even famous conductor and composer Leonard Bernstein had an 'aha' moment regarding female conductors as described below by Marin Alsop:

There was a funny moment where, usually, when I finished conducting, he would jump all over me and jump on the podium and go crazy and I finished and where is he? And he was out sitting out in the audience with his head down and I thought, "Oh gosh, what happened?" And so I went out and I said, "Maestro, what's, is something wrong?" He said, "I can't figure it out. When I sit here and close my eyes, I can't tell you're a woman." And I said, "Well, look, if you want to close your eyes through my concerts, I

don't mind." I mean, we had a good laugh about it, but he told me that he was trying to figure it out. He was trying to work out for himself, why gender should be an inhibiting factor or a determining factor and he couldn't find any reason. So, I think for me, it was actually extremely validating because he was willing to think in a broader way, you know, "Why aren't women accepted, because I can't hear any difference?"⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Alsop, "Marin Alsop: No Longer a One Woman Show."

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

In Chapter II, past literature was examined regarding the status of women wind band conductors in higher education. This chapter focuses on the present status of women wind band conductors in higher education and the processes used to garner that information. Investigating the present status of women band conductors in higher education was part of the purpose of this study. The process used to garner information concerning women wind band conductors in higher education for this dissertation was interpretative phenomenological analysis, also called IPA. I purposefully interviewed prominent women collegiate band directors to obtain their idiographic ‘lived’ experiences. The interviews were conducted in an open-ended style of inquiry with a stance that was inquisitive and facilitative. A double hermeneutic was used since I, the analyst, was analyzing the participants’ views of their own experiences. Inductive coding or open coding was used since the responses and data were not predetermined. The data were analyzed using manual human analysis and manual coding. The types of qualitative data analysis used in this inquiry were narrative analysis and framework analysis. A hierarchical coding frame was chosen to show the results of data gathered.

Phenomenology

German philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) was the twentieth century leader in phenomenology, which is considered the science of pure phenomena. “Realities are thus treated

as pure ‘phenomena’ and the only absolute data from where to begin.”⁷⁶ An American psychologist, Amedeo Giorgi (b. 1931), developed the descriptive phenomenological method in psychology. “For Giorgi, the operative word in phenomenological research is ‘describe’. The aim of the researcher is to describe as accurately as possible the phenomenon, refraining from any pre-given framework, but remaining true to the facts.”⁷⁷ In descriptive phenomenology, intuition is used to get a sense of the lived meaning in each description. As stated by Thomas Groenewald, “A researcher applying phenomenology is concerned with the lived experiences of the people (Greene, 1997; Holloway, 1997; Kruger, 1988; Kvale, 1996; Maypole & Davies, 2001; Robinson & Reed, 1998) involved, or who were involved, with the issue that is being researched.”⁷⁸

In one comparative study of five different music education journals including *The British Journal of Music Education*, *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, *International Journal of Music Education*, *Journal of Research in Music Education* and *Music Education Research*, Debra Joubert and Liesl Van der Merwe explored recent usage of phenomenological inquiries between 2012 and 2015.⁷⁹ A total of 480 articles were analyzed and they found phenomenological inquiry was one of the top three preferred strategies used in music education articles. The authors stated,

The valuable strengths of phenomenology as a qualitative strategy of inquiry expand the boundaries of meaning knowledge in music education research (Bresler, 1996; Randles, 2012). According to Bresler (2010), phenomenology makes a unique contribution to the theory and practice of music education, since the ‘created reality’ (p. 13) of private

⁷⁶ Thomas Groenewald. “A Phenomenological Research Design Illustrated.” *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 3, Issue 1 (March 2004), 42.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 42.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 42.

⁷⁹ Debra Joubert and Liesl Van der Merwe, “Phenomenology in Five Music Education Journals: Recent Use and Future Directions,” *International Journal of Music Education* 38, Issue 3 (October 2019), 337-351.

knowledge and behaviours [sic] offers a way of discovering personal depth of experience and understanding. Phenomenological research is a qualitative strategy of inquiry in which the researcher identifies and understands the essence of human lived experiences of the phenomenon from the perspective of the participants (Giorgi, 2009; Moustakas, 1994; Van Manen, 1990). The four types of phenomenological research most common in music education research are transcendental phenomenology, existential phenomenology, hermeneutical phenomenology and interpretive phenomenological analysis (Bresler, 1996, 2010; Eisner, 2002; Hourigan & Scott, 2014; Randles, 2012; Roberts, 1994).⁸⁰

The type of phenomenological research conducted in this study was interpretive phenomenological analysis where the participants' lived experiences were examined as they made sense of their own experiences and the meanings behind them through the interview process.

Researcher Stance

My personal experience as a female wind conductor started in high school when I was the field conductor of the marching band and was able to rehearse the concert band when the band director had to step out or was absent from rehearsal. By the time I graduated from high school, I had attended eight summer drum major camps, primarily with George N. Parks, and six band leadership summer camps, all with Tim Lautzenheiser (Dr. Tim). During my high school years, I was able to perform under world renowned conductors—only one of which was a woman. These were conductors in my three years at All-State and two years with the National Honor Band in Philadelphia under the direction of Anthony Maiello.

I had wonderful mentors including my junior high band director, Gary Jones, and my high school band director, Charlotte Wright. My mother, June Grice, was a music teacher as I was growing up so she served as one of my mentors in music. She was a high school band director but switched to being an elementary school general music teacher so she could have

⁸⁰ Ibid., 337.

more time at home with her family. Overall, I had three female mentors before I attended college: my mother, high school band director, and an All-State conductor (Mallory Thompson). It was when I played *Gandolf* by Johan de Meij under Mallory Thompson that I had my first aesthetic moment in music; at that moment, I knew I wanted to be a wind conductor at the collegiate or professional level.

Some trials I experienced as a female in music included the following:

- Not choosing the French horn when given the option in fourth grade because of the perception in the early 1980's that 'boys were supposed to play brass instruments, not girls'
- Being told early on to conduct like a man if I wanted to be successful
- Being told to dress like a man
- Men directors not treating me as an equal
- Unwanted advances being made
- Unequal salary to men with the same amount of experience and job level
- Many people not understanding that I was in charge because I was a woman
- Told multiple times to be three times as good as the men to be successful
- That I could not make it in the conducting world because I have children
- Told many times that I could not accomplish something because I was a woman
- Passed over for a higher position because I was a woman or had children; this was stated in an interview

On the other hand, I had numerous male role models and mentors who helped guide me to success, helped me learn how to 'play the game,' and aided in my growth as a musician and conductor (see Figure 1).

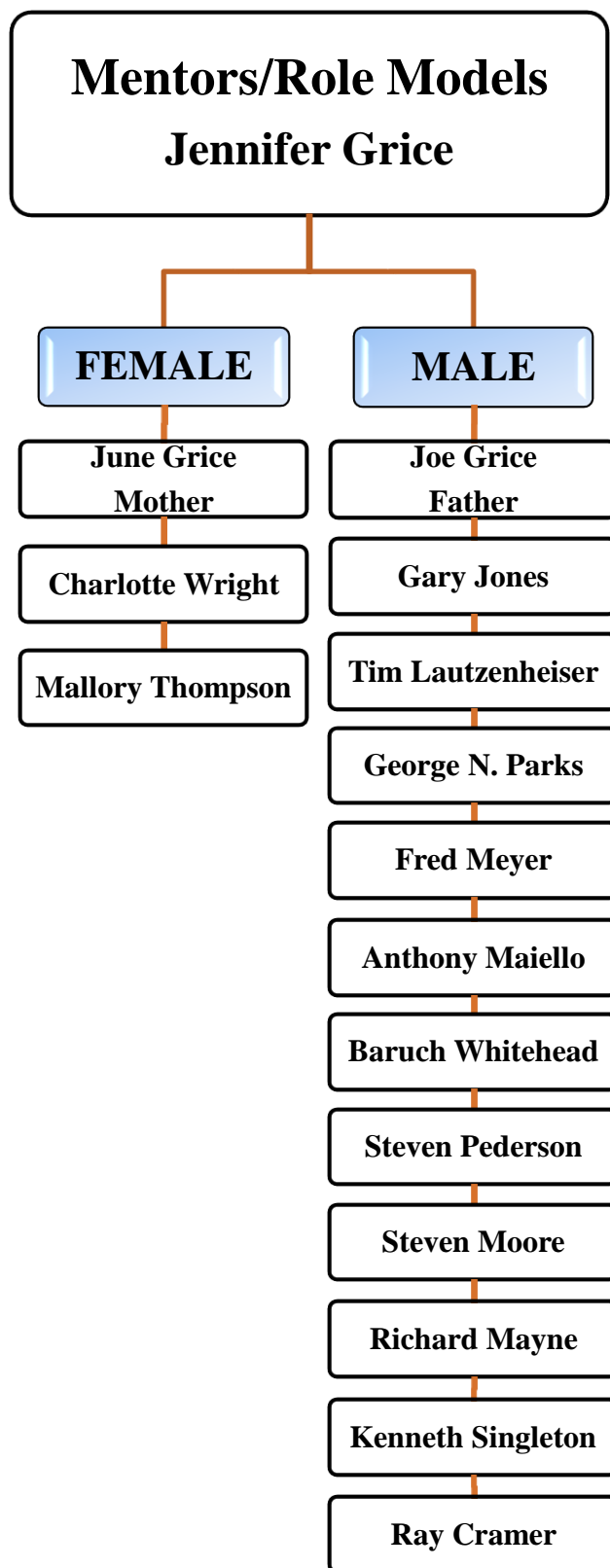


Figure 1. Mentors/Role Models of Jennifer Grice.

My potential bias would be assuming the women being interviewed who were my age or older would have experienced some of the same trials and tribulations as myself. As the researcher, I was aware of this and tried not to portray my opinions on the interviewees. Below is my personal mentor/role model hierarchical coding frame (see Figure 1); a similar model was used for the interviewees.

Participants

Participants in this study met the following criteria: female, must be teaching band at the collegiate level or retired from teaching at the collegiate level, must be still active in the field, and have had known successes and are prominent in the wind band conducting profession. There was a large range of experience between the interviewees. Some of the women had taught at the collegiate level for decades to one woman who was just beginning her collegiate career. The differences in career stages gave a unique perspective of the times and how women are currently viewed in the profession compared to previous years. Participants were recruited by personal contact via email or phone and then emailed a contact letter (see Appendix A). All participants were sent an informed consent form prior to the conducting of any data collection (see Appendix B).

Data Collection Methods and Procedures

Prior to contacting the interviewees, approval was granted by the Institutional Review Board (see Appendix C). Each participant engaged in an approximately 90-minute semi-structured interview based on the questions in Appendices D and E. Sample questions were constructed based on the style of interview questions used by Bruce Hangen in Part III of his book, *Conducting Music Today*. He interviewed twelve successful conductors in an open-ended format where the questions were about similar themes. These interviews provided insights as

how the interviewees obtained success, experiences, and techniques associated with conducting as well as suggestions for emerging conductors.

The interviews conducted in this inquiry were done over a secure Google Meet link and were digitally audio/video recorded and transcribed by the researcher. From these interviews, the researcher gained the interviewees' lived experiences, assumptions, and perceptions of being a female collegiate wind conductor. Artifacts were collected from the participants including items such as curriculum vitae and/or professional documents that reflected their work in the field (publications, programs, announcements, videos, societies, and boards they belong to, awards). After the interviews were transcribed, a copy of the transcript was sent to the interviewees to member check the transcription of the interview for accuracy and amend or add any information they deemed appropriate for a more accurate reflection of their experiences and perspectives. Information from these three data sources (interview, artifacts, and transcription) were analyzed and synthesized through a thematic analysis of their experiences.

Coding and Analysis

All of the interviews were transcribed by the researcher, submitted to the participants for member checking, and subjected to a two-part process. The first step was open coding in which I reviewed the participants' transcripts and examined them for common experiences and themes. The second step was axial coding where the major themes were examined for similarities and differences. I looked at frequency, intensity, and specific instances that changed the interviewees' careers. Axial coding in qualitative research is a technique relating to data gathered to further reveal codes and subcategories of each participant's voice. The other purpose of using axial coding was to be able to look at relationships such as mentoring and linkages of the interviewees.

Efforts to Control for Bias

The following procedures were employed to control for potential researcher bias:

1. Member checking. As referenced before all participants reviewed both the accuracy of their transcripts and the relevance of major themes.
2. Coding procedures. Two opportunities have been used to review and synthesize the data with open and axial coding. Codes and themes represent the most salient of the participants. The codes and themes of lived experiences were examined.
3. Multiple data sources. All participants in the inquiry completed a semi-structured interview, member-checking, and artifacts to provide a multi-dimensional view of their experiences.
4. Researcher stance. Potential sources of bias or lack of awareness was articulated by enumerating my researcher stance and areas where the data are not seen clearly.

Given all that has been referenced above, the lived experiences of the participants are presented in Chapter IV and summarized in Chapter V.

Insights were gained on these prominent women's triumphs, trials, and past experiences. The interviewees were also asked to give recommendations to improve the percentage of young women as conductors at any level in addition to higher education. Eight conductors were interviewed and featured, the results of all conductors were included, answers compared, and the overall results presented. This provided a more accurate view of the most experienced and more recent collegiate female wind conductors and their journeys. This wide pool showed comparisons of ethnicity, institutional variances (size, head versus assistant status, courses taught such as marching band), life experiences, and how things were different for women at different times.

Definitions

Axial Coding. A qualitative research technique that involves relating data together to reveal codes, categories, and subcategories grounded within participants' voices within one's collected data. It constructs linkages between data.⁸¹

Coding. Process of labeling and organizing qualitative data to identify different themes and the relationship between them⁸².

Double Hermeneutic. Theory that every day “lay” concepts and those from the social sciences have a two-way relationship, i.e., when an analyst attempts to make sense of the participants’ attempts to make sense of their own experiences.⁸³

Framework Analysis. Qualitative data analysis that is a framework; i.e., a code frame such as a hierarchical set of themes used in coding qualitative data.⁸⁴

Hermeneutic. A method or theory of interpretation; IPA’s hermeneutic stance is one of inquiry and meaning-making.⁸⁵

Hierarchical Coding Frame. Organize codes on how they relate to one another.⁸⁶

Idiographic. Means ‘own’ or ‘private.’ Psychologists using this approach focus on the individual and emphasize the unique personal experience of human nature; the idiographic approach does not seek to formulate laws or generalize results to others.⁸⁷

⁸¹ SAGE Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods. Edited by Mike Allen
<https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781483381411.n33>. accessed 5 July 2021.

⁸² Alyona Medelyan, *Coding Qualitative Data: How to Code Qualitative Research*.
<https://getthematic.com/insights/coding-qualitative-data/>. accessed 5 July 2021.

⁸³ https://en.wikia.org/wiki/Double_hermeneutic. assessed 5 July 2021

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ https://psychology.wikia.org/wiki/Interpretative_phenomenological_analysis. accessed 5 July 2021

⁸⁶ Alyona Madelyan, *Coding*.

⁸⁷ Ben Davis, *What does Idiographic mean in Psychology?* <https://www.mvorganizing.org/what-does-idiographic-mean-in-psychology/>. Accessed 5 July 2021.

Inductive (Open Coding). Type of coding that starts from scratch and creates codes based on the qualitative data itself, no set codebook, all codes arise directly from the survey responses.⁸⁸

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). An approach to psychological qualitative research with an idiographic focus that aims to offer insights into how a given person, in a given context, makes sense of a given phenomenon.⁸⁹

Member Checking. Also known as participant or respondent validation, is a technique for exploring the credibility of results.⁹⁰

Narrative Analysis. Qualitative data that contain a story; helps understand the underlying events and their effect on the overall outcome.⁹¹

Qualitative Data. Any non-numerical and unstructured data (in this study, open-ended responses to interview questions).⁹²

Qualitative Data Analysis. Process of examining and interpreting qualitative data to understand what they represent.⁹³

Thematic Analysis. Extracts themes from text by analyzing the word and sentence structure.⁹⁴

Summary

Phenomenology is an analytical means of evaluating an individual's lived experiences. This evaluative approach is particularly applicable to "soft" sciences such as psychology,

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ https://psychology.wikia.org/wiki/Interpretative_phenomenological_analysis. accessed 5 July 2021.

⁹⁰ Linda Birt and others. *Member Checking: A Tool to Enhance Trustworthiness or Merely a Nod to Validation?* <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1049732316654870>, 2016.

⁹¹ Alyona Madelyan, *Coding*.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

management, sociology, and other fields that do not realistically lend themselves to more discrete statistical analysis. This approach emphasized the importance of the subjects actual lived experiences and the subjects thoughts and emotions at the time of the experiences that are being evaluated.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

This chapter identifies the subjects' lived experiences as they related to the purpose of the study, which is investigating the current status of women wind band conductors in higher education. Eight women wind band conductors in higher education with one being professor emeritus were interviewed to obtain their lived experiences. Each were asked questions to understand their individual journeys including: the beginning of their musical journey, mentors/role models, education, triumphs, trials, and suggestions for future generations. Eight prominent women were chosen to be interviewed in the collegiate wind band field: Andrea Brown, Paula Crider, Tonya Mitchell-Spradlin, Emily Moss, Catherine Rand, Courtney Snyder, Emily Threinen, and LaToya Webb.

Andrea Brown Interview

Grice: Hi, thank you so much for coming on this morning. Before we start I need to ask you this question. Do you Andrea Brown give your consent to have your voice video recorded during this interview for the purposes of my doctoral research?

Brown: Yes.

Grice: Could you please begin by telling me your musical journey? For example, things like: Why did you choose to play your instrument and that specific instrument? What were your experiences as a student in public schools and in college? When did you know you wanted to be a conductor? What were the influences that led you to your professional career?

Brown: I started on piano when I was in second grade and that was definitely an influence of my grandmother. It was a really small town and we had the same band director in middle school and high school. So when it was time for band in sixth grade, my parents were already friends with the band director. Before I started band, I wanted to play clarinet because my Dad played clarinet and we had a clarinet. But the band director talked to me and my parents and said if you play horn I'll let you have a school horn to keep at school and one to keep at home so you don't have

to carry it back and forth on the bus. Also, if you learn to play it well enough you'll go to college for free. So, no one in my family had ever been to college so that of course sounded awesome. And as crazy as that sounds he did end up being right. I went to a college where that worked out and I went for free. That's how I got to play horn. The point of having one at school and one at home didn't last so long, but by that point I was already kind of hooked on the horn. There weren't any horns in the grades in front of us except for the seniors when I was in sixth grade. So they definitely needed horn players. So that's how I got started on horn. Again being from a small school, myself and my cousin were the only horn players in my grade and all the grades in front of me. We had a good time with that situation. My band director's son was a big influence on me and I'm not sure why or how this happened, but he was a person that had made All-State every year that he possibly could. He was older than me. That was like this challenge for me, would I be able to do that? So that was definitely an influence. I got started in auditioning for the region band and all of that and got in as soon as I could do that. That was a huge thing for me because I remember the first one I went to being in that band with all these kids. I was not from a very big band and to be in this group, even as a seventh grader with all these kids that were relatively interested in what they were doing. That was huge and I would definitely say I was interested in going to honor bands, which was a big thing in my area. There were lots of those available and so I soon got into doing any honor band that I could get into. I loved doing that because I love working with a new conductor, playing harder music than what we could play in my school's group and stuff like that. I do credit that for being a huge influence on me because I just love everything about that experience, except for your face hurting. The other thing that was probably a huge deal for me is how I mentioned there were no horns in the grades in front of us. I was from a school or from an area that had a lot of activities such as fall football season, spring festival, parade season and so you were doing a lot of parades, even in middle school. So as a sixth grader I got asked to play in the middle school band that was marching in the parade. That was my first time to play a mellophone and march. So that was, you know, an immediate, I love this. At least for what my school did, they were really good at for what it was with marching band. That's where its pride came from. I was definitely hooked on it and interested in that and then got to do that. Then I got to march with the high school band when I was in eighth grade. Same reason, of course there's no horns, and so it was a life changing experience. It was like oh my gosh, this is like so cool. That's when I knew I wanted to teach music, in eighth grade. I don't know if I could have vocalized and said I want to be a band director or I want to be a conductor, but I knew in eighth grade that that's what I wanted to do. I learned about drum corps through high school because my band director's son had marched Scouts and a bunch of people from my area had marched Scouts. That's all I heard about was Scouts, of course obviously I was not marching Scouts. I really enjoyed drum corps and all of that, but I didn't get into it until after I graduated from high school.

Grice: Great, as you reflect on your journey please describe your early role models? Describe your role models later in your career and any current ones.

Brown: Well, definitely my high school band director was a huge role model. I think I knew in high school that he wasn't necessarily the best musician, but he was an awesome human and he wanted to make sure that everybody that wanted to be in the band could be. It wasn't a very wealthy area so there were a lot of kids where he said the band gives more to this kid than the kid gives to the band. He was way into that and making sure that as many people could participate

and be a part of band. He was all about working hard and having a really high set of ideals. Our group couldn't play the highest level of literature, but we did really well for what we had, and so he was a huge role model for me. His name was Pete Evans, that was his nickname, his name was James. He died unfortunately, while I was doing my first master's degree so I never really got to talk to him when I was in a job. I would've loved to have been able to call him in my first job and say like hey, but yeah he didn't make it that long. That was devastating, but he was awesome. Definitely John Locke, I have to give him loads of credit. I went to UNCG not knowing who he was, not knowing anything because I was going there to do a masters in horn performance. I got assigned to him as a graduate assistant to work my hours in the band office and that's just kind of how it started. I took a conducting class with him and that's when I decided okay, this horn thing is fun, I like it. I really like to play, but I want to conduct. I got to study with him two different times. He's been a huge role model for me, of course. Also, definitely Sue Samuels was a role model. I got to work with her when she hired me for my first drum corps gig, and we've kept in touch ever since. When I got to Michigan, I had the opportunity to spend a good amount of time with H. Robert Reynolds. Even though I can't say that I studied with him, I've had a lot of pancake breakfasts with him.

Grice: That's still good mentorship.

Brown: Yeah, so I wish I had had more women on that list.

Grice: Yeah, that was the next thing I was going to ask you. Do you think your career path would have been different if you had a female mentor and in what ways do you serve as a mentor to your students and graduates?

Brown: I do think so because I don't think I ever had a woman conductor.

Grice: Not even in the honor bands?

Brown: Never even in honor bands. They were there conducting other bands, but I don't think I ever had one. You know, I talk about Sue, but I wasn't ever conducted by her. I don't know, I have to keep working on that one, but I don't think that I have. I did know of women that were band directors, not very many obviously. There were two big names that were from middle Tennessee that you might know, JoAnn Hood and Nola Jones were kind of famous. Especially when I was in college these two were part of these great programs in Nashville. So I knew that was kind of the first thought of oh, women can be band directors and run these big programs. I was forging my own path at that point because no one in my family had been to college. As much as I loved my high school band director and my undergraduate college director, they weren't pointing me to things like conducting workshops. So I was just fumbling around like a pinball trying to figure out where and what to do. Drum Corps helped me a lot with networking, the two years that I marched. Then I went to Brevard for two years and that kind of helped just expand my knowledge. But I don't know what I'd be doing if I hadn't had those experiences of just networking. One thing that my high school teacher did was he took me to Midwest when I was maybe a junior in high school and that of course changed me.

Grice: Yeah, that's huge, because that's before they had this high school program and everything, right. They didn't have anything like that then.

Brown: There was a college night, but there definitely was no high school track. I mean, this was back when it was at the hotel. One of the first things that I remember seeing was Canadian Brass. They did a big concert that year, that kind of thing really helped me, especially for somebody that absolutely didn't know what path to take. No one likes to talk about it, but there's an invisible path that's out there. I was totally oblivious of that because I didn't go to a conducting workshop until 2005 or 2006. I didn't even know they existed. That's crazy because I don't know if Dr. Locke had talked to me about that because that's after I had studied with him and after I'd done my masters. Maybe I knew they were like little weekend things, but I didn't know that people were going for a week. I don't know what I was paying attention to, but I didn't see that. Maybe I was still doing all my drum corps in the summer and that's all I was thinking about. I've been very fortunate, and so with people that I talk to now whatever their gender, but particularly women, I realize it's so important that they just see me doing it. You don't even have to say anything they just see you doing it and they think oh yeah, I can do that. I try to enlighten people about that invisible track that exists, but I also tell them you can do things and be successful and not have traveled that path. It would be a roundabout way like I got here, but you can do it for a conducting path.

Grice: Would you please describe that invisible path you're referring to?

Brown: That invisible path would be to go to your undergrad. Hopefully it's a gigantic state school that has some kind of credibility in the business. Go out to teach your high school band or middle school, but probably high school for three years, maybe five, but that would be really pushing it. In that time you're going to every conducting workshop that you possibly can go to choose and audition and check out the wares of all the conducting teachers. Figuring out who you like, who you don't, who your compadres are, who you're going to be competing against. I'm so glad that I didn't actually know about this part. Well it would have caused trauma. Then you go audition and get into a master's program and then you go straight into a DMA. Then depending on how you look at things you more than likely go teach. You want to take a job where you don't have to do any lowly things such as athletic bands. But for that, I should also say that you want to if you can, you want get into a school such as Northwestern, Michigan, Michigan State, Baylor, or University of Texas. It's on that little what I call the escalator or it's like a conveyor belt like they just pass students between them. Again, it isn't necessarily a stamp of how talented you are, but they definitely get the door opened a little bit more for those people automatically.

Grice: Yeah, no. I totally agree and it's nice to hear somebody say it. You know what I mean, because we all know it, but I don't know if I've ever read or heard someone say it in those terms. It's nice to hear somebody articulate it.

Brown: Yeah, I brought it up in a Big 10 band directors session we had at Midwest. I brought that up because I wanted to make sure that they understood that they're a part of this. But this is what happens, we need to have the conversation because do we really need all these people in DMA programs. We need to really work on helping people realize it is really okay and a great

thing if we have fantastic people that are teaching middle school and high school band. After you go get your masters, go put that to use, then maybe do your DMA. But it's not set up that way right now.

Grice: Yeah, well as we're talking about that, I just wanted to bring up that you're currently on the CBDNA, gender and ethnic minority committee. So as far as women in the field, kind of tell me a little bit about that committee and what you guys do to help with that.

Brown: That committee, a large part of its work is really to manage and award the grants for people to go to conducting workshops. The Mike Moss grants and it's a wonderful program and lots and lots of people had started figuring out it existed. Before, I don't think as many people were applying for it, but the last couple of years we've had way more applicants than we had spots for people to take, which is great. It's for women or any person of color. With that growth in applicants, we've had to really kind of talk about what the rubric is for awarding those, and how to make that work? That's kind of what the bulk of the work was on the committee for quite a while, but we're really starting to try to expand that. It had done some more things before and had kind of shrunk a little bit, but now we're kind of looking at other things, such as how to support composer diversity and programming diversity. What other things can we do to support the pipeline of conductors, because obviously it starts way before graduate programs and helping students realize oh yeah, this is something I can do.

Grice: Okay, great and I'm going to go ahead and lean into this just a little bit because I want to make sure that that we talk about it. So you being the founder of the Facebook page Women Rising to the Podium, which I'm a member of, and just love seeing the stuff that's on there. Can you tell me a little bit about why you founded that and where you see that going in the future for women?

Brown: So it came out of some dark times actually. The whole #MeToo situation had really affected me. I had a little moment of activism and tried to make a statement at the Midwest clinic at that point. But in that process I found out very quickly that most women in the profession at that time were not ready to talk about that, or at least not in that way. So I kind of took a step back and said okay, this might be too much in your face, or might feel too threatening. What could possibly help our situation. I know WBDI exists, but I was just thinking what if there is just a community where you didn't have to pay dues. A group that just helps us connect because sometimes it feels like there's only one spot for us. We don't know each other as people, it's really easy to just step on somebody else to claw their way up to the top. I thought you know if we knew each other as people we'd be less inclined to feel that way, and also we could join together and share a lot of things, celebrate a lot of things, and work together toward making this whole thing better and realizing that there's plenty of pie. We just have to help people realize that there's plenty of capable women to do the job. So that's how it started. I was leaving Michigan and I was feeling really strongly about there was a need for it, because at this point WBDI was about to have a rebirth, but it hadn't happened yet. So there was a space for it, and I mean 1,000 people joined the group within 24 hours. So I was like, okay, this is quite something.

Grice: This was needed, yeah? This was needed.

Brown: Yeah, and I will admit during this pandemic I haven't been the best at staying on top of everything with it, but I know everybody just kind of hanging on for dear life and so I'm hoping that as we get more into doing things and people will be happy to share again. I've been getting a lot of messages of people that are grateful that the group exists and that it's a safe space for them to ask questions that maybe they don't feel comfortable asking in other places. I'm grateful for the folks that kind of helped support getting it going.

Grice: Yeah, I think it's been great for people who are very young to feel safe to ask those questions. Questions that more experienced directors wouldn't normally ask such as what should my headshot look like. Then several people post their headshots to help them out. At first I thought really, but then somebody needed that information and help. So I think it's been really great for young people. Even questions such as what should I wear? Those types of things. I think that's made them feel really comfortable to just ask and maybe they wouldn't have in person, especially if their mentors are men.

Brown: I so agree with you. Some of my colleagues that are moderators and are older, they also have a tribe of people that they would ask instead of the group. But some younger women obviously don't have that, so this is it for them. No matter how many come through, we approve them all. It's also inspiring how willing the younger folks are to just ask questions and just say stuff. We would always be like will we ever get another job if I ask that or say that. I do like that there's the mixing of the generations.

Grice: How many members are a part of that now?

Brown: I think we're right around 4,000.

Grice: Wow, that's awesome. Yeah good job starting it and keeping it going.

Brown: Well, I hope it can keep going and that it has a kind of a rebirth as we get back into doing things.

Grice: Well, I think it's very helpful. Describe your experiences that you believe related to you being a woman. What supports and what barriers have you faced that you believed were/are related to your gender? Thinking about your conducting career, tell me about experiences where you felt, if you did unequal treatment when compared to your male peers? How did you respond?

Brown: Well, I think I mentioned before early on I didn't really think about gender so much. I was just doing it. I don't know why and I'm sure some of it is, you know, being in a place of privilege, and not thinking about that either. I was just doing my thing and I guess I was kind of fortunate in undergrad. There weren't that many women that were wanting to be a band director. You probably have some similarities to this. I just never thought about it because I think there was a lot of those guys that I was with marching drum corps and I was too. So it was just like, oh okay, I can do this. I do think that there was always that whole thing of like oh well, you know you're pretty good for a girl. I definitely have heard that or those kind of things. My mentors and my role models were generally encouraging. The only thing that I would say that I ran into at all

with Dr. Locke is that he only had a couple of female students before me. It didn't come till much later for my doctorate from when I was deciding what I want to do for my final project and I really wanted to do something related to gender because at this point I had become aware and I was all about talking about it and things about that. I wanted to do my final project on something related to that and he said, "I don't think you want to be known as that person." He just didn't want that to be my final project. Of course, I think if we had to do it all over again that would be a very different situation. So I picked a composer and a piece and it was fine. I probably faced more of those barriers in pageantry like drum corps. So maybe I feel those a lot more so I don't notice the ones in my professional world as much because the ones in drum corps we're just so like hitting you over the head with it. When you're the only female on the brass staff for years. Wherever you were there's that and you know and then just in general, which I think drum corps is starting to deal with. It's just so much misogyny, like every moment of every day, like you don't even notice it sometimes. It's just so much part of what happens the way people talk, the way they talk to each other and it's just part of the world. Then also the whole thing of which you might have heard before too, they just assume if you're a girl that you're on the color guard staff. Which I love the color guard people and love my color guard friends, but there's that thing. I guess I try not to think of it being a barrier, but so as you know, even now my job here at Maryland I have the people that don't believe I'm the director. They're always surprised when I say I'm the director. So we get through it, but it's like, okay well, what did I miss out on because you were making sure that in your mind I wasn't in charge.

Grice: Yeah, what about any job interviews? Have you ever felt unequal treatment?

Brown: Oh yes. One in particular, I had two occasions with two because you know in college job interviews you're there for a day or two and talking to a bunch of different people. But one in particular I will never forget is that I had to talk to an administrator. I don't remember if they were the Dean, or what exactly their position was, but they straight up said, "Well, I've never seen a lady band director before. You know how are you going to deal with that"? And I'm just like, no one else is in this room and this has got to be a question that's not legal. And that happened in some form or fashion twice at that particular institution. Needless to say, I did not get that job, but it's kind of tricky.

Grice: So you probably didn't want it.

Brown: Well, they have a female band director now and she's kicking butt so good for her.

Grice: Tell me about moments that were critical in your career - specifically what they were and what meaning did you make from them? Did you have a defining moment where you decided you wanted to be a conductor and how did that shift your journey? I know you talked about eighth grade knowing you wanted to be in music, but was there any time with specifically conducting with Dr. Locke. I know you said studying with him is what made you want to get your second masters.

Brown: I didn't think of it as conducting so much, but the middle school spring parade band also came a drum major. So I saw, you know somebody doing that when I was in sixth grade and I was like, oh, I want to do that. I don't know if it was the conducting part or what, but then I tried

out and I was the drum major in eighth grade and in high school, and then I was a drum major all through college. I don't necessarily know that I really, for whatever reason, really put it with being a band director, but I always loved doing it. Even though if I would go back and watch videos I'd probably be like what the hell was I doing, none of that is matching musically. But you think you are, and you know and love it. I came from a tradition of where it was a lot of choreography, but I loved it. But I didn't necessarily connect it with conducting for whatever dumb reason. Then when I got to UNCG and took that conducting class and then some other things kind of clicked into place and I was like, oh yeah this is what I like to do. With my horn playing I had a moment where I figured out that I wanted to be involved with things and doing the best that I could. I was playing with a quintet really pretty seriously in my first time as a master student and we went to the International Brass Quintet competition and we won. We got to do like a rehearsal with Boston Brass and that's actually how I met JD Shaw which led to me getting the Phantom gig. There were some moments like that even though it's not conducting that I will say inspired me as a musician to have those opportunities. The work that it took to get to that place, I think will always kind of be like a lesson for me about how to get things done.

Grice: This is totally off subject, but do you think that you're one of the few collegiate associate director of bands that has that much drum corps experience and is still working with drum corps?

Brown: There's not that many that are associate director of bands. I'm trying to think of any off the top of my head to be honest with you. I think Nick Williams was probably one of the last ones, and he's not doing it anymore. You know how wild is that, that he was a Black guy and good for him. But, yeah, there's not too many like me, that's for sure.

Grice: What are some of your greatest triumphs?

Brown: I don't know about triumphs. I mean, you have the peak moments I guess or things that you remember. That brass quintet competition I was mentioning earlier was definitely one. It was a lot of fun, it was a great group, but we worked really hard for that. It was just so cool to actually have it pay off because you know it doesn't always happen. I think the fact that I finished the season of marching Cadets felt like a triumph to me. I mean, it was done and I never marched again after that, but I did that. Conducting wise, I don't know that I feel like I've had any of what I would say triumphs. That probably feels weird to say, but I've had some fantastic moments like when I was conducting the orchestra at Georgia Tech, there were some. That group was so fun, it was like a community orchestra on steroids. There were some things that I got to do with them, that I'll never get to do again unfortunately. Because we get tracked into one world or the other, which is sad, but that was a lot of fun.

Grice: What was your favorite piece that you did with them?

Brown: Probably Thioamides *The Here and Now*. We did that with the choir and I don't know that it holds up as far as if I went back and listened to the performance, if it was all that fabulous. But it was so much fun to put together and the students didn't really know that piece and how much they got into it. I just loved that piece too, so that was a lot of fun. Here at Maryland, this is the first time I've had a group of almost all or about 95% music majors. They're all mostly

freshmen, but they can do some fun things. My first semester with them Dr. Locke was retiring so I did this concert that was all kind of related to pieces that was not necessarily pieces he liked, but pieces that were connected to him for me. One of course is the piece he commissioned *Frozen Cathedral* and so I got to do that with the group and of course they loved it and you know for him to be there and all that was pretty cool.

Grice: What were some of your tribulations and we've already talked about some of those? What kind of constraints and/or obstacles have you had to overcome and how did you deal with them? What sacrifices have you made to achieve your successes?

Brown: I think my tribulations, I hate to say it is what we've already mentioned, but I didn't go to the right schools. It's not easy and you've gotta just keep clawing your way into where you want to be. You don't get the benefit of the doubt. I'm very fortunate and I don't take for granted that I got to teach at the University of Michigan. I know that was important for how I got here. That's why I went there. I was obviously very honored that they wanted me, but I knew I was making a strategic move at that point for the rest of my career. I was leaving Georgia Tech, which I loved. I loved Atlanta and loved being the director of orchestras and then I also got to do band and marching band which was awesome. But I knew that going to Michigan was going to be kind of filling that hole of me not going to the right schools and I hate saying that because I love UNCG and I tell people all the time, it's a hidden gem that you should definitely check it out. It's just the state of our business. So I think not going to the quote and unquote right schools. I've gotten this question before if there's anything that I could change, I would say be a guy, you know? I think it's enough of a barrier that it's definitely easier to be a white dude in our business. The sacrifices that I've made, I don't necessarily feel this way at least not right now, I might not feel this way when I'm 80, but like I don't have kids. I'm not married, that kind of thing, but you know, that's also not very common for people in jobs like mine, that are women. I'm not alone in my being in that situation. Some people don't think that this is a benefit, but like that I've got to change locations and see a different part of the country and experience new things. Even though it's hard to kind of reform a friend and social group, you always have the job that you put plenty of your hours into. So it's not like you're ever bored and or super lonely. I guess, that would definitely be a sacrifice, but I'm okay with that so far.

Grice: Are there other aspects of your identities (race, instrument you play, age) that you believe influenced your triumphs and tribulations in your career? We've kind of already hit on some of those.

Brown: Yeah, I mean obviously it's easier to be a white lady that it is to be a lady of any other color. I mean, that's like the hardest place to be in our business. It's getting slightly better and I hope it continues to do so.

Grice: Do you think that's going to change with the Black Lives Matter movement?

Brown: There's definitely an awareness happening. You know, where we've got to change things like I talked about before. We've got to change and make adjustments to who has access to being in band period. Like from the beginning. To make sure that band is accessible to anyone who wants to be a part of it, not just in certain schools that your parents can afford to pay the rental on

your instrument. You know that kind of thing because, it starts there. So that we can have the a very diverse population of band kids that can grow up to be a diverse group of band conductors. We've never figured that out. I don't know how much the collegiate world can influence that, but I think we have to talk about it as much as we can. I think playing a brass instrument, definitely influenced my career. I mean, I know you're a woodwind player that did drum corps and my sister was, but that's not the norm. So my career would be very, very different if I had not marched or taught drum corps. I know that I'm not supposed to say that in the world, as hard as it could be sometimes and the negative aspects that you have to put up with at times, unfortunately, or fortunately, I know that there's benefits to have done it to getting me to where I am now.

Grice: What would you change, if anything if you could go back? I know you already said being a guy, but if there's anything else and what would you tell the beginner conducting you?

Brown: I guess I wish that younger me had had more confidence and been okay with what I wanted to do and who I wanted to be earlier on. I feel like you don't figure that out until you're older and you just wish you could tell your younger self, I'm sorry you had to go through all of that. I think the same thing with maybe not beginner conductor, beginner conductor me did not know what I didn't know. I figured it out pretty fast, but beginner conductor, I would help that person earlier on, say like there's a whole lot that you don't know. But maybe I needed to be like that to get through getting started.

Grice: What advice would you have for women entering the field of collegiate conducting?

Brown: It's way more about networking than it should be and who you know and who you've interacted with and created a positive relationship with. I wish that had more to do with what you knew and what you could do on the podium or with your students. I don't think that's the majority of what gets you a job. The other thing that I would say and I think this would fall on a lot of deaf ears, but I would love to see more women that are considering a collegiate career teaching athletic bands. We're more apt to avoid that route and I wish that wasn't the case.

Grice: Do you think that's because maybe they don't understand sports as well?

Brown: I think it has to do with the schedule. It would be interesting to find out exactly what that is. I have a feeling it might surprise us because I don't know if it's because of the instrument that we tend to play. If that affects how much we enjoy being in marching band, and if it is directly connected to how much you personally enjoyed marching band or whether or not you want to teach marching band. Or can you find fulfillment. We have such a weird relationship with marching band and athletic bands in general. I'm waiting for the profession to figure out that that's the area where the world is connecting with you. You really are already further ahead in your route of trying to make your work more diverse or attract a bigger audience. Another controversial thing that I say is in athletic band people are typecast and it's kind of classist in our business of like, well, if you are good at athletic bands, you're not thought of as being necessarily a good musician. So I would just love to see more women. I'd love to see more people in general, but just more women for sure and being like you know what, I am a damn good musician and I can produce a damn good marching band.

Grice: Yep, agreed. Okay and then kind of along this same line, what advice changes would you have for just in general the field of conducting?

Brown: I think breaking down not just the gender and ethnicity barriers but the classist system of how we think of things. For example, collegiate directors are on a higher rung than middle school directors. I think we've got to figure out how to get past all of that and appreciate the incredible musicianship that it takes to be a fantastic middle school director. I mean, there's tons of fantastic middle school directors that can conduct circles around plenty of collegiate people that I know. But that's how our system is built and I don't enjoy it.

Grice: Did you ever teach in the public schools? If so, what grade levels and number of years? Also, how valuable do you think public school teaching experience is for the collegiate conductor?

Brown: Yes, I taught two whole years, which is not a fabulous track record, but I did one year of teaching grades five through eight right outside of Milwaukee, Wisconsin for one year and then I taught grades nine through eleven with you at McKinney North High School in Texas.

Grice: Did you think that helped with becoming a collegiate director, having that public school experience?

Brown: Yeah, I'm glad I had both of them. I learned a lot, obviously if you're only in a place for a year like that, you definitely aren't getting settled with anything. It wasn't my intention to just be there for that long, it's just how it worked out. But it definitely helps, and I think you're able to speak with students that you're teaching to, obviously mine has been a long time ago. But I still really know what a seventh grader smells like when they come in after PE class. Some of those things don't change no matter what.

Grice: Yeah, great. How do you think men perceive women in the field of collegiate wind conducting over the years? Do you think the 'Good Ol' Boys' club exists? How do we as women counter that?

Brown: I think it depends on how old the person is as to how they perceive women in the field. I think it's getting better, but there's definitely a 'Good Ol' Boys' club. I think it still exists. It's changed and is more comfortable and not as egregious, but it's still there. It's softer and more comfortable, but it still happens. The issues that are getting to be the things that people say or the things that they do, they're getting more subtle and they're getting smaller. I think we just have to really, as women, really keep our radar up and ready and be ready to say something when it's you, but even more so when it's happened to somebody else.

Grice: Do you think more women are applying for collegiate wind band conducting positions and are we succeeding in bridging the gap in male to female conducting positions at the collegiate level?

Brown: Yes, I think more women are applying. I definitely see more women. I don't know that it's huge numbers, but I can see it's getting incrementally better. I think we're bridging the gap if

it's conducting a concert band only situation. I think we're making more progress there than we are in the athletic band world. That is not scientific, that is just what I'm seeing.

Grice: Do you feel that you have ever had to mask your femininity in interviews, dress, language, or on the podium to be respected as a conductor in a male-dominated field? If yes, in what ways?

Brown: Yes, yes, yes, yes, and yes. This kind of my own issue and people have different body types, but I have a larger chest. I've had it forever and it's not going anywhere. Some of it's before I got into conducting of just not wanting to draw attention to that, and so I do feel like I've made a subconscious, sometimes conscious, but usually subconscious choice in the things that I wear. Especially when you're like flailing your arms around in that area that I'm not drawing attention to that. It's weird because at the same point I usually fix my hair and I've kept my hair long. I've had a very well respected person ask me why I do that. I do that very pointed, like now, it wasn't always a conscious thing, but now I would on purpose. But again, on the other hand, I've got everything like locked up here. So that doesn't make any sense, but that's my hang up. Language I would say that one not so much, but I think that that's from hanging around with brass players too much.

Grice: Describe your method of score study, rehearsal techniques, and concert programming. Does your programming include female composers? I know you do include females in your programming so any advice on how to go about doing that and including not only female but minority composers.

Brown: Yes, so ever since I got to Maryland and again this is my first time to have a group that I have a little more control over what I can program for them. I had that with the orchestra at Georgia Tech, I could do this, but it wasn't so much on my radar at that point, for whatever reason. Since I've been at UMD, which is since the fall of 2018, every one of my programs has either a woman or a composer of color on it. Sometimes there's more than that, but I always make sure there's at least one. I don't say anything about it I just do it. There's plenty of options out there. My method of score study is, with something new I do my best to spend as much time as I can with the score whether it's plunk things out on a piano. Eventually I will definitely listen to some recordings that are out there to kind of hear that as well. I'm not a person that goes too into the weeds with harmonization and writing out all of those things. I just look at it and find where the things are that are really interesting and I know we're going to need to be brought out or I'm going to need to deal with in rehearsal. You have this plan of what you want to do, but then there's the actual time that you have to do it, so everything has to get filtered down to the biggest impact of study that you can do in the amount of time that you have. Things that I need to work out physically I work out physically and try to get as much of that as I can as far in advance as I can. But sometimes as we all know, it's not as much time as you want. I'm not a person to analyze every chord. That's not my thing. I get more into the phrasing and again finding the places of harmonic interest, but not necessarily have all the Roman numerals down underneath on the bottom.

Grice: What areas of collaboration have you used in your programs? This can be with other arts or dance. I know you talked about the choir with the orchestra.

Brown: Since I got to Maryland I've had two vocal soloists, both women, both sopranos, that I've worked with. I've had a clarinet, saxophone, and horn soloist. I was supposed to have a friend of mine that I went to Austin Peay with and is the principal trombone in the Marine band, he was supposed to solo with us last spring, but then Covid happened. So hopefully we'll get him back. So mostly it's soloists that I've worked with so far, and then of course the choir that one time. I'd love to do something like that again. I did do *Ecstatic Waters* with electronics by Steven Bryant.

Grice: Oh cool! Do you have any rituals that you do before concerts? Do you have any routines or activities to help keep your body and mind at its highest?

Brown: Oh I wish I did. I have a couple of movement things to make sure I'm loose. Depending on how I'm feeling, I will kind of take into that some kind of like super person pose where I'm just taking up space and remembering that you know I'm here for a reason. This is, you know, like you're not an impostor, you know how to do this. I don't really have a routine. I probably should, but I don't.

Grice: Can you just talk a little bit about the conducting pedagogy technology you've used and what you've done with that?

Brown: Yeah, so it's definitely a current guilt because when I moved here I just haven't found a home for it yet. It started when I was at Georgia Tech and is related from the pedagogy that Michael Haithcock, Kevin Gerald, and Brian Doyle. They actually have a new textbook that came out this past fall. It's related specifically to the beginning part of their pedagogy, which is different than what I learned and I would guess it's different than how most people learned. It's where you start with spending a ton of time with body awareness, which probably most people do, but then the first things you do as a conductor is you're conducting single sounds. You're not doing any patterns, you're not doing anything like that. You're just doing like a single sound that has a beginning, middle, and end. That lent itself very well to the technology that was available at the time. There was a music technology lab at Georgia Tech that was very sophisticated run by a guy that had gone to MIT. I was working on this system that could watch your gesture and read it in real time and then analyze it and match it to a sound that matched what you did. What it basically was, that's a long story to just say, it's a way for beginning students to practice conducting without having to have somebody sit there and sing or play for them. Which you know we don't have right now. The only way you get in practice now with live instant sound is if you have a friend that's willing to sit there with you or you're in class. Conducting class is one of the most stressful things ever. I've watched so many kids go through it, because you're having to practice essentially with all of your peeps right there.

Grice: So for example, if they would barely touch it would be a soft sound or a short or long sound. So if they did it too hard and they were trying to do something that was soft, then they would hear that one pitch, is that correct?

Brown: Yeah, it's just one sound. We did get to where you could change notes where you could conduct a very simple tune, but every note was a separate event, you weren't conducting a phrase. But exactly what you said in that what I try to teach is that in conducting you're not really

doing anything wrong, it's just not matching what you wanted to hear. So it's a way for them to see if I do this, I'm going to get a softer sound or a louder sound, or a harder beginning or a softer beginning. We could do sustains, and we could do crescendos and decrescendos. Between my years at Georgia Tech and then at Michigan, we made some good progress on it. It's not quite ready to put out for the masses yet and unfortunately it's such a small audience that it's not likely to get funding for it. It's also not my skill set and I'm not an entrepreneurial expert. When you're trying to overhaul an athletic band program, it just hasn't gotten done yet as far as getting it started here at Maryland. I'm hoping sometime soon it will reemerge, but it's something that I'm definitely interested in and it's very much connected to how I teach conducting.

Grice: Okay, great. How important is leadership as a quality for any conductor? Were there any leadership roles that you held as a young student in high school or college that you think helped your career pathway? I know drum major obviously is one of those throughout.

Brown: Yes, drum major for sure. That's probably the biggest. I think leadership is sometimes more important than musicianship. Sometimes, I mean they're like both important. Most of the time, music is most important, but I'm sorry it's right there like all the time.

Grice: What should young conductors be sure to always and never do?

Brown: I would say always introduce yourself and try to make a connection with as many people as you can in the business. Again, going back to what I was saying unfortunately how important that is. Related to that I would also say you should always admit your mistakes on the podium, because people know, even beginners know, so don't try to fake it, just own up to it. I would definitely recommend not burning any bridges or as few as possible. If you do burn one, be ready for the consequences. Then related to that, in some ways, never say never. Yeah, you don't know when you're going to eat that crow.

Grice: Yeah, I always said I'd never teach orchestra and I think now that I'm doing orchestra and band this year will be my ninth year doing orchestra. So yeah, never say never. I like that.

Brown: Not saying that I always adhere to that, but I would say that now.

Grice: What advice do you have for young conductors on balancing work and life outside of work?

Brown: I hope you did better than me. One of the things for me is that I'd say is figure out what's most important to you. One of the things for me that's not the same for everybody is that I want to live in a place that I enjoy living and there's things to inspire me and to motivate me. I've been like this for a while. I'm not willing to take a job, even though it might be a DOB, if it's going to be somewhere that I don't want to live, it's not worth it to me. That's one small way that I deal with work life balance. I think just trying to remember, I have to remind myself this too, you're never going to get all the things done. So just keep working on trying to prioritize the things that you need to do first, and just know that the to do list is never empty.

Grice: Okay, great. Do female successes in other fields, such as the first minority woman Vice President of the United States (Kamala Harris) and the youngest US Inauguration Youth Poet Laureate (Amanda Gorman), enhance a female's ability to succeed in areas such as wind conducting? Do you think this will help women feel more comfortable applying for jobs that are in a male-dominated field such as wind conducting? You already mentioned that the #MeToo movement is what started the Facebook page and so any of the movements besides the #MeToo movement such as women's right to vote. Do you think those things that aren't music correlates into women in the wind conducting field?

Brown: I think it does. All of it helps to raise the awareness of a lot of people that aren't necessarily, in all kinds of ways. I don't know if it's a significant contribution and so forth, but I think it can only help because people are thinking about it. I think the things like whether it's the #MeToo movement or various movements, activists and those kind of things and getting more comfortable with applying for jobs. I think again, it's all creating an environment that you know that we didn't grow up in, and I think that it is helping people younger than me feel more comfortable with speaking their truth and being themselves and going for things. I think it's on us to watch out for them and to have their backs because at some point there's going to be some whiplash that occurs. The pendulum is going to swing, and so I think we have to be prepared for that and not just be like, oh, it's all getting better. I think we have to keep pushing for it even when it feels like it's going in the right direction.

Grice: What experiences/organizations shaped your career? (military, non-musical jobs, travel), and were any of them specifically female-oriented?

Brown: I would say the one thing that I haven't mentioned yet is I was, and still am, a member of Sigma Alpha Iota women's music fraternity and I'm still involved. I'm the director of the graduate conducting scholarship so I help run that scholarship and recruit applicants and have a committee that helps toward that. So I'm still active in the organization that way and of course, I'm also getting to give back and connect with younger women conductors. They can be in any field so it's not necessarily band folks. I think being involved in that in undergrad was very helpful to me because of what I've talked about that I was a brass player, I was doing drum corps, I was definitely one of the boys, and wasn't always being my best self. Being a part of SAI helped me to remember oh yeah, girls are not the enemy, these are my friends too. I do think that that was helpful to me and it meant enough to me that when I went to UNCG I actually started a chapter of SAI when I got there because it didn't exist. It's still going, and it's good to see that that's still happening. So I'd say probably the biggest one would be SAI.

Grice: Do you have any thoughts or comments to add that were not addressed in any of the previous questions?

Brown: I mean; I think your questions were really good. I think you've got a lot of stuff.

Grice: Thank you so much for your time today, I really appreciate you.

Brown: You're welcome and thank you for having me.⁹⁵

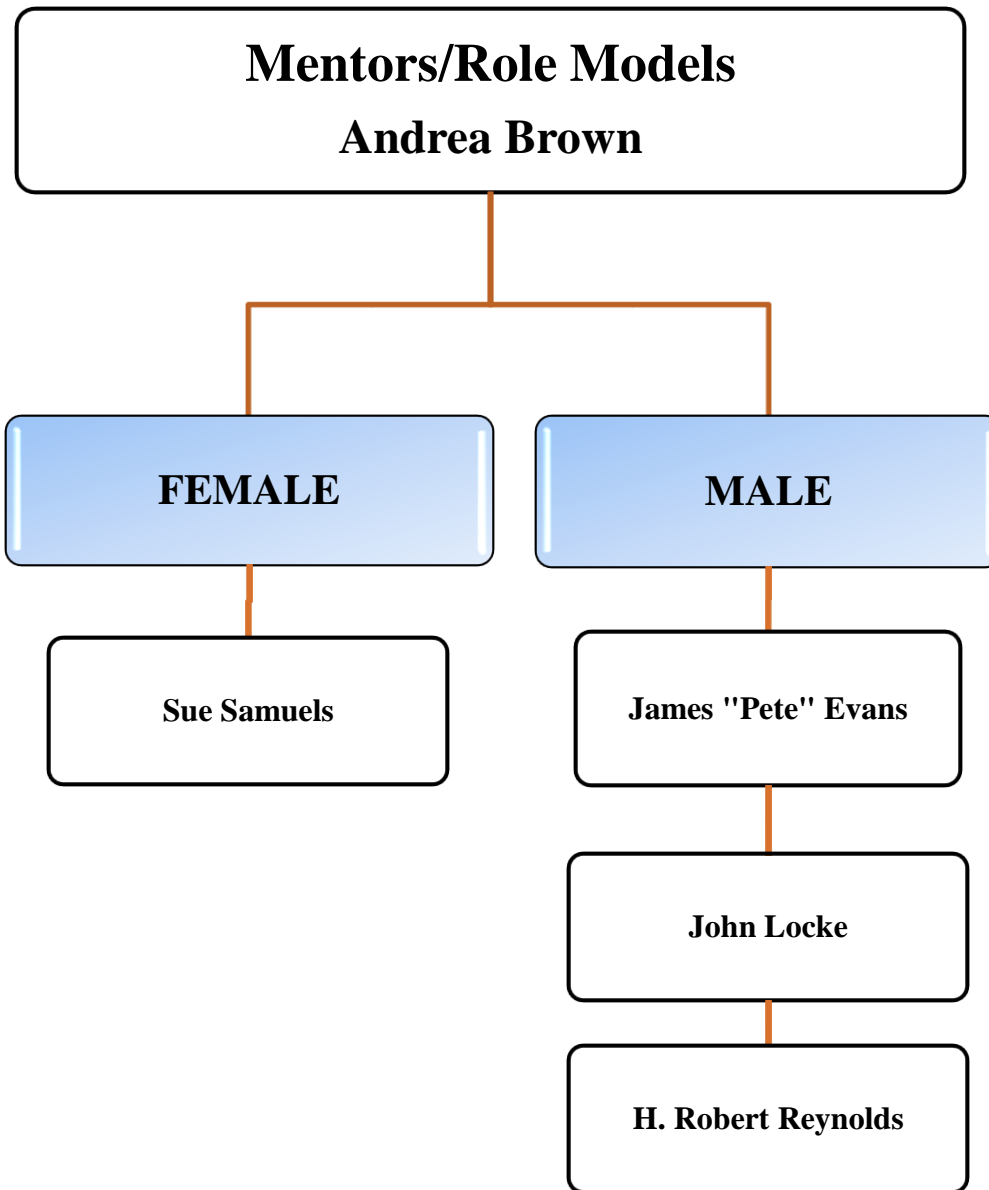


Figure 2. Mentors/Role Models of Andrea Brown.

⁹⁵ Andrea Brown, personal interview (Google Meet: 21 June, 2021).

Andrea Brown Profile

Current Collegiate Position: Associate Director of Bands at the University of Maryland

Previous Collegiate Positions:

Assistant Director of Bands at the University of Michigan

Director of Orchestra and Assistant Director of Bands at the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta

Assistant Director of Bands at Austin Peay State University

Degrees:

BS, Austin Peay State University
Music Education

MM, University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Horn Performance

Music Education emphasis in Instrumental Conducting

DMA, University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Instrumental Conducting

Paula Crider Interview

Grice: Thank you for agreeing to participate in my inquiry. So now that we're recording please say your name and if you give consent to your voice and video being recorded for the purposes of my doctoral research.

Crider: My name is Paula Crider and I give my permission for you to use anything I have to say in your doctoral studies.

Grice: Could you please begin by telling me your musical journey and things like why did you choose to play your instrument and that specific instrument? What were your experiences as a student in the public schools and in college as a student? When did you know you wanted to be a conductor? And what were the influences that led you to your professional career?

Crider: Okay, that's a lot. First of all, I was a late starter. I didn't start playing in band until halfway through my junior year in high school. It was an interesting story but I won't bore you with that.

Grice: Oh, I'd love to hear it.

Crider: Well, I played basketball and our coach became a principal. The principal was a great coach, but the new coach didn't care anything about coaching girls. One coach had to coach both boys and girls back in the day. I became so disgusted at the lack of attention, one day I just went charging up these steps to a room above the gym. I didn't know where I was going. The door opened and there was a gentleman standing there with a trumpet in his hand and he said, "try blowing on the small end" and that was my first trumpet lesson! We found out later of course, he was expecting someone else who never showed up. But the long and short of it was the minute I

made what was probably the worst sound ever made by a beginning trumpet player, I was hooked. I just remember feeling it in my entire body. I decided that I wanted to learn how to play this magical instrument. I loved the challenge; I loved the sound of the horn. I went to the University of Southern Miss for undergrad. I just wanted to play my horn and they had a good band program. I majored in English Literature, and minored in Physics. Halfway through my sophomore year I decided to add a major in music. My parents didn't know I was majoring in music. I was just going to do it for fun, until I student taught and realized that teaching was something I wanted to do for the rest of my life. My first job was at a very small high school where I taught for two years. The band program was not strong. The second year they made the first straight I's they'd ever made. I decided it was time for me to learn more so I went to the University of Texas to work on my master's and to pursue a doctorate. I had almost everything completed when I was offered the Crockett High School job. Before that, when I was working on my degree, I taught at Allen Jr. High, which was located in a very disadvantaged area. That was a great experience for me. I learned to communicate with two cultures (Black and Hispanic) with which I had little prior knowledge. Then I went to Crockett High School. I was the first female to conduct what was in a 4A band; it would be a 6A band now. It was a large high school band and I was very fortunate to stay there for 13 years. Then I went to the University of Texas where I became a fully tenured professor. I retired from UT after 17 years. Now I continue to teach in my position as a senior education consultant for Conn-Selmer, Inc. I get to go all over the world and present band director workshops and work with bands, so I'm still waving the little white stick.

Grice: That's amazing, and you still conduct a lot of honor bands?

Crider: Yes, as a matter of fact, I was scheduled to do four All-States this year. Two cancelled and two were virtual, which was crazy, but it was good for the kids. The students got to enjoy the honor of being named to an All-State band. During zoom rehearsals, I saw them moving, but could hear no sound whatsoever. They performed to a click track. So it was better than not playing at all. The pandemic has forced us into much uncharted territory.

Grice: Different experience, that's amazing. As you reflect on your journey, can you describe your early role models and your role models later in life, and then if you have any still current role models?

Crider: Okay, well, first of all, early role models were anyone who was nationally recognized whom I had a chance to observe a district honor band or region band or all-state. Legends such as Bill Revelli, Fred Ebbs, Fred Fennell, and Arnald Gabriel. I got to see all of them rehearse. Included in the next generation were Ray Cramer, John Bourgeois, H. Robert Reynolds, and Frank Wicks, to name a few. I was a fly on the wall, so they had no idea they were my teachers, but I took copious notes. I studied their rehearsal techniques. I learned much from them. One role model especially stands out, and that was Howard Dunn who was Director of Bands at SMU. Prior to SMU, he had a very fine high school band. I just stuck to him like glue and he was really helpful in my formative years. He was a master of score study and I am really, really grateful to him for seeing the score through his eyes. As far as female role models, probably my two would be Elizabeth Green, with whom I was very fortunate to study with. Lessons with "Ma Green", really changed my life. The other is someone you may not know, but her name is Marie Speziale. I didn't meet Marie until several years ago, but she was the first female trumpet player to ever

make it in a major symphony. She played in the Cincinnati symphony for years. It was one of those “if she can do it, I can too” inspirations. However, the person who had the most effect on my career was a man named Weldon Covington. He was a music supervisor and was a very fine high school band director before that. He took his band to national contests back in the day and did very well. His wife was a middle school director and one of the best teachers I’ve ever known. But in her day she was not allowed to become a high school director. She really wanted to, but of course, that just wasn’t done. So her husband, Mr. Cov., as we called him, gave me a chance to be a high school director in Austin, Texas. He’s the person who hired me. When I look back on it now he took a huge chance because had I been a failure he might never have been able to hire more female band directors for the Austin schools. (Eventually there were four great female high school band directors in Austin.) Because he knew his wife would have been an outstanding high school teacher, he gave me that opportunity and I’ll be forever grateful. In a nutshell, anybody who is anybody in the wind band profession or the orchestral profession from whom I could learn I consider to have had an influence upon my musical life.

Grice: That’s great and you said earlier that you were the first female 4A band director in the state of Texas.

Crider: Correct. It seemed to be a big deal for everybody but me. I was just too busy learning to be a master teacher.

Grice: That is amazing though. Wow! Next question and you already answered some of this but what were your experiences that you believe related to you being a woman, what supports and/or barriers have you faced that you believe were and are related to your gender?

Crider: Well, you know, that’s really hard for me to answer because so many of those barriers I did not face because I was afforded the Crockett High School job. On the other hand, I will share a story, and I didn’t find this out until years later because one of the Texas band directors who became a very good friend said, “Paula you didn’t know this, but the first year you took the Crockett High School band to marching contest a bunch of directors from different regions all came to watch because we knew it was going to be joke. We expected you to fail.” He then said, “we weren’t laughing after that incredible performance!” You know, I was not aware of all of that. One band director’s wife accosted me at TMEA and said, “You realize you’re taking food off the table.” [from other male band directors] And I was like, no I’m really not. I have to feed myself too. That was so minor because, you know you can’t worry about that kind of stuff. You just can’t.

Grice: Were you surprised that that was from a woman instead of a man.

Crider: Yeah, and I found out later it was because her husband wanted the Crockett job.

Grice: Oh, that makes sense.

Crider: Yeah, again what can I say? But it is easy to really get wrapped up in that sort of petty, negative thinking. If you let it, it can destroy you. I was too busy teaching to worry about other people’s opinions.

Grice: Yeah, but I feel that it's so wonderful that Mr. Covington trusted you and gave you that position, you having that job was being a trailblazer for the rest of us. Because what if that hadn't happened. I just think that's so amazing. Even though it wasn't a big deal to you it is to all of us that came afterwards.

Crider: To say it wasn't a big deal, I don't mean it wasn't a huge responsibility. For example, the two years that I taught at Allen Middle School allowed me to prove I could take a weak band program and make it much, much better. When I taught there, free and reduced lunch wasn't a thing, but if it had been every kid would have been on it. In the second year the Allen Band made the first I's they had ever made. I say that because that's one of the reasons that Mr. Covington gave me a chance to have that high school job. He saw something in me that made him believe I had the ability to teach at a large Texas high school. Again, this is all looking back. I mean, when he said I want you to go interview for the Crockett job it was like, okay. The only question the superintendent had for me was, "how are you going to handle those big old boys?" My response was, "I won't have any trouble with big old boys, it's the twirler moms that can be trouble!" He started laughing and that was pretty much the end of the interview.

Grice: How many were in your band when you took the Crockett job?

Crider: When I took the Crockett job there were about 150 in the program. When I left the numbers had more than doubled.

Grice: I've heard from some colleagues that being a woman means that sometimes it's harder to professionally get along with women than men. Have you ever felt that throughout your career? As far as maybe going for certain jobs or being chosen for certain things.

Crider: Oh yeah, I mean gender inequity is present in everything in our society. But, you know, Jenn, I've always looked at that as a positive for me because if you're a minority, not just a woman, but a person of color, I've always felt you have to be far better than average to be taken seriously. You can whine about it or you can be far better than average and it makes you stronger. That's the way I've always chosen to look at it. If people think, "oh my gosh, there's a woman she's not going to do a great job." My response is, Eat My Dust!

Grice: Great, do you feel like it's still that way? That women still have to be far better or twice as good. I've always taken that same approach too so it hasn't hindered me in what I've wanted to do, because I've felt that way. But then there's other people who think, well it should be equal, you shouldn't have to be better or twice as good. Do you feel like we're still having to still do that?

Crider: Oh yeah, the thing is, you can't change that. Things are changing thank goodness. But they're changing a lot more slowly than they should and that's wrong. It's absolutely wrong. But, when I talk to female teachers, I know immediately whether someone is going to be successful. They come to me, and share problems, and oh my gosh my heart bleeds for them. I see many women who are undervalued, or mistreated, especially if they're assistants and they threaten their male counterparts. If I sense their attitude is, "what can I do to be better, what can I do to

make this work?" I know they're going to be successful. If I hear, "oh poor me, it's not fair," well you know life is not fair, but complaining is not going to make it any better.

Grice: Just the way it is.

Crider: It's a mindset. Compared to when I started, especially in Texas, there are so many really fine female band directors. Look at Amanda Drinkwater and what she did. I mean there's nobody in the country who had a better band program, and it had nothing whatsoever to do with her gender.

Grice: That's a great example. Okay, tell me about the moments that were critical in your career, specifically what they were and what meaning did you make from them? Did you have a defining moment when you wanted to be a conductor? I know you already talked about being a teacher and first learning the trumpet, but specifically a conductor and how did that shift your journey?

Crider: Well, I had an epiphany as a first year teacher when I took the Purvis H.S. band to contest. They'd not been terribly successful in the past. I thought that the future of western civilization depended upon my proving myself, (I, me) in doing well at the state contest. Of course, that's the wrong way to look at things, but I was obsessed with trying to prove myself. Now, there's nothing wrong with wanting to be successful, but I was so intent on making sure that there was nothing wrong with the performance, I focused only on the technical aspects. So I took the band to my first state contest. To show how much I didn't know, we played two pieces by the same composer. They were two different styles, one was *Air for Band* by Frank Erickson and the other was another more active Franck Erickson tune. Well guess who one of the judges was? Frank Erickson! I remember being so nervous when I extended my left hand, it was shaking so much I conducted the whole contest with my left hand locked in a fist at my waist, because I didn't want the band to see my hand shaking. One of the judges said, "you might want to consider using your left hand." (Duh!) But, the point is that Frank Erickson wrote a sheet that I framed and it's been in every office that I've ever had. It says, "Your band plays with beautiful tone, they play well in tune, this is obviously a well-rehearsed band, but down at the bottom was ... "but what about the MUSIC?" At first I was like, "what do you mean, what about the music?" But oh yeah, all we did was make sure that they couldn't find anything wrong with it. The music had no soul. Now that happened during my first year as a teacher, which made me realize that I needed to learn to play my band the same way I played my trumpet. It's a bigger instrument, and infinitely more complex, but out of this experience came a lifelong goal of taking my students beyond the notes. In order to do that, I needed to develop more conducting chops. That epiphany didn't come for a while because I was still too busy figuring out how to teach and how to motivate. My real epiphany in conducting came when Bob Reynolds came to conduct the Texas All-State second band years and years ago. He wasn't beating time. It was all of a sudden I was viewing a conductor who was as artistic as any symphony conductor I've ever seen. Well, hello! We all have these epiphanies and sometimes it takes longer than others. It was like, "oh wow, I need to figure out how to do that." I had been teaching for eight years which is kind of embarrassing now, but again no one who starts teaching is going to have the bimanual technique that we need any more than anybody who becomes a professional musician is going to play at

entry level the way they will twenty years later. Developing the art and artistry of conducting is a life-long pursuit.

Grice: Where in your career did you do the summers with Elizabeth Green?

Crider: Probably year five or six and seven of my high school teaching career. She was a clinician at our TMEA, and I insisted that I be the person to pick her up at the airport. She let me take her out to dinner. I got to know her well enough that when I attended a Tau Beta Sigma/Kappa Kappa Psi national convention in Ann Arbor, I called her and asked if I could take a lesson. The second year, I studied for a week. She had retired, and I realized that as a quintessential teacher, she loved teaching. Her enthusiasm for the art of conducting, her total dedication, and endless curiosity made for a life-altering experience. Talk about dedication, the last book she wrote was “Practicing Successfully.” That’s when she talks about training neural paths, and the split brain theory. She found out she had cancer. At that time, she was about two thirds of the way through the book, she’d been working on it for about three years. The doctor told her if she had chemo or radiation it would be hard for her to concentrate to finish the book. She didn’t want to do that so she chose to have no chemo or radiation at all. She finished the book and passed away very shortly thereafter.

Grice: Oh, wow I’ve never heard that.

Crider: No, I mean that just hit me, just one more step in her dedication. Another thing I learned from her, Jenn, that was really, really profound was she could find something good to say about any conductor. We went to a summer band concert and there was this young conductor that was just flailing away and I expected her to start picking it apart. She looked at me and she said, “you know he could put that energy to really good use some day.”

Grice: Super positive.

Crider: Well yes! But I always had the sense if you weren’t prepared she would take you to task. She was a wonderful teacher who, in many respects, was very much ahead of her time.

Grice: That’s really great. What are some of your greatest triumphs?

Crider: I can’t answer that. I mean I really can’t. I think if I were to count triumphs, more of my triumphs would have been in rehearsals when the kids have those ‘aha’ moments, rather than winning a state band contest, being selected for Midwest, or receiving some award. All of those things are important, but I learned early on, it’s not all those trophies and accolades that really matter. It’s how you make the kids feel about the music.

Grice: Well, I think that’s why you’ve had such a great journey. That’s always been your focus and then you had all those successes teaching all of those kids great music as a high school teacher and then being on the Midwest board it just continues. It has a lot to say about your attitude of how you look at things. It is a journey and it’s never done. That’s what’s so amazing about your career is that the triumphs just continually come because you keep on working at it.

Crider: Well, you're very kind. But the thing is, any person who does well in whatever their choice of profession, they're lifelong learners. That's a thread of commonality. If it's a quantum physicist or a basketball player, whatever, they're never going to stop looking for more creative and great ways to do what they do. That's the cool thing about our art. Oh my gosh, you know I'm in a stage of my life where I realize I'm going to die long before I learn everything I want to learn about music. I need ten lifetimes to do that. It's really humbling, but it's also really exciting. I just found out just about five minutes ago that I'm going to be working with a band next week from Canada. They're so far removed in the winter sometimes the highways are snowed in and the town is inaccessible. The person who was telling me about this band said the parents are so supportive of the kids and they just love music. I can't wait to work with those kids because I know their teacher is a remarkable person.

Grice: Great and they want to bring the best to them. One of the reasons I view you as a mentor is because some people when they retire they relax. But, when I look at you that's when all the great things continue to happen. It's like your mindset was what can I do now. When people ask me when do you want to retire. I always tell them never, I want to do this until the end. I think that's really amazing and why you have as many triumphs as you do. I definitely look up to you and as I look at your career and what you've done, it's great. When you get to a certain stage and you complete that and then you think what's next it opens up new doors. That's a great career and it's never dull right? I mean never a dull moment.

Crider: Indeed. And there's always new music to learn which is another thing. If you're an English teacher you want to share some of the best literature that's ever been written. You mentioned a question about female composers. More female composers are starting to gain recognition. I think that's terrific because again that's a profession where people were like, "oh I'm not going to encourage you. You can't be a composer. A composer's a guy."

Grice: Yeah, what were some of your tribulations? What kind of constraints and/or obstacles have you had to overcome and how did you deal with them? What sacrifices have you made to achieve your successes?

Crider: You know, I never thought of making any sacrifices because the time I spent especially teaching high school and then at UT were worth every second of my energies. It was nothing to get there at six o'clock in the morning and not leave until ten o'clock at night. If I had a family and children, I could not have done that. That was a choice that I made. I admire so much, you and so many women who can do it all. I don't know how you do it. I'm really in awe of that. I think the biggest obstacles I had to overcome were just me. Bill Moody, who was my college director, was a mentor throughout my life. I sometimes used to imagine a little Moody-conscience on my shoulder. When I would think "why isn't the band making the progress I want?" that little voice would say, "well it's your fault, figure it out!" And I would set about to find a better way; a more efficient, challenging, interesting, fun way to do things. But again, there are always outside things to deal with. When you're teaching high school sometimes you'll deal with a parent who is upset because their darling isn't first chair even though they never practice. When you get to the college level you're having to deal with athletics and all sorts of challenges dealing with governors and even presidents. You can learn to deal diplomatically with

those kinds of things. The things that are toughest to figure out involve how to go from where you are to that elusive next step of excellence. And there's always going to be a "next" level!

Grice: Did you do the marching band at UT Austin?

Crider: Hook em' Horns! You bet I did! I had the privilege of working with the best and brightest students at The University.

Grice: When you had to meet with athletics did you find that difficult at the beginning?

Crider: Difficult at the beginning until I took steps to establish a rapport with the Athletic Director and his very important secretary! The director of athletics at the University of Texas was a man named DeLoss Dodds. DeLoss played euphonium in his high school band and his wife played clarinet. We went out to lunch once and discovered he played euphonium in his high school band. The minute I knew he understood where I was coming from, we were okay. He also enjoyed great wine and I always had a really good bottle to present at Christmas and for his birthday. There has to be some give and take. I was lucky in high school because sometimes there can be animosity between a coach and band director. The drill team instructor was a really good friend, and her husband was the football coach. We owned the school because we got along. We taught our students to support and to respect each other. You have to learn how to get along with people. I got even better at diplomacy when I went to UT. I had to deal with some pretty high level people and learn to say no diplomatically. "No you cannot have a pep band for the opening of your lingerie shop, even if your husband is a huge contributor to UT athletics!"

Grice: Oh, that's great. Are there other aspects of your identities whether it be race, the instrument you play, age that you believe influenced your triumphs and tribulations in your career?

Crider: That's a good question. It really is. I was on a panel with three female band directors, and a young man raised his hand and said, "how does it feel to be a woman band director?" I started laughing and I said, "well since I've never been a guy, I really have no basis for comparison!" Often someone might think, "whoa you're a woman band director!" I just feel like I'm a band director. I do think that my choice of instrument, (that's why I like your question), had quite a bit to do with my presence on the podium. If you're a brass player, especially a trumpet player, you can't be shy. You have to own it! Playing trumpet requires a level of confidence, and perhaps even a degree of aggressiveness. I really feel as if this translates to the podium. If you're going to own it, you better know your score. You'd better be prepared. You may have come across this in your research, there are more band director trumpet players especially on the secondary level than any other instrument.

Grice: I did not know that.

Crider: I started doing this, this is not a scientific poll, but every time I do a band director workshop I'll say okay how many of you play whatever, and I'll go down the instruments. But what would you think the second most popular instrument would be?

Grice: Hmmm... probably saxophone.

Crider: That's what I guessed, but it's percussion. We're talking by a huge margin. Again, I just think my approach to the instrument, (conducting) is the same approach to that instrument (trumpet).

Grice: That's really interesting. What would you change if anything if you could go back? What would you tell the beginner conducting you?

Crider: I would tell myself first that other people's opinions are not nearly as important as my own. I would also tell myself to go back to undergraduate school and learn how to better play piano! I was so busy getting better on my instrument, I practiced piano just well enough to get by. I'm embarrassed to say this because this makes score study far more difficult. If I didn't have the ability to sight sing really well, my score study would be abysmal. I cannot sit down and read a score at the keyboard. I can work through harmonic intricacies, but that's about all. My mother made me take 12 years of dance and I begged her to let me take piano. But mother was made to take piano and she hated it so she thought I would hate it. So she made me take dance, and I hated it!

Grice: Oh no, karma! That's interesting. What advice would you have for women entering the field of collegiate conducting?

Crider: Well first thing is to find a mentor who believes in you. I think that's really important. I remember when I was a young high school band director, Frank Wicks was one of my judges. He came up to see me afterwards because he was impressed by our performance. He said, "I want you to meet a young student of mine who is going to be a great teacher." That person was Linda Moorhouse. He was her champion, he saw something in her. Some people want to go to the world's best university and they get lost in the crowd. The second advice I would have is so many people want to become university directors and the only job they might be able to get is a junior college or a small college where it might be extremely difficult to build the kind of program that would merit notice. However, you can be a high school band director, be successful, build a great program, play almost any literature a good college band can play. Develop the ears, develop your teaching chops, and then go to the next level. A lot of people think, "if I'm going to be the best I can be I have to be a college band director." That's not necessarily the case. My advice is to go wherever you can be successful and make meaningful music. You may have already figured this out, but college salaries compared to good public school salaries sometimes are quite skewed.

Grice: Yeah, I think that's shocking to a lot of people. The fact that you would actually take a large cut most of the time.

Crider: One of my former students took a college job. He had been a middle school band director. He returned to UT to complete his doctorate. His first college job post-doctorate required he take a \$40,000 pay cut. Teaching at a major university can be a challenging and incredibly rewarding experience, but it does not necessarily represent the pinnacle of achievement in one's career.

Grice: That's insane.

Crider: Yeah, they need good teachers too. But if you want to be at the top of your profession you have to have a path for musical growth, and not be limited by lack of funding, too few scholarships, and the many other factors governing the success of a university band program.

Grice: That's great advice. What advice/changes would you have for the field of conducting?

Crider: First of all, I see a whole generation of young conductors who are really into gesture. They have to have all of these great moves, which is terrific, but Leonard Bernstein said it best. He said, "if the conductor feels the music, the ensemble feels the music. If the ensemble feels the music, the audience feels the music." The conductor has to own it. Developing a vocabulary of gestures that allows for artistic non-verbal expression is a lifelong pursuit. Now I find myself embracing a "less is more" approach. I realize as a young conductor, I was just a control freak. The better conductors make the pulse the responsibility of the ensemble so as to free the conductor to sculpt the phrase. The conductor's art has grown by leaps and bounds, especially in the last twenty years or so. I just think that too often the missing piece for young conductors is the connection to the "whys" of the music. I'll do a conducting workshop and say, "what do you think about that phrase?" and the response is, "uh, what do you want me to think about the phrase?" It's Mozart, figure it out! It's the gesture yes, but knowledge first.

Grice: What is your favorite workshop that you've done?

Crider: If I had to pick a favorite workshop it would be "Teaching Students to go Beyond the Notes". It's the whole idea of not being satisfied with clean technique and for gosh sake cut out this nonsense of teaching the notes first and then go back and add the music. That's a little too prevalent. But again, a lot of teachers are young teachers and they're doing things sequentially. Maybe they'll have a Frank Erickson in their young lives to serve as a to wake up call!

Grice: I know you've mentioned all of these great mentors that you've had that were men besides Elizabeth Green, but early on do you think it would have made a difference to have a female mentor or for there to have been a female high school band director in Texas before you.

Crider: Oh yeah, yeah you've probably seen the studies, maybe it was Dan Pink's book, that he talks about Se-Ri Pak, who's a Korean golfer. When she entered the LPGA there were no other Korean golfers. She was very successful and she won the LPGA US Women's Open. So the next year there are three Korean golfers. Well if you look now, and this is like 12-15 years later there are all of these fantastic golfers from Korea. Why? Because they developed the mindset, "if she can do it, I can too." If there were other female role models when I began teaching, it would have made a difference. It would have helped me develop my "teacher voice." I think that women as a rule, have a nurturing sense or a sixth sense. We can sometimes take the temperature of an ensemble or a student. It's just that perception of, "what's bothering you?" It's not to say that guys can't do that, but as a rule I think that's something that we really have going for us. That sensitivity. I had no female role models, but I knew I couldn't stand up and stomp my feet and attempt to emulate my male colleagues because it simply didn't feel right. So you have to learn other ways to present yourself; to be genuine in your own skin.

Grice: Did you feel at the beginning and do you feel now that you have to dress a certain way as a female? Has that ever played any role in what you're thinking about as far as what to wear for concerts or the feminine side of it?

Crider: Oh, definitely for concerts. It is very difficult, as you know, to find something that is feminine. The whole idea of a concert dress is not to detract from the music. So I'm bothered when I see females conducting with short skirts or bare arms because it directs focus on something other than the music. Marin Alsop for example wears a man's tux and it works for her. That doesn't work for me because I don't really feel comfortable, so I wear a long skirt and kind of a tux top. It's so hard to find something that doesn't get in the way of comfort, but looks professional. It's the same thing on the job. Now that I'm retired I've given a lot of my suits and heels to the battered women's shelter. But I'm so skinny that when I took it there they said, "oh honey I don't think anyone can wear this, but we'll take it!" There is much to be said for dressing for success.

Grice: Do you have your concert outfits specially made so that you get exactly what you want for the concerts?

Crider: I do, and I'm really lucky because when I went to Singapore and Hong Kong I could have things made for a song. They make them overnight. I can pick out the material and draw out what I want. I have three outfits made in Hong Kong. They're all very comfortable, but elegant as well.

Grice: That's great. Did you feel starting off and do you feel the 'Good Ol' Boys' club still exists, especially being from Texas?

Crider: There's always going to be a 'Good Ol' Boys' club. Men are comfortable in the company of men. This doesn't necessarily translate to misogyny. The men in Texas whom I respect the most were great teachers and they treated me with the same respect with which I treated them. I was very lucky. Sometimes, the people in the 'Good Ol' Boys' club are threatened by strong females. I make it their problem, not mine. Like finds like. In Texas, many former athletic coaches become principals, which necessitates serious education to remove the "this is a man's job" preconception.

Grice: Do you have any advice for young females who are coming out on how to go around that or how to battle that in an interview?

Crider: I think you have to go straight at it. If there's somebody that is pushing back because of your gender I think you should make every effort to have them see you as a caring human being; someone who is knowledgeable, capable and proficient. It's much more difficult to hold on to a prejudice once you get to know a person. That's my advice: be positive, and share your strengths. The other thing is don't ever let anybody bully you. Sometimes the most insecure people will try to do that. I will not ever let anyone treat me that way! I will rip their lungs out and feed them to my dog before I let them disparage me in any way. There have been several times where I've had to get in a bully's face, and refuse to back down. A bully will push against weakness, but retreat in the face of strength.

Grice: What do you think we can do to attract more women and minorities to the field of conducting? We already talked about having to demonstrate a higher competency in order to attain prominent positions. What can we do to attract women and women minorities?

Crider: We have to set an example to let them know, not just to let women and minorities know, but to let the powers at be that are hiring know, gender doesn't affect competence. Skin color doesn't affect competence. What affects competence is how much you care and how much you know.

Grice: Do you think it's helping having the first female vice president, Kamala Harris and the youngest poet laureate, Amanda Gorman? Do you think that helps women seeing women outside of our field in high positions? I know as far as Amanda Gorman goes, I was excited for my kids because she's so young and it was very exciting.

Crider: Amanda Gorman is absolutely fantastic. The same thing may be said of our vice president. She's so articulate. I just have to say this because I've thought a lot about this. I thought when Barack Obama was elected we were through with racism in this country and sadly, was I wrong. Often men are threatened by powerful woman because they feel she doesn't "know her place." This attitude is gradually changing, but far too slowly. You have to walk a very delicate line. It's empowering to see brilliant, strong, successful women. Ruth Bader Ginsburg has been my hero for years. It broke my heart when she passed away, but oh what a powerful, beautiful human being. She truly changed the world for the better.

Grice: Do you think more women are applying for collegiate wind band conducting positions and do you think we are succeeding at bridging that gap? With each year I see more and more women collegiate wind conductors.

Crider: Yes, and I do keep up with that. I'm always joyful when I see a female hired in a university position. I have not seen one female who's been hired and entrusted with a university position that hasn't distinguished herself. They're setting an example. The thing is now kids grow up and they don't think anything about whether they have a female on the podium. However, I've been to some states and conducted All-State bands where girls have come up to me and said you're the first female conductor we've ever had!

Grice: Wow, that's powerful. Do you feel you've ever had to mask your femininity in interviews, dress, language, or on the podium to be respected as a conductor in what used to be and still is a male-dominated field?

Crider: Not really. I am who I am, and always have been. I think students and colleagues respect that.

Grice: When female college students tell you that they aspire to have a university conducting position what advice would you give them?

Crider: First, to stop this business of going from undergraduate, to masters, to doctorate and then teach. You can't develop your ears that way. There's little podium time to do that. I tell

them, go for it if that's your goal, but teach first so you can develop your teaching chops and so the ears can develop. That just can't happen overnight and I don't care how competent the musician is.

Grice: Do you like them to get years of experience in the public schools between undergrad and masters?

Crider: We didn't accept students for a master's degree in conducting unless they had at least two years of successful teaching experience. Generally, those with at least four years of teaching experience enjoyed the most success.

Grice: Then would you suggest for them to get more experience between the masters and doctorate?

Crider: Depends on the student. Kevin Sedatole comes to mind. Kevin taught middle school. He was a middle school assistant for I think four years. He had the best second band I've ever heard. He came to UT for his masters and then did his doctorate and of course has been very successful. It depends on how successful one is between undergrad and the second degree.

Grice: I want to talk some about your score study and rehearsal techniques since you're so amazing. Can you describe your method of score study, rehearsal techniques, and concert programming and does your programming include female composers?

Crider: I constantly search for and promote underrepresented composers. Since retirement, I am limited to guest conducting, so finding the "right" pieces to fit the ensemble is a constant challenge. My thoughts on score study would require hours of discussion, but basically what I do for score study is I go from a macro to a micro and back to macro approach. I want to understand the "whys" of the piece. I use a Schenker analysis to organize phrase structure. I think it was Leinsdorf who said every great piece of music has one moment of greatest intensity. That may be the softest moment in the piece or it may be the most fully intense, everything else is in proportion to that. So I'll make sure when I'm shaping phrases that if this has a ninth in the chord and it's the same phrase that was in the 'A' theme, but if in the 'A' theme if the apex only had a seventh in the chord then I know the composer is telling me this is more important. I think harmonic analysis is important, for it serves as a guide as to the composer's intent. I do a dynamic intensity scale. I work on understanding balance and proportion. I want to understand the architecture of the piece. Reader's Digest version - I want to know the "why's" of the music and then I want to know how the composer constructed those whys. Why did she do it, how did she do it, how does this make the music impactful? Meaningful? I want to own it. If I can't sing through a piece by memory, I really don't know it well enough to stand up and conduct it. I try to do lots of memorization. I learned that from Arnauld Gabriel. Memorization frees the ears! As far as rehearsal techniques, my goal is to take students beyond the notes. I want to create feelingful, meaningful, memorable music. I was doing an All-State in Georgia and the piece was *Blue Shades*. It has a great clarinet solo and there was a fantastic kid playing clarinet. Well, in Georgia they don't get the music until the first day of rehearsal, but sight reading is 50% of their audition process so those kids can read really well. So this clarinet player is playing and I stop him and said, "Eddie what do you think about that phrase?" and what I meant was where's the phrase

going? We'd been talking about shaping phrases and giving shape to the music. He looked at me very innocently and said, "what do you want me to think?" It's so much easier to say, "start at letter A, crescendo for 4 bars, etc. But the kids don't understand why. They don't develop any intellectual understanding and certainly not any emotional understanding. My rehearsals are based on what and how I want the kids to hear, and to feel. I want them to learn to listen beyond their parts, I want them to understand the music, I want them to have musical opinions. Sometimes, I'll say, "okay kids we're going to start at letter A. I'm going to give you a downbeat and I want you to hold the note that you think is the peak of the phrase" Some of them will go four bars some will go eight bars some will go two. But they're forming opinions. That matters because I want to teach the kids to love the music, but I also want to teach the kids to feel the music. I haven't been doing this all my life because music made my math scores better. I don't think we talk about that Jenn, we don't talk about emotion enough. We didn't ask why we do what we do and why great pieces of music touch us in a place that nothing else can.

Grice: I talk a lot in my rehearsals about emotion and I think I come across that way to my students. But, I don't really let them have as many of their own musical opinions out loud. I need to do a lot more of that. Hearing you say that, I need to do a lot more of that. It's more like I'm telling them what to feel. I like that idea of having them make their own musical opinions.

Crider: You know you'd be surprised even little beginners can have musical opinions. The only thing you have to be careful of, is not to disagree with an opinion. Let the band try different ways of interpreting a phrase. In my third band at Crockett I'd say, "do you think this is a two bar phrase, or a four bar phrase?" We'd vote on it and sometimes the kids would come up with an answer that differed from mine. I'd never say, "no, no, no we're going to do it this way." Okay, great let's go with it. Because they believed it, they made it work. Those wonderful young minds need to be encouraged to think for themselves.

Grice: What areas of collaboration have you used in your programs? That can be with art, dance, other music groups.

Crider: Well, teaching across the curriculum is something I've always been really big on. When I was teaching at Crockett we had teachers who really tended to resent the band because the kids loved band and maybe they didn't love some classes that much. There was one teacher in particular who was a senior English teacher. Every year at spring concert festival when the students had to miss class, she scheduled a major test. The kids would have to take a make-up test and it was always harder than the regular test. As with any band my students were National Merit finalists, salutatorians, valedictorians, etc. One day I said, "what do you think about naming a teacher of the month?" They asked where are you going with this? Somebody will invite this teacher, I was talking about this English teacher, to dinner and then bring her to our Tuesday night rehearsal to let her see what we do. They said, "oh she won't do that." I said, "I bet she will if you ask her." I had it all planned. MacBeth wrote a piece called *Of Sailors and Whales*. I knew all kids in English class had to read *Moby Dick*. On the night she came to our rehearsal, we sight read *Sailors and Whales* and I asked her to read a passage, then we would play a passage and encourage her to hear the action in the music. She became so hooked on what we were doing in band, and so impressed by the student's dedication, and discipline, she never missed a concert, and actually started traveling with us. I realized that it was my fault, because I

expected people who knew nothing about music to understand what we were doing. But that was a real epiphany for the kids. It created a culture where teachers would come and sit in the band and play with us if they ever played an instrument. Just to reach out and make sure that they didn't think that we were just a bunch of dummies that weren't doing anything that didn't require a great deal of skill and dedication. It's easier to reach out to somebody than it is to complain about them as I did for years. I also worked closely with the choir and orchestra directors. It was a win/win situation.

Grice: How has your conducting style and technique changed over the years?

Crider: One of my aims as with all conductors is to develop an ever greater vocabulary of gestures. I watch great conductors all the time and steal if I see them do something that works. I work really hard now on left-hand independence and try to say as much as I can with my left hand and as little with my right hand as far as pulse is concerned. It's an evolving thing. As I say, it would take five lifetimes to even begin to master the level of expression I would like to project. But, the more I can say with gesture, and not say with my voice, the better.

Grice: Do you have any rituals that you do before concerts and do you have routines or activities to help your mind be at its highest?

Crider: Okay, I like that question. That's a good question. Before concerts when at all possible I like to have the hour before so I can just focus and think through the music and make sure I have everything in place. Especially now that I don't have my own ensemble. When I'm doing a two day rehearsal with an All-State band, I have to be aware of potential problem spots. I have to help the kids. As far as physical preparation, I practice Tai Chi every morning. I use that in my conducting workshops because it really helps translate gesture. Especially since Covid I've been able to do it every day. I get up and I do about a 45-minute exercise regimen after Tai Chi. As you know, you have to be in good physical shape to stand up and conduct an 8-10 hour rehearsal. Well, I don't do ten hour rehearsals with All-States anymore, that's child abuse. Even eight hours a day with kids you have to be in good shape to keep the energy high.

Grice: That's great. I remember you doing Tai Chi at the Conn-Selmer Institute.

Crider: Right, as a matter of fact I just did a video because we're going to start the first virtual Conn-Selmer day with some Tai Chi. Matthew Arau on the second day is going to do a mediation. It's going to be fun.

Grice: How important is leadership as a quality for a conductor? We did talk about that with the trumpet and knowing exactly what you want. Were there any other leadership roles outside of music that you held as a young student in high school or college that you think helped your career path?

Crider: In college I was elected president of Tau Beta Sigma. That was my first real leadership role. As my career progressed, I've been president of several national organizations. Leadership, (and this is Tim Lautzenheiser to the core), is simply to lead by example. I try my best to do that. That means that I'm going to work harder than any student in my band because I want them to

know that I'm not going to stand back and cross my arms and tell them what they have to do if I'm not willing to give that time and dedication as well. And I'm a trumpet player so what can I say? We lead!

Grice: Were there any experiences/organizations that helped shape your career, non-musical jobs or travel and were any of them specifically female oriented?

Crider: I can't think of any that were female oriented. I have all my life been involved in volunteer work. I've built for Habitat for Humanity. I've been doing a lot of work for the Austin food bank this year because so many people are hungry. I find this very enriching. I try to teach my students that same lesson: doing good is equally as important as is doing well. You mention travel. I think travel is one of the best educators in the world. I love to travel. Now that I'm retired I can do my work and then stay a week. I get to see so many wonderful places.

Grice: How many countries have you traveled to?

Crider: I think I'm up to thirteen now. The fun thing is trying to learn the language of each country. I went to South Korea year before last so I decided I was going to learn a little Korean. I don't know if you know anything about that language but it is a most gracious language. For example instead of saying hello, you say "an nyeong ha seyo.." That means literally, "are you at peace?" Isn't that a beautiful way to greet someone? Learning even a little of the language so that the kids know that you appreciate their culture is really important.

Grice: I didn't know that and my brother is from Seoul, South Korea. Are there any additional comments or thoughts that you would like to add on to this?

Crider: Here's a last thought I always share with students. My grandparents were very important to me in my formative years. My grandmother had a college degree which is very unusual for someone in her generation. One of the people whom she admired was Eleanor Roosevelt. There's an Eleanor Roosevelt quote that says, "No one has the ability to make you feel inferior without your consent." My grandmother taught that to me from the time that I could understand the meaning of those words. When I talk to people, male or female, whomever, I think that sense of self is vitally important. The world is full of naysayers. It's so easy to tear things down. Things can become negative so quickly that you have to hold fast to your own view of the world. I think that's really important. That quote has made a difference in my life. Music is the only language with which you cannot say a mean thing. What a beautiful gift we have to share!⁹⁶

Grice: I love that. I want to get that quote made and give it to my daughters to hang up. That is a great quote. Fantastic. Thank you so much Paula, it's great to see you.

⁹⁶ Paula Crider, personal interview (Google Meet: 21 April, 2021).



Figure 3. Mentors/Role Models of Paula Crider.

Paula Crider Profile

Current Collegiate Position: Professor Emerita at The University of Texas

Previous Collegiate Positions:

Interim Director of Bands at Columbus State University

Interim Director of Bands at the University of Nebraska

Degrees:

BM, University of Southern Mississippi

Music

English Literature

MME, The University of Texas

Doctor of Music Education Honoris Causa, VanderCook College of Music

Tonya Mitchell-Spradlin

Grice: Hi, thank you so much for coming on this morning. Before we start I need to make this statement. Do you Tonya Mitchell-Spradlin give your consent to have your voice video recorded during this interview for the purposes of my doctoral research?

Mitchell-Spradlin: Yes, this is fantastic. I'm so happy to share with you and to be part of this journey with you, Jennifer.

Grice: Great, thank you. Could you please begin by telling me your musical journey? For example, things like: Why did you choose to play your instrument and that specific instrument? What were your experiences as a student in public schools and in college? When did you know you wanted to be a conductor? What were the influences that led you to your professional career?

Mitchell-Spradlin: My musical journey, I started playing the piano first as my primary instrument. When I was nine I started taking lessons. When I was about seven for a gift for Christmas one year my mom got me one of those little 66 key Casio keyboards where the keys light up when you're supposed to move from one note to the other. I practiced and practiced and played on that all the time and I learned how to play all the songs that were programmed into the Casio. My mom eventually put me in piano lessons. I begged and begged can I please take lessons, I want to get better. I already know all the songs, what else is there. The nine year old me, knew that there was more, but didn't know how to access it. My mom played in an African drumming ensemble called Drum Café, which is interesting because she's not very musical. But she played in this group and it was a lot of fun. My brothers and I, we all played in Earth Shaking Samba. So we were all in this samba band at a very young age. Once a week we'd drive downtown Atlanta. We grew up in Lawrenceville, Georgia, which is about 20 minutes north of Atlanta, so we drive downtown Atlanta and play in the samba band. So we always had music in our lives. My mother is an artist and so creative endeavors were always encouraged. I have an older brother, who's two years older, and he joined the band and he played the trumpet. So you know, I wanted to be in the band because my brother was in the band. He said, "Tonya I have

monopoly over the brass instruments, because I'm a trumpet player, it's my instrument. You can't play trumpet, you have to play a woodwind instrument.” I don't know why I listened, but I did and I picked the clarinet. I practiced, practiced, and practiced. I wasn't told this or I missed it, that you're supposed to wet the reed to play the instrument. I had a background in practicing right, because I had already been taking piano lessons and I practiced and would do these little recitals for my family and recitals for my studio. So I did the same kind of practice for my clarinet and it sounded so bad. Why is it always squeaking? I'm trying so hard like going through the book. So I did this recital for my family and my older brother says, “you know, when I'm in band, I always see the players put the reed in their mouth first and then they put it on the instrument.” I did that and it sounded, not good, but better.

Grice: That's funny that it was your brother instead of your band director telling you that, right.

Mitchell-Spradlin: I know, and not to say that my band director was bad, but there are a lot of humans, there are a lot of us in that room. I think managing everybody, the classroom management I think was difficult because there was so many people. In my middle school you had to be in band, orchestra, or chorus. So I think there were a lot of people that didn't want to be there and there were a lot of people who really wanted to be there. I think that was tough and because that was tough there were a lot of times where we had to go into the hall until everyone was quiet. When everyone was quiet then we could come back in and play. I remember there being long stretches where I just wanted to play. That's how I knew I was going to be a band director actually, in the sixth grade, because I thought I'm going to be a band director and we are going to play. No one's going to miss that they have to wet the reed and we are all going to enjoy getting to share this experience as much as I enjoy it. Because I loved it and I felt like I didn't get to do as much of it in the class as I wanted to. So I think maybe that's the first part of the question that started me on my musical journey. I also had this piano teacher who I loved and still love. Her name is Valencia Giles and she was my first piano teacher and I stayed with her and kept taking lessons well into college. Quite a long time, over a decade of taking lessons with the same person and that really helped shape my musical growth because she was phenomenal and she was also a singer. Let's see, so that's also how I started playing the clarinet. My secondary instrument, I guess tertiary, is the trombone. Because I knew I wanted to be a band director in the sixth grade, I thought, well I need to learn all the instruments now. There's was this old music store called Mars Music in Georgia. I think it's out of business now, but they had this trombone that was only \$100, a little peashooter trombone. I said, Mom I have to have this trombone, I have to be a band director, I have to learn all the instruments. Please buy me this trombone and she did. In the eighth grade, my band director said, if you can make All-State on this instrument, that's not your instrument, I'll throw you a party. So every morning I practiced and I made All-State on the trombone and not the clarinet. I didn't get a party, but then I just kept playing trombone. So once I went to high school, I played clarinet and I would get up and walk to the other side of the room and play trombone on some pieces. I just kept playing them both until I eventually needed to pick one. I play trombone in marching band all through college as well. I had a great time in my ensembles, both in my public school experience, middle school, high school in Georgia and in college. I always felt supported and encouraged, even if I didn't get that party. I always felt like I was able to grow and I was always pushed to grow and to try new things. Hey Tonya, you should audition for this honor band or you should play in this ensemble. Hey Tonya, make sure you send in a video for GHP. Hey, these are great teachers in the area,

you'll probably learn really well from Judy Beach. She's a great clarinet teacher. If you could swing it, try to take lessons with her, she's excellent. So I always felt kind of pushed into those opportunities. Same thing for youth orchestras. I was always pushed to take auditions and play in those groups and I really think that helped me grow as a musician. I think that helped shape me into wanting to be not necessarily a conductor, but an excellent musician. Someone who ingests music and someone who shares it with other people, so I guess that's also the definition of a conductor.

Grice: Great, as you reflect on your journey please describe your early role models. Describe your role models later in your career and any current role models.

Mitchell-Spradlin: Sure, so my first role model was my piano teacher, Valencia Giles. I think I was drawn to her because she was kind, but also very focused, wouldn't let me quit. She was also a black woman. That didn't mean anything to me at the time, she was just a piano teacher. As I look back on it I realize that I think that helped me feel confident as a black woman musician. As I've gotten older and older I see how few and far between that is. So she's been a great role model, just for professionalism, growth, being kind and open, and having a wonderful family life. She also really loved every single one of her students, and it showed how you're supposed to treat students. She still runs a studio in Atlanta. As I got a little bit older, my first ever conducting teacher at Indiana became the teacher I studied with at Kansas, Paul Popiel. He became a major resource and role model because he's kind of been with me my entire career. I mean, I met him my freshman year of college and then several years later went to do my doctorate because I wanted to study with him. Even to this day we're constantly in touch. I constantly ask questions; should I be doing this, should I be doing that? So I would say he's probably my biggest professional conducting career role model and mentor.

Grice: I know you had your piano teacher, but do you think your career path would have been different if you had a female mentor in the band world? In what ways do you serve as a mentor to your students and graduates?

Mitchell-Spradlin: I definitely think my career would have been different or particularly my feeling about it, and my confidence level throughout. I think that would have been significantly different had I had a female conductor. I think that's because I never saw a female band director until after I finished my undergraduate degree. I just never saw one. That's not true. I saw Mary Land, but she wasn't my conductor. She was conducting an honor band, but not my group. She was phenomenal. But I just never really spent time with them or watched them work or had any sort of experience. I think it would have been different in that it would have shown me that that's okay. I think when you don't see it, you get this cognitive dissonance where you close your eyes and you're trying to be professional, and you envision professionalism as a man on stage. As a person wearing a tuxedo on stage. You've envisioned it as what you've always seen, what you see when you go to concerts, what you see when you watch movies, what you see when you google conductor. So what place does that put you in when you're trying to do the same thing and you can't form a concept of it other than yourself? It's really difficult and that causes a lot of inner struggle. A lot of am I doing this right? Will I be taken seriously? Am I standing up tall enough? Does this look appropriate? Does this look professional? Do I sound palatable? You know, all of these things that are barriers to vulnerability and barriers to music making. I think

that would have been a little bit lessened had I had some female representation. So yes, to answer your question, absolutely yes. Then you also ask how am I working to be a mentor for my students. I am a College Music Society mentor and I'm also part of the mentor program from the National Band Association, I have a mentor. Those are kind of formal roles that I've gone out of my way to be a mentor and learn and meet young women I wouldn't normally know. Then with my students a way that I try to be a mentor is one I try to always be prepared, a great example of what professionalism is, a great example of organization of focus of clarity and execution of vision. I also try to show that it's okay to be a human and make mistakes and be vulnerable. I actively in my programming work to make sure they're always seeing and not just the young women, but everyone is always seeing a variety of different performers, composers, guests, so that unlike me they leave with clear images that represent who they are. I talk about it a lot and I think that's a key too. I struggle with impostor syndrome. Why me and am I good enough? I found that the best way to fight some of those feelings is to just talk about it, and so I openly do. I've had a lot of students knock on my door and say, "can you just talk to me more about impostor syndrome, can we walk through the campus, can we go out and get some coffee, I've been struggling with this." Just trying to have an open door policy too and open about some things I've struggled with and I'm currently working to overcome even now.

Grice: Describe your experiences that you believe related to you being a woman. What supports and what barriers have you faced that you believed were/are related to your gender? Thinking about your conducting career, tell me about experiences where you felt, if you did unequal treatment when compared to your male peers? How did you respond?

Mitchell-Spradlin: Yeah, I think for that first part, barriers that may be faced as related to gender. I think some of that's external and some of that's internal and some of the internal barriers are caused as a reflection of external treatment, right? And so I talked about some of those internal barriers as having impostor syndrome or constantly the 'I should' mentality. I should do this, I should do that, I should take 10 years to pick out my concert outfit because what does it look like from the back, is it too tight or too short? You know stuff like that. I have had some situations where I have felt external barriers for sure. Situations where I felt like I had to really, really, really work eight times harder than everyone else to be seen as equal. There's that statement, you have to work twice as hard to get half as much. I think that's compounded by being a woman and by being a black woman. I remember my first job, teaching high school, I was director of the high school marching band and I had an assistant who was a man. He was a white man and was probably 10-11 years older than me. I told you this is all I ever wanted to do since I was in sixth grade. I'm doing this thing I've always wanted to do. It's so awesome, it's so great, I'm working so hard, I love my students, I love my job. These challenges were going to come and be great. I got this job three days before band camp started, so I had to pick a show, find staff, and get everything organized. It was all moving and the wheels were turning the way I wanted them to turn. We had one of our first performances and I felt the group did a very good job. They were super clean and organized, and yeah we had things to work on, but I was very happy. Somebody came, and they noticed that the band did really well and they came to the band and said to the assistant, "hey, your band sounds really great." And the assistant said, "oh I'm just the assistant, I'm actually not the director, she's the director." And he's like, "ah, stop joking with me, your band sounds great." The assistant says, "no she's the director," and points to me. I don't see this happening. The guy then says, "ah, you're lying," and would not believe him. Then he

goes to students in uniform and says, “hey, where's your director” and they point to me. He then says, “you guys are pulling my chain” and he goes to a booster parent and says, “Hey, I'm looking for the director. Everyone keeps telling me it's this person, but like obviously it's this guy, right?” They said, “no, she's the director.” I think I was 22 years old at the time too so I think there's three things - youth, gender, and race. So he comes over to me, and by this point I saw what was happening and I guess it was the first time that I realized that my perception was not the external person. I don't know why I didn't realize that beforehand. I thought I'll just work really hard and it will be awesome. I don't know why it took me so long to see that. I guess I was very naive, sheltered, super supported and encouraged to the point where I didn't perceive that until I started teaching high school. So I think I've just battled a lot of that such as I expect you to be this way, or I expect you to do this or do that, or I don't expect you to be the person on the podium. Therefore, when you are the person I see, I'm going to be super critical and judgmental, because I never expected you to be there in the first place. Which makes you in turn feel like, oh, I have to be super freaking good, I have to be better, I have to have a personality, and I have to not make mistakes. It puts this burden, I think sometimes an unnecessary burden of fear of failure, because of some external pressure. I've also had a couple situations too where you know, oh, this is feminine music, you should do that. Or this is masculine music that would be for somebody else. When I would be in a group with my colleagues, this hasn't happened in quite some time, but when I was starting my career, colleague X is a male, “so what's your group working on, what are they playing?” Colleague Y is a male, “what different mouthpieces are you using for your trumpets?” Me, and they'd say, “oh you look nice today.” The music talk would stop and the let's talk about butterflies, flowers, and clothes. So I noticed a lot of that.

Grice: You said that hasn't happened in some time. Do you feel that's getting better with our society?

Mitchell-Spradlin: Yeah, I think in our society that's improving significantly. I mean, that's definitely improving, there's been a lot of awareness about it. There have been, people like you who are writing dissertations, there's Andrea Brown who started Women Rising to the Podium, there's Girls Who Conduct started by Kaitlin Bove, there's the Association of Black Women Band Directors started last year with Myra Rhoden. There's so much more awareness there. I did a Midwest presentation with Catherine Rand, Catherine Bushman, Jennifer Higdon, Libby Larson, and Augusta Reed Thomas about this, women in music. Specifically, pieces and composers, but there's a lot of awareness and a lot of discussions being had, and that's causing some change. A lot of people are willing to stand up and say this is not okay, lets re-evaluate. All the movements that are not music related, they of course filter into how we treat one another in our profession. The #MeToo movement, and now we're just analyzing things and really thinking more deeply about them. I also think I've been doing it longer, so once the longer you do it, the more people start to recognize your face and your name and so there's fewer chances of who's this random woman. I'm just going to talk to her about random things I think she'll like, like shoes. Which I do, but if you're going to talk to my male counterparts about music, talk to me about music too. Let's talk about what our bands are doing.

Grice: That's great. Tell me about moments that were critical in your career - specifically what they were and what meaning did you make from them? Did you have a defining moment where

you decided you wanted to be a conductor and how did that shift your journey? You kind of talked about sixth grade already, but were there any others?

Mitchell-Spradlin: Yeah, I think once I started I always wanted to be an educator, I always wanted to be a band director, I always wanted to have a field where I could inspire young people to grow and be their best selves through musical instruction, specifically band. That's still my mission now. I just do it with older students than I thought I would when I made my initial plan. My plan was never, I'm going to teach middle school for this amount of time, high school for this amount of time, and then college for this amount of time. It was always just where can I be where I feel like I can make a difference, where I'm fulfilled musically, where students are growing and I can see that growth, and that has led me to teach in college. I remember having a moment when I taught high school of this deep, deep connection with players. I don't remember what we're playing, but I remember that we were in a gym and there were basketballs that kept hitting the wall because it was a temporary space. I don't remember what we were playing, but I remember everyone was locked on. You know what, I think it was *Among the Clouds* by Brian Balmages with my second group, the intermediate band. There was this really prolonged crescendo and the energy picked up, the rhythm picked up, we needed to show that aspect of delayed gratification, and we needed to show patience in our growth. I stopped conducting and just moved my face and said let's just work together so that we reached this height of this phrase together. It was amazing and I could feel the energy in the room, it was like lightning, it was palpable, I could reach out and touch it, and put it in my pocket. They were so connected I remember Jessica Eliezer's eyes and Catherine's eyes and Sarah. I remember all these students and we just grew together. Then once we finished this phrase, it's like all of us turned to each other and thought oh my gosh, that was something special. It's like we all realized something special together. I think that's when I knew I wanted to spend more time conducting and kind of honing those skills and searching for those types of human connections through conducting. At that time I wasn't conducting it was just my face and then we put it back together. I think that was a palpable experience, and I remember going home and having this high, this feeling in my heart all day long like wow, that was the most connected I have felt to humans and to music in my career thus far. I had just started teaching and that was incredible. I wanted to seek that feeling always.

Grice: What are some of your greatest triumphs?

Mitchell-Spradlin: I feel like my greatest triumphs are always reflected in other humans. So I feel like it's my absolute greatest achievement, accomplishment that I'm most excited about is seeing my students flourish and the fact that they still reach out to me. But you know, ten years later, the ones who I taught the very, very beginning of my teaching career will find me on Facebook and send a random message or send a random email. A couple weeks ago a parent of a trombone player, Kevin, who I taught my first year, sent me a message. Kevin was talking about you the other day and we just really missed your spirit and we hope you're doing well. I was like oh my gosh. I feel like those are triumphs more so than any amazing concert, more so than any realization of a piece. It's a decade later, years and years later the people affected through the process, it still means something so deeply to them that they go out of their way to reach out and say something about it, years later. That is why I would never stop doing this.

Grice: What were some of your tribulations and we've already talked about some of those? What kind of constraints and/or obstacles have you had to overcome and how did you deal with them? What sacrifices have you made to achieve your successes?

Mitchell-Spradlin: Ah, so some tribulations I have felt is sometimes I've had difficulty or obstacles feeling totally comfortable and authentic all the time. I talked a little bit about impostor syndrome and a little bit about feeling like I should do this or I should do that. I've worked hard to not fall too deep into that. I have been very fortunate to have had a lot of support. I've been fortunate to have what externally looks like success I guess. I have struggled within the past five or six years or so with my programming and making sure it's representative of what I want it to represent. I fought this big battle of no, it just needs to be excellent and these people are playing these things and these people are playing those things. Now I feel very strongly of having this philosophy of every single program that I share with my students. Every single program has a female composer, at least one, not limited to one. Absolutely I'll do the work to make sure there is one that's an excellent piece I like that fits. Every single program will have a piece by a person of color. I don't believe in the no dead white guys in the program. They probably will always have one so that we show some sort of growth or trajectory in music and how pieces work together and composers work together. So I found that to be a challenge just finding resources and sticking to that philosophy and sharing that philosophy and making sure that actually happens correctly and authentically, and actually happens well. I hope that answered the question and you also asked what sacrifices have I made to achieve success. I have had to make some family sacrifices. It is difficult to constantly move in our field in collegiate conducting. It's really hard to get a promotion or a raise within the same school. You kind of just have to move. So often times a promotion looks like moving from one part of the country to another part of the country. That's really hard, and so I guess that would go under tribulations as well. Feeling settled and at home in a location and having to move and learn a whole new state, whole new community, whole new culture, and be away from family and away from friends. That's hard. Penn State is my third college teaching job. Three very different parts of the country; Austin, Georgia, South Carolina and now State College, Pennsylvania, totally different. So I guess the sacrifices I have had to make are I'm gone from home a lot. If I'm traveling, doing an honor band, or guest conducting (I think that those things are important and networking is important), but my husband is at home, a dog at home, and I miss home. I try to be really careful about what things I leave the house for, especially after Covid. I've grown to actually really love being at home. I like being at home. But yeah, it's a sacrifice because I'm so far away from my nephews. I'm far away from my family. He's far away from his family because he moved with me. He works from home in a company that fortunately has been remote for quite some time, but not being close to those family ties are tough when you're adjusting to a brand new environment. So yeah, that is a little bit of a sacrifice kind of being out on your own and picking up and putting roots in a place you've never been before is hard.

Grice: Are there other aspects of your identities (race, instrument you play, age) that you believe influenced your triumphs and tribulations in your career?

Mitchell-Spradlin: Sure, I have one more thing to add to the previous question about sacrifices. I have also always felt that you know for women to be successful you just have to say yes to everything, you have to show your face, you have to go to all the networking, you gotta make

sure people see your car late in the day so it's like, oh yeah, she's really putting in the hours. I always felt that was important. As a result sometimes if you want to have a family sometimes it makes it harder. Why we feel that way? I think it's all societal pressure which then becomes kind of internalized pressure. But there's definitely this fear of oh, if I'm gone for a semester, gone for a year, choose to have a family, choose to have mental health and a freaking break, take some time off, miss this or miss that, or build into my schedule time to rest; I have always felt extreme fear of doing that. I feel like I will fall behind, won't be relevant, or I will miss the boat on being invited to clinics or honor bands if I take that time off. I don't think that's accurate and I don't think it's true, but it's definitely a pressure I put on myself and I know that other women have put on themselves in different conversations I've had. So I do think that's a little bit of a sacrifice that I hope is a trend that stops perpetuating itself.

Grice: I have definitely felt that throughout. You've already spoken about some of them, but what advice would you have for women entering the field of collegiate conducting?

Mitchell-Spradlin: Our human race in general just likes to categorize things. You're this or you're that and just put labels on things. Whether it's good or bad, we just like to be able to describe. We are definitely a label society. With that has definitely come some challenges because labels come with stereotypes and stereotypes come with an embedded preconceived notion of what something is going to be that then is up to the person who's the root of the stereotype or the person being affected by it to disprove. It's not up to the person who holds the belief or the notion. I feel like it's up to me to disprove someone else's notions of what a conductor should be or what I'm supposed to be, and that's a burden. I really don't think we should have to, but I definitely feel that way sometimes and I'm aware of those things when I go into different environments when I speak, when I conduct, or when I do events. Part of that has caused some inner struggle; do I need to talk like this, sound like that, or look like this. I feel like I've kind of gotten away from most of that in the past several years. I don't think that so much anymore, but I definitely think it was certainly a challenge I've really worked hard to overcome and still working hard to overcome. I have had some instances too that I think are race related. I've had a lot that I know are race related and some I think are. You know I had a colleague of mine who said I'm blacker than you are or I talk blacker than you in my rehearsals. This was a white man. He said I do this and say all these jokes and things. Why don't you do that? Just be yourself. I thought, ah, everything I do is inherently being myself because it's me, but also I struggled with that a lot too, oh are you telling me to be more black in an inherently conservative environment that will probably not be as receiving of me as you doing anything. So that was a little bit of a tribulation that I felt because of race. Sometimes I feel like I have to speak so much louder to be heard. I feel like I have to think really critically about how to deliver information for different people. I feel like I have to suss out their biases, so I can deliver information that they will actually receive, especially if it's someone in a position of power that affects what I'm doing. I have learned to learn their method of communication, which everyone should do, but I've also learned to learn their stereotypes and biases. So when I ask for something or I need to challenge something or I disagree, I can do it in a way I know will actually be received as opposed to oh, she's just complaining or she's angry. I feel like for women in particular, whenever we have a dissenting opinion, it's sometimes met with, great thank you for your feedback and it's often met with she's just emotional. That's something I've had to really think about a lot. I felt like I've had to double, triple, quadruple check myself or my delivery. There's this really awesome video I

love about women in the workplace. It was black women in the workplace who felt like whenever they needed to deliver information, if it was a criticism, a dissenting opinion, or if it was just direct information as opposed to delivering or delivering a compliment, they felt like they had to like sing it in a sing songy manner in order for it not to be viewed as angry or argumentative. I thought that was really funny because I definitely feel that way sometimes, where I have a seat at the table but not a voice at the table. We talk often about we need to have seats at the table. I think that's a step. The next step is a voice at the table. So it's one thing to have a seat at the table and say great we've got a woman at the table or great we've got a person of color at the table, look we're diverse, we care. It's a whole another thing to actually listen to what that person has to say. Sometimes I feel like I have to yell, not physically yell, but work so much harder than I have noticed my peers in order to have the same respect and have a voice at the table. You asked about any trials or tribulations. I feel like that's been a little bit of a tribulation. A triumph has been in that process of really investigating learning styles, communication styles, what's your bias?, how can I work around them? It's caused me to work to read people well. At least I think so, I don't know, ask my colleagues. Being organized and really thinking about, you know when we send an email for instance, text only conveys 7% of our meaning and so how do we get to the heart of what we mean? Same thing with sharing philosophy and this idea of having a mission and a vision and how do we communicate that? I think this forced me to be better at communicating vision, core values, and kind of a long-lasting philosophy or goals to other people. You can't get anybody on your side unless they buy into what you're bought into. I think a triumph has been getting better at sharing that philosophy in a way that's well received.

Grice: Okay, great. I'm going to skip to a question because you've talked a lot about it with language. Do you feel that you have ever had to mask your femininity in interviews, dress, language, or on the podium to be respected as a conductor in a male-dominated field? If yes, in what ways?

Mitchell-Spradlin: I absolutely have felt that way. I used to think I always had to wear a suit all the time. This is a professional, a suit. Something very high with shoulder pads and a long suit. I used to think this is the uniform, this is what I need to wear, this is professional and I would make a point to dress that way. If I would wear something more feminine then often my male colleagues at county meetings or conventions would comment, oh you look nice. If all of the men folk are gathering here and you want to be part of the club because you want to be respected as a director and if all the directors are men you want to be respected by them. It definitely led me to think alright if I wear suit then that's one less barrier and they won't comment on my clothes and we'll just talk about the music, so I definitely felt that. I have rebelled against that, particularly at concerts. I used to have this mantra, I will always wear a skirt at a concert or I will always wear a dress at a concert so people can see that people who wear skirts, that's okay on the podium. I now think a little bit differently, now I think I can wear whatever I want. But I certainly feel like I'm constantly making sure it's not too tight, constantly analyzing every stitch, every seam, every fit, and that's been a bit of the struggle. I've also, in terms of dress, must wear a suit, must wear a jacket, I don't do that anymore. I found that sometimes when I wear jackets I'm not comfortable or my shoulders don't move as well as I want them to move. I can't be as free on the podium. So I just stopped and I haven't noticed that it has altered my career in any way. You know I struggled with hair too. If there aren't a lot of women on the podium, there are

definitely not a lot of women of color on the podium, which means there's not a lot of different hair types. Black women and black hair can look so different all the time, and there's so many societal rules about what is professional, what is accepted, what is not accepted, what is quote and unquote neat. I used to have locks and I felt proud of that because it was inherently a black hairstyle. I don't have locks anymore and I try not to feel like I have to wear my hair any certain way to be respected, viewed as equal, or put together. But it's always something in the back of my mind, like what will this look like or how this is perceived? While it doesn't stop me from doing it, it's definitely something I have to think about more so than just what's the style going to be. So those are a couple of things about equity. I have also felt this sometimes with discussions and talking. I have a lot of colleagues and a lot of friends who said, I've had to talk in a different way or laugh at jokes I don't normally laugh at, or hear insensitive things, or maybe slight sexist comments. But, everyone in the room is laughing. Every single person is laughing and I'm the only one uncomfortable. So what do you do? Do you say something around twenty men with a slightly sexist joke, actually there's no such thing as slightly with a sexist joke, and shut it down or do you kind of just laugh along with it because you're part of the team. So that's always something to think about too. I now have found a way to say something without using a lot of words. Usually just a face like hmm, not very funny which usually gets the point across. But that's something too, I think at the beginning of my career, I heard those things a lot and just let it slide and kind of laughed along like ha, ha, ha that's just how it is and then vented to my friends after the fact. So yeah, I think there's a lot of that that I have dealt with and allowed really to happen.

Grice: What would you change, if anything if you could go back? What would you tell the beginner conducting you?

Mitchell-Spradlin: I would say, try less hard to find all the 'shoulds'. Think less about this should, I should be doing this, I should be teaching this way, I should be doing that. Be more you and find the joy because when you look through things with the lens of 'I should', it's a lens of criticism, criticizing oneself. We literally hear differently, there's studies about how we hear differently when we're stressed, when we have anxiety, or when we're nervous. When we're fully relaxed and comfortable, our ears function in a different way. We start to hear and see things through a lens of joy and ultimately what we do should be joyous. It should be exciting, it should be fun, it should be fulfilling, and it shouldn't be joyous after I get a 'I' at festival then it'll be fun or after I get through this concert then I'll be relaxed and I'll have fun. There's a lot of that in terms of time management and everything, but I wish I had more of every single day to find joy in three different things. I think I would be able to trace back and say that I tried to find joy in maybe one thing every couple days. But every day find some extreme joy in what we get to do as conductors and music educators.

Grice: What advice would you have for women entering the field of collegiate conducting?

Mitchell-Spradlin: Come on, more of all of you, let's go, get there and start doing it. Don't worry if you belong, you absolutely do. So that's my first one is how can we just increase the number, right? Increase the number of people who are severely dedicated to serving music and serving other humans, and being very selfless in that aspect. My second piece of advice is, you know I talked about, those jokes and things we don't often talk about it. Let's start talking about

them more and let's start shutting things down when they're not okay. Let's stop saying sorry and just start doing it and kind of owning our space and not worrying so much if it's okay for here. I think there's a little bit of that too, so that would be some advice. Then also, once you have that platform, help support other women in their careers by building them up or reaching out to them and saying, hey you're awesome or finding a photo. It's something as simple as if someone posts something on their social media, helping to amplify their voice, helping to amplify who they are and their musicianship, so that we're building one another and supporting one another.

Grice: What advice or changes would you have for the field of conducting in general?

Mitchell-Spradlin: Advice I would have is I would love it if as a whole, we could really step out and analyze some of the things and practices that we have that might be barriers to access. I've been thinking a lot about just the nature of concerts in general. You know, we work for months to prepare a program, we do it for however many people come, usually not a ton of people and then it disappears. For all of those who are able to show up at 7:00pm on a random Tuesday night and sit super quietly, usually in a cold auditorium, where they're afraid to move or cough because they don't want to ruin the performance. There's a beautiful flute solo at minute one, but they can't do anything to show appreciation for it. You just have to remember it 12 minutes later when the piece ends. There's so many structures built into our traditional way that we execute our quote and unquote product that keep a lot of people from being able to engage in it. So one question is how can we expand that? How can we get out of our concert halls and bring music to communities? How can we change this traditional, I guess box for lack of a better word, and change our venue, change the method of performance, the music, the engagement with our audience expanding to other mediums. Find out what's happening in our community and how does our program relate to what is going on in our actual community. How can we connect those two so that our art form is more than just for parents and not just for academics. It's for everyone and it's to everyone. Live stream certainly helps with that, but that's one thing I'm interested in investigating a little bit more. I think we'll reach more people and have a stronger, more connected to the world product and engagement and meaning, if we step outside of our quote and unquote 'ivory tower' sometimes.

Grice: That's great, have you started to implement any of those different venues or is that something in the future that you're looking at?

Mitchell-Spradlin: Right now I've implemented some cross medium work. I've been at Penn State for one year and it's a Covid year, so I'm just happy to perform anywhere honestly. So a couple of things that we're doing now is looking for places we can play outside or in conjunction with our museum. As you walk through the corridor to the museum, there's chamber music along the way. Pieces that lend themselves to feature art or dance that's always included not just a specialty thing, it's every concert, how can we connect with someone outside of our realm and our sphere of influence.

Grice: I know you did teach high school, but how many years and did you teach any other grades? Also, how valuable do you think public school teaching experience is for the collegiate conductor?

Mitchell-Spradlin: I did teach public school. I taught for four years at a public school. It was an interesting school, it was a public school, a magnet school, and a charter school, kind of three in one. I loved every second of it. My student teaching was on the Navajo Reservation where I taught middle school band and choir and a little bit of third grade English.

Grice: That's different.

Mitchell-Spradlin: Yes, I also coached track. Half the time I taught high school band I was also a girls track coach and a distance track coach. Actually, even when I was student teaching in the Navajo Reservation I was one of the track coaches. I do think that it significantly shaped my experience before I went to grad school to get my doctorate and to teach collegiately. First of all, I just understood what works and what doesn't work. I had a lot of time to hone my class management skill. I talked about finding joy every day, it gave me a lot of time to develop administrative organization that would allow me to experience joy when I actually got to the music making part of the job. Tons of time learning how to interact with colleagues. I think one of the biggest lessons I learned was how to advocate for my program or for myself in a way that was well received by people with no music background or people with different experiences than music, such as administrators, other teachers, coaches, and parents. I think it really solidified the love of humans working with other humans first, the love of different repertoire, the love of seeing students grasp a difficult concept and growing through that, the love of seeing how they reacted when they fell in love with the phrase as much as I fell in love with the phrase. It gave me a lot of different teaching tools. I think it's an invaluable experience that if one does not have it you miss out. Does it make you a worse college teacher? No, I don't necessarily think that's true, but I definitely think that that experience of teaching public school makes you better. I think it gives you more experiences to pull from and a little bit more connection, but when it comes to being successful in the college world, I don't think it makes you less successful not to have taught, but I certainly valued the time I had in public schools.

Grice: You've already spoken a little bit about this, but if you'd like to add anything go ahead. How do you think men perceive women in the field of collegiate wind conducting over the years? Do you think the 'Good Ol' Boys' club exists? How do we as women counter that?

Mitchell-Spradlin: Uh, do I think the 'Good Ol' Boys' club exists? 100% absolutely yes, definitely hands down. I think a lot of people are working against that, men in particular. I think men are working against that and I think women are working against that, but I definitely think it exists. Once you get to know a few people and it kind of stays in that world, it's hard to expand outside of it. How do I think men perceive women in the field of collegiate wind conducting over the years? I would say I'm in the first third of my career as a college band conductor. I have a colleague who tells me that all the time. She says I'm in my last third, you're in your first third, you've done a lot. I think that there's been a lot of change in my conversations with my friends and colleagues who have been in this field for quite some time. I think women were this kind of odd commodity who were more successful when trying to channel the male 'Good Ol' Boy' persona because you know there is, I do think that there is a club. I think that that's evolving, and I think that with more representation different voices are being seen and heard, and different aesthetics. I think we are starting to realize that women have a lot to bring to the table and at the very least, need to be included, just so that we have some different sort of representation for our

students. How are we going to have more young female conductors, composers, anything if they don't see that it's possible? So I definitely have felt that there has been a perception of women in the collegiate world, as you are the person who the students go to air their problems and I'm the person that they go to learn about music. I've definitely sensed a little bit of that. I think there's been this dichotomy of serious. What does serious mean in terms of rehearsal structure and persona. For instance, I have sensed and noticed that in a particular rehearsal, that it might be used as a tool from conductor to player being very serious, no smiling, there is fear in the players, a little bit of anxiety. That could yield a good result, and sometimes that's viewed as quote and unquote, good. At least in my personal eye, I think that smiling is okay. I think that laughing is okay. I think that there is a balance between humor and work. I think that we can be focused and efficient without feeling stressed or anxiety. I think that we can pull the best out of players when they feel valued and heard as human beings inside and outside of the rehearsal. I think that I have heard that called a feminine approach as opposed to just a kind human approach. I obviously don't think that it's a feminine approach, but I've heard it called that. Oh, you're so nurturing. Maybe it does look like nurturing, but it's also just basic human kindness and I don't think that being kind to students and caring about them and wanting to see them happy as humans in addition to playing well in rehearsal, is inherently a feminine trait. I think it's just a trait of kindness and a way we want to treat people. How do we as women counter that is I think the last part of that question. I think we just keep doing it, but I also think we have to make sure that the results speak for themselves. It's one thing to have a value that kindness works and then the group doesn't sound good. Then they were kind of showing the opposite, so I think one way to counter that is to be focused on building up humans who feel empowered to play extremely well for us. I think another way that we work to combat that is by actively trying to put women in positions where they can make a change. For instance, I'll share this short story with you, Jennifer. I did this honor band in South Georgia a few years ago and it was great. It was a great mixture of sweet students, they were very kind, very nice, and funny. It was great to work with them and they also played really well. They were super focused in rehearsal and it was an ensemble where I would say let's just try this and they would just do it perfectly. Oh, it was so much fun. At the end a flute player on the front row said, "We sound good, we're getting positive validation from our directors who are stepping in on rehearsals. I feel good about what we're playing. I feel secure. I really like our music. You're saying all the right things. You just don't look like a band director and it's so weird to me how we can have this result from you. Also, you're not mean to us, you're nice to us, but we still sound good, it's blowing my mind." So I think that really speaks to we just have to have more people in these positions because if this person had never seen that before, it's not her fault. She'll have a narrow view of what it can be, and she might never see herself as being able to do that, and that's not her fault. That's our fault for not giving her that kind of access and exposure as educators. We can combat that by actively and constantly, for the rest of our careers and the rest of our lives, working to make sure that that representation exists from someone who is inherently a good musician and a great person who also happens to be a woman.

Grice: Do you think more women are applying for collegiate wind band conducting positions and are we succeeding in bridging the gap in male to female conducting positions at the collegiate level?

Mitchell-Spradlin: I definitely think there's a lot of movement that has occurred within the past five years or so. I'd say definitely. I really credit that to people who I look up to such as Andrea Brown and Courtney Snyder who have been openly talking about this and holding presentations about this, and really working to move the needle. I think that there are more women applying for collegiate wind band conducting positions. I also think that might happen to do with more women in conducting programs, more women who see oh there are females being very successful, I could do that too. It's like a switch that's flipped. I don't think it's ever a I can't do this, it's just once you see that it's happening like oh, I could do that too. There's a lot of research out there. I love this one article about these students in an inner city school that are black male students. The graduation rate went up something like 40% because they had one black male teacher in elementary school. One, just one, and how much of a difference that one human made in how they saw themselves. So I think that definitely makes a difference. So I think as a result, it's perpetuating growth, which is a good thing.

Grice: I know this next one you could talk about for a couple of weeks, but in a shortened version please describe your method of score study, rehearsal techniques, and concert programming. You've already said your programming does include female composers and that every program has at least one female composer.

Mitchell-Spradlin: Yeah, so every single concert program does and I also encourage that my colleagues. For all of the bands at Penn State we talk openly about what we're programming. We share our programs with each other for a number of reasons; one to make sure that we're not overlapping, to make sure that we're supporting one another, if we have a guest artist coming in then maybe we all play a different piece by that guest so that they work with every single ensemble and every student, not just the wind ensemble. Then we openly talk about ways that we can make our programming more diverse. It's not from the top down. "You better make your program diverse", but for me I think my colleagues would say that I strongly encourage it and provide lots of resources and suggestions to ensure that it happens. Once a week we have a band meeting, and this actually wasn't my suggestion, this was someone else's suggestion. I just started a list, but one of my colleagues suggested every week we should all bring a piece to our meeting that's by an underrepresented composer. We share about why we think it's great and which ensemble we think would be best suited for. We've been doing that for months and it's been incredible. So absolutely, yes, there's always a piece by a female composer, absolutely hands down, always. So if there's four concerts a year there will be at least four pieces, probably more like six or eight. My method of score study - I have this list of pieces that I keep by genre or inspiration that has just been a running list for quite some time now. I think oh, I love this piece, I'm going to add it to my list. Or I'll go to Midwest or CBDNA and somebody will play something that really moves me and I'll write it down on my list. Oh my gosh, you investigate this piece and then of course there's others on the list. I really could talk for a very long time about how the program is concocted, but once the program is together my method of score study if first and foremost it's just early. I try to have the year's concerts programmed early in the summer so that I can start studying early in the summer or midsummer and also so my grad students know what they're studying and they're not working last minute. This score study will always usually start with just a deep dive into everything about the composer, the time period, history, what was happening in the world, other pieces that they've written, kind of what I think their compositional aesthetic seems like, or how it has changed over their career and how that

informs whatever piece I'm studying. I'm a very affective person in my score study, so I like to affix a mood or a character in addition to my basic study of form/spatial construction. I'm trying to use the word form less and more structural space, you know how space is used. I think sometimes when we use form we try to categorize things that sometimes are difficult to categorize instead of just allowing it to move the way it moves. So I figure out key areas, spatial organization, how I would teach that to my students, how I would showcase that to them, and then what is the mood, what is the character, has the character changed, what's changing the character, is it the harmony or is it the melody or is it just completely different style? I like to try to sing. I used to play on my instrument, I don't anymore. Sometimes I'll take it on piano just to make sure that I hear in my head accurately what I should be hearing. I don't want to be singing something in a wrong key and then I go and have to translate that. Sometimes there's dance associated with that, but I always try to visualize kind of the narrative arc of the piece and how it's changing so that there's more to my aural image than just sound. There's also some visuals that I'm seeing as a representation of the music.

Grice: I know it's been a Covid year at Penn State, but have you done any collaboration with dance, art, or other areas in your previous jobs?

Mitchell-Spradlin: Yes, even in our Covid year at Penn State, we're able to do some collaborations. The collaboration with our choirs which I really enjoy are our gospel choir and our concert choir. We played Carlos Simon's, *Sweet Chariot* and I went to our gospel choir, Essence of Joy, is what it's called here at Penn State, I said, hey, we're doing sweet chariot you know it's a hymn. Do you have a recording of *Sweet Chariot* we could tack on so that the audience can orient their ears and then hear it within Carlos Simon's work. They said no, but you know what, we'll just commission and have a brand new piece written and it will be a premiere. That's even better, this is going to be amazing! An alum wrote this arrangement of *Sweet Chariot*, but Carlos Simon's piece also uses the Gregorian chant, *In Paradisum*. So when this alum wrote this piece he also included snippets of *In Paradisum*. I had the gospel choirs working on that, so I asked if members of concert choir would sing *In Paradisum*. I remember this really cool moment with the wind ensemble because they said how many of you know *Sweet Chariot*. This was before we started playing the piece, talking a little bit about the background. I said can you sing it, I sang the first note so we'd have a pitch and I stopped singing. The entire ensemble, or what I perceived as the entire ensemble - there may have been people who didn't know the words, all sang *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* together. It was so gorgeous and I really think that made our performance of the piece so much better, just having that vocal aspect to it. Taking the time for us to sing, taking the time for the gospel choir to be involved, to see it in a different perspective, for concert choir to sing the chant from a different perspective. So that was a collaboration that was really cool and meaningful. We have some collaborations coming up with dance, art, and wind ensemble, so that we're not the only ones on stage. At South Carolina some collaborations were just working with the history department and historical background of pieces. Sometimes students will learn a lot more from an actual expert talking about history than me and my summary of the dissertations and historical research I've done on a composer. So that's always helpful, there's so many ways we collaborate outside of what the audience sees at the actual concert.

Grice: What was your ‘aha’ moment as a conductor and how did that shift your journey? You've already told us about the one with the second band being a big moment. Do you have any others?

Mitchell-Spradlin: Yeah, I think that was a really good representation of one. Then also while teaching high school, the top band had a performance at an evaluation, and my first year teaching I programmed poorly. I programmed too difficult and I remember one of my mentors came to my school, it was Alfred Watkins, he's a retired band director.

Grice: I love Alfred.

Mitchell-Spradlin: I would go and sit in Lassiter rehearsals and think oh they sound great, I'm going to just do that. That doesn't work. That's also my advice for young teachers. Don't try to copy someone, don't do that. But yeah, he would come and listen to my group and come to rehearsals, or I'd make recordings and he'd listen to the recordings. One time I was just a couple weeks out from my first ever evaluation concert and I think he said, and his assistant at the time, James Thompson, came to do a symphonic camp, and both of them said this music is too hard. We were playing *Scenes from the Louvre*, and at the very end the finale there's this part where the trumpets are just playing above the staff, then it goes up the octave. Yeah, that was not pretty and made these three trumpets who I thought they're so good they could do it, they can each play this note. Yeah they can, but can they play it perfectly in tune every single time that occurs in the music perfectly in unison as a 10th grader. You know, and not that age would deter them from being able to do that, but it was an extremely difficult position I put them in and as a result we didn't do very well and all the feedback I got was that it's too hard. That's too hard. I cried and I went home and was like I'm terrible, I can't believe I put them in that situation. We will be better and I will never make that mistake again. I guess the next ‘aha’ moment I had was really honing in on what works for the players, not just what is good music. It's a great piece, it just didn't fit at the time. Making that intelligent selection where you can feel like every single day there's a challenge, but there's also a deep connection to something outside of what's printed on the page. So I guess kind of in general that was an ‘aha’ moment because it really changed the rehearsal structure.

Grice: Is there a specific piece that you remember conducting early on in your career where you had a moment on a piece of music where you just loved it and had that aesthetic feeling?

Mitchell-Spradlin: Yeah, I think every time I experience, conduct, play, or am in the room for *O Magnum Mysterium*, the Lauridsen/Reynolds arrangement, I feel transported. I think what it is about that piece is I talked about having this visual of what's happening in the music in addition to this aural image. I see it so clearly. I see this piece very clearly. If you asked me to make a movie or narrate a picture book, I would have very clear images for every single aspect of the piece including each of the brushstrokes, the exact colors, all of the transitions. That's been a piece that's always made the hair stand up on the back of my neck since my first experience with it when I was in high school. I had a grad student of mine conduct it this year and the whole time I was like I want to be conducting it. Not that she wasn't doing a good job, just ahh. That has been a piece that has always deeply connected me to something beautiful and something visceral.

Grice: Do you have any rituals that you do before concerts? Do you have any routines or activities to help keep your body and mind at its highest?

Mitchell-Spradlin: Yeah, I'm actually experimenting with a new ritual now on advice of a mentor/colleague of mine. But one of my rituals is that I try not to change anything; if I always have two cups of coffee, I still have two cups of coffee. It seems like something that would not be a ritual, but it's really important not to change your day so much that you're just stressed by the end. I always try to have a good breakfast and it's usually what I call 'o and e', breakfast of champions, which is oatmeal and eggs. Sweetened oatmeal and scrambled eggs all mixed together makes me feel really great if I have it on the concert day. My newest ritual I'm trying is taking a nap before a concert and then waking up and getting ready for the day again after that. I try to sing through music and visualize it before a concert or before a performance, and I just do some breathing exercises too to calm me. It's always hot on stage, everywhere I am, I'm always hot on stage. I find that that helps me just become a little bit more balanced and centered. I do a couple of sun salutations as well, if you're familiar with yoga. I literally get on the floor and do that in my dressing room. You're the first person I've told that to, but I find it helps me just relax a little bit. Yeah, so I always feel nervous beforehand, but then once I start I don't feel nervous anymore.

Grice: Yeah, great. What about daily activities just to keep your mind going throughout the year?

Mitchell-Spradlin: I'm most connected to myself on days I wake up and do yoga in the morning or days I wake up and do something that connects my mind and body together. That's usually something physical, whether that's an extended walk with my dog, Shadow, or running. But I feel like if you start your day with a personal victory no matter how long it is, then everything else in your day is improved, including working on the podium.

Grice: Fantastic, how important is leadership as a quality for any conductor? Were there any leadership roles that you held as a young student in high school or college that you think helped your career pathway?

Mitchell-Spradlin: Yeah, I feel very strongly about this question. I think leadership is everything we do as a conductor. I do not think that we can separate the music making aspect with who we are as people and who we aim to develop, particularly in an educational setting. We're teachers, we're educators, we work with young people who are learning how to go out in the world and be successful. So leadership is a huge part of that. I also firmly believe that leadership is a skill set. It's not this loshky thing, you're either born with it or not. I think you're nurtured into having charisma maybe, or maybe that's a nature thing. I think it's a set of traits that we can expand, build on, and ameliorate over time. If we're self-aware and what traits we want to build, our leadership will improve. If we want to be better communicators, we can practice communicating. If we want to be better listeners, we can practice listening. If we want to be more at the forefront, if we want to be better servers or better servants, those are things we can literally practice. If we decide we want to practice them and if we know we need to practice them. I feel like the act of conducting is very much about leadership. It's very much about effective communication and knowing when to assert versus when to be passive. It's very much

about knowing how to build people up when they're down, how to take them to the next level when they're at their highest, how to show them what delayed gratification is, what is growth, how to maximize potential, how to be as a person, organized and focused and still have fun. It's all those interactions they see sometimes off the podium too, when they see the conductor having a great relationship or a jovial relationship with the orchestra director, choir director, and administrators. How to handle difficult situations, how to handle conflict? Those are all things that I think we should be aiming to display as leaders.

Grice: And then the second part of that. Did you hold any leadership roles as a young student or college student?

Mitchell-Spradlin: I did, I was drum major of my high school band for three years and my college band for two years. I grew up in Gwinnett County, and it had something called the Gwinnett student leadership team. Two people were chosen per school per year and it was monthly modules at the Chamber of Commerce and lunch with the governor and giving speeches. I was part of that organization and I would travel around and give leadership speeches. I remember speaking at the governor's mansion, I spoke to a teacher in-service, a statewide teacher in-service, and a lot of little things like that. I really loved it. So I had a lot of those experiences and opportunities. Even now I'm very involved in leadership. I teach at the Georgia State Summer Leadership Institute and am involved with the Athena Music and Leadership Camp. So it's very important to me.

Grice: Okay great. What should young conductors be sure to always and never do?

Mitchell-Spradlin: Ooh, always study, never get on a podium and think that you can make it through a rehearsal without preparation. That's a no no and students usually will notice. I think always work to be curious about music and what kind of shapes it. Always work to know as much as possible about the thing that we get to impart to other people. Never be shy about admitting mistakes, something as simple as, oh my bad, eventually at some point in our careers, we're going to conduct four beats in a 3/4 bar, right? It might happen one day and don't be ashamed of saying, oh, this piece would probably be a lot better if I put three beats in that bar instead of four. So admitting mistakes. Students and players always know so always be comfortable being vulnerable and saying when you're wrong. One more thing, always look for opportunities and always put yourself in positions that you're a little bit uncomfortable. If you're constantly comfortable, sometimes that's a reflection of lack of growth, so always look for those places where you might feel a little bit uncomfortable.

Grice: Yeah, that's great advice. What advice do you have for young conductors on balancing work and life outside of work?

Mitchell-Spradlin: Oh, goodness. I don't know you tell me. I think it's a sliding scale. I think sometimes there's a lot of work to do, and then there's sometimes where there's almost nothing. Teaching college it's a lot at certain periods of time and then other times it's a little bit less. Teaching public school I felt like it was just a lot all the time until there would be a break in there and then there'd just be nothing. There's this mantra of work life balance that I kind of reject, which is you have your work and then you have your life. Instead of just life, which

inherently includes work, right. So why do we separate them out, like I have my work and then I can live my life? I used to live like that, once I accomplish 'xyz' tasks for work, then I can go on this trip with my friends and go on vacation. That will lead to burnout and it led to me getting sick all the time. so I had work, work, work, work, work, and then I'd finally say it on July 17th I will take a break. Then I'd be sick during that break because I pushed my body to the limit with work. Then we also have this thing of work hard, play hard; like we have to work so hard in order to be able to finally earn the ability to play hard. So my suggestion would be to find little things every day that you can do that brings some sort of joy to your life. I'm a time blocking person. I have a timer and I give 100% of my attention to my email for 30 minutes and then when that's over I'm going to give 100% of my attention to prepping for this class for 30 minutes, and then I might go back and forth. Then I'm going to give 100% of my time to reading something that I want to do or I am interested in for 30 minutes and just little bits every day of something that's not work. I also feel very strongly about those personal victories if every day has a personal victory. I'm bad at them. The days I have them I feel great, but I admit that I don't do it all the time and I don't feel great those days. Then I'll do it and I feel great and I say oh my gosh I need to do it all the time. It's hard, but trying to find something every day, one thing every day.

Grice: Do female successes in other fields, such as the first minority woman Vice President of the United States (Kamala Harris) and the youngest US inauguration Youth Poet Laureate (Amanda Gorman), enhance a female's ability to succeed in areas such as wind conducting? Do you think this will help women feel more comfortable applying for jobs that are in a male-dominated field such as wind conducting? Fields such as wind conducting. I know you already spoke a little bit about the #MeToo movement and how a lot of the movements have helped in this area.

Mitchell-Spradlin: Yes, 100%. I think that's 100% true. If you see someone with your likeness of any kind succeeding on such a magnificent international scale, then of course it gives you validity to what we're doing. Sometimes I'll put it in perspective, for instance you mentioned Kamala Harris as an example, I think well, why am I so worried about what I'm doing, wind band. I tell a lot of people I have a doctorate in wind conducting. They're like, oh, energy like wind energy. They don't even know what we do. It's a very narrow field. Not everyone even knows what we do, period. When I put that into perspective and I start getting worked up about something, I think well I'm pretty sure my struggles in this field are far less than the first ever female Vice President of color. I look to her and I'd say she's doing it with such aplomb. I can do this thing. Absolutely, that representation yields in and of itself advocacy and validity to everyone else.

Grice: What experiences/organizations shaped your career (military, non-musical jobs, travel) and are any of them specifically female-oriented?

Mitchell-Spradlin: I am a firm believer that sports shaped my career. I ran cross country and I ran track, that's why I ended up coaching it. I think the experience that I had in sports and running showed me a level of dedication, work ethic, teamwork, but also in running something that's inherently individual, yet you're still part of a team. I think it taught me a lot of lessons about what I'm capable of, and especially what I can do while tired, as you know in our fields

we're tired a lot. Just the difference between tired and an excuse and tired and that's the separation between professionals. I had this professor who would say he'd ask how's everyone doing, we're Freshmen in college, and we'd say we're tired, we're tired. After a whole year went by he finally said, you know the difference between professionals and amateurs. We said what. He said amateurs say we're tired and use it as an excuse not to perform. Well, professionals say I'm tired and still have amazing performances despite being tired. They know how to access a part of themselves. Now you know that's always within reason, at some point you gotta sleep. But I think the act of running and the act of a sport where you're by yourself for miles at a time just pounding pavement or pounding dirt kind of forces you to think differently. It's not a sport where you're worried about contact or you're trying to catch a ball or anything like that. It's not as fast paced, it's very internal, very reflective, and very introspective. So I think that kind of shaped the way I think about things. I think also having a mother who is an artist may be the reason why I think about things so visually when I talk about scores and how I study scores, there's a little bit of a visual aspect to all the affective character and moods that I'm thinking of. I think that's from growing up with an artist. She was also military, so I think that also had something to do with our work ethic.

Grice: Did you move around a lot as a kid because of that?

Mitchell-Spradlin: We moved a lot when I was very, very young and then my father passed away in the military when we were in Germany. So once we moved back to the states we kind of stopped moving. I think you know the sports experiences, no it was not specifically female-oriented. I think the piano lessons and that community was not particularly female-oriented, although the teacher was female. Track and cross country I mentioned - no female coaches. Yeah, none of them were females, not at all.

Grice: Do you have any thoughts or comments to add that were not addressed in any of the previous questions? I think you've articulated very well everything that I asked.

Mitchell-Spradlin: Oh, thank you. You had a number of very thorough questions. I hope that I gave you enough information to write about for your dissertation.⁹⁷

Grice: Oh, absolutely. Thank you and have a great day.

⁹⁷ Tonya Mitchell-Spradlin, personal interview (Google Meet: 29 June, 2021).

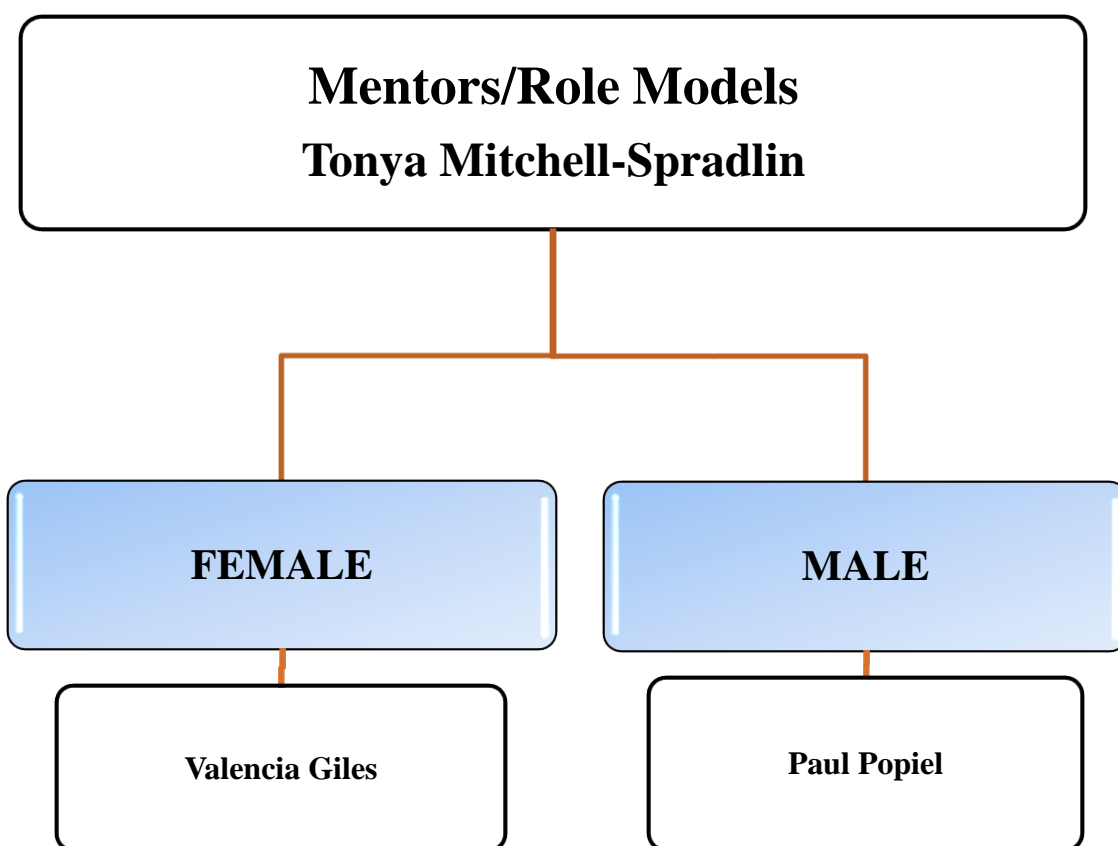


Figure 4. Mentors/Role Models of Tonya Mitchell-Spradlin.

Tonya Mitchell-Spradlin Profile

Current Collegiate Position: Director of Wind Band Studies at Penn State University

Previous Collegiate Positions:

Assistant Director of Bands/Associate Director of Athletic Bands at the University of South Carolina

Director of Athletic Bands at Valdosta State University

Degrees:

BME, Indiana University

MME, University of Georgia

DMA, University of Kansas

Emily Moss Interview

Grice: Thank you for agreeing to participate in my inquiry. Please say your name and that you give your consent for your voice to be video and audio recorded during this interview for my doctoral research.

Moss: Certainly, my name is Emily Moss and I consent to being audio and video recorded for this interview.

Grice: Thank you. It's great to have you here and I'm very excited about this. Can't wait to hear about your journey. It's going to be awesome.

Moss: If I may, I have to tell you I'm a little nervous reading some of these questions. It's emotional thinking about these things. I'm sure you've experienced this with other participants as well.

Grice: Yes, could you please begin by telling me your musical journey? For example, things like: Why did you choose to play your instrument and that specific instrument? What were your experiences as a student in public schools and in college? When did you know you wanted to be a conductor? What were the influences that led you to your professional career?

Moss: I started out playing piano at the age of five at the urging and insistence of my mother. My maternal grandfather, her father was a piano player; he could read music, but he really played by ear. He did show tunes like Cole Porter. Their family grew up around the piano in that sort of informal way, and so she put both of her daughters in piano. I enjoyed it and always felt very musical. I certainly did a lot of singing, also as a kid. But, there was a lot of forcing me to practice, but not really feeling super committed to the piano itself. The moment I was able to quit for our family was when you could join band or orchestra. I don't even think we had an orchestra in middle school, but we had band. I played the alto saxophone to start as was my first instrument. I quit piano and started playing saxophone. I quickly discovered the joy and fun of playing with other people. I see this now, but what I really loved about music was the community and being with my friends and playing and making music together. The saxophone was super easy for me. I didn't ever have to practice and I was better than everybody else. My band director saw in me that I had some talent and some desire. So after two years of playing saxophone, at the end of my 6th grade year, he approached me and said, how would you like to start a second instrument? I said, cool yeah, that sounds great. He said, how about the bassoon? Of course I said, what is that? I don't know what that instrument is. He literally handed me the bassoon on the last day of school in June, and said, good luck, come back in the fall, we'll get you going. I continued to play saxophone in jazz band all through middle school and in high school. I started playing the bassoon and played in my middle school and high school. I grew up on Whidbey Island which is North of Seattle. There was not a ton of music going on in our tiny little community, but there were these group of string players who went on the ferry once a week and participated with the Everett Youth Symphony. It's just basically on the other side of the ferry terminal, it's a ten minute drive from the ferry on the mainland side. They got me hooked up with that and so I started playing with the Everett Youth Symphony and then through that organization I got hooked up with my first bassoon teacher and that just really was where things

opened up for me. I actually had someone who could help me navigate that very complicated instrument because my band director certainly didn't really know how to help me. And I loved it. I loved the feeling of being unique. I was doing something that nobody else was doing. I just remember that feeling of like "wow", what's that instrument, oh yeah you're doing this cool thing, and feeling like that was a big draw for me. Then I got involved with the Seattle Youth Symphony. Everett is north of Seattle and the Seattle Youth Symphony organization was a really big organization where at the time they had three full youth orchestras with winds, brass and percussion. Now they have four full orchestra groups and then they have three string only groups; it's a pretty massive youth symphony organization. I'm so grateful for them because they really helped foster my love of classical music. Playing with them gave me this whole other community that was outside of my school. I was quickly told to keep working at bassoon because you could get a college scholarship. Anyway, I ended up at University of Washington and played in everything since I was the only undergrad bassoonist for a long time. My very first year as a freshman I played in a woodwind quintet and they were all college seniors. They were like well, you're the bassoonist, so I guess you're going to play with us. And man, that was stressful, but good, I was just thrown in the deep end. I was really an orchestra kid for a long time, but I knew I wanted to be a band director. I knew that I wanted to teach music, which is so funny for me to think about now. I guess the only thing I knew about music teachers were band directors, because that's just what we had at my school. Although we did have a choir director and because I sang and did a lot of performing on stage, I was in musicals and such, that I did consider being a choir director too. But it was band or choir; I knew I was going to do one of those two. I guess that's basically my experiences as a student in public school and in college, so it was really the band director at Washington, Tim Salzman, who approached me my sophomore year to ask if I was a music ed major and then said why aren't you in the wind ensemble? I was like I don't know. My experience, my perception was that the band sucked and orchestra was where all the fun was. I'd never even heard a good college band at that point. So he cut a deal with me. He's like, okay, we're going to swap. I have this guy who's playing bassoon and we're going to put him in orchestra for a quarter as we were in the quarter system and you're going to come and play with us for a quarter and just see if you like it and see what you think. That first quarter we played Maslanka 4. I thought oh my God, this is insane, I had no idea. Really, cutting edge stuff like Salzman likes to program. Of course we played classics and I was hooked. I loved it. Bassoon music is so much more interesting in a lot of ways in high level wind bands. In orchestra you're sitting around and are waiting for your moment. That's not to say it's not fun to play in orchestra, but when you're in band you're really doing a lot of fun stuff where the repertoire is more challenging. I just had never experienced that. It's funny this question, when did you know you wanted to be a conductor? I would say that there was never a point where I said I want to be a conductor. That was not something I thought about. I only thought that I want to be a teacher. I've actually had quite a few conversations with people about this idea of identity, and do you call yourself a director? Do you call yourself a conductor? Call yourself a teacher? Call yourself a professor? All these different words. Certainly my career has ebbed and flowed in terms of my identity and thinking about that, but certainly early on I was a music education major and I was going to be a teacher. You learn how to conduct because you're going to conduct your kids when you're in rehearsal. But I wanted to be a middle school band director. I should also point out that I was young for my time in school. I had graduated from high school at sixteen and I turned seventeen that summer. So I was getting ready to student teach when I was twenty.

Grice: That's our daughter by the way. I think I talked to you about that. She's graduating at sixteen and will student teach at twenty.

Moss: At the time I think I was scared about high schoolers and being in charge. I didn't think I had enough authority and they were maybe just too close to me in age. It was really strange when I think back on it. I had a lot of confidence in a way that twenty year-olds do, undeservedly. You're just like well, I went through those classes and I got A's and I know I've been rocking it and I know everything. So it's strange that I had both this confidence in a way, and then total fear or scared, maybe because I was so young. The influences that led me to my career, I would just say that I knew that I loved music and that I wanted to teach and so that was just what I was going to do. That's how I came to UNC, the University of Northern Colorado, and that is what led me to my professional career. Do you want me to get into that particular story right at this moment, or if that'll come up later?

Grice: Either way, if you want to wait, or if you want to tell it now.

Moss: I was teaching middle school and I knew that eventually I wanted to get my master's degree and this was in my 6th year of public school teaching. In the state of Washington. my initial teaching certificate was getting ready to expire so I had taken some online classes through the University of Phoenix. This is 2002 or 2003 and I was miserable. It sucked so bad and I didn't learn anything. It was like a total waste. I might as well just have been writing a check to somebody and saying why don't you just give me three credit units? I'm not getting anything out of it. I had to do that. I was going to have to do that five more times to earn enough units to get the next level of the teaching certificate. At the time, several people I went to undergrad with were looking at summer programs or they were doing either an entirely online degree or a summer program. I didn't want to do that. What was I going to do? How was I going to get this next level of teaching? I decided, well now is the time. I'm just going to go back and get my masters now and then with that degree, I'll get my next level teaching certificate and I'll be done with that. I used to always say that I had some unfinished business with my bassoon. I felt like I loved playing and I knew that I didn't achieve everything I could have because I was doing eighteen things always at once in high school. I was always doing so many different activities and things. My bassoon teacher was always harping on me like Emily, you've got to focus, quit doing things like sports and theater and student government. You have to practice if you want to do music for your career. I just said that I was fine. So I thought this is my time to really just focus and be a musician and really work on playing and teaching. At the time I was playing in a community band called the Washington Wind Symphony. The conductor of that was Scott Taube and I just said to him, hey, I'm thinking about getting my masters and asked where should I go? This is actually pretty embarrassing to say, but again, I feel like so much in my life, I just have gone through naively like I didn't know what's happening out there in the world. At that time, I thought well, I guess I'll get my masters in bassoon performance; I guess that's what I'm going to do. This guy said well, why don't you do wind conducting? I was like, you can do that? It's so idiotic saying that, but at the time I didn't even consider that, even though there were grad students at Washington but they were all D.M.A.'s and getting their doctorates. I didn't know there was this middle level thing. I didn't know about and that sounded interesting. Where should I go? He said, well, you should check out Northern Colorado. There's this really great guy that I went to ASU with, his name is Dick Mayne and he's just an amazing educator and

conductor. If what you want to do is teach, and you want to get your masters, and you wish to be a better instrument player... I interviewed at UNC and was just like this is the one that is so the right fit for me. My plan was to get my masters in two years and move back to Seattle and continue being a middle school band director for the rest of my career. Then Doc (Ken Singleton) said hey, you know you're good at this. You're really good at this. What are you going to do when you're done? I'm like be a middle school band director, of course. I'll never forget that conversation with Doc. He just sat me down and said, why do you to teach? I said, well, I want to share my love and passion for music with my students. He said, imagine being able to do that on an exponential level by teaching music teachers. It was just like a slap in the face. Wow, oh my God. That sounds amazing! I never even thought about that. Then the docs were just like, why don't you just stay here and do your doctorate to teach college? Anyway, any time you have someone in your life, in any realm, say you're really good at this, you should do it. Obviously, this needs to be someone you admire and respect. Then it's like wow, okay, whatever you say. I know you as someone who knows these two gentlemen, will know what I mean. Sure, anything you say I will do.

Grice: Absolutely, I really liked the comment that you said that you had unfinished business with your bassoon. I think that's such a great statement for people who just miss playing and to know that there's more that you want to do there.

Moss: Yeah, and I knew how much I loved it and I knew that I had limitations in my playing.

Grice: Great, that's a great story. As you reflect on your journey please describe your early role models? Describe your role models later in your career and any current role models.

Moss: This question of role models is such an interesting one, because I feel like so much in my life has not been a very clear and obvious thing. Meaning where I had someone in my life, and I conceptualized them as my role model. Especially early in my career, I didn't have that many people. I mean there were people that I admired and I looked up to, but I didn't necessarily sit down with them and ask for advice and guide me. It's strange to think of it.

Grice: So do you think that was more once you got to college that you thought of that?

Moss: I think so. Also, there's probably something deep in me that has always been a trailblazer and wanting to just do things my own way. That part of me is both a strength and a weakness. You know it has caused me to not worry about stereotypes and not care about certain things. I've already mentioned about being naive about certain things, it's like having blinders up. It's like well, this is what I'm doing, and not even thinking that there's anything strange. I feel in a way that there's people that I admired and looked up to, but then it was like great now I'm going to do my thing. But you know with all that being said, there all men. All the people who were basically my role models were men, with the exception of my mother.

Grice: I was going to ask that next if you had any female mentors or role models.

Moss: My bassoon teacher was a woman, but there were so many things about her that I thought I'm never going to be like that. She was a chain smoker and she and I were so different

personality wise in so many ways. So maybe part of my problem is how I defined at that time in my life what a role model was. Maybe that is what it is different about that time. I will say the first female conductor I ever saw and worked with was Linda Moorhouse. She was a doctoral student at Washington. I will never forget the first time she stepped in front of us. I'd never even seen her before. I don't know, maybe that is because it was her first term. Do you know Linda?

Grice: Yes.

Moss: So you know she is a southern belle, and she came in with her long hair and all of her makeup. Just the most feminine lady, and she got up there and I was just like, whoa. It was like an alien had just walked in and started conducting. It's really strange to think about that now.

Grice: Did you think then when you saw her at that point, I can do that. Once you saw a woman was conducting?

Moss: No, honestly, I swear to you I didn't. I did not make any connection with what she was doing with what I was going to do. It's so weird. In a lot of ways, I would say the same thing was true of Tim Salzman. There was such a disconnect for me, between these conductors coming in and what I was going to do which was teach. I just didn't think of it that way. I do remember maybe a year or two later, the University of Washington hosts this big middle and high school band festival, which was called the Pacific Northwest Festival. Of course, as undergrads, we were all laborers, right, just like All-State at Northern Colorado. You get put to work, and so I was working and there's this conductor; I wish I could remember her name. There was this middle school band director, an older female and I could tell she'd been teaching twenty plus years. Her band was lights out! They were so incredibly good. This humongous band and they played some march and I had never heard any band get so soft in my life. I do remember that moment being like wow, oh my God, and how does she do that? She's amazing? So I think she was someone; I mean, I never talked to her. I don't even know her name. It was just like wow. She obviously is an amazing teacher and really want to know what she's doing.

Grice: Is that when you decided you wanted to be a middle school band director? Was it before or after you saw her conduct?

Moss: I don't know. That's a good question. I'm not sure I ever remember thinking that as an undergrad, that I would teach anything other than middle school, so I assume that I had already had that in my mind. I'm going to reiterate this, because I know we're going to be talking more about it I feel like this has got to be true. I just think I was scared. I was scared of failure and middle school just seemed easier to me.

Grice: Because the kids were younger, was that the main reason?

Moss: Younger, younger kids, not as much pressure. You know you can do repertoire that's easier; I think I was just scared that I wasn't going to be good enough in my musicianship. It's so funny to even think about this now because I self-identify as a confident person who feels very capable. I assume some part had to do with my age since I was so young.

Grice: While we're on mentorship, do you think that your career path would have been different if you had a female mentor? Since you say you didn't besides your mom.

Moss: That's such a good question. I feel like I was such a person that if somebody told me that's all you can do, then I was okay then, I'll just go do that. I mean there are certainly things in my life where I have been like, I'm doing that. It will be hell if you get in my way, I'll just be digging in my heels and don't you tell me I'm not doing something. I think so much more when somebody said, hey, you'd be really good at this. You should try it. So sometimes I wonder if somebody had, you know a female mentor, had said to me that you don't need to just do middle school. Why don't you want to try high school? You could be great at something like that. But you know, it's hard to say now. I have said for years that I chose middle school because I really liked that age of kid. I think the reality is that I went and did it because I was scared of anything else and then I learned to love it. I liked it immediately. I loved them. I still love middle school kids. They're so fun and quirky and silly and I love to be all of those things. They're so excitable, and you can harness that and there's so much goodness in them still. I used to say they're old enough to take responsibility for themselves, but they're young enough to not take themselves too seriously yet. I loved that they still seemed malleable. I was making a big difference with them. But again, that's not necessarily the reason I chose it I suppose.

Grice: Okay, in what ways do you serve as a mentor to your students and graduates?

Moss: I love the mentorship role that I have with my students and graduate alums. I stay in touch with so many of them. I work in a very highly Hispanic Latino community and so many of them talk to me about the importance of seeing a strong female leader and they use words like "strong." They discuss how a female role model in their lives and how that has influenced them and made them feel it's possible. I love that. I mean, I cherish that. I've really tried to embody that. I've tried to place myself in a position that anybody can come and talk to me about these types of issues about being a female leader and what it feels like so you can be confident in yourself and your abilities. That it's okay to not know everything. So often young women, I mean all women feel that they can never show that they don't know something or don't have the exact perfect answer for everything all the time. The perception is the second you show anyone that you aren't superwoman that people are just going to overlook you and your clearly not capable.

Grice: How do you connect with those students in other areas outside of music? How do they know to come to you?

Moss: I've been involved in some cross disciplinary collaborations on my campus in various ways, working with other departments like theatre and dance. But I've done several things. I have a lot of good friends in the English department. We were department chairs together and so I'm just good friends with them and we've collaborated on a variety of projects. So through those different projects that I've just had an opportunity to mentor those students and in things like getting up in front of a crowd of people and talking. Giving them the confidence to you know, not dwell on mistakes, but to just push through them. I'm thinking of one young lady in particular. This is now a couple years ago when we did Howard Hanson's piece that's called *Song of Democracy*. It's for wind ensemble and chorus with poetry by Walt Whitman. We did this really cool collaboration with this one graduate seminar from the English department who

happened to be reading “Leaves of Grass” by Walt Whitman. I asked the English teacher, are there any students in this class that might want to do this collaborative kind of lecture series between your students and my students? You can present it to us as a deep reading of this poem. One of my grad students did a whole thing on Howard Hanson and it was just this cool whole background thing. Anyway, one of them was chosen to stand up in front of a 500-person auditorium and speak about Walt Whitman and do a little reading. I mean it was not more than three minutes long, but she was so nervous. At the time I didn't think I was doing anything that I wouldn't have done for any other student, but man, she came up to me afterwards and she was just gushing with appreciation. She said she never thought she could ever do this and thank you for being such a strong role model. It's just one of those things like, wow, I didn't even think I was doing that or being that. That has made me look for more opportunities like that where I can just lift up young women around me.

Grice: Yeah, that's great. What a great story. I think it's neat that sometimes we're touching others when we don't even know we're doing it and when you least expect it. Describe your experiences that you believe related to you being a woman. What supports and barriers have you faced that you believed were and are related to your gender? Thinking about your conducting career, tell me about experiences where you felt unequal treatment when compared to your male peers? How did you respond?

Moss: I think I have already spoken several times about this quality of mine where I can just walk blissfully through the world, not really being fully aware of how the world might be perceiving me. I think that that was true for much of the early part of my career as a female conductor. I just didn't see it. This absolutely goes hand in hand with my experience at UNC, which is that they have such a long history of having female grad students around there that it was no big deal. I never felt like I was a woman in a sea of men, which is so strange to say. I mean, while I was at UNC the conducting studio was at least 50/50 female versus male. At the most, it was almost all women. There was a year that it was all women. Then there was one guy that showed up and then there was another guy that showed up, but another woman came too, then it was 50/50. It was never like oh, you're the girl.

Grice: What about once you got into teaching college? Did you ever feel like you were in a sea of men? I like that statement.

Moss: The point in time in my career when I really started being aware of the disparities in collegiate conducting for women was really not until I got my job in California. My first three years of teaching were in Brooklyn, New York, so I finished grad school at Northern Colorado, and I got my first college teaching job. Then I got pregnant with my first child so I showed up in Brooklyn and said hi, remember me, you hired me, I'm going to have a baby. I suppose this is less about college band directing and more about just academia. My experience was pretty bad in terms of people telling me what my rights were and me not knowing what I was supposed to do. Nobody did any of that and without going into too much detail, I'll just say that I remember I got a phone call after I'd returned to work in January. My daughter had been born December 16th, and I'd had a C-section and I returned to work. I remember getting this phone call from HR them saying we understand you had a baby, and did you fill out this paperwork, there's this form you have to fill out. I didn't know about the form. I remember I had to go to my doctor with this

form, and it was a safe to return to work form. I had already been back working for two weeks. She was like what the hell is this? There was something like, oh, you definitely can't return within six weeks after a C-section. Well, I had a C-section and I had returned to work to the day in six weeks. Anyway, it's things like that that I look back on and, let's just say I'm grateful now that many women who are having babies have it much easier with lactation rooms. I was pumping in my office where I had a male office mate. We had coded notes to put on the door.

Grice: Hang something on the doorknob?

Moss: Totally. I mean, it's absurd to think about now. Anyway, it wasn't until I got to California and I started realizing that I was in my first thought was, wow, there's a good amount of high school band directors and a few of them were female band directors. There were more than I would have thought and I remember saying that out loud. Wow, there's a good number of female band directors at the high school level. I was so impressed and I remember one of them saying to me, really, there's not that many of us. There's really not that many of us. I was like oh well, it's better than any other place; I feel like it's better than other places I've been. It was really at that point in my career that I became more involved in the profession. Prior to that, I was a grad student. I went to Midwest once as a grad student. Then I was having babies. My three years at Brooklyn, I had both my daughters within eighteen months and so it was like I was just a mom. I was doing my thing and wasn't really paying attention. I'm sure you know, you could probably relate. When you're a new mom and you're a new professor, I wasn't watching the trends of anything; I was just surviving. In California is when I started attending all the local conferences, going to Midwest each year, becoming really involved with CBDNA. I joined the board and so that's when I really started to notice and be aware and talk to other people. You asked me about unequal treatment. I believe that female college band directors have to do twice as much and have to, like I said before, never look like you don't know exactly what you're doing, always be 'on', 'on', 'on' to even be remotely considered at the same level as our male counterparts. I didn't realize that at first and I thought that I just had to work really, really, really hard because everybody was working really, really, really hard. This is something that was always a part of me, but definitely was instilled in me deeply at UNC is that you do all of the work behind the scenes so that your students can just come in and just get right to it. You're putting in all the hours and all the work. You just have to work extra hard so that your program is great, so that what you're doing is flourishing. But then I started noticing, it's hard to get guest conducting gigs. It seemed like my male colleagues around are everywhere doing stuff. That's not to say I didn't get there, I did, I feel that I've achieved a lot, but it took longer and I had to jump through so many hoops to achieve the same things.

Grice: Since it goes along with dealing with equity. How do you think men perceive women in the field of collegiate wind conducting over the years? Do you think the 'Good Ol' Boys' club exists? How do we as women counter that?

Moss: Oh, this is such a hard question and the reason it's hard is because it's definitely changing. Everybody knows that there was and is a 'Good Ol' Boys' club that is dying out. I mean literally. They're just getting old and they're passing on and there are more with it young men who have just grown up in a more progressive world. I believe that, but what's hard about that question for me is, is there an equivalent for women? How do I think men perceived women conductors?

Unfortunately, there is so much more put on our physical appearance, that's just the first impression and that stereotypes are used instantly to judge you. It's hard to go against that. Again, I think it's getting better. Early on you either had to try to look like a man in order to be respected, or if you were feminine and wanted to look beautiful in whatever way that meant for you, but somehow you were using your sexuality or your beauty to get places. It was kind of a lose, lose feeling. I would not say that I've struggled with this because I self-identify as someone who's very feminine. I like to wear dresses and wear makeup and my hair is whatever I like. If someone was to look at me, they would say that I look feminine. I have a feminine look. I would never change that for anything or anybody. I believe, I don't really know this, but I believe that there's probably been times when I have been underestimated.

Grice: Underestimated because of being a woman.

Moss: Yeah, I don't really know because it's hard to understand somebody's mindset. Maybe you care about how you look or you want to be beautiful; therefore, it is perceived you must be hiding something. I mean I don't know.

Grice: Do you feel that you have ever had to mask your femininity in interviews, dress, language, or on the podium to be respected as a conductor in a male-dominated field? If yes, in what ways?

Moss: It's very hard for me to not be myself. I think that if I tried to mask my femininity I would be trying to be somebody who I'm not. I just know that I can't do that. That has to do with language or the way I carry myself. In terms of dress, I mean, what female conductor doesn't talk about what they wear all the friggin' time. I feel like this is the conversation I have with everybody and we laugh about it sometimes. A couple other female college band directors, when we talk about dress, it's like why is it that we're always talking about this? Why is that?

Grice: Right, because men don't sit around and talk about that.

Moss: I'll just give a quick anecdote. I had my first big concert as a collegiate conductor in 2014. I got to take my band to the regional CBDNA conference in Reno, Nevada. I piled my students on the bus and drove to Reno. You know that's the kind of event that you go, what are you going to wear conducting? What dress do you wear? I just stopped wearing suits and pants a long time ago because I just sweat. It's just uncomfortable and it sticks to my body. If it's actually going to fit me I just feel constrained. I don't know how men do it. I've worn dresses for a long time, anyway, I found this killer dress that was sleeveless and it was somewhat low in the back. Now it wasn't like plunging and it didn't show anything. It's just that it wasn't high. I remember that that year at Midwest in a big group of men, after having had a couple of drinks, saying okay guys, I have a question for you. I'm conducting in a couple of months and I got this dress and here's what it looks like. What do you think? Again, currently I felt naive about this. Like why wouldn't I ask this question? At the time I was like isn't this an interesting topic? Let's talk about it. Man, I had a wide range of opinions from these gentlemen. The comments were not what I expected. It was like, girl, you wear whatever you want and you just feel it. You just get out there and you feel like a million bucks. All the way to absolutely, do not wear that. You are going to distract the audience and have people judging you. I'm going like, screw it, I'm wearing this dress, I want

to wear it. I didn't even think, not for a second, did I second guess it. I remember our clarinet professor who was with us when we played *Black Dog* by Scott McAllister. She's like me, she was wearing something like a strapless mermaid dress that was in a rainbow pattern. So, of course, when we both opened our hotel room doors across the hall from each other and walked out, we were both like, yeah you look awesome. Oh my God, that's amazing like boom. I have no idea how that was received other than the fact that I sat that night at the banquet next to Gary Hill; who now I have a great relationship with him and he's great and everything is fine. I sat next to him and he said that dress was quite something, you could wear it and have a tattoo of what you want to say or of Mozart on my back. I was just like okay, but anyway, I've worn that dress again since then. I definitely have a battery of dresses that I wear. I gage who's my audience, who's going to be sitting in the audience, where am I? So I might wear a three-quarter sleeve with something that's much more conservative in a certain place. At my home concerts, I feel comfortable wearing this whole set of stuff and that's just the reality of it. The reality of what we deal with. I'm trying to think if there was another part of that. I'll give you another anecdote. I was recently a finalist for a job. I won't say anything more than that, but in the interview, I'm on campus at this university. One of the interview questions was "It's your last concert that you're ever going to conduct. What piece do you want to be on the program?" I said James Barnes' *Symphony #3*. I started talking about it and I got emotional and I teared up. I had to get a tissue and wipe my face. I was composed and I wasn't blubbering. I got emotional and a tear formed and then we moved on. I thought about that moment probably way more than I should, but I have thought many times and wondered how that one moment landed with those male committee members.

Grice: And wondering if it was different because it was a female shedding a tear instead of a male shedding a tear over the same thing.

Moss: That's right, if all other things were equal and they were trying to make a decision in those search committees. I hope we're going to get a chance to get into this, time permitting about what's the current state of female band directors at the college level. You say some word that is a pet peeve of one of the committee members and boom, they give it to somebody else, and you just never know. It's so friggin' cutthroat. I've thought about that moment and it was just me being exactly who I am. If I went back and had it to do it over again, I don't know that I could have done anything different. I was just caught up in the moment and it was just an emotional moment for me. I do show emotion. It's just part of me and I can't not be that person.

Grice: That's a great story. Tell me about moments that were critical in your career, specifically what they were and what meaning did you make from them? I know you've already talked about going to UNC and those points, I'm sure those were critical. But if there's any others and did you have a defining moment where you decided you want to be conductor? You said you really didn't, as it was being a teacher. Here I thought of that shift in your journey. Were there any other critical moments in your career that shifted your path besides going to school for music ed and then going for the wind conducting at UNC?

Moss: Okay, critical moments in my career. Having the opportunity to join the CBDNA board, I would say was a pretty critical point in my career. Being a part of that professional organization on that level has just opened me up to so many other people's ways of thinking and perspectives

that I've really treasured. They all came about because I went to my first conference in 2012 in Reno, Nevada. There was one person there whose name is Christopher Bianco. He's now a very good friend of mine. He was sitting there getting organized and shuffling some papers around and I just walked up to him and said something like, "Hi, I'm Emily Moss, the new director at Cal State LA. What can I do to help? You look like you're here by yourself", and he said something like, yeah, actually why don't you come over here where he was setting up the registration booth or whatever. Then the next day it was great. He is the band director at Western Washington University, which is very close to where I grew up. I was like oh my gosh, I'm from Whidbey Island and so we just immediately had this connection and for me, I was back with my people from the West. The very next day I looked up and there was Christopher by himself, moving chairs and stands. I looked left, looked right, and just walked up on the stage. I asked if I could help as he looked like he could use some help. I now know that the reason why he was alone doing all this stuff is because he had a counterpart that was missing in action and he was supposed to have somebody helping him. I was there so I started helping. I swear that this is another thing I got from UNC. You just step in and you just start working. You just start doing stuff. I like to think I had maybe a little bit of that beforehand, but you know Jenny, you know what I'm saying. I mean immediately step in and the next day after that, I was asking things like hey, how do I get involved in leadership in this organization? This was great, I was meeting people and I was really enjoying the vibe here. He said you tell someone on the board like me you're interested. The next time in the next year or the next conference two years later, I was nominated to join the board. That was a really critical moment, that feeling of being a part of something that was important to our profession. For me personally I spent 3 1/2 years as the department chair at my university. I dealt with a lot of difficult moments, probably more so than anything I ever dealt with from other conductors or other band directing situations. But dealing with some disgruntled, recalcitrant colleagues who thought I was someone young, well younger than them, I still am. I just had been promoted to associate and tenured, and they were all full professors. I think this consisted of a lot of misogyny. Plus, I was leading a program that was thriving and many of their programs were not. Of course, then I'm the enemy. Academic leadership has been one of the hardest things that I've dealt with, which has nothing to do with music at all. But that was certainly a critical moment. At the same time, I loved the positive impact I had on my students and the shift in culture I was able to make. The students were not just the students in my program, but the students in the entire department. That's an example of one of those things that yes, it's hard, and I dealt with so many hardships and struggles, but in a lot of ways it was worth it. I'm glad I'm not doing it anymore.

Grice: You paid your dues, so leading into that. What are some of your greatest triumphs?

Moss: I'll just continue with the department chair stuff. I was a part of hiring three incredible new faculty that were under my leadership. They're just amazing humans. And you know, we talked a little bit and I hope we get to talk some more about searches, academic searches. It's just this crazy performative thing. One of the things that I have learned having gone through searches myself, is that you have to be able to look past and through that performative thing that's happening. How is this person interacting with the students? There are a hundred people for any job that can do the job musically. Somehow we make it about, there's this little tiny thing that one did that was so much better than the other. How are they as a person? How are they going to work with us? What are their ideas for the future? There's so many other things like that. I feel

those search results were a real triumph. I'm so proud of the vast majority of students that have graduated from my program. I mean, what I really think about is that if I keeled over tomorrow, someone would look back and say, well what impact did Emily Moss have on this world? I hope after my own children, and after my husband, my personal family, I hope that someone would say that she made such an impact. I'm going to get emotional, here I go! She made such an impact in music and music education in southern California. She just helped propel this vast group of students that would not have had an opportunity otherwise. That to me feels like a real triumph. Cal UCLA does not draw the top students in the area. We have eight gazillion universities in southern California and students have so many choices. We're kind of in the middle of the pack, and that's fine. But I feel like I've created an environment where you can show up with very little and as long as you have a good attitude and work hard, you'll be okay. The students should be ready to have a lot of fun because, my God, we're going to have so much fun. We do and love it and they thrive and they flourish. When I think about that and focus on that that's what I'm most proud of.

Grice: Sounds like a great legacy. On the opposite end, what were some of your tribulations? What kind of constraints and/or obstacles have you had to overcome? You've mentioned a couple of them. How did you deal with them and what sacrifices have you made to achieve your successes?

Moss: Let me start with tribulations. This profession, it is so easy to feel self-deprecation and to feel like, why is that person over there getting to do and be and achieve and be put up on this pedestal. It's so easy to fall into that cycle because it's so cut throat. I'm just going to tangent just for a minute to talk about this idea that, because there are so few of us women, I believe that we're scared of success of each other. When one of us does well it zero self. That means that I'm screwed because I'm not going to go and get another job, because the world is just not going to let that many of us in. There's this negative cycle. I've not really talked to anybody about this, it's just my perception. We like to think that we prop each other up and I think more and more people do. Like the FaceBook group 'Women Rising to the Podium', is great for that. Andrea Brown at Maryland, I love her, I think she is single handedly trying to break this cycle. But it's there, I've seen it, I've felt it. I've tried to push back against it. But you know it's just obvious to me that if you can't check all of these exact boxes, then why would somebody give you a chance. Now that is not literally true, but that's how it can feel, and it's easy to kind of get into that cycle. Did you go to one of these top four institutions? Me, no I did not. Have you gone to these five prominent conducting workshops and studied under these five prominent people? No, I have not. Well, then that immediately puts you in this totally other category. Really, so that's it? That's it for me? There's no amount of hard work and effort that I can put forward? I've said this to many people and I'm happy to say it right now. I treasure the education I got from Northern Colorado and I'm eternally grateful to the Docs, my two mentors. They've taught me more than I can ever imagine about life and being a good person, and then of course, conducting, music, and analysis and all of that. It's easy to allow yourself to think for a moment, well what if I had gone to Northwestern? What if I had gone to Michigan? Maybe I would have gotten that job that I didn't get. Maybe if Jerry Junkin were talking to the committee on my behalf, maybe that's just a little bit of leg up that I needed when I didn't get that job or didn't even get a phone interview or whatever. In terms of tribulations, for me it's that mental struggle. It's constantly trying to quiet that voice in your head that is saying, am I good enough? I have talked to several close

colleagues, other band directors, and said I feel like my own personal musicianship is atrophying because I haven't been doing what I do, and my God, do I still remember how to interpret music in the same way and analyze and things like that. It's real, it is. That to me is one of the biggest tribulations of this job, is the mental game.

Grice: Is that because you've been online the whole time during Covid.

Moss: Yes, the atrophying is directly related to Covid, but just aside from being online, just the idea of am I good enough? Should I even bother applying for that position? Have I done enough? How can I do more? I actually talk a lot in my positions of leadership about trying to re-define success and about how we can help all of our members feel successful. I just think that will help all of us. It will really help our students. It rubs off on them when you're feeling like you're not good enough to get a particular job or I want another job because that's the only way that anybody will think I'm good at what I do and so I need to get that job over there.

Grice: Are there other aspects of your identities (race, instrument you play, age) that you believe influenced your triumphs and tribulations in your career?

Moss: I will say that I have always loved identifying as a bassoonist conductor. I talk a lot about how I still play, and I think if I were a trumpet player or something, I probably would not play as much as I do. I play because people need the sounds. In my graduate students' conducting recitals, they need the bassoons to cover parts. I like covering parts during this past pandemic in virtual band stuff for my own band, because I can play the bassoon. I think that's probably a big part of it, and I do what I love. feelings of success in some strange way, I don't know. I just had a conversation two days ago about this with another female band director colleague talking about how we feel like being a white woman right now. It is difficult as a conductor because we're in this incredibly wonderful and powerful moment of racial justice. Finally people of color are being elevated and given opportunities, and that is a really good thing.

Grice: What would you change, if anything if you could go back? What would you tell the beginner conducting you?

Moss: If I could go back, I definitely wish I'd kept up my piano skills. That is something that I feel disadvantages me in a lot of ways in terms of score preparation and just my musicianship in general. I really wish I could sit down at a piano and play through stuff from a score. I can't and I won't. I know that there will not be this ability soon, maybe if and when I retire, I might pursue it. What would I tell the beginning conductor me? I think I would say something along the lines of having something do with balance, keeping balance. I would give advice of making sure of being present in the moment and finding small successes in everyday small things. You know when you're at the beginning teacher level and you're first starting out, you just like instantly want to be great. I saw a middle school teacher and saw how good her band was and there's just a ceiling of like, well, if I work really hard, we'll be there next year. We're just going to be there and you know, I try. It's actually one of the things that my students probably get really tired of hearing me say, but that is, look you are definitely going to screw up a lot in your first few years and I'm here to assure you, that nobody's going to die. You're not going to like ruin anybody or scare them away from music forever. But you're going to screw up and you're going to make

mistakes and then always be reflecting on those moments. Recognize that you're a human being that is going to grow and develop. Maybe in year five you can kind of think that maybe you've done something decent. You look across the street or you look on Facebook or whatever and you see people that have it all together, they don't. They don't have it all together. They are struggling in different ways than you can see. I think that's a big one, I think it's just tempering your expectations.

Grice: What advice would you have for women entering the field of collegiate conducting?

Moss: I have a graduate student who is starting a DMA program. In the fall she's going to the University of Maryland. I've been talking to her a lot about this lately. I try not to be cynical because I really am not a cynical person. I am positive, and yet, I feel like I want to make sure she is aware of the realities of the world she's entering. Part of this reality is that women have to work harder and be better than everybody else. I just feel that is true and so I tell her this, not to discourage her. She happens to be someone who is an extremely hard worker, which is why I recommended her for a DMA program. I wouldn't have even recommended somebody who is not willing to just put their entire self into it, because that's what it takes. That's number one, it's to not fight against that reality. There's a difference between wanting to change the system from inside and constantly fighting against it. It is my belief that you can do both of those things, meaning you can fight against it and do work within the system to be successful. The reality is that successful people have more chance of changing the system from within. So I encourage young women to go out and go for it and the reality is that things are changing for the better, although sometimes it doesn't feel like it. I can tell you right now, Emily Moss is saying right now, it doesn't really feel like things are great. But for women, it's that idea of you're on an upward trajectory there, but then it kind of plateaus for a little while before it can start back up again. It just feels this way to me personally. I could be wrong, but it feels like we're in a bit of a plateau. Then probably, in all likelihood, there will be upward trajectory again. So just to keep at it, stay positive, and acknowledge the world that way. Women are easily criticized when we are not smiley, happy, and positive. If not, you're instantly pegged as, excuse my language, of being a bitch. Nobody wants that! It's like the Hillary Clinton phenomenon, she couldn't get it right if she was strong and aggressive she was bitchy and mean, and if she smiled, then she was soft and she can't possibly be a leader if she's nurturing and caring. I do think we have an advantage in the sense that we can, because music does call for care and love. I think that the reality is that we do have the capacity to straddle that line of being a strong leader and emotive, connecting, and vulnerable on the podium. We just need to lean into that and embrace that.

Grice: What advice or changes would you have for the field of conducting in general?

Moss: In the conducting field, we put far too much emphasis on the visual, in the way a person looks. So often, what is actually going on inside the conductor and seeing if there is actually any music happening is secondary. Look at conductors who you know and look at performances that they're giving. I have this great friend and I don't think he would mind me quoting him. He is Peter Haberman from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota. He says it so well and he said it like this: "We are training a generation of liars on the podium." That was it. It was in response to the myriad of conducting workshops that now exist. It's this whole thing of going to this conducting workshop because that person is there and you want to audition for their DMA

program. The way that we have just put every little thing gesturally under a microscope. That's sort of coupled with, how many young conductors go there in training, some who are just conducting to recordings. This is just so opposed to creating the music yourself, which you don't, you can't really do. You can't fully learn how to do that if what you're doing all the time is just conducting to recordings. I think Peter Haberman wanted to talk about balance, like balancing and managing your time and having a family and all of that. There is another thing I've talked about with some of my close friends during the pandemic and that is feeling like there is no time to do the things that you really want to do, like score study. It just feels it's so hard if you're managing so many things like those of us with children and we're trying to help them get through. Then we have to try to work and it's just so difficult in that way. These are just the realities and the time constraints; what we all have to do in our jobs. I guess, in other words, what I'm trying to say is that I am not without using recordings myself, but what do we have? What I'm trying to say is this idea of how can we help our young conductors? We need to worry less about how they look at any given moment and worry more about how they are affecting the music. What are they doing to bring out the very best in their players? The idea of servant leadership is so important to me and I teach that to all of my students and it means that it's not about you, but it is about what you are doing to bring out the very best in the music and then in your players.

Grice: I know that you said that you taught six years in the public schools and at the middle school level before you went to get the masters. How valuable do you think public school teaching experience is for the collegiate conductor?

Moss: I think it is invaluable. It is a high crime against humanity that a collegiate conductor would never have worked in the public schools. It is mind boggling to me that any search committee would ever hire a person that has never spent time teaching. They don't teach you that in a DMA program. They teach you how to, in some cases, but even then, not so much. I mean, you're training your ears and your brain. It's about interpretation and, don't get me wrong, there's somebody that runs a DMA program out there that's probably going to just think I'm a horrible person for saying that, but it cannot be compared to the time you spend learning how to actually teach. I don't want to put a number to it like it has to be a minimum of three years or has to be a minimum of five years or whatever, but it's without a doubt valuable. I advise my students all the time to teach and advise students of mine who are finishing their undergraduate degrees to teach. They think they want to go right on to get their masters and they always say they plan to go teach after college. I always say that you don't know, what you don't know, until you get out there and see what areas you really need to develop. Then you can go to a master's program and work on those things. You can't possibly know what things you are going to need in a program until you get out there and teach. It feels this way to me. I guess it doesn't matter in the pathway to college teaching and in college band directing. I guess I would say it doesn't matter whether you taught in-between undergrad and masters or if you taught in-between masters and doctorate. I think that probably doesn't matter, just that you get that experience at some point.

Grice: Describe your method of score study, rehearsal techniques, and concert programming pre-Covid. Does your programming include female composers?

Moss: I would say that my programming definitely includes female composers and I try my best to know them and have them on my radar, but I rarely think to myself, “I need to put a female on this program, so I'm going to go and find one.” I'm adamantly opposed to having an entire program of female composers. I feel like that exacerbates the problem and to just make it a part of your overall programming. My method that I usually do for concert programming is totally something I got from Doc Singleton. Over the summer, I put together a huge list where I just throw every single piece that I'm even considering doing onto a spreadsheet. I have the same running spreadsheet that I've had for years and years now and I am just constantly adding to it. When we perform something, I take it off the list and so then it's just like this constantly rotating thing. Plus, I'm always factoring in who my players are and who has played which pieces. I try to do some representative composers. I feel very strongly about our core repertoire. I want to make sure that they get exposed to Grainger, Holst, Gould or just a whole set of pieces that I feel are in our core repertoire. I try to rotate those through, while also including up and coming pieces and pieces that might have a deeper meaning, social justice or something like that. For score study, my approach is, I would say, totally cliché in the sense it's like big, little, big. You're just looking at it and taking in things like big ideas. How long is this piece? What's the general form of it? Is there a lot of unison writing versus chamber type writing? In other words, what's the texture and all that and then I try to get in right away into what I think are going to be spots that my students can play right away. Once I feel like I have a good sense of the whole piece and a good idea of how the flow goes and the key, I sing the majority of the melodies so that I have internalized it. Then I look for difficulty because I know my students are terrible sight-readers, as much as I've tried to help them with that. It's going to take them a couple of weeks to learn difficult technical passages, so I never start rehearsing those, it's just futile. So I'm going to take a piece and know that there's this beautiful choral section here, there's this rhythmic passage and there's this eight bar motive that occurs in five different places throughout this, so we're going to learn that eight bars, and then we're going to hit all five of those spots so we can really feel good about it. I might tell them to take the last five minutes of rehearsal and have them play it through. By the way, I almost never rehearse stuff under tempo. I just say here's the tempo we're going to go, and they're floundering. They know they can't do it, and it's okay. I tell them, I'm giving you guys one week, take a look, see what letter ‘G’ is like and be ready for that. That's kind of my approach. I'm always thinking about how they can find the most success and feel the most confident playing the piece. I don't get into much score study analysis, but I'm really a big believer in form and understanding the shape and how I want the shape of the piece to go and how that affects phrasing and dynamics. Plus, I put an importance in knowing the development of melody. That is what's so interesting about music; that's what I love about music, that's what I want to go after.

Grice: You talked earlier about doing collaboration with the English department. Are there any other big collaborations that you've done with your programs?

Moss: I've done a couple of really cool ones just this year because of the pandemic. We mixed them up so there were people from each group together. That was super fun and just a week and half ago, I did a collaborative concert with the University of Montana where we were the remote ensemble and their band was the live ensemble and it was a world premiere piece by Joel Puckett. Then we zoomed into their performance hall and were projected up twenty feet high on the back of their shell. People said it looked like we were a hologram.

Grice: That's awesome.

Moss: Yeah, those are two that jump out and I've done a lot of joint concerts. I love doing joint concerts with other Universities, community colleges, and high schools on our campus. We don't have that great of a performance space, but it doesn't matter. It's just that it's neat and it's just fun.

Grice: What was your 'aha' moment as a conductor and how did that shift your journey? Is there one moment that you can think of being a conductor where you thought oh I love this?

Moss: Well, there were two moments. I mentioned the hall moment with Doc Singleton, about him saying the effect I could have, but there was also a moment when I was in my program, my grad studies program, where I had this just moment of shift. It was the realization that I'm at the service of these players. It really was like a click-click, that almost out of body experience. I was just with the music and channeling the music, in a way, and I kind of felt me as a person dissolved and I just kind of became the music. Also, Doc will tell you he remembers the moment because he asked what had happened. He said, "What did you do?" I don't know but it was amazing, wasn't it? Yeah. It's just one of those things. It's just like something clicked, I stopped trying to do and I just was. I was just being. It's such a hard thing to teach. I've had students say, "How did you do that? What did you do?" You did this thing. I don't know. I was just channeling the music and was trying to be with the music and they try that and they're like oh, you know, it didn't quite work.

Grice: Do you think more women are applying for collegiate wind band conducting positions and are we succeeding in bridging the gap in male to female conducting positions at the collegiate level? I know that you had already spoke about how you thought we'd reached a plateau.

Moss: You should email Courtney Snyder in Michigan. She did a presentation at Midwest. I think it's now been maybe three years ago. I went to it and she was on a panel of all women. I remember there being statistics, because the statistic that I remember had to do with the number of women, the percentage of women at the elementary level, middle school level, high school level and collegiate level. My memory out of all of the numbers, and I have used this number, so I hope my memory is correct, was that it was 9% for the collegiate level. One could argue that is, my goodness, that's double, what is that 100% increase or 200% increase. I would say that's still pretty bad. Reach out to her. She would at least be able to point you if there's a place where those statistics exist.

Grice: Do you feel like it has plateaued because I know it seems for me being in college that there does seem to be more positions opening up that women are applying for. Even in the last couple of years, it might seem that way because of social media and Facebook pages such as 'Women Rising to the Podium' and you see all of the women in new roles popping up. It does seem like women are attaining more of those positions.

Moss: Here's my mostly anecdotal evidence or thought on it. I think that it is more public because of social media and that it seems that it's getting better. If those numbers we just talked

about are correct, then obviously it is. The numbers are showing that it is getting better. My belief is that the number of prominent female conductors in positions such as director of bands positions, there are very few. You could argue that there are more of us that have attained collegiate positions, but I would argue that those are predominantly in the second position, or the third position, or in a small liberal arts school. Then it seems harder and harder to breakthrough to those good and big positions. I think that I could probably tell you all of them by name in a couple of minutes.

Grice: Do female successes in other fields, such as the first minority woman Vice President of the United States (Kamala Harris) and the youngest US inauguration Youth Poet Laureate (Amanda Gorman), enhance a female's ability to succeed in areas such as wind conducting? Do you think this will help women feel more comfortable applying for jobs that are in a male-dominated field such as wind conducting? Do you think this will help women feel more comfortable applying for jobs that are in a male-dominated fields such as wind conducting?

Moss: I really like this question because it's one that certainly made me think about it. I am far from a scholar or an expert in any way in this area. One would think that it would have an impact seeing women in any male-dominated field just makes general society, and the general public, feel more accustomed to it. That is, it seems more possible. My guess is that's probably more true on the side of encouraging women to apply. There is still, and I spoke about this before, more in the pools for the positions. Being candidates is definitely a good thing, but until they're actually getting those positions, it's not progress. There's just myriad training going on at universities across the country on diversity and representation. How can you be aware of your unconscious bias so that you know that they can just check off these diversity boxes in their pools of applicants? I can tell you that someone we hired this last year, somebody in commercial music, it was like rock guitar. There were very few female applicants and it was a very small pool of applicants. You didn't have to be a guitarist because it was with commercial music and you could have a secondary area and you could do something else with any other instrument or whatever. We almost lost the search because our team did not have enough women in this pool. It was like who do you know? We just need to put their names on this list. We called and got the names of some females and sent them the job posting. Our search went through because they saw more female names on the list. In the end we hired a male. Whatever, he's fantastic and we love him. He's absolutely the best person for the job. He's from South America and so he is a minority. The point I'm trying to make is that we're in this zone of committees needing to fill these requirements that the universities have. I've had conversations with the few women about who actually have gotten some jobs. They have this deep-down self-doubt that they're just a diversity hire position and that they didn't deserve the positions. It could be the committees second choice or the top choice, but it's so complicated. It's such a complicated issue.

Grice: No, that's great because I wasn't aware of that. I figured those that applied knew that the committees were looking for diverse people in higher ed. I didn't know that, even just to apply, they were looking at a certain number. That matters, so that's very interesting.

Moss: There are now some fairly prominent websites, latinodiversity.com, where if you're a professor and you're Latino, you can put your name on this website. Universities are paying for this list. In that case, they can show in their recruiting analysts that they did this. For female

faculty, it's different for something a little more specialized like conducting or music because we're such a smaller pool that I think it's not as financially beneficial to those people.

Grice: So we don't have something like that for conducting.

Moss: No, I don't think that there's anything like that. I don't think that they have gone that route. There is another thing we haven't talked about. There are lots of women that I talked to that say they don't want to be known as a female conductor, but as just 'a conductor'. What made me think of that is, of course, this organization, Women Band Directors International. So many of us, including myself, have resisted joining that organization for that exact reason. So it's super complicated.

Grice: Do you think more women are applying for the collegiate wind band conducting positions and you've already said you don't think we're succeeding too well in bridging the gap of male to female in conducting positions?

Moss: I don't think that anybody could actually do this research, because I think that finalists for positions is not public information. In discussing anecdotally, like my own situation, and through talking to my lady conductor friends, you have some ideas. I feel like I have heard women have been finalists for so many jobs and it always goes to the dude, to the guy. It's like they checked a box so that they could say, look at this diverse group of candidates.

Grice: Why do you think it usually goes to the males?

Moss: There are these searches, and you know you have one day to be a superstar and to convince administrators, colleagues, the committees, students, alumni and anybody and 20 everybody in a period of seven to nine hours that you are the superior candidate. We are talking about the most minute differences between people and all the time you know there have been hundreds, literally hundreds of applicants. The committee has spoken to the four people that have been vetted like crazy. You looked at their CVs, you talk to their references, you watch some conducting. You've done that. You know you've done all these things, and then it's, who makes you feel comfortable? Who will fit in your department? These are a lot of the questions even when you've had good diversity and inclusion trainings. Schools go right at these questions. Why are you picking them? Why do you think they make you feel the most positive? Who appears to stick better? Is it because they're like you? Well, that's not how you want this, that's not necessarily the best.

Grice: That's not diverse.

Moss: That's exactly opposite of diversity, in fact. I think there's a lot of that and, just like I said, it's like the tiniest of differences. You think, okay, of these four people, basically, any one of them would be fine. I'll just leave it with the most common thing that people say, who's going to fit in? Who's going to fit in best? Maybe when you know the position, especially the director of bands positions, but also any conductor position, it is seen as a leadership role. The person hired is going to bring together an organization or move an organization in a certain direction. I just feel like, when push comes to shove, and there's a woman and a man, and everything else seems

equal, they hire the male and I think nobody would ever just admit to this or want to. I think everybody would want to say “no, no, no, I don't look at those things.”

Grice: Is that why you feel women have to work so much harder and be so much better, because if you're equal, it's probably going to go to the male and you just have to stand out?

Moss: That's right, and in fact I think that this is so even when things aren't equal, just because of who we are and how we are perceived. There is this notion of where we were is okay, but I'm not familiar with that. I'm sure that in your research, you understand or heard the stats and found that men will apply for jobs when they're 50% qualified and women won't even apply for jobs unless they feel they're 90% to a 100% qualified. I feel like it's that same thing. It's like women are okay and there is a certain pervading perception.

Grice: Do you have any rituals that you do before concerts? Do you have any routines or activities to help keep your body and mind at its highest?

Moss: That's a really good one. I find that I can't eat a lot on the day of a concert. There's a fine line because you obviously want to have enough calories in you for mental acuity, but I cannot have a heavy meal at all on the day of a concert. I try to eliminate as much work the day of as possible. When I was department chair, I would let my office assistant know that I had a concert that day and to please keep interactions to a minimum. I just wanted to be focused on anything I might need to do and then often, in just the few hours before the concert, I'm thinking of what I'm going to actually say. That's the point in time when I'm conceptualizing the verbal communication to the audience. It might be sitting down and it's funny, I never have time to do this until the day of the concert. How many grad students that are like, you could just throw the presentation words together and write program notes for me like we did at UNC. I do enjoy taking that time to craft in my head what I want the audience's experience to be, and I think it helps me get into the zone. I would say I don't necessarily have any other rituals. In the pre-concert warm-up with my students, I try to keep it very positive. They never see me say something like “come on you guys, it's time to just nail it.” We have the intense energy and nervous energy leading up, maybe like a week and a half or two weeks before the concert. On concert day, I'll say something like, “Oh my gosh, people it's go time. You guys are so ready.” I usually think that they are pretty ready and I feel confident in my ability to get my group to their best place. My whole thing is, you are great. I get so excited and tell the group that I love making music with them and this is just going to be fantastic and to just exude as much positivity, joy, and love as I can.

Grice: What do you do to just keeping your body and your mind at its highest in general? I know you like to hike, right or when you're in Colorado anyways?

Moss: Being physically fit is a huge part of my life. Hiking is not something that I do regularly but I run, cycle, and I do strength training. Every summer I do a triathlon. It's just absolutely an essential part of my life, that's all. I'm big on physical well-being. I talk a lot to my students about it, both undergrad and grad, about how important your physical and mental health is. Just like being the best you can be for your students.

Grice: How important is leadership as a quality for any conductor? Were there any leadership roles that you held as a young student in high school or college that you think helped your career pathway? I know you've already spoken about CBDNA, how you jumped in and helped, which I think was a great leadership thing and how that then turned into being on the board. How important do you think that is for your undergraduate students to get that experience?

Moss: I think it is an absolutely essential quality of a conductor to have leadership and there's no way around it. You cannot not want to be a leader and be a successful conductor. That being said, there really are many different forms of leadership. There are many, many different leadership styles. But you are the person standing in front of a group of people, and by the nature of initiating sound, you are leading. A level of trust comes with that and confidence in yourself and in your players. That is essential. I think for me, it's why I have sought out and been a leader in so many aspects of my life since I was a kid. I spoke about this earlier, but you know, so much of my life has been driven by people saying, well, you're pretty good at this, you should try this and I think okay. Credit to the adults in my life. I think they saw the leadership qualities and gave me those opportunities in virtually every single activity I ever did in my life. Eventually, in most things I did, I had some kind of leadership role. I rode horses as a kid, right up until about age twelve. One of the last things I did was a series of what are called Rallies, where you go and stay overnight somewhere and you have a team and you do different equestrian and jumping and other stuff. I was a team leader at rallies for my age group of around eleven. I was captain of my basketball team and I was always running sectionals and things in music. I was junior class president. Also, my junior year, since I was part of student government, I submitted my name to a statewide leadership thing and I was selected. I got to go and do this leadership training weekend and so, I mean, there's just things like that all throughout my life.

Grice: Do you think that those experiences directly correlate to your success as a conductor?

Moss: Being a leader in whatever field, it's interacting with people. Leading is managing. Some people don't like that term, but leading is managing other humans. You know the best leaders out there are the ones who are good communicators and who can listen. This is totally not thinking about music, but you can listen to constituents and have them feel that they have been heard. Sometimes you have to make hard decisions and understand that not everybody is going to be happy about that. That's what leaders have to do. I can't imagine that those experiences did not influence me in my comfort with leading people and being in front of people.

Grice: What should young conductors be sure to always and never do?

Moss: Young conductors should never be sorry. They should always be wanting to get better. They should always be seeking out ways of improving whatever aspect of their life or musical self needs improving and growing. So then conversely, of course, never think that you are done, that you've got it. I tell my undergrads all the time that the day you say that you have learned everything you possibly could know about teaching then you should just retire right there, because that means you're done. That means you've achieved everything you can in your career. So young conductors should remember that we always are at the service of the music. It's just not about you. Nobody really cares about what you're doing if it's not helping the music. You need to keep calling forth the best artistry from your players. That's all, it just always needs to be about

the music. It's not about you. That's a good one. I would also say always remember this is the way it's going to be, and this could be a controversial one: The way your band sounds is absolutely 100% a reflection of you as a teacher. It's not because they have better instruments, because they don't have private lessons, they just started playing, or oh, I don't have any double reeds and it's not like... you can make excuses all day long. But the way the band sounds is because of how you taught them and so if you don't like how they sound, fix it, and do something different. If you don't know how to do that, then go ask somebody.

Grice: What advice do you have for young conductors on balancing work and life outside of work? We talked a little bit about children.

Moss: Yeah, after my second concert at Brooklyn College, my daughter was born eight days later and I actually played my bassoon the night before she was born in a new composition concert. I went into labor the next morning. Advice on balancing work and life; I think the best advice I could give is that, I think I even talked about this a little bit before, but the idea that regardless of what you have or where you're at in your journey of having a family, the process of building your career building a program, or achieving the things that you want to do is a long road and it just takes time. Don't think that if I just stay an extra two hours in the band room or if I just put in a little bit more time and a little bit more effort, I'll get to those goals quicker. We'll get that trophy and we'll get unanimous superior at festival if only I just put in a little bit more time right now, today. I just think that is a false premise. What you're doing is shrinking yourself. You're taking time away from your own self as a person and the less of a person that you are yourself, the less you're going to be able to give back to your students. There's a point where you're just going to either get sick or burnout or your spouse is going to leave you. It's unsustainable and unhealthy. I just try to give the advice of patience and do not get sucked into the social media game of everybody's doing more than me. I say this as a person who has absolutely been sucked into that and had to fight against the things we all do. We're human beings. Oh man, on social media, like so and so has got four gigs this year and I only got two. And oh, they're doing all this amazing cool stuff over there. Wow, I guess I better do more because that must mean that I'm not doing enough. They're doing all that and it's just... we all do it. We all do it and so just recognize it. Say thank you for sharing, and then move on. I guess you can just stay focused on your goals, which hopefully also include you having a happy home life and getting some exercise. Maybe you have some other hobbies or things that you enjoy doing. That's great. There's so much out there in the world beyond music that can influence you as a musician, just experiencing nature or experiencing art, visual art or dance, or just being a human being and experiencing all that informs us as artists in our particular medium. If you've just got the blinders on and you're doing band all the time and you're barely letting in anything else, it's really hard to maintain that in a way that will sustain you as a human. Don't get me wrong, if anybody told you they have not struggled with this, they are lying because it's so hard. I was really pretty good before the pandemic, that when I came home, I was just at home, not on my computer or checking stuff on my phone. There are times when emergencies will come up, but I really tried so hard, especially as chair because it feels like those leadership positions, it feels like you're on call twenty-four hours a day. I really tried to do that and it was easy when I left the house and came back in the house, and as the entire world has experienced in the pandemic, the blurring of those lines. I just encourage everybody, when we go back to some normalcy and you're having some routines, that you set up some boundaries. Get those boundaries up again and

leave it at the door. Be with your family and honor them. I teach a lot of Latinos right now. I think it's fair to say that they are a patriarchal society where the man is working and the woman is at home and the caregiver. I'm not in any way saying that there's a problem with that because there are many families that have that as their dynamic, and they're very successful and happy. One of the things that I talk with about my students, especially my young Latino future teachers, I say just remember what you do is not more important than what your spouse does. If you think you find yourself getting into that trap, it's going to be a real problem. Honor your spouse in whatever they do; they work hard too. You make sure you go to that company Christmas party or whatever. Make sure that there isn't an uneven balance of sacrifice. You give your spouse a chance to do something special for themselves and it's not just you that has marching band all the time and concerts all the time. They're the ones that are having to do all the heavy lifting. These things can be cyclical; there's marching band season. We all know that there's more times of the year, but then you make a point of being there and giving yourself some times of the year where their things are more valued. I just think that it's an important thing to remember when we are talking about work life balance with so many of us. I think rightfully so that we are changing people's lives. What we do is really important work and so is what your spouse does and likes; whatever it is that they do, help them feel valued and important.

Grice: Have you ever had problems because you have children? Has it ever been asked in an interview, "How would you do the job and balance family, being a mother," and have you also ever felt like that has kept you from a job?

Moss: I'm fairly certain that it is completely illegal for anybody to ask you that question. I've never been asked that question. And I think if I were ever asked that question, I would bring it up with Title IX people. You just cannot ask somebody that.

Grice: I've been asked that twice in interviews.

Moss: Oh my gosh. I don't know, maybe in university jobs, there's just more scrutiny around it. I've never been asked that. I mean, in all fairness, I suppose I've only had three in-person interviews for college positions and in one of them I didn't have any children yet. So there were only two others and I was not asked. I did ask the one female member of the search committee at Cal State L.A. something like "I'm really embarrassed, but I need to pump. Is there somewhere I can go?" She just let me into her office and closed the door. So she obviously knew, but I don't think she shared it with anybody.

Grice: Have you ever felt in your career that having children has been a reason why you have not gotten that job?

Moss: No, I feel fairly confident in saying that because there's only been one interview, so I'm not probably the person to ask. I guess the best person got the job, but there's only been one interview, where I did not get the job, since I've had children.

Grice: What experiences/organizations shaped your career (military, non-musical jobs, travel), and are any of them specifically female-oriented? I know you've already talked in detail about CBDNA and how that shaped your career.

Moss: I mentioned a friend of mine named Peter Haberman previously, and I just had him two days ago as a guest in my conducting seminar class. This came to mind because of what he was talking about. I did a ton of theatre and dance growing up. I was in musicals and I very much believe that those experiences gave me a sense of how to move and an awareness of my posture and my body and how to use my arms and using all sorts of physical movements. I also just learned how to be in front of people; like the idea of looking up and talking to the back of the room and those kinds of things that are very important. You know they just come naturally to me because I believe I had all these years of doing that and being involved in those kinds of other organizations and training. I mentioned being a part of the Seattle Youth Symphony. That was a very influential organization in my young development. I think more than anything because I got to be around other kids my age who loved classical music. I just didn't have that in the same way in my high school of feeling belonging and feeling a part of something that you really love and are good at. That was important to me.

Grice: What is your greatest achievement as a conductor or special moments?

Moss: Conducting at [Colorado] All-State was such an incredible experience after being part of running that event for three years. I was star struck when all those guests conductors would show up. I think it was like the very first year as a TA and my job for the weekend was carting around and chauffeuring around Linda Moorhouse who was the conductor of the second band. I was just like, "Hi Linda, you don't remember me, but I was an undergrad when you were at Washington." I mean, I just spent the whole weekend, just like, "Did you hear what she just said?" I was taking notes and I remember I wrote copious notes on everything she said and I typed them up. I still have it somewhere and I remember saying, "Hey Dr. Mayne, would you like a copy of my notes of everything Linda Moorhouse said this entire weekend." He's like "sure, Emily." No, I mean he was kind about it, but to then be invited back, I will never forget that for my entire life. You know, waiting to be called out on stage, standing by Doc...I'm going to start crying. Doc was right there with me. And he just looked at me and...it was just this really sweet moment. I was just so proud.

Grice: I was there.

Moss: Those kids sounded amazing. We nailed it. I felt like I did my very best and they played so well.

Grice: Everybody talks about that group, that being one of the best concerts that group had ever played.

Moss: It was so personal for me. That was a moment that is very high up on up on the list.⁹⁸

Grice: Well, thank you so much for all your knowledge and your lived experience. It's been great.

⁹⁸ Emily Moss, personal interview (Google Meet: 28 April, 2021; 1 May, 2021).

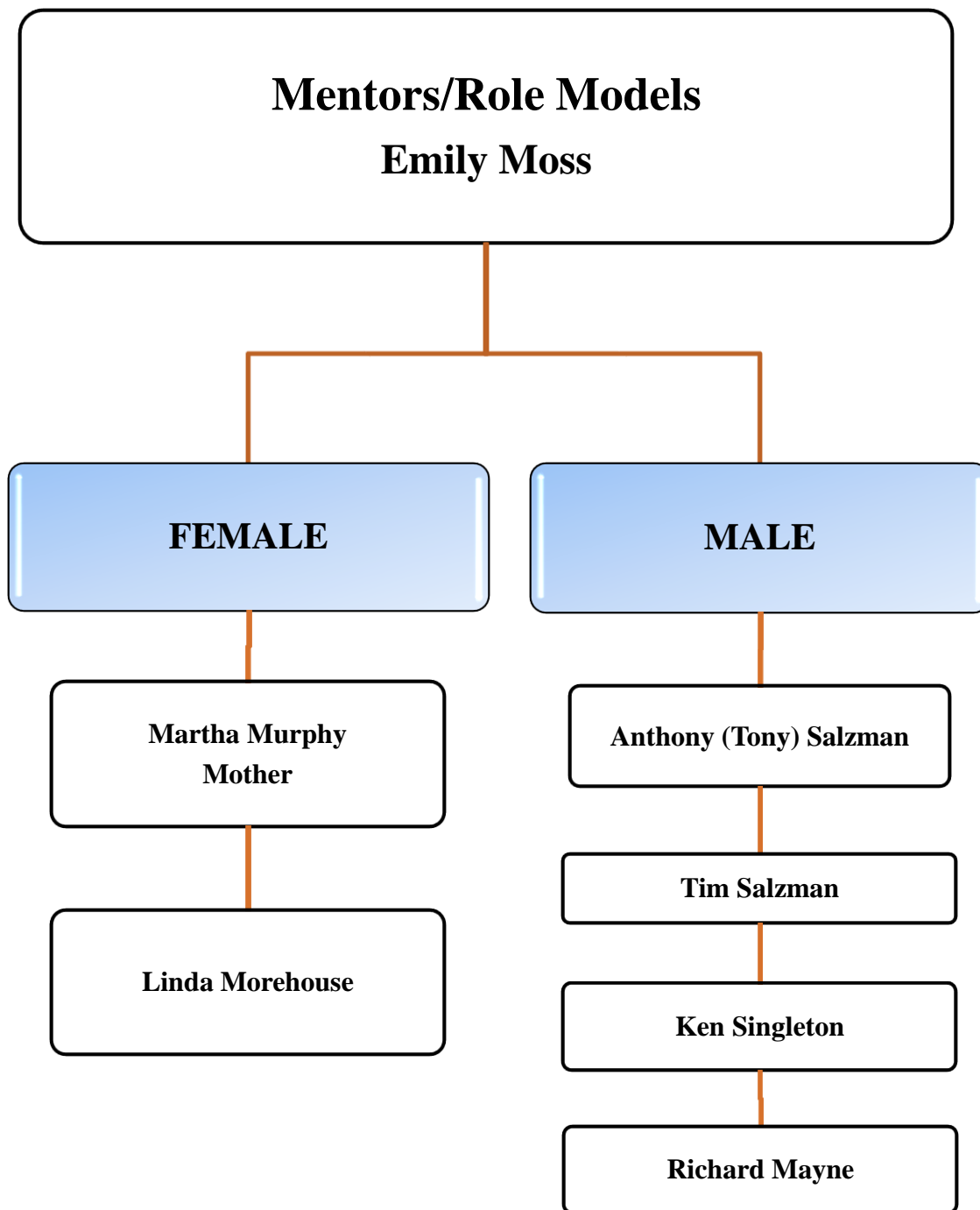


Figure 5. Mentors/Role Models of Emily Moss.

Emily Moss Profile

Current Collegiate Position: Director of Bands & Instrumental Music Education at California State University, Los Angeles

Previous Collegiate Positions:

Director and Coordinator of Music Education at Brooklyn College Conservatory of Music

Degrees:

BME, BA-Music, University of Washington

MM, University of Northern Colorado Wind Conducting
Wind Conducting

DA, University of Northern Colorado
Music Education

Bassoon Performance (secondary emphasis)

Catherine Rand Interview

Grice: Hi, thank you so much for agreeing to participate in my dissertation. Before we start I need to make this statement. Do you Catherine Rand give your consent to have your voice video recorded during this interview for the purposes of my doctoral research?

Rand: Yes, I do give permission for that to happen.

Grice: Great thank you. Could you please begin by telling me your musical journey. For example, things like: Why did you choose to play your instrument and that specific instrument? What were your experiences as a student in public schools and in college? When did you know you wanted to be a conductor? What were the influences that led you to your professional career?

Rand: Why did I choose the musical instrument that I chose? Well I'm a French horn player and actually I grew up in a family of musicians. My father was a flautist. I'm the last of five children and everybody played an instrument or sang. But, nobody in my family played the French horn and it was the one instrument that was very orchestral as well as band oriented. It was considered in the Guinness Book of World Records one of the hardest instruments to play, and as the youngest child I wanted to stand out, so I chose French horn. I loved the sound and the soaring, soaring lines of the horn. I was a drum major in my high school band. Besides playing horn, I also played trumpet in jazz band. I went to Plant City High School in Plant City, Florida which was a small farming community. I went to college for a little over a year as an accounting major and then I decided to quit school. Low and behold, my high school band director called me and said, you need to go speak to the band director at the local college, Dr. Carol Green. A few weeks later I met with the director of bands, Dr. Carol Green at the University of Tampa Dr. Green thought she recognized me, she asked if my father happened to be Ken Rand and I said yes. She said she used to play in a symphony with my father and remember him bringing his children to rehearsals and concerts. As a child I had fond memories of my father taking all five of us to rehearsals and concerts and sitting in the pit or the concert hall. I decided after speaking

with Dr. Green, that's where I wanted to study music. So, I worked part time to be able to afford to go to college. I was a double major, art, and music education.

Grice: When you first started before you quit the first time, what was your major then? Or were you just getting your general classes out of the way?

Rand: Alright, so I'm going to be honest here. My father said if you go into music I will not pay for your college. I said OKAY, so I was going to go into accounting. But that did not work out. I am a numbers person but not in that manner, so I quit school. Then my former high school band director introduced me to Dr. Green. So, I ended up paying my own way through college.

Grice: Why do you think he said that?

Rand: I think my dad initially said that for two reasons. One he got married at a very young age and had five children by the time he was 26. To support five children, he could not do it orchestrally, so he became an electrical engineer. I think that my dad felt that income wise it would not be a great job to pursue, but more of a hobby. I mean, he played in a symphony that eventually became the Florida Orchestra. Now he wasn't in it when it became the Florida Orchestra, by that time he was working as an engineer. but I think that that was the main reason why. I was a little bit more stubborn, being the youngest child, and said I'm going to do it anyway. That was my passion, most definitely.

Grice: Great and the last part of that, when did you know you wanted to be a conductor and what were the influences that led you to that? Which obviously you've already said Carol Green.

Rand: I can tell you the first time that I was like, oh my goodness, I wanted to be a conductor, was back in the late 60's when my father played the live performance of *Fantasia*. I'm a Disney kid, I'm from Lakeland, Florida, Plant City or Lakeland area which is like an hour and a half away from Disney. Just seeing that performance live with Mickey Mouse and all the other characters and all the people in the orchestra. Oh, I wanted to be a conductor. Yeah, that made an impression on me as a child.

Grice: How old were you when you saw that?

Rand: I don't remember when *Fantasia* came out, but I know I had to have been around 6 or 7 or somewhere in there. I also wanted to be a carpenter at one time, but conducting won out.

Grice: Okay, great, any other influences besides your dad and Carol Green.

Rand: I would say my high school band director because of course he was the one that really mentored me throughout high school and my first year in college. Carol Green mentored me through my undergraduate years and then I didn't really have anybody until I went to get my doctorate. Gary Green I would say was a definite influence while I was getting my doctorate.

Grice: Okay that leads into the next question. Any others besides them for role models and mentors? You've already mentioned your early ones but do you have any current ones?

Rand: I think for me I wish I had a current role model because no matter how old you are you still need to have that person that you go to. Even throughout my career, I never had a consistent role model or someone that was there. I think that would have benefited me tremendously to have that support consistent throughout my career. You know, I looked at the list of women that you did an interview with and I think only one is older than I. So I mean we come in from different generations and then you have that bulk of that next generation below myself.

Grice: Do you think it would have been a huge difference if you would have had a female mentor. I know Carol Green was more on the education side. Did you ever have a female conductor mentor or role model and do you think that would have changed your path in any way?

Rand: You know, I don't think it would have changed my path. But in my generation most men did not know what women had to go through. It would have been nice to have somebody that understood exactly what was going on in my career and some of the things that I would stumble at or get hit with, that maybe my male counterparts would not have appropriate suggestions for me. But I think the other part to that is, I think having a male as a mentor during those times would have been great, because a man could get you into some of those doors that you would not be able to get into as woman.

Grice: Describe your experiences that you believe related to you being a woman. What supports and what barriers have you faced that you believed were/are related to your gender? Thinking about your conducting career, tell me about experiences where you felt, if you did unequal treatment when compared to your male peers? How did you respond?

Rand: I had a lot of great experiences and I have had several that have been not so great, that is everything including clothing. I used to wear a long dress and I had a slit up the back of my dress. It wasn't big it was to my knees maybe. I remember a male saying to me, I really liked what you did on the podium, but I wished you would've moved a little bit more so I could see your legs between the skirt. Yes, that happened. I've had a lot of comments throughout my career in respects to being a woman and related to being a woman that were problematic to me. I'm not going to go into those stories, but they have happened even as of last year.

Grice: What supports and barriers have you faced related to your gender besides comments here and there?

Rand: I've had some great male colleagues that have helped me to get into the field when I taught high school band. But there have been many barriers. When I taught high school band every time that I would get off of a band bus they would look at my assistant director, which was male, and say, hey where do you want your band? He would say, I don't know ask her she's the band director. Oh okay, so there's always that assumption that the director of bands was my male counterpart instead of me. So it felt like you always had to push yourself even more so and be dominant beyond what maybe you would traditionally be, so that people would go oh maybe she is the band director. Well, yes, you know I can do that. Or they've gone to my assistant director and say, oh, is this your wife? No, that's the director of bands, I work for her. So there have been

some barriers, including getting into “the club” as one of your questions refers too. And there is a big club and so trying to get into that’s been difficult.

Grice: Tell me about moments that were critical in your career - specifically what they were and what meaning did you make from them? Did you have a defining moment where you decided you wanted to be a conductor, you already said *Fantasia*, and how did that shift your journey? Was there maybe later on a certain piece after *Fantasia* that was defining?

Rand: There were two other ‘like’ moments in time. For several years, I taught both band and orchestra. I do remember we were playing Britten’s *Simple Symphony* at district festival, and we were all in flow. The whole ensemble, the audience, it just felt like everybody was there. And I remember cutting off and you could feel that quietness and peacefulness from everyone. It is like this thing that takes over your body and you’re like I want more of that. I want to know how to recreate that at every single rehearsal and at every single performance. Then you think about the gestures in which you make and you think about all of these things that you do. That was one of the most defining moments. Then the other was teaching high school band my last year - we’re doing high quality literature Grade 6 repertoire in the top band like playing *March* from *Symphonic Metamorphosis*. Then wanting to know what else is out there, what is beyond this that I could do that isn’t having to play off a list, you know whether it’s FBA or TMEA. What is that other art, that musical art that I could go towards that I’m not being able to do here, maybe for my end of the year concert. But I think that was that next step, the repertoire was the next big push to move me into grad school.

Grice: What are some of your greatest triumphs?

Rand: My greatest triumphs are to see my students, when I taught high school, to have a love of music, whether they went into music or not. I get Facebook comments all the time, ‘my son is playing trombone and made All-State band as an 11th grader or 12th grader or they’re going on to teach music’. That is very meaningful to me! Currently would be my conducting studio, my students that are out there in the field and seeing their successes. I have “triumphs” that we would consider in the band world. I’ve played conducted the USM Wind Ensemble at CBDNA national - I think I was the fourth woman to conduct at CBDNA national. You know, yay, that’s a musical triumph, but the biggest ones, are the students I have taught, and their successes.

Grice: That’s great. What were some of your tribulations and we’ve already talked about some of those? What kind of constraints and/or obstacles have you had to overcome and how did you deal with them? What sacrifices have you made to achieve your successes?

Rand: You know, I think people forget that conductors are human, and no matter male or female, we make mistakes. Just like anybody, you learn from things that you do. You try to be better. I think for me I’m always at constant work at being a good conductor, a good mentor, somebody that students can come too without any issues. Some days I achieve that well and some days I don’t. It’s like how to be that great person constantly. What kind of constraints and obstacles have you had to overcome, and how did you deal with them? Is this in relationship to being a female?

Grice: It could be either way.

Rand: Okay, this may go back to an earlier question. I think it relates to being a woman. When I first went through undergraduate school, I was looking for a high school job because I wanted to be a high school band director. I remember going to this specific county and interviewing with the music supervisor. I asked, do you have any openings for high school band directors? He goes said, yes, we do, but we do not hire women for high school. We only hire women for middle school. So my first real job was a middle school band director. I never gave up my dream of being a high school band director. And eventually, of course, I was able to achieve that. Sacrifices you have made. I preached this to my own students, you know that saying practice what you preach. Well, here's one thing that I believe in it and it's trying to balance life and work. I don't think I've done a great job with that. I know you interviewed Courtney Snyder and Courtney has twin girls. I don't know how she could balance as well as she has, it's been difficult for me. It's been difficult for me maybe because it's second nature - being an artist, a painter, and a sculptor - your mind just thinks of that constantly and you get lost in it all.

Grice: So the second part of that question is what advice do you have for young conductors on balancing work and life outside of work. You said you talk to your students about this, what do you tell your students?

Rand: Just being aware and open communication. I think open communication with your partner, wife, or husband, is a big thing and not forgetting that person because this job requires so much and is extremely stressful. Make sure that you have time to share with them. Put aside time for a life, your time that you can live your life outside of the hustle and bustle of the job. Because it is overwhelming and you have to have that balance or you get lost. So if they can make that balance now as a young conductor it is easier, but if you don't do that now, it's harder to change as you get older. You must create that time and you yourself are more important than the job.

Grice: Great advice. Are there other aspects of your identities (race, instrument you play, age) that you believe influenced your triumphs and tribulations in your career?

Rand: Again, I feel like I had to work really hard as a female conductor. I looked really young. I think my age and being a female in a male-dominated business was a factor, in fact I was one of the first females in the county in which I taught. Everybody looked at you differently. However, I taught in the same county as my high school band director, and that helped quite a bit. So learning how to be, sounds really bad, but learning how to be one of the guys and getting rid of a little bit of that femininity helped.

Grice: What was your high school band director's name?

Rand: Ken Norton.

Grice: What would you change, if anything if you could go back? What would you tell the beginner conducting you?

Rand: Here you go, constantly listen. Listen to those really amazing conductors in your county in your state. Just listen and take to heart and then ask them to help you. I think that's the other thing, be willing to accept the help. Then find a mentor, let me correct that statement, find a lifetime mentor. Somebody that you can move through this career with. I think that's the biggest thing. The other thing I would tell my beginning self is you're going to love this.

Grice: That's great. What advice would you have for women entering the field of collegiate conducting?

Rand: I think women currently are very different from when I came in. I'm sitting here at my age and I have been teaching band for 30 plus years, actually 32 years teaching band or going to school. I wrote in response to your question - live your dreams. You can achieve absolutely anything that you want to. Don't allow yourself to put roadblocks in front you. Live your dream, go for it. I think nowadays women are more likely to go for their dreams than 20-30 years ago. They (we) can do anything that we choose. There are more women in our field and going into music in general now than there ever has been. I think that this is this is going to flip. You're on that paradigm shift where one day it was all men in orchestras, now the amount of women in orchestras is starting to get larger than men.

Grice: Do you feel that flip or switch is also happening in the band world?

Rand: Yes, in the band world more so than orchestrally, I mean look at all the women that are starting to get college jobs. I've seen more young women get college jobs this year than I have ever seen. Maybe that's due to Facebook and social media. More so now than ever and I think it's great. I know that when I started to look at colleges for my graduate degree, I spoke to one director and that director said, well I already have one female I don't need another. That was a college band director. People don't say that now. People are more willing to accept more than one.

Grice: Yeah, that's great. I'm going to skip over to a different question since we're on that topic. Do female successes in other fields, such as the first minority woman Vice President of the United States (Kamala Harris) and the youngest US inauguration Youth Poet Laureate (Amanda Gorman), enhance a female's ability to succeed in areas such as wind conducting? Do you think this will help women feel more comfortable applying for jobs that are in a male dominated field such as wind conducting? Do you think this will help women feel more comfortable applying for jobs that are in a male dominated? Fields such as wind conducting. Seeing people at such a high level in other fields.

Rand: I think the generation of women now have been empowered. Whether there is a first or not, this is the generation, your generation or the younger generation is going to be that generation of women that are going to be the first and if not, they're going to populate they are going to populate the job market. Because it's there's no holds bar right now going on in this country. A huge change and a huge paradigm shift in how we view society and women are doing things that 20-30 years ago you would have never thought. Again, women are empowered now. So yes, they are going to be moving forward if they have not already. So, Kamala yeah, great, you know when's our next female president? It's going to be soon.

Grice: I think so. What advice or changes would you have for the basic field of conducting in general?

Rand: I think we need to go in as a servant leader role. I think everything is changing so quick and Covid has really shown us some things that we are going to have to do differently in our field or change to be able to maneuver into other ways of teaching like we had to do this past year. Being well rounded as conductors, entrepreneurs that's going to be big. Leaders in the field, I think is a big for me at this point.

Grice: We already talked about if you had a female mentor, but I'm not sure if we touched specifically on what ways do you serve as a mentor to your students and graduates.

Rand: I've had more male students than I have had female students. I try to help my male students realize what women issues are and for them to be able to be attuned to that. For them to be able to stand up and support the women in the field. Quite often you go to a meeting and you say as a female one thing in this meeting and you get overlooked. For example, 'maybe we need to do this'. Then they say, 'that's a good thought, so what else does anybody have to say?' Then chatter goes on and then two minutes later, someone else, a male may say the exact same thing, and then the chair or whomever says, 'that's a great idea'. Well then you want your male counterpart to say, 'well yes, that's what Catherine said two minutes ago.' It is important to empower my male students - to stand up and recognize that and help if somebody gets quote 'mansplained', help them to be able to be heard, because quite often we don't get heard.

Grice: You've already said that you taught middle school and high school. What grade levels and number of years and how valuable do you think public school teaching experience is for the collegiate conductor?

Rand: I taught for approximately 15 years in the public school system, middle school 6th through 8th and then high school/junior high kind of thing 9th through 12th grade. It is extremely invaluable to have taught in public school. One, it's grade 13 anyway coming in for most freshmen. According to where you live and what institution that you are teaching, you're just a slight step above high school and or in some institutions you are a glorified high school, so you need to be able to understand those students. Teaching high school and the constraints in which you have given yourself grounding in different kinds of repertoire, how to manage people, how to manage your students, manage that environment, and budgeting. All of these different things that we do administratively with support from your administration. On a college level you're always having to fight for more - when in a high school level, you still fight for more, however you're still given something.

Grice: You spoke briefly on this, but could you go into more detail on how do you think men perceive women in the field of collegiate wind conducting over the years? How was it different from the beginning of your career to now? Do you think the 'Good Ol' Boys' club still exists? How do we as women counter that?

Rand: Again it's changed tremendously from my first job interview of we don't hire women in high school band, we only hire women in middle school. To, I'm the first woman in 100 years to

teach at this university. We are seeing more women getting university jobs and more women that are having outstanding programs that are now being recognized for how good they really are. Do I think that a 'Good Ol' Boys' club still exists, yes. How do we women counter that? Educate our colleagues and or as I said earlier, our male students to stand up and help the women get through, be a great colleague, and to recognize that. I've been to several band director's homes where I am the only female director. So, you have the group of male directors and the wives and then there's you. The wives want to talk to you - however, you need to go out and smoke a cigar with the guys or else you're not going to be in that conversation. Thank goodness I like to occasionally drink, so that's not a problem. I can drink bourbon with the best of them. But, just to fit in, just to be in that conversation you have to do those kinds of things. There you go.

Grice: Do you think more women are applying for collegiate wind band conducting positions? You've already said you do and are we succeeding in bridging the gap? You've already said you absolutely think we're doing that, so do you have any additional comments?

Rand: Yes, there's the national trend right now in schools of music that you're seeing more women in the field. I would agree with that.

Grice: You spoke slightly on the one dress with the slit and you talked about how your high school director kind of taught you how to mask that femininity. Do you feel that you have ever had to mask your femininity in interviews, dress, language, or on the podium to be respected as a conductor in a male dominated field? If yes, in what ways?

Rand: In how I dress most definitely. I once had a lesson with a prominent very well-known female orchestral conductor, who said, "They don't want to see you be feminine on that podium. They want you to give them information and that is it." It became a very apparent then not to be feminine, just give instruction.

Grice: Do you agree with that?

Rand: No, I don't. But that's how that particular person had to live to get through and to achieve what they are doing now. That is generational, and in my generation, yes, you still had to do some of that. Again, in this younger generation, they're not having to do that. It doesn't matter, who you are?, what kind of person you are?, female etc. You can be you. Where in an earlier time, it was frowned upon.

Grice: Did you feel like you masked that in interviews or on the podium?

Rand: On the podium, yes. There's been many times, uh, that a student says, 'you're the first female that I've have had as a conductor'. Again, this is all changing. So I think I've had to do that on the podium and I've had to do that in dress. In interviews I have learned to be me, because if you don't like me for me, I don't want your job because we're not going to be a good fit. I don't want to hide who I am or what I am in any interview, because you're selling something then that you are not.

Grice: That's good advice. On a very condensed level, describe your method of score study, rehearsal techniques, and concert programming, Does your programming include female composers? Reading your bio, I know you do commission a lot of new works, but do you also do that specifically with female composers?

Rand: Yes, and I don't set out program a female composer at every single concert. I want to make sure that I'm in tune with what is happening musically across the board, male and female. Female composers are not being heard, so I want to make sure that I'm aware and I am versed in what's happening and being written by female composers. Being able to give female composers the opportunity to be heard, very important.

Grice: How do you stay versed on that?

Rand: One is just listening to what everybody has for new music by going to their websites. There are several websites that are specific female composers. I think that is important to be able to listen to new music and getting online is one way to do that. Whether it's Julie Giroux or someone else, listening to what they have written and what they have coming up – new works. Participating in commissioning a new project. Also supporting young promising women composers through consortiums and commissions. I'll be glad to help commission female composers. Even if it's somebody that I don't know that you know has great potential to write worthy music, absolutely. When I played at CBDNA nationals I performed a female composer's piece, one of Julie Giroux's, *Symphony No. 5 Elements 1st Mvmt. – Sun in C*. I remember a colleague in the business said, "oh, you just picked that piece because she's a female." Why did this person say that? I picked the piece because I thought it was significant piece of repertoire and it was a poignant piece to me. To me, programming is like - you're going to laugh at this. It's like a meal. It is something that you eat, but it's aurally. So how do you start the program? What is that the beginning course? What is that main course and how do you end? All of that I think is important in considering the breadth of the program.

Grice: That's a great analogy. How do you describe your method of score study?

Rand: Well, that's a big one. Just recently, I'm teaching a score study one course. Band directors do a lot of the same things, we steal it from one another. There is a great book by Gary Stith about score preparation that is wonderful as well as the traditional Battisti, Garofalo's *Guide to Score Study*. I was taught that you go through the history of the pieces, understand the era it was written and why. Outline the piece structurally and harmonically to come up with an aurally idea of what the piece should sound like. You have to have an understand of were sections or individuals are to take a breath, phrases, the musical line of every single part; always ask question – question everything - how does it start?, how does it end?, and having a good aural idea of every single line and how it matches with one another and supports one another. That's a small gist of what I do.

Grice: What was the first book that you held up, I didn't see it.

Rand: *It's A Realistic Approach* by Gary Stith. I love that it because when I taught high school band, I was the only band director. I taught Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Winds, Freshman Band,

guitar, orchestra, a woodwind choir, a brass choir, and percussion ensemble, and then I taught a chamber group. I taught 9 separate ensembles throughout the week, with about four different pieces of rep each, so you're consuming 30 or more works in one concert series as a high school band director, especially if you're by yourself and doing everything. So you're having to learn how to evaluate scores and put time in certain scores where you don't have to put time in and as much in other scores. But teaching score study is really going through those guiding score study books of Gary Stith, Battisti, Garofalo, etc.

Grice: Okay, great. What about your rehearsal techniques? Just kind of an overview of your style of rehearsal techniques.

Rand: I'm a proponent of listening to my ensemble – recording my group every rehearsal then creating a hit list of things that I need to do in the next ensemble rehearsal. Trying to be constantly positive with what I am asking to the ensemble. We are creating music together as a team or a symbiont being. It's not just me telling them what to do, but it is a joint effort between everyone in the room - making something sound as good as we can to represent the composer's intent.

Grice: What areas of collaboration have you used in your programs? This can be with other arts or dance.

Rand: Commissioning composers, bringing composers in, bringing major performers in. I think those things are important for the growth of the student as well as the conductor. I've collaborated with the English department using poetry and music together. I did a Maya Angelou concert, which was absolutely amazing. We did "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings", and we would have student come in from the English department and read specific poems from that book. We created a relationship between her poetry and music which worked well together. Also, art and music. So, collaboration between artists and others, whether it's film and or live creation of art at the same time as a performance. The collaboration that I have done with dance and live performance was a fabulous experience for the musicians, dancers, and the audience. I have done those types of collaborations within my career and look forward to doing many more.

Grice: That's fantastic. Would you consider Britten's *Simple Symphony* and *Fantasia* as your 'aha' moment as a conductor and how that shifted your journey or would you say it would be something else?

Rand: I think it would be those two moments. As a child, *Fantasia* you know you can't beat Disney. Then I think yes as orchestral conductor, conducting Britten's *Simple Symphony* was an 'aha' moment. I'm going to give you one other. I would say another 'aha' moment is learning to create sound through silent gesture and learning the art of the space that we have around us and how you touch air or that creation of sound. How does that sound feel? How does that sound, if I were to create a gesture or that aura. That was like an 'aha' moment of me as a conductor of things that I can do, or things that you could teach someone else. Conducting is just not patterns. It's great to be able to keep a beat and move through that, but can you create gesture honestly and truly that imitates the sound in which you want.

Grice: Did you ever do dance or theater?

Rand: No, but I should have because I'm a hand talker as you can well tell. No, but you know, I think this is very similar to a painter and a sculptor, somebody that has hands on to create something visual. When you're sculpting the pressure in which you put on a piece of clay or how you move a paintbrush, whether it is light as you paint it or move it or heavy and thick. Those gestures create texture. All of that creates sound. So to take those two and put them together and realize that what I'm doing as a conductor is I'm painting sound. So how do you paint the colors in which you want and the intensity in which you want. You see intensity in painting, you see it visually. Now we have to do it physically without that sound.

Grice: Yeah, that's great. Do you use the Laban method when teaching conducting?

Rand: You know what, I have not. However, I am getting more and more into that because I think it's a process that I need to understand more, but I was never taught Laban. I came from it from a total different idea of a visual art side. I think Laban is a great way to verbalize it if you're not a painter or sculptor.

Grice: Right, that's why I asked that because you were talking about all of the art and you're talking about the stroke. I thought oh that sounds like Laban.

Rand: It does, but I came from it from a totally different aspect from the visual arts side and the sculpting side.

Grice: Yeah, I think that gives you a great perspective, probably a different perspective than most people that are conductors. Do you have any rituals that you do before concerts? Do you have any routines or activities to help keep your body and mind at its highest?

Rand: One ritual I do before every concert is to find a quiet place and relax my mind prior to walking into even the concert hall, so I could focus on what we are there to do. Having a quiet soul and trying to move towards that before I walk on the podium because I do get nervous. I think everybody gets nervous and some of us are very willing to admit that some of us are not. I need to quiet my soul before I do that. Activities to help keep your mind and body at its highest. I think that that fluctuates with me. There are times that I am really good to myself. Like I said earlier about work and life balance and other times I am not. But keeping body and mind at its highest, you know trying to read other things besides music. I love poetry. So, reading more, trying to exercise in a relaxed body I think is helpful. I'll tell you a great story. Here I go with another book, I don't know if you know this book. "Silence: The Power of Quiet in the World Full of Noise" by Thich Nhat Hanh. This book was given to me at a premiere of David Maslanka's *Hosannas* on 10/18/15. It was given to me by David Maslanka who wrote on the opening page - "For Catherine, with a prayer for peace and powerful quiet, David Maslanka *Hosannas* 10/18/15." Because my mind, our minds are constantly going with all the things that are going on in the world and all the things and stresses that are in our job. Trying to find that peace and that quietness is important.

Grice: Would you consider him one of your role models and mentors?

Rand: You know I talked to him a little bit, but not as much as I should have. But I understand him at least for where my understanding and my journey in my life was at, at that point in time. I would say that he would be somebody that I looked up to for that peacefulness even though he had to go through such a journey to get to that point of peacefulness in his life.

Grice: How important is leadership as a quality for any conductor? Were there any leadership roles that you held as a young student in high school or college that you think helped your career pathway? I know you mentioned drum major.

Rand: I think leadership is extremely important for conductors because you have to be a piper of people. This all goes back to everything else; we have a lot of stress on our lives to constantly be at a certain musical level. That is hard to do 32 years later, some people achieve it well. It's at times difficult, but leadership is extremely important. Being that leader that is a giver constantly and being able to gather people constantly is extremely important. Leadership roles, high school of course drum major and first chair French horn; college first chair French horn, I was president of our Kappa Kappa Psi chapter, and president of Alpha Chi Omega sorority. I did all that. I was always involved in those kinds of leadership roles. WBDI, Women Band Directors International, I'm the immediate Past President, but I had been Vice President, President Elect, President. That is, by the way, a wonderful group of women that have made I think an important part of my life as well.

Grice: Okay, great. What should young conductors be sure to always and never do?

Rand: Don't be afraid to ask for help. Always ask for help. Learn how to build community and learn how to build a community of those you respect, and learn how to build relationships. Never stop learning.

Grice: You've already spoke on several of these, but what experiences/organizations shaped your career? (military, non-musical jobs, travel), and are any of them specifically female-oriented?

Rand: Women Band Directors International, and that's been probably 8-10 years as part of my career. It's shaped my career, networking, and getting to know other women and that brings along opportunity. There have been two different experiences that have really helped me as I look back at my career. The experiences were given to me by students. One when I was Director of Bands at Florida International University. I had one student from the Cayman Islands. She and I created an organization that brought students from FIU to the Cayman Islands to teach young kids from 5 years old to 14 as well as directors. I worked with the directors as well as the kids. But it was a 5-prong curriculum: international music, technology, world music, making instruments, and playing Orff instruments. And just seeing what these kids could do – the program emphasis was working with underprivileged students. So being able to give back was tremendous. That's one and being able to see that there are so many people that want to learn, they just needed to be given the opportunity. The other is at Southern Miss. I have a student that I've been working we go to Ecuador and work with students as well as from other countries. Young students as well as older college students in Ecuador. It's opened my eyes worldwide with

how small we really are and that the opportunities that we have in the US and the opportunities that other people have in other countries. It's been amazing. Absolutely amazing.

Grice: From your bio can you tell me a little bit about your research on balancing artistry and education?

Rand: Very well. While teaching in high school band or middle school band, many of us have forgotten ourselves as an artist. Most often we play this, play that, play it softer, and so we're giving all our students all of these mixed signals. And really it is balancing artistry, it is getting back into the one reason why you became a musician. Why did you want to become a conductor?

Grice: Are you asking me or are you saying?

Rand: Yeah, why? Why did you want to become a conductor?

Grice: My mother has been a music ed professor at universities, so I come from a very musical family. But my specific thing for conducting besides loving being drum major in high school, would have been Mallory Thompson conducted an All-State band I was in. She was a female and that did have a big impact on me. She was the first female, well my high school band director was female, but the first conductor in an honor group that was female and she conducted *Gandalf, Lord of the Rings*. Just the power that she was showing and the power that was coming out of the brass from behind. I remember on the All-State concert, I stopped playing for a second because it was the first time I remember having that aesthetic feeling, just the chill bumps and I remember looking at her going, that's what I'm going to do. So yeah, that was my moment.

Rand: That's the artistry. You wanted the artistry you wanted to create that sound and that power and that energy. It wasn't about the education of your students where you're pounding in a beat. You yourself have to be the artist to have your students also follow with you. I think that we forget about that and we forget why we got into teaching originally and it gets lost in the mundane part of what we do as conductors. You have to get to state festival or regional festival or district festival and so you're pounding in this stuff and you have forgotten the artistry of what you do. What is the most important thing to you, and that is to create music. And so your love of that music has to penetrate your students. It has to be able to be given to them so you have to show it every day. It is not about forcing anything. It's about this joint aspect between your students and you creating the art.

Grice: That's great. Do you have any thoughts or comments to add that were not addressed in any of the previous questions?

Rand: Looking at all the questions that you had asked originally and then the role model information and sample interviews. I think you did a great job.⁹⁹

Grice: Thank you. Thank you so much for meeting with me today and for all of the advice. I really appreciate it. Have a great day.

⁹⁹ Catherine Rand, personal interview (Google Meet: 12 July, 2021).

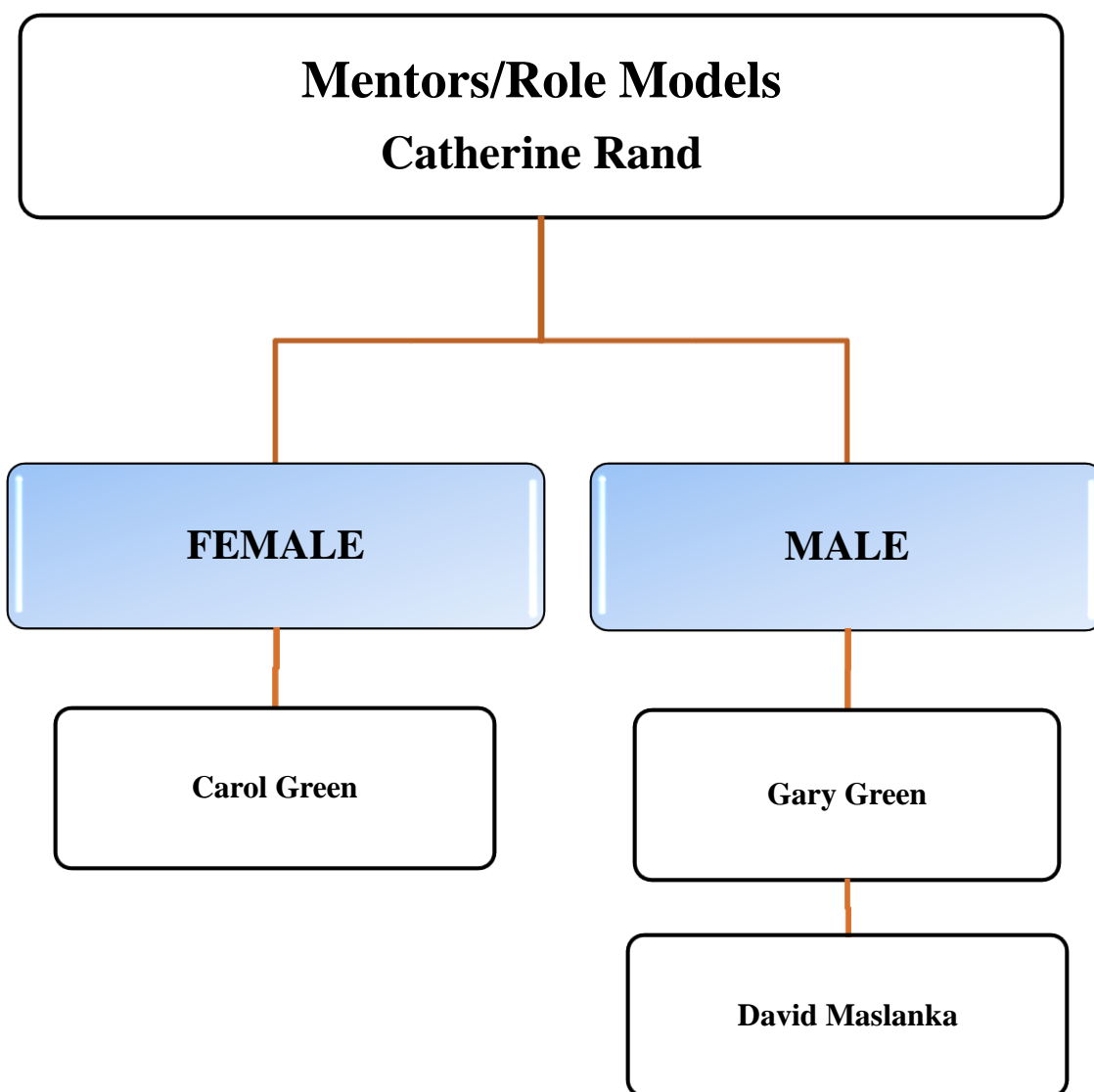


Figure 6. Mentors/Role Models of Catherine Rand.

Catherine Rand Profile

Current Collegiate Position: Associate Director of Bands at the University of Southern Mississippi

Previous Collegiate Positions:

Director of Bands at Florida International University

Director of Bands at the University of South Carolina - Aiken

Degrees:
 BME, University of Tampa
 MM, University of South Florida
 Conducting
 DMA, University of Miami
 Wind Conducting

Courtney Snyder Interview

Grice: Hi, thank you so much for coming on this morning. Before we start I need to make this statement. Do you Courtney Snyder give your consent to have your voice video recorded during this interview for the purposes of my doctoral research?

Snyder: I do.

Grice: Could you please begin by telling me your musical journey? For example, things like: Why did you choose to play your instrument and that specific instrument? What were your experiences as a student in public schools and in college? When did you know you wanted to be a conductor? What were the influences that led you to your professional career?

Snyder: I'll try to be as succinct as I can. I'll just go in order here. I grew up playing piano by ear. I had a desire to play. I certainly sang a lot as well. I'm the youngest in my family and my brother and sister took piano and they assumed that since they hated it, the youngest would hate it too. That was wrong, completely. When I got into third grade, they started string instruments, so I actually started playing violin. I picked violin not because I should have truthfully, but because I was just hungry. I did not come from a musical family. Nobody played an instrument, so I just I just wanted to do it so I started playing violin. Having a bit of foundation on piano, meant I understood how it worked. I mean, piano is a really great instrument for that, right? You can see it and you can feel it. So, violins are also like that too, you can feel all the steps, once you understand how it works. You just have to then get proficient at it, which is a different situation. I continued doing choir and orchestra. I only went into band in high school, and I really did it through marching band. My friends were all in band and so I ended up playing several different instruments throughout that time while I continued to play violin. I ultimately started taking voice lessons, so when I went to college, I was a voice major. I thought I was going to teach high school choir. So that was my initial kind of start there. Really, I just was never on the right instrument. My parents didn't give me piano lessons or have me take piano lessons. I just did a lot of self-learning, but I could play and read both clefs so the bulk of my study was on my own until I got to college and started studying more. Piano probably should have been the primary instrument if I would've started at four like I probably should have. I did percussion and I really loved that and I have a good knack for that as well. I got to trombone when I was in college, and that's where I really found out that that's the instrument I really love. It's funny all my friends were brass guys. Having played all these soprano instruments was nice, but I realized I really liked the brass sound and I really liked the lower tenor voice. I even like bass trombone in some ways. I have a lot of appreciation for a good bass trombone player.

Grice: That's very interesting that it wasn't until college where you found that love for that instrument.

Snyder: Yeah, it was definitely unusual. After all of that, I found that I gravitate toward; piano, percussion, and trombone. Those are the ones that I feel speak to me.

Grice: Was percussion what you played in the high school marching band?

Snyder: Yeah, I played in high school marching band. I played percussion a fair amount of times in bands as well. Actually it was funny, one conducting symposium that I participated in as participant I played percussion. This is when I was an undergrad as a voice major. My band director who was sitting in the back and I was playing the bass drum and he says, that was like incredible bass drum playing. I was in the zone and really listening. It's a different thing when you're in percussion in the back, how you listen and how you incorporate yourself into the sound. I like that aspect of percussion. Also, I'm a left handed person who also does things right handed. So switching back and forth is never a problem for me. I think there's just a physical comfort that comes from that evenhandedness. Although, drumset would be fabulous and I can't do drumset. That's a whole different level of skill. So yeah, that's rather odd. In some ways I feel like I was a jack of all trades, master of none. Going through the experience of playing all these different instruments really let me know how instruments work. It kind of sparked the technical side of my brain and having adept ability to sing meant I could model things really well with my voice in front of the podium. I'm also recognizing what things I did well and what things I didn't like such as trumpet. I'm not a high brass player. I appreciate all those people who could do that, but no I'm not the best player. When I went into college I was focused on voice, so I was singing in choir for those first two years. I was really focused but I missed the instrumental component, so I decided that I wanted to get back to it and I pulled back out my violin. I felt most confident on that instrument so I auditioned to be in orchestra and that's when I started playing again. Then it was my junior year that I really found out that I loved trombone through brass methods class. Just realizing, oh my gosh, this instant and immediately like for the trombone. I could make a really good sound and I just had that ability and a good embouchure for it. The infinite pitch thing I already had experience with on violin, so that certainly helped train my ear. So I continued as a voice major, but I only participated in instrumental ensembles from that point on and I really knew I wasn't going to be a choir teacher.

Grice: So did you finish your undergrad with a choral degree.

Snyder: I was a vocal music ed major, but I never took choral conducting. I took only instrumental. We're certified K-12. We had to take all the methods classes anyway and yeah, I never looked back. It was more of me deciding "do I want to do band or orchestra?" not "do I want to do instrumental or vocal?" The question of when did you know you wanted to be a conductor? I think I knew it before I ever started studying conducting. I always had a fascination with it even when I was in high school. There was just something about it that I knew I would like it. We took conducting in our junior year, and I was just so excited to learn it. I knew I would like it before I ever did it. I was super excited. It was more like "I finally get to do this" versus a realization that that's what I wanted. The more that I did it, the more I was stoked. There are so many different things that I like; the element of score study, the energy of the music, really

trying to figure out what all that is and ingest it and interpret it. Plus, I like the physical movement as well, and I liked training my body how to communicate better. So really to me it just fits all the things that I liked doing already. What were influences that led you to your professional career? I mean, in many ways there's a lot of the things that I've mentioned. Really the path that changed it obviously was when I was in undergrad deciding that I wanted to really do instrumental. I think probably in part because I went to school, Jack Stamp was like the kind of 'it' person at our school, he was the one most known. He was really out there and doing things. He was the instrumental beginning conducting teacher. So having him as a teacher and just being really inspired by him was really helpful. I mean that certainly had an impact. Again, I mean, anybody might have been there, but he was the person that was there and he saw something in me as well, and so that certainly helped. I took four semesters of conducting before I went and student taught. I took way more conducting than what's normal, in part because he made himself available, he ended up teaching at the third level, conducting a third class because there were so many of us that wanted it. Then I did an independent study with him.

Grice: Oh wow, that's great.

Snyder: Yeah, so I guess it's probably the biggest influence and it was in that undergrad time that I realized I really like college. I like this level. I like this atmosphere. I feel like it was probably the first place I felt like I could be me. I really excelled and found out I liked it more. In high school I was doing all the music stuff and I was doing well, but I was never the best or someone who stood out as the shining star. Whereas a lot of people were like, yeah, this other person is definitely going to do that, nobody would have thought I was going to become a band director. That would not have been on their mindset. It was clear that I was interested in music, but it was in college when people started recognizing, that I had something I was good at and something I could contribute. That's probably a big element of that.

Grice: Great, as you reflect on your journey please describe your early role models? Describe your role models later in your career and any current role models.

Snyder: You know it's funny as I look back, I often don't think about who my role models are as a kid. I think in many ways one is probably my father. In particular, in high school, I really saw a pretty big change in my father. I think that had a big effect on me. It's a positive change, so seeing how he kind of navigated challenges to come out better, I think, had a dramatic impact on me. I'm the youngest in the family and I was daddy's little girl. So, I think that would put him in that realm of being probably my largest role model. In some ways, maybe that's a good thing, because being in a male-dominated field it was like I was comfortable being mentored by men. I felt like I had more similarities with my dad than my mom. Not that I'm not similar to my mom, but my dad and I just have a different personality, we're more like each other. When I got into high school, I don't think anybody completely stood out. It's funny, I had two math teachers when I was looking at colleges. I actually decided I want to be a teacher before I knew what I wanted to do. So I was looking at math education and music education. Ultimately, you know what I chose, but I think two of my math teachers, my Trig teacher, Mrs. Sawyer, and my Calc teacher, Mr. Walker, were both pretty strong mentors. They were great teachers. They had a really good rapport with their students, and they were people that I admired and so they were definitely up there.

Grice: Out of curiosity were they male or female?

Snyder: One each, my Trig teacher was a female and my Calc teacher was a male. My choral teacher, we definitely all loved her, but it's so funny when I look back on it. She's a fabulous pianist, but she wasn't as good a conductor as my orchestral conductor teacher. She really helped ground me with a solid foundation, I just didn't quite see it then. She was a great teacher.

Grice: What was her name?

Snyder: Shirley Miller. She was our orchestra teacher. She just had a quirky kind of personality that sometimes students didn't gravitate towards. She was the person that played commissioning works and it was those great works. My favorite composer, even when I was in high school, was Stravinsky. I got to play *Firebird Suite* with her and through county orchestras and things like that. I was already an instrumental person before I realized and even more. A modernist. I mean the fact that Stravinsky was a composer that I liked, says something. But I liked more contemporaries, he's not contemporary by any stretch today, but certainly growing up he felt more contemporary. Certainly, Jack Stamp at my undergrad, was without a question, probably my most influential mentor in terms of the path that I chose and is still the person that I talk to and write to bounce ideas off of. Mike Haithcock was my teacher as well and obviously I work with him too. He's definitely still a mentor to me as well. So in the career, it's still those two. I certainly have more peer people that I look to bounce off ideas as well and that's very helpful, just building relationships as well. We have a group of band director moms that text each other regularly - what do you think about this, or what do you, what about, how should I write this, just to be able to develop those ideas. It's nice to have that kind of camaraderie with people in the field.

Grice: Do you think your career path would have been different if you had more female mentors besides one of your math teachers and orchestra director? In what ways do you serve as a mentor to your students and graduates?

Snyder: Well, the first thing is I had some, but in the field of band I certainly didn't. In many ways I was kind of opposed to it. I didn't feel like I needed to reach out to women, which was probably not right. Well no, it wasn't really right. There are things that were important that I kind of learned the hard way because I just didn't have any understanding that I would even experience sexism yet alone how to navigate it. But there were also so few women that I knew of at the time. I can't say I missed out or didn't do anything because of that. It's hard to say that right? I mean, I am where I am. I can't really go back and change it. I do think that when I was teaching high school, it would have been really great to have a female mentor in that capacity. Man, if I had studied with a cooperating teacher who was female that would have been helpful. That's where I experienced the most amount of pushback from being a female director, and I definitely would have felt like I learned a lot if I had a female mentor in that capacity. But, I definitely did not have that in in the band world for sure.

Grice: In what ways do you serve as a mentor to your students?

Snyder: Well, for one I serve as an advisor out at the school for all the doctoral students in conducting, so I'm already kind of there able to help them get grounded within the program itself and know what things are coming up. I'm not the primary teacher here, so I don't have students that come and study directly with me, but I am the person that the undergrads get experience with. So, when I have students that are really interested in being band directors, they'll take my classes and I get to know them pretty well, and I can see what their gifts are and help them. I do build relationships with them. I know that there are a lot of my female students who specially want to be high school directors or even teach beyond that. They do tend to gravitate towards me. Honestly, in that area I definitely struggled with that when I was younger. I wanted a family and I didn't see that role modeled at all from any female directors at all. In college I just didn't see any woman in a position that I wanted, that had children who had a family. So, they do have those questions and they often will come and ask me about it. Even the female grad students. I do get to know them all. They work with me as kind of understudies and shadow conductors for what I do. They help lead sectionals. So, I'm working with them in other capacities and I'm helping them and advising them with regard to like how they write and getting in feedback on their conducting. They've all asked questions about either things related to what my interests are that they're interested in. But also, like how do you manage this stuff like what is it like to take a maternity leave or just those basic things that you just can't really ask a guy?

Grice: Since we're on that topic right now I'm going to skip questions, but what advice do you have for young conductors on balancing work and life outside of work?

Snyder: Well, I think the idea that you're going to have complete balance is probably a farce. It's always this kind of ebb and flow. The most important thing is for you to find what balances you. For example, if you need to have more time away from the job then you have to find a job that allows you to have that. If you really want to get a lot of work, then you can find a job that fits that. Granted we can all find jobs and we can get a ton of work too, but you have to find a place where you can recognize what that balance is that makes you feel good about what it is you're contributing. Because we know that if we have too many negative elements, they don't balance out. They don't over balance the positive ones and so you feel really comfortable. In particular to regards to family, you have to have a supportive partner, just period. I think part of the reason why I've worked with fewer women is just because the role of the father figure. The partner often didn't take responsibility for the children and managing the home and taking care of it. It was all generally put on the woman's responsibility. If you don't have that kind of supportive person who recognizes that you're going to have strange hours and this on time that you just need to be there and present for. You're in front of a lot of people, right? You're speaking in front of people and you're also in a male-dominated field so you're going to be around a bunch of men. You just have to have a partner that is good with that and be completely comfortable. I travel and my husband has to be okay doing his job while he's also taking care of kids. He does that and that's not a problem. He doesn't see that as "that's your job." It's very much that partnership, and I think if you didn't have that, it would be really hard, especially if you have kids. You just hire an au pair, then maybe it could be taken care of if you have enough money.

Grice: On a personal note, did you wait until after you got your doctorate or your first college job to have kids? Did you specifically have in mind I'm going to wait until this time in my life to have kids?

Snyder: No, honestly, I just got married late so it was more like I didn't find a person that I wanted to marry till I was 35 and we got married four days before my 36th birthday. We knew we wanted to have kids, so we would have to try right away because I was considered geriatric at this point in time. He's older than me too, so none of us had kids and we wanted to so it was pretty much let's just try to have kids. I just happen to have two at the same time, so I have two and that's it. I have twin girls. I was 37 when I had them. So you know that was just kind of out of necessity, because we both wanted to so I didn't want to wait for something. Because I met him at the age I was, I was already teaching college, so I already had my degree. I don't think if I look back on my younger self that wasn't how I wanted it. I would have gotten married earlier. You have to find the right person and I'm glad I waited to find the right person rather than just get married for the sake of getting married and having all that stuff to deal with.

Grice: Describe your experiences that you believe related to you being a woman. What supports and what barriers have you faced that you believed were/are related to your gender? Thinking about your conducting career, tell me about experiences where you felt, if you did unequal treatment when compared to your male peers? How did you respond?

Snyder: So in many ways, if I'm thinking about at least coming up in in the career, I felt like I had a good support system. I didn't feel ever that I had mentors that treated me differently. They just saw me for who I was and were good quality people. So both in terms of the people I studied with, both being Jack Stamp and Michael Haithcock, they were just good people who had integrity who just treated all their students well. They could see what was in them and helped inspire them. The challenge would be is I did question a lot like what my life would look like because I knew I wanted to be married and have kids. I mean, that's something I always wanted, even when I was younger, so that never changed just because I got a career. Having a support system that I could really ask those kind of questions was not right in place there, so that was always a bit of a struggle. I don't think they would even think that I probably had those questions because they never did. They both chose different paths because Jack Stamp chose to never have children and then Mike did, but they were both married. They could have chosen that path, it was no big deal for them to choose either path. It felt like more of a big deal to me, it's just I didn't know how to communicate that. So I feel like in my own education I didn't really feel like there were barriers for me. When I started teaching high school, I started to experience all things that I just honestly had no idea, you hear about those, but I didn't expect to experience them. So even in my very first job, I was told even before the summer that I only got hired because I was a female. That was the first time that I was like deliberately belittled, that I didn't deserve to be there. They thought I was just filling in, as a tokenism kind of thing. It's funny, because I didn't believe it. I knew my own strengths, but to hear that and know that that's how people perceived me, was really surprising. Not being trusted by the parents at that school in the way that they trusted the male band director just before me, who's not even I think 10 years older than me. But to see that sort of weirdness because I was a younger woman I just didn't have what it took. I clearly didn't fit that role. In other places weren't like that, but I definitely felt that in my first job without a question. Those parent's experiences mean their kids are also experiencing that because they're creating that culture at home. That was not a fun time in my life. I'll just be honest. I did not enjoy that job. I learned a lot and I learned a lot about myself. More so than anything.

Grice: How many years did you stay in that environment?

Snyder: I was there for two years and I really left to go find another job. It definitely made me question am I cut out for this? I had many conversations with both Jack Stamp and Michael Haithcock. They're like, "no, that's not true. You can totally do this, but maybe it's just not the right place." And that ultimately was the truth. It was just not the right place. There were some nefarious things that went on in terms of strange insubordination and strange backstabbing behaviors going on from colleagues who were male. But there were also mistakes from me being a little too trusting and probably should have had more savvy. Also me wondering "am I reading that accurately?" You know those kinds of things. I definitely think in some ways it was related to me being younger. Being really, really good at what I did, but also just not having that wealth of experience having taught in other places. But then also being female and having that young female thing was definitely an issue. I think if I was a fair amount older, it wouldn't have been the same, but having both of those two was like two strikes in that environment. That experience, I definitely would have had a different experience if I had been a man. Every job I've been in, I've always had somebody at some point, less so here, but at some point going up to the assistant with mostly marching band, and go up to the male assistant to talk to him like he's the band director. They don't even realize that I am. Thankfully all of them were like "she's the director." But that's just a funny thing to have happen, and I think every woman I've talked with has had the same experience at some point. I don't know anybody who hasn't. Also, getting those conversations such as some older guy or former band director pulls up to the school and says can I talk to the band director and I say this is she. Then they say, "you?" That's kind of innocuous and not a big deal. It's more those personal relationships where someone really questions you. Those would be the big ones to me.

Grice: Tell me about moments that were critical in your career, specifically what they were and what meaning did you make from them? Did you have a defining moment where you decided you wanted to be a conductor, you've already talked about how there wasn't one defining moment, but was there a time that shifted your journey?

Snyder: You know that first job was certainly critical in my path, because it could have been a time where I just turned away. I think if I was somebody else, I might very well have said I don't want to teach and would have just walked away from the profession all together. But I had enough peer support system around me and my mentors for me to realize this was the place I was and not the job and not just me. So that was certainly important, and I felt a lot stronger having gone through it. I mean I was at ulcer stage of stress, and I lost quite a bit of weight because I couldn't eat because I was such a knot. That and knowing I stayed in the profession made me think okay I can handle it. At times it's embarrassing when it doesn't work and so having to kind of navigate those sort of issues. I have to stand up amidst the issue of going through a shame spiral and learning how to navigate that and get my own value, even though I was experiencing conflict, was important for me to go through. I also started the process of learning what is me and what was the other person. Learning how to take responsibility for the things that you need to, but then also recognizing that's really on the other person. That's not a me issue and I shouldn't be trying to fix it when it's not my problem. You know that was a good life skill to learn and I took that with me. The other defining moment was when I took my second job up to Michigan. I was teaching over here and then I moved over here. I taught in Ypsilanti, which is a neighboring

town to Ann Arbor. I taught there for four years. I found a program that really fit my philosophy of music education at the high school level. I also was teaching in a predominantly minority school, so that really helped me learn a lot about students who grew up in a different culture than me. Realizing that I was looking at them through my own lens until I recognized that I had to change my lens. All of a sudden, things really changed, so that really helped my perspective and recognizing that my lens is not the only lens to look through. Then ultimately, I was there right beside the University of Michigan and was like, “well, when can I go back to school?” I wanted to finish a group of students, I wanted to get a group of freshmen and graduate them. So, I ended up staying there for four years and then it just felt like the time was right to be able to move on. So those are definitely big defining moments within my career. Another one that is a critical moment was when I was teaching here in my third year and going through the tenure process can be very stressful. You're trying to figure out what the expectations are on you and anytime they're murky, you know it usually causes you to get a bit stressed out or get depressed and what not. Sometimes it's purposefully that way, the tenure process can be very funny in sort of being a little bit too ambiguous. But I remember coming into a place where I was really questioning everything and going through that struggle and again, I had a moment of like “do I want to stay in this profession or do I want to leave?” Through that experience I realized I have something unique to bring to the table, instead of always focusing on my weaknesses and what things I needed to make better and always kind of looking at myself through the failure lens saying here's where I'm not matching up. I changed that and started looking at myself saying, “what do I have to bring the table and that nobody else does?” Because to me, that's why we're all part of the greater body of our profession, I can see where the gaps can fill in. I have this ability to be perceptive about things and I have this skill set to bring forward. That really changed my own confidence level and it changed where I felt like I fit within the profession instead of constantly negatively judging myself. So that was also a critical point I think in my career too.

Grice: What are some of your greatest triumphs?

Snyder: Some of those things that I just said and I learned a lot from them. It's even funny little silly things. The moments where in conducting in particular, I can learn just to let go and stop focusing on myself and just be in that zone. Having those experiences to me were great triumphs along the way. It teaches you how to be accepting of yourself a lot more and just to take yourself where you are. Those are even greater triumphs. I mean, my groups have played at big conferences and what not, and those are great accolades and I feel good about them and I'm proud of what we did, but I feel like the greater triumphs are when you realize your purpose and feel like you've learned something and grown up stronger from them. I kind of take those as more of greater triumphs.

Grice: What were some of your tribulations and we've already talked about some of those? What kind of constraints and/or obstacles have you had to overcome and how did you deal with them? What sacrifices have you made to achieve your successes?

Snyder: Well, I certainly mentioned a few of the tribulations, so I probably got those covered. I think the obstacles in every situation in coming through the obstacle was having a support system around you. Having people that can give you perspective, and not just be there and give you falsities like “you're going be okay.” To really give you truth and tell you when something

isn't right that you need to fix, but then also say this isn't on you. I can think of those more darker moments of those tribulations knowing the people that came around me to support me, it made a huge difference in helping me. Honestly, sometimes they can give you perspective that you just didn't see and then all of a sudden when you see it, you're like "oh my gosh, I get it". Then all of a sudden you can solve the problem because now you have a perspective that you just didn't have before. You just needed to shed light on that one thing. To me that's the greatest thing, that why community is so important because you have to have those people around you who can give you perspective that you just can't see. So it's always been that I think and having your support system of your family, who are the people that love you no matter what and will be there when you feel like a failure, but will also be there to support you when you feel like a true success. Some sacrifices are you have to be willing to move around, that's for sure. Even when I had met my husband, when we were dating initially, I told him I'm probably not going to stay here are you going to be okay moving. That's something that also goes along with that support system. You have to know when you're a college band director, until you find your home, most likely you're going to have to literally pick up and move to some other part of the country. That certainly is a sacrifice. It puts me farther away from my own family and generally speaking you want your kids to have access to their grandparents and things like that. So those are probably the quote end quote sacrifices.

Grice: Are there other aspects of your identities (race, instrument you play, age) that you believe influenced your triumphs and tribulations in your career?

Snyder: I mean, I mentioned before about my own gender and age certainly being an issue at first. It's hard for me to say, I mean I'm white so I probably come from a lot more privilege. I don't have that element that plays against me in the way that certainly could for other people who are bipoc. It's hard for me to say, I think the instrument I play because my identity wasn't just about my instrument because I was playing so many and also doing things that didn't quite fit me. I don't know. I do think that even when I was at Baylor when I did my masters, I was in the trombone studio and my teacher was male and every other person in the studio was male. I was comfortable with them. I mean it was kind of funny sometimes because when you're the only woman in a group of men like that, I think I'm silly, sometimes they definitely relate to each other in ways that women don't typically do. So, I kind of got an insight into that, but I didn't feel like an outsider. I just definitely knew that there were times that I had a different perspective on it than what they did, but I think that also made me feel comfortable. It's like I knew that I could be okay with a group of men and they were all good to me. Even my conducting studio, they were all male as well. I didn't have any female colleagues until I got to the University of Michigan to study in the DMA program there. So, I think being a low brass player certainly put me in more contact with men, sad as it is because it shouldn't be that way. When I was in college I just made friends with guys pretty easily, it felt more comfortable, most of my friends were guys. So that probably had an element to do with it. I think being a brass player probably is advantageous especially in the band world because that's where a lot of band directors come from, and it's not traditionally female. I mean horn is probably the only instrument in the brass family that has the most representation of women. But yeah, there's probably a bit of an advantage there being comfortable in that space, plus you're the loudest people in the group. Well percussion is pretty loud too.

Grice: What would you change, if anything if you could go back? What would you tell the beginner conducting you?

Snyder: Oh, this is so funny because I'm even thinking so much about this more recently. The beginner conductor, there are a couple things that I would say. One is conducting is not about you. Yes, you want to be good at it, but your whole job is to get that ensemble to be a unit and to play and to feel welcomed and accepted. Your job is to let every single one of those people know that you see them, you hear them, and you want them to be part of that group. I think so much of it was me focusing on myself doing a good job. Learning how to let go of that, I would have loved to learn how to let go of that a lot sooner, not that I'm perfect at it by any stretch. The other thing that I would have done with this is maybe a strange thing to say, is I was so trained in movable 'Do' and get yourself trained in fixed 'Do' and start reading your clefs. Just get really good at transposing by clef instead of by intervals. Just for score study's sake and just becoming really fluent in that. I can read tenor clef because of my trombone experience, but like the other clefs took me a long time. Just get your mezzo soprano clef down so you can read things like that. The other step I would have loved to have had that experience, that more conservatory based mindset. The American mindset is movable 'Do', and I'm only recently a fixed 'Do' convert. I never thought I would be, so that's an unusual thing to say. But if I could go back and start again and really get invested in that, then I think I would have a different perspective on even score study today. So those would be the things.

Grice: What advice would you have for women entering the field of collegiate conducting?

Snyder: The first thing you have to do is be excellent at your craft. You just have to work to be the absolute best you can. Second, know what you have to bring to the table. Assess yourself for your strengths, not just your weaknesses. Don't always look for your deficiencies, look for what you have to bring and maximize that strength. That is something you bring to the table, so your job is to hone in on that and really let that shine. The other would be that element of know what's on you and what's not on you. I don't know if you've ever watched Ted Lasso. If you haven't, you need to watch Ted Lasso, it's such a ridiculously good show. But I was watching this one segment of the show that is so darn good. It's about using a quote from Walt Whitman that says 'Be curious, not judgmental'. That mindset of not always going to the judgment of things, but just go for the knowledge. What are you learning? What things do you see? Instead of immediately judging it, just be curious about it. That in and of itself, once you start to recognize that it teaches you how to view yourself, it teaches you how you view others, and it teaches you how to view others viewing you. I think so many times we have that other person sitting outside of us judging us all the time. Learning how to let go of that is a really big deal and I think it's bigger for women because we're just trained to be within our society. There's a lot of focus on how we quote unquote look. There's a focus on fitting in and don't be too much of this or too much of that. Those are some constraints that our society puts on women. You just have to kind of learn how to put in perspective or at least know they exist so that when they come at you, you understand what's again on you and what's not. I think about some of my students who are undergrads, they're the ones who are the most unconfident, and are oftentimes my women students, my female students. That just punches me in the gut, I hate seeing that. But you can see that there's such a vulnerability that you have to have when you conduct. You have to be comfortable with your arms out like this, which is a very vulnerable position. All those people

are looking at you and you just have to be okay in that space. You have to find whatever means you can possibly do to get to that place. But I think it comes ultimately from you building up your core element. I could face the elements that came at me because I felt like I had a strong foundation and I was confident enough in my skills. If I wasn't, I would have really been obliterated.

Grice: Just kind of to add on to that. When you say that some of the most insecure students are women, how do you help them get past that?

Snyder: I mean one is finding out what the element is. Okay, let's assess what are you thinking about right now. I'm judging myself. Okay, so let's put that aside, where do you want to continue working? Helping them hone in on where their thought processes is and then helping to shine a little light to bring their awareness to it. When you're aware, you can actually start to do something about it. Just giving them experiences and really showcasing them when they do it, that was it. Giving them that extra boost and I mean in some ways you kind of have to keep putting them in that place to allow themselves to experience that success while they're being vulnerable, so they realize taking risk is okay. It's letting them know, the world is still going to spin if you screw up that 4/4 pattern, or you know whatever. It's okay. Sometimes having moments of humor can also be helpful in there. Sometimes it's just helping them along the way and has nothing to do with what's on the podium. It's going to that what do you want to do? What do you have to bring to the table? What do you feel comfortable with? Where do you feel your gifts are, your purpose? If they can realize that they have that to bring to the table instead of focusing on that deficit thinking, I think that will also help build their confidence.

Grice: Do you think for a lot of them it is a physical thing of not feeling comfortable? For example, things you mentioned such as the arms outstretched and stuff? Do you think for a lot of them it's that physical aspect?

Snyder: Well, there's a lot that goes into conducting. Especially when you're teaching beginning conducting, they're already pretty well-versed in music, but then all of a sudden you're putting them in a space where they just aren't physically versed. So you have a brain that says I should be able to do this, but I can't do this. So you end up with your brains just going honestly in hyper overdrive. It's like you can't focus on the music when it's focused on all of that. So kind of breaking it down to okay, well here are the elements that helps you practice that. Here's how you build up this skill. So that you don't have to be constantly judging yourself and unwinding every element while you're conducting. It's just too much to do.

Grice: Okay, great. What advice or changes would you have for the field of conducting in general?

Snyder: It'd be nice if it still wasn't considered to be this masculine thing. The field conducting is broader because it's not just band this could be any of it. Choir conductors probably don't feel the same way because there's so many more women female choir directors than anything else. One is just recognizing you don't need to look a certain way, even gesturally. Music is music. Music doesn't have a gender. It doesn't even have an identity, it just is. So being able to just accept the gesture for whatever it is and whatever it looks on the podium the biggest thing is

about what it sounds like, not what it looks like. So who cares what it looks like on the podium if it sounds good. I think if we could get to that point of recognizing that the visual component of conducting is only to enhance the aural aspect of what the ensemble sounds like. That's the most important thing. I wish we would stop being stuck on the physical visual thing. We're in a visual society, so we tend to value visual over everything of our senses. But I would love that to be a change where we just focus on sound instead of how it looks. But also musical sound, not just that sounds really well balanced, but like music? The other thing would be to say that we are musicians first and foremost, and it's the core part of your musicianship that you're bringing to the table here. That it's not about again the joy of making a pattern and doing that, because again, it's not on you. It's not about the conductor, it's about what you have internally to help those musicians. Ultimately again you're only as good as you're able to bring the best out of the people in front of you. How do those students feel included? How do they feel valued? Not just can they play well, but what's the community of your group? How are you bringing them together? Or are you just pushing them away like what we used to do, that sort of tyrant mentality. Such as you have to move down a chair because you didn't play that well. That sort of demeaning aspect, you will do it my way. That's not a conductor's role. It shouldn't be a dictatorship.

Grice: Did you ever teach in the public schools? We know you did, but what grade levels and number of years? Also, how valuable do you think public school teaching experience is for the collegiate conductor?

Snyder: So I taught in the public schools for six and a half years. Actually, I graduated from undergrad in four and a half, so I taught general music elementary music for one semester before I went and continued on with my master's degree. But really, six years as an instrumental music teacher. For my first job, I was teaching middle school and high school band along with teaching high school orchestra. My second job which I was there for four years, I was just teaching high school band. I had three concert bands, jazz band, and marching band. I also did the pit for musicals and those kind of things outside of classes.

Grice: Where did that fall in going back to get your masters?

Snyder: My masters was before that. So when I graduated with my masters then I started teaching high school and middle school. I think it's really valuable to have public school teaching experience. There are pros and cons to it when it goes to teaching college, sometimes just because they're such easy places to get into bad habits. I think in many ways in the public school the teacher is generating so much of the work that you end up taking responsibility for everything. Which is kind of what our public school is doing just in general with the whole teaching to the test kind of thing. When I look at my conducting video, I'm like, oh my goodness gracious, you would think I didn't even have a degree in conducting at that point. You could just see that I was really working for the students instead of giving that responsibility to them. So learning what that role is can be a little bit tricky when you're just feeling like I just want you to put 3rd position here and 2nd position here. But what you do get is, one you get experience kind of running things, especially if you're the head director. Then you've got to manage the budget of it, you've got to be able to navigate all the elements that come down with running a program, which I think is very valuable. You're dealing with parents as well as students, so you're having to deal with adults, which I think is helpful in teaching college because you're dealing with more adults

as well. You can really learn elements of delegation and all those kind of elements that can really come into play, especially when you have grad students you have to know what's appropriate to delegate and what's appropriate not to. In rehearsals you have to learn every single day you're on a schedule and you only have this much time to do it. I always feel like those students that come into teaching college with a public school background, they're immediately able to run rehearsals confidently. Even if they're in a space where they're like, oh my gosh, these students are way better than the students I've ever taught, which we always experience. I experienced it myself in the doctoral program. I felt like a hack because I wasn't used to being around student's that were that good. You get used to trusting your ears. Our students always really valued that, you could just see it. There's also a lack of ego. You have to know how to stack chairs, fix the stands, you're going to be doing all that stuff, so there's something about that too. You just want to get to work. This is not again about you being on the podium, this is you making the program work. I think that it's really good to be humbled in some ways and just knowing that you have to be the one to get dirty and get it done. I think that makes you better. I was thinking about this pandemic, in our program, in band we were all in person this year, but really small groups. I think it felt like in October that the whole university was on fire, there was just a lot of stuff going on and the numbers for Covid were rising, but not for us. All of my students were showing up, whereas like sometimes in orchestra sometimes part of the students weren't. But all the band kids were showing up. I remember talking to the president, saying, why are we different? There's just something about it that was like we valued the connection, we didn't have an ego established, we just wanted to be there because we loved it. We let go of the other stuff that gets in the way. To me they were great. I think yeah, these are my people. I think it's really valuable.

Grice: How do you think men perceive women in the field of collegiate wind conducting over the years? Do you think the 'Good Ol' Boys' club exists? How do we as women counter that?

Snyder: I think that there are plenty of men who've always been fine with women. They just might not have had a lot of experience with them. Again, my experience with my two mentors were both college teachers and I never suspected there was a problem. I do remember one time, it was funny though, I was actually sitting with Jack Stamp. He did get concerned that people were going to see him sitting with me as inappropriate. I was far removed from being his student at the time, so I remember him saying something like, people are going to think we're together, or something like that. That was something I never really thought about, but it was interesting to know that that went through his mind. It does show that you do have to be thinking about that as well, you don't know how people are going to perceive you and sometimes you have to make sure that you're doing things in appropriate ways that doesn't look inappropriate. It's strange because obviously men don't really have to deal with that with each other, and women vice versa. But when you have that cross gender relations, sometimes it is funny to see how that was perceived. There are certainly times where guys are jerks and think women are weaker or less than. I know of that to have existed. I'm thankful I never really experienced that directly myself. The 'Good Ol' Boys' club certainly is that way. I think it still exists, but less so. There's still just a cliquishness about things. It's funny, in the collegiate world there's the studios, oh, you went to this school and then all those people hang out together. You went to this school, those people hang out together. Generally, it is still pretty male-dominated. I see that and that kind of rubs me the wrong way because I'm like wow, that's really exclusive. There's still an element of because they become buddies and certainly when you have families you just don't have time to be able to

just go out and go have a beer with somebody. I gotta go home and take care of the kids. So I see a little bit of that and I see that kind of bonding and that sort of not reaching out. I had a colleague, maybe it was two years ago, but created this session that was talking about the art of conducting and it was literally all white men. I was kind of initially taken aback by it, whoa, with everything that's going on right now you just can't afford to do that. I said, why didn't you reach out to this person or that person? But his initial response was like, well, I just don't know people. I'm like well then you need to get to know people, because there are lots of excellent women out there. But if you don't know them, then you've got to figure out a way to get to know them. So you realize how easy it is to be insular. Once you have your group of friends, that's who you want to go see when you go to the conferences and whatnot. There has to be a way that we're being better about inviting new people in. Your job needs to be, oh I've heard about this person, I should get to go know her instead of just him. Sometimes I do get kind of tired of seeing the same groups of people. All the guys like we're going to go do this. There's still also an element of how they bond can still be kind of traditional and masculine. The whole going to cigar bars and smoking cigars is pretty masculine. I really don't want to go and smoke cigars because I don't have any interest in putting that kind of stuff in my body or smelling it. That kind of thing probably needs to go, or at least in these professional places we shouldn't be doing that. Studios that do that kind of hang, it's like no. Even if there's a band director group like band directors and bourbon. I do not drink bourbon. But it's really funny how it's like nobody posts as a woman, they're all men. All of them. So they probably have no clue. That's just a very masculine thing to do. I don't sit around my girlfriends and drink bourbon.

Grice: Women and wine!

Snyder: Yeah, I mean or beer. I'm like that would be fine but it's really funny, those little things. I'm like wow, you don't see them until you literally look at the page. I'm going, I don't think I know a single woman who's posted anything on this page. So those kind of things still happen. I think as women to counter that, maybe there has to be more about reaching out, but I think that somebody has to call it out a little bit. Maybe I should do a better job of that so. I'm putting it on the record at this point, but it's hard to figure out how to do that right without being the angry woman. I think also for ourselves, building a community within ourselves. Also, I think it's important, and it's maybe saying, well it's countered to that, but it's like we don't have a good group of people around us too that we can bounce ideas off and to go hang out with and have fun with. You could be one of the guys, and that's how women got along for a long time, is just being one of the guys. Guys like that because they don't have to change. But I think now we need to find ways that are less gendered to work with one another. I think we should create a beer and wine club?

Grice: Do you think more women are applying for collegiate wind band conducting positions and are we succeeding in bridging the gap in male to female conducting positions at the collegiate level?

Snyder: Well for sure we are. I mean there are definitely more women. Holy smokes, there are a lot more women directors at the college level than when I was going through school. Also women who have families too. So it's definitely changing. It's still really small in comparison to the amount of men. We're also getting better at getting more bipoc conductors there as well. Are

we succeeding? We're making progress. We're not fully there yet by any stretch because it's not even close to 50/50. But I do think it's getting better. You're seeing more women, so you can encourage more women. Once you start to see it's like you hit a tipping point of sorts, and then it's like, oh I could see myself in that job. I don't question it because this person's doing that.

Grice: Do you feel that you have ever had to mask your femininity in interviews, dress, language, or on the podium to be respected as a conductor in a male dominated field? If yes, in what ways?

Snyder: It's funny because in many ways, gosh, you know dress is a huge part of being a woman. I hate it. I hate even having to have the conversation, but what do you wear when you're on the podium? I just wish that we all just wore the same thing, like in some ways I kind of just wish our world would just all dress exactly the same. But there's such a different code for women's dress than men's dress. It's annoying and I deal with it even with very young kids, look at the shorts. These kids are four and they have girl shorts and boy shorts. Their bodies aren't even different from one another. That kind of element bothers me, however, I'm relatively conservative in my own dress in general, so I don't feel like I've had to mask, I wouldn't be overtly feminine in general. The jewelry that I wear is just because it stays on me 100% of the time. I feel very comfortable in pant suits, I would never wear a skirt suit. I will wear dresses and I feel pretty comfortable with those. But again, as long as they're covering me up in a way that I feel comfortable myself. So I don't know that I would say that I have to mask my femininity. I have no problem wearing a skirt or wearing a dress. But I wouldn't go to the extreme, there are certain things that I wouldn't wear on the podium. I'm not going to wear a ball gown looking dress to conducting because I just don't think that's appropriate. I would not feel comfortable in that because I'd be like the dress is wearing me. When I was teaching high school, I had outfits and pencil skirts that I would wear that match and were color coordinated with my school colors. I feel comfortable enough in that, but it didn't bother me too much. I know other people have experienced that issue, but it doesn't bother me too much. I do definitely think on the podium for me I have to be covered. So, I just need to wear something for me that makes me feel like I'm being myself. I don't want to be self-conscious about who I am, so I have to wear something that I feel comfortable on me where I'm not thinking about my clothing while I'm conducting. As long as it fits that realm, I'm good. I do like to wear my jackets that are definitely feminine, but they're definitely like longer coats and I wear them with pants.

Grice: Do you have those specially made?

Snyder: No, I get them from White House Black Market. I shop right around the holiday time like October/November, they usually come out with these jackets then. They're like cocktail dresses, but I wear them as my conducting jackets. Then I just have a black shell and black pants that I wear underneath it. I do have a couple dresses that I've gotten and I've been wearing them more frequently, but I still honestly don't feel as comfortable in them as I do in my jacket and pants.

Grice: Describe your method of score study, rehearsal techniques, and concert programming. Does your programming include female composers? I know you do include females in your

programming so any advice on how to go about doing that and including not only female but minority composers.

Snyder: So yeah, codifying method of score study into something short can be perhaps a little bit challenging. Generally speaking, if I'm trying to find music that I'm going to do, I'm going to be looking at if I can get my eyes on the score and my ears in the recording, that's great. Because then I at least get a feel, I can make decisions based off of what I see, but I usually can't make the best decision just based off what I hear. It's like I need to know what those parts look like and are they going to be idiomatic to what I need. So there's that element of at least how I choose music is going to be based off of those elements. In terms of how I study it, gosh, I generally start by going through it at least melodically to capture the music while I'm figuring out the form and the structure and then I'm going layer by layer. It's definitely a macro form wise in to micro every line. Then I get to more specific decisions of interpretation once I know the notes, and I often am sitting at the piano. I'm plunking out the notes, I'm singing along, playing something else if I can't get it into my fingers. I just do that a lot. I'll go section by section or page by page, but usually a section. I try this phrase or this small 'A' section or big 'A' section. I learn it that way, I don't just go straight through the piece. Then once I feel like I've made decisions and I mark my scores with a few things that I like to mark, then I really just try to audiate it in my head. So that's really a lot of coverage about study score. Rehearsal techniques, I have goals for my rehearsals and areas that I want to work on and its related to the big picture. I always know how many rehearsals I have, plus the dress. I always consider the dress extra. At the beginning I'm going to getting them used to the piece. I might not run through the whole thing, but if it's a multi-movement piece, I'll run through the movement or I'll run through large sections to try to give them a good idea what the piece is about as much as I can. I'm going to be breaking it down in the middle and I always do another run. Then about two rehearsals from the dress, I do another run. I don't do a heck of a lot of runs unless I feel like I need to. Sometimes you assess a group and you're like, they just really need to play it a couple times. So it's constant assessment along that path. I use a lot of post-it notes, so I have my sections and I keep detailed work of my rehearsals. On Friday I send out my rehearsal schedule for the whole week and say we're going to be working on this piece, this part of the piece, these are the instruments, this is what I want to accomplish. I'm really thinking about all of that ahead of time, and then I'm just basically keeping up with that throughout the week and then I assess it and write my next one. So it keeps me accountable to make sure that I'm covering the piece because I feel like my job is to make them as confident on the piece as possible. I never feel like I get to rehearsal or to a concert and my students don't know it. There might be a part of the piece they just don't play as well because it's hard, but it's never because they haven't worked on it enough, or because they don't know it. You don't get to that point where they kind of missed working on that part. I'm really trying to make sure that I'm covering all the bases and that sort of macro, micro, macro, micro, macro element has worked really well for me irrespective of what kind of group I teach. Then concert programming, yes, I definitely do program female composers. I program bipoc composers as much as I can as well. It takes a tremendous amount of study in the summer. I spend from the end of April and May with the idea that I would have my programming set in June for the whole year. That's usually my goal. When I'm trying to fill in gaps of things I don't know because I grew up with so many white men composers, I'm doing all the things I can to try to comb through the repertoire that I don't know by bipoc and women composers. Sometimes it's frustrating because I could spend eight hours in a day and come up with nothing that I'm going to

program. But I value it enough that I'm learning. Sometimes I find a piece that would be great for an honor band. But I'm really doing it with the lens that I've got to get my programming done for my group because if I have it done at the end of May then I've got June, July, and August to do my score study. It's harder to do it when you're in the actual teaching year. So I try to get as much of that done during the summer. I use a lot of databases. I try to look at what are the articles about composers. Here are the top ten women composers you should know. What other band works do they have any? I might put that person on a list of hey, you should commission this person later. But you know, I go through those kind of lists to try to find out, I comb their websites, I try to just acclimate myself as much as possible. I go to the CBDNA reports and look through their programming that other people submit so that I can get some ideas as well. The stuff written by people I know, that's not hard, I already know it.

Grice: What areas of collaboration have you used in your programs? This can be with other arts or dance.

Snyder: It's a little hard to do that in like dance, for us is almost impossible because we don't have a building or a stage that's big enough to house a full band and a dancer. A lot of the collaboration that I do is more with other faculty members and other people. I do have one concert that I didn't get to do because Covid happened literally six days before our concert and it got cancelled. It was a big women rights concert. We're going to do it this December finally because I couldn't even do it this past year. For this concert I've collaborated with speakers and with the acting faculty. I collaborated with one of the librarians at the school, she has a lot of feminist literature and helped me get all the quotes of the women because we're doing quotes of women over the past 250 years of America's existence. I've worked with an artist, a graphic artist designer who's on faculty. She created the program so we have a really detailed, beautiful program. I even worked with a historian to get their perspective of where should we go pulling all this together to have a good historical background on that information. This is tracing women's suffrage, but it's also suffrage of anybody who wasn't represented and learning a lot about that.

Grice: Sounds amazing.

Snyder: It was actually one of the most fun things that I've done and to collaborate with. I can't wait to put it on and we're actually going to be able to live stream it now. She's an artist and she's created the slides that have the quotes on them. That's been one of my favorite things probably that I've done. It just killed me that I couldn't get to do it, although I think it's going to be even better because, we'll have even more composers coming out this year. That's a really big collaboration. Again, they're not doing the art as part of art while something else is happening, but it's done beforehand. It's been a lot of work getting a vision together and for me to think about it aurally, when she's thinking about it visually.

Grice: That sounds like a great collaboration. I'm glad it's going to be live streamed. I definitely want to catch that one.

Snyder: Yeah, once we get things going I'll definitely put it out there and be like make sure you put this on your calendar.

Grice: Sounds great. Do you mind me asking who the women composers are?

Snyder: Yeah, so it's different now, I actually changed the program a bit. In part because when we had rehearsed the music I told the students I said if we can do this in the fall, what pieces do you want to repeat and which pieces do you not? So we were going to do Joan Tower's *Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman #1* which we would have done, but truthfully, I just don't have the trumpets that could do it because it's really hard. So we're going to do a piece by Kathryn Bostic called *Portrait of a Peaceful Warrior*. So that's going to be the different opener. We're doing a piece by Kathryn Salfelder, *Apotheosis*, one by Margaret Brouwer that's called *Pulse*, a piece by Felicia Sandler called *Rosie the Riveter*, then we're doing a piece by Roshanne Etezady called *Anahita*, and then we're doing a world premiere piece with Valerie Coleman called *Let Woman Choose Her Sphere*, which is the name of the whole concert. So actually we're opening the entire concert with women singing a suffrage song, but it's to the tune of *Auld Lang Syne*, but it's called *Keep Woman in Her Sphere* and is a world premiere by Lynne Shankel. So it opens with that and the concert will end with *Let Woman Choose Her Sphere*. The whole opener ends with that tune and then it goes into the instrumental stuff with the speeches.

Grice: Wow, that's awesome.

Snyder: Yeah it's been a lot of work, but it's been one of the most fun things and truthfully I've learned so much. I've really realized, oh my gosh, I've learned nothing about feminist history really growing up. I don't think I felt like I needed to. I definitely went through that stage where I'm not a feminist, feminists are bad. I don't feel that way anymore. I learned a lot going through there going wow I wish I would have learned this stuff.

Grice: I don't know a lot about those composers so I'm excited to research a little bit about them.

Snyder: Yeah, Kate Salfelder is certainly well known and probably of those Valerie Coleman is very well known. Roshanne is well-known. But certainly Felicia Sandler, Margaret Brouwer, and Kathryn Bostic are probably less known, certainly in the band world.

Grice: What was your 'aha' moment as a conductor and how did that shift your journey? Since you've already talked about this a couple of times was there a certain piece that was an 'aha' moment?

Snyder: Well, there certainly are. There's one piece that I would feel that without having ever conducted yet, so I haven't gotten to, which *And the Mountains Rising Nowhere*. That's my favorite piece of all time. Truthfully, probably one of my most favorite 'aha' moments as a conductor was when I could really let go for a whole piece which was Shostakovich's *Festive Overture*. The funniest thing that all I did was allow myself to smile. It was more like just allow yourself to experience the joy that you feel when you hear this piece, and when I allowed myself to do that, it was the most electric performance. Even the students now, and this was at my previous job, but the students now are like, do you remember that time and everybody in the audience was like what happened to the group. It just changed everything and I just allowed myself to smile and show them how I felt about the music instead of how I conducted it.

Grice: Yeah, that's a great story.

Snyder: That was definitely an 'aha' moment.

Grice: Do you have any rituals that you do before concerts? Do you have any routines or activities to help keep your body and mind at its highest?

Snyder: I do, I go aurally through my scores. I don't really conduct them without a group. I sing through them, I look through the score, I'll do it in my head because I want to feel comfortable with my tempos, making sure that I'm not getting nervous and pushing it, or making it too slow. So I do that to try to get into the space an hour before I have to be on or even sometimes more than that. I just want to have that space to not be distracted by other things. I'm definitely not a last minute arriver. I do tend to do some sun salutations in yoga just to calm my body and do some kind of core strengthening just to get the jitters out. I don't really feel jittery, but I feel like it just centers me a little bit more. So those are the things that I do before concerts, almost always. I try to be as healthy as I can as a human so trying to eat well and I like to do yoga or do exercise. I actually fell over two years ago and I hurt my shoulder. I still have some issues with it, more muscular than anything else, but I have to do things to keep that strong. It never bothers me when I conduct, but I try to take care of my shoulders in particular, because I know how many conductors have shoulder problems. I like yoga in part because it centers me and teaches me to balance. I can be that kind of centered because I'm doing things to be centered and grounded. A sense of flow when I'm conducting is something I value so I try to make sure that's part of my mindset. The other thing is just trying to be inspired so not getting bogged down by the work of it all. You know, I don't tend to sit around and just listen to a bunch of band recordings, but I try to do other things that inspire me, whether that might be listening to other kinds of recordings or other kinds of music that I just enjoy for fun. Those are elements that I feel like help me. The practicing it and regular score study and challenging myself. I'm actually going through this new book by Marianne Ploger that I'm going through and I'm just reading this because I want to. I want to get myself in that mindset, so I want to learn something new this summer, so that will be great.

Grice: What's the name of the book?

Snyder: It's "The Ploger Method".

Grice: How important is leadership as a quality for any conductor? Were there any leadership roles that you held as a young student in high school or college that you think helped your career pathway?

Snyder: I think leadership is phenomenally important. I mean, you're leading a group of people and they have to be able to trust you and they have to believe that you are capable and you have to work with them well. They have to have a camaraderie with you, so leadership is 100% key. You know it's funny. I really didn't have any leadership skills when I was in high school. Leadership was something I was weak at. I wasn't section leader, I was that jack of all trades and master of none. So I was just constantly doing things, but I was building my own skills. For me it was filling up what I needed to be, and then ultimately it's like gaining your confidence. You do

have to have an element of confidence enough to be able to lead people that if you're not it's really hard to lead. I think the leadership component is also just about vision. I think it took me a long time to realize leadership is not just about doing a job, it's also about having a vision. Where are we going? What do we want to accomplish? What are you sensing from those around you that you feel this is where we could go? What are you adding to this? But that's all to me part of leadership as well. And so yeah, I definitely was not honing those skills as a young child, and truthfully, I'm really thankful I wasn't a drum major because I feel like I would have had to rid myself of all the bad things. I was actually really interested in it. I thought I would like it. My band director said, you're going to be better and more valuable to me in band as a player.

Grice: What should young conductors be sure to always and never do?

Snyder: I would say young conductors should never think that conducting is about the pattern. They shouldn't be studying their scores by conducting. I mean they need to work that out, but that's not the music. I think pattern traps you and the need to generate beat traps you. I do everything I can to try to get young conductors out of that mindset, like you've got to think about the music, you've got to think about the phrase, you've got to think about what it sounds like. So trying to fill them up from that perspective. That's always a thing that young conductors struggle with. As soon as you give them pattern, they just put themselves into a tightly wound box, and then it's really hard to bust them out of it.

Grice: Do you use Laban?

Snyder: I do use Laban for gesture because then they realize, oh, I already can do these things. It's just learning how to do it in a new way with the baton attached. I do a lot of Laban. The first conducting thing that they have to do with music, is actually not beat. The metronome is set and the singers will sing to the metronome. Your job is to direct them where they want to go, show them the dynamics, show them the kind of articulation, but it's not pattern and it's not beat generated. I kind of push them out of that, so I always feel like it's the opposite like you try to get them to do that, but they're so tied to the pattern that it's really hard. I mean, I had to learn how to do that myself. How to break myself out of pattern and not make that the dominant thing that I do. What should they always do? They should always be studying. Always be filling themselves up with music ideas. Observe people that are good around them. Just make yourself as good a musician as you can possibly be. Yeah, and score study I would say go for fixed 'Do' and like learn how to cancel all those clefs because you're going to be better at reading a score.

Grice: Do female successes in other fields, such as the first minority woman Vice President of the United States (Kamala Harris) and the youngest US inauguration Youth Poet Laureate (Amanda Gorman), enhance a female's ability to succeed in areas such as wind conducting? Do you think this will help women feel more comfortable applying for jobs that are in a male dominated field such as wind conducting? Do you think this will help women feel more comfortable applying for jobs that are in a male dominated? Fields such as wind conducting. Seeing people at such a high level in other fields.

Snyder: I think it definitely does. I think it also brings to light how the world is viewed. When you see people in that kind of high echelon, you do get a bit more of a microscopic viewpoint of

how the world views women versus men. I think that's an educationally important thing. I think just having representation clearly does matter without a question. I don't know if Kamala Harris, being vice president, would make me go be a band director or not, but it does make me believe that women could do anything. So, if I am in that place of being in a more minority role, I might think, well, if Kamala Harris could do that, I could probably do it too. So I think there is an element of that that is true. Maybe not completely directly, but certainly indirectly. The element about women feeling more comfortable applying for jobs. It's funny because I've learned that generally speaking, men will apply for jobs when they feel like they fit 60% of the roles that they could do. Women feel like they have to have 100%. That shows going way back to what we had started talking about the insecurity element that you have to be perfect. I do think that could certainly help, but I think we need to be more deliberate and recognize that this is something that you want to apply for. What's the worst they can do is say no, but at least you get experience in applying. If you get an interview, you're going to get experience where you're going to learn something from that, and it's okay if you fail, it's okay if you don't get it. Failure is a part of learning and truthfully failure is usually our better teacher. Being able to put yourself out there and be okay and not feel like you have to be perfect. Those are elements that I think when you see people in those positions dealing with that, it helps you. But I also think that we have to be intentional with making women realize that you don't have to be perfect.

Grice: What experiences/organizations shaped your career? (military, non-musical jobs, travel), and are any of them specifically female-oriented?

Snyder: It's funny when thinking about nonmusical jobs. I did do a desk job for a period of time. It was so boring that I realized I can't do that. Honestly, I don't know that I was overly involved in a lot of organizations until I was in this career. Every organization I've been involved in has probably been more musically related, and certainly with my involvement with WBDI that's very female oriented. But I do feel it shaped my career not so much in building up my own career, but in seeing a broader purpose to my career. It really blended together what I felt were my own strengths and my leanings that I felt like I was supposed to accomplish within my career. I've been involved a lot in my church and I've always been involved in music in my church too. So having that connection of people has also been important to me. That's not an organization per say. But yeah, the only thing that's really female oriented I would say has been WBDI and that's after I was already teaching here. I actually purposely stayed away from it. I didn't want to be part of a woman's group and I thought that it wasn't necessary, and women are catty and women are more competitive. It's like if we want to change that trajectory, we have to do something about it. Let's stop perpetuating that myth and perpetuating that climate and culture. I had a sort of vision of me being in front of a group of women already before I ever knew that it was WBDI. I didn't think it was musically related, but I felt this very strong draw that there was a purpose that I was supposed to do there. The Midwest presentation I did back in 2016 set me on the path to realize that vision that I had was completely separate in my career, was actually becoming part of my career. It was really that that brought me into WBDI. So, it was kind of interesting that my vision for women was actually separate from WBDI, but it drew me into WBDI to lead that. Bringing that on a path where more women are involved has been key. What I've learned is that it's not just a group for women, it's about creating something with your colleagues and working together to create something with a greater purpose that is really meaningful. My mindset was it was just a bunch of women needing to vent, but it's a very different mindset than what it really is

or what it really could be. I hope that more women see that. I think the younger generations are in, but my generation and older is still a little bit of a challenge.

Grice: Do you have any thoughts or comments to add that were not addressed in any of the previous questions?

Snyder: We covered a lot. It's hard for me to think of anything. I feel like it's all in there. It would just be more rehashing something that we already said.

Grice: Okay, great, well you were wonderful. You're such a good speaker and very articulate. It was great. Thank you so much and have a great day.

Snyder: Well, thank you so much. Good luck with your dissertation.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ Courtney Snyder, personal interview (Google Meet: 25 June, 2021).

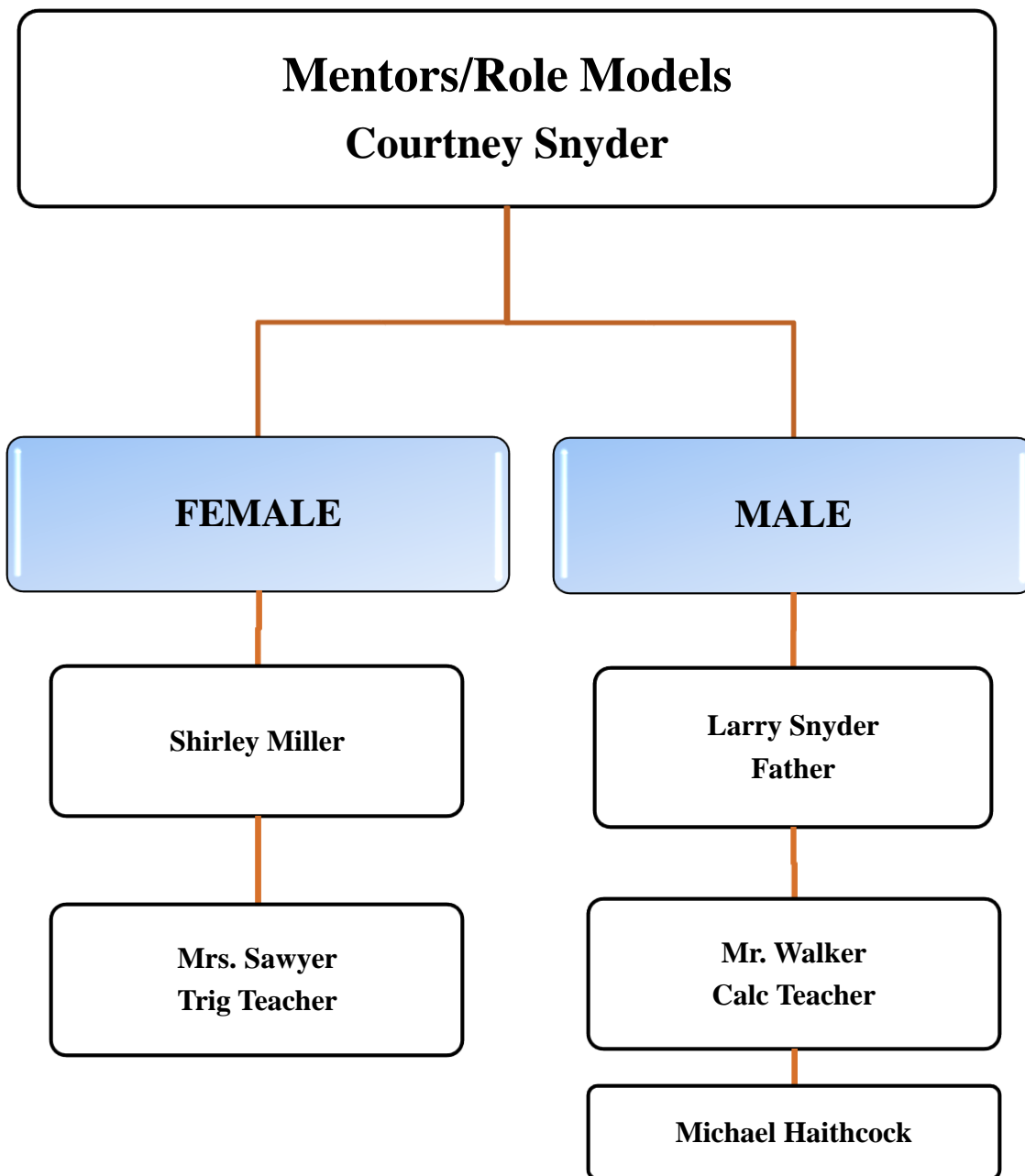


Figure 7. Mentors/Role Models of Courtney Snyder.

Courtney Snyder Profile

Current Collegiate Position: Associate Director of Bands & Associate Professor of Conducting at the University of Michigan

Previous Collegiate Positions:

Assistant Director of Bands/Director of Athletic Bands at the University of Nebraska-Omaha

Degrees:

BS Ed, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

MM, Baylor University

Wind Conducting

DMA, University of Michigan

Wind Conducting

Emily Threinen Interview

Grice: Hi, thank you so much for coming on this morning. Before we start I need to make this statement. Do you Emily Threinen give your consent to have your voice video recorded during this interview for the purposes of my doctoral research?

Threinen: I do give consent, yes.

Grice: Thank you. Could you please begin by telling me your musical journey? For example, things like: Why did you choose to play your instrument and that specific instrument? What were your experiences as a student in public schools and in college? When did you know you wanted to be a conductor? What were the influences that led you to your professional career?

Threinen: Well, first of all, I just want to say again, thank you for including me on this and I hope my answers can be helpful. As you well know, everyone's journey is unique and different and everyone comes to their jobs from completely different backgrounds and points of views and perspectives. I hope that my point of view can be helpful to your study in some way. I did not come from a musical background, so I didn't grow up in a family where music was around or mom and dad played music. So in many ways, music is my own prized possession; my own journey, my own experience. Perhaps I take a bit of pride in that as well, because of finding it and it finding me maybe, and having it not be from my family or background, but that it became and was my own thing. So there might be some pride in that as well. As far as why did I choose to play an instrument, I think like most kids in elementary school, I remember being in choir. I think it was just part of what was expected of all kids, everyone was in choir. I remember enjoying that, there's something about music, performing, singing, and making music that I just couldn't shake. I always loved it. Not all my friends did love it right, but I was one that loved it. I remember in I think 4th grade maybe, my choir teacher and I don't remember her name, but I remember her asking me to do a solo, *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*. Just feeling honored that I got asked and then I stayed after school and practiced with her, she was a pianist. I remember being so nervous in the school assembly and standing up at the front of the stage and singing to

everyone and people clapped and people liked it. I think that was one of the pivotal moments. Okay performing can be exciting and fun and people can like it. People responded well and I didn't get made fun of after that. It was a positive experience all around. Then as far as what instrument, I think typical of a lot of kids, the beginning of 5th grade all the kids were in the gym and got to look at instruments and decide if they want to sign up for band. I think we were able to try some things on a mouthpiece. I think all the kids wanted to play saxophone, me included, and I remember lifting up the instrument and like this is the one I want. The teacher saying, "well what about the smaller version, that's a clarinet? Why don't you look at that one?" So I'm like okay, so I tried that one and I liked that it was black. I liked the color of it so and it was smaller and lighter so I think I'm like, sure, let's try that one. So I started I think like a lot of kids in such that I didn't have this background, there was zero expectation. I didn't really know anything about anything. I kind of liked how the instrument looked and it was light. That was how I got introduced to the clarinet. Then in band class I like all the other kids just put it together, figured it out, but I never had private lessons. I really just learned through whatever band teacher, music teacher at that time taught. So that was my elementary journey. My family, parents, my mother and stepfather moved a bit so I didn't grow up in one community. We moved from Illinois to Minnesota and back and forth and just didn't feel like I had any footing in any kind of a community or school. That's partly why I sort of don't remember my teachers until high school. But I remember always being in band and I think my parents must have bought me a plastic clarinet when I started and then I just played in band. So middle school I remember playing in band and being pretty good I think. Then it was of course high school when I really started getting the itch for wanting to take it a little more seriously. I had a great high school band director here in the state of Minnesota in Elk River, Minnesota which is a suburb northwest of the Twin Cities. The gentleman's name is Tim Smith. He's still teaching high school in the state at Zimmerman High School. A great band director doing really great work. He was just very inspiring and I think again like a lot of typical high school kids, they love their band director and they love the experience. They look to their band director as this mentor if they're having a good experience, and I was no different. I would say that one pivotal difference of Tim Smith was that he felt like he saw something in me and took an extra effort and opened my eyes to taking private lessons. He said, "I think you've got a gift in this, I think you should actually take this more seriously. You could get better." He encouraged me to do private lessons, encouraged me to go out for All-State, honor bands, and district bands. I remember we did like a district band and I made first chair. That was like a little marker, like oh okay, maybe I'm sort of okay on this. It was my junior year or something but I thought maybe I'm okay on the instrument. I was first chair in our high school band, but there was another gal that was also first chair. We were kind of competitive, so when you're in your own high school, you don't know if you're any good. It's when you kind of go out and see other kids, right. So I would say it was a kind of a snowball effect, and then I auditioned for youth orchestra here in the in the Twin Cities and the organization still exists. It's called the Greater Twin Cities Youth Orchestras and I got into that and so then I started taking private lessons and so it all kind of accumulated in high school. That was really when I just couldn't shake it and I loved it. I was practicing more and trying harder rep, doing the state solo and ensemble contest and that kind of thing. So that's from the very beginning through high school. I wanted to be my high school band director and I wanted to keep going in music and the more I did the more the world got bigger. The more I started seeing like oh wow, there's orchestra, I didn't really know what orchestra was, until youth orchestra. So my world just kept expanding and I kept loving all of it right, just wanting to consume all of it and

get better. So that's why I chose the instrument and how I got started. Your second question, what were your experiences as a student in public school? So I kind of answered that, I was in my high school band program and then did Solo & Ensemble contest, District, region band, All-State Band, Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies and private lessons. That was all happening junior/senior year of high school. Then of course I was in band since 5th grade. In college I went to the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities with a dual degree in music education and clarinet performance. That's how I started and that's how I ended because I wasn't sure. You had to pick a track and they were slightly different. One was certainly more performance heavy and one was you had to get certified to teach in the state and go through the various certification processes that the state required for K-12 education and I couldn't decide so I just said well I'll do both. I'll take five years and do both. In that I pretty much did everything I could and I was one of those students that probably took on too much. I was always maxed out on credits, I did marching band, I did a little bit of jazz, I played saxophone in the secondary ensembles, I was in clarinet choir, I was in the top concert groups, the orchestra and the wind ensemble, and I was in a woodwind quintet. I just couldn't get enough of it and I wanted to just do everything. Sometimes again, spreading oneself a little bit thin, but I was just very active. I worked part time, I should say too, and I remember working as a university admissions tour guide. I was kind of an advocate for the band program, and was one of those like go get her kids at the university because I just loved it so much. I was a lover of the marching band and the band program. As an undergraduate I was just really active in in all that. I was in our Tau Beta Sigma organization. I tried to be a leader in the school of music in whatever way that I could and just kind of do whatever my schedule allowed me to do while I was an undergraduate.

Grice: That's great. When did you know you wanted to be a conductor?

Threinen: You know, I'm trying to remember. People have asked me that in the past and I feel like I should go back and remember the exact date, but I remember it was either sophomore year or junior year and I think it might have been sophomore if I thought about the curriculum. In your undergraduate curriculum, wherever you go, you take your basic conducting class and then your second level conducting class. That's just kind of the nature of things. Certainly when I was in high school I wanted to be drum major. I didn't get drum major, but I wanted to be. I kind of loved just moving my hands to the music. My teacher said that he remembers me playing recordings and standing on the podium and just conducting out to the air. I don't remember that, but he seems to remember that. So I think maybe it was always in there, but I didn't understand how to do it or what it was until I took that basic conducting class. And again, I don't remember if it was sophomore or junior year in college. At that time professor Craig Kirchhoff was the faculty member and he also had TA's helping him out in that class. I just remember that class being kind of life changing of like whoa conducting is all of these things. It's teaching, it's study, it's pedagogy, it's performing, it's like the perfect combination of all of these skills. It's the analysis part that you can put into practice, problem solving, and listening deeply. So it opened up again, like the world just kept getting bigger and bigger and bigger. In that class, I remember just opening up my perspective of what the full totality of conducting was, and again, it was just like the entry portal. It's only one class and you're like, whoa look at this world in front of me here through this door. So that's when I think I really thought wow, this would be great. Of course, I didn't know how to make a path for myself, but that was the itch. The elementary or beginning conducting class at the University of Minnesota was how it started.

Grice: That's great. What were the influences, you've already mentioned several, your high school band director, that led you to your professional career?

Threinen: It's so hard to pick a small list. I think it's accumulation of everything. I'm very confident that my middle school band director, I think her last name was Warneke. I feel bad that I don't remember exactly. But I think even that person was very formative. I remember her being tough and I remember her pushing us and holding us accountable. As much as I didn't like it at the time, I think it made me better. I appreciate it now. My high school director was very formative. My clarinet instructor he was the member of the Minnesota Orchestra when I was in high school. His name is Joseph Longo and he was very formative. Once I got to college my college directors and clarinet instructor at the University of Minnesota were incredibly influential. The person that I've worked with as my student teacher mentor, or cooperating teacher was Elizabeth Jackson who is Craig Kirchhoff's wife who just so happens to be the Director of Bands at Eden Prairie High School in Minnesota. She's who I student taught with in the late 90's. She was incredibly influential. I really think that every teacher I've worked with has been incredibly influential along the way. Of course events are also influential. Little markers that sort of tell you that you're doing well in this or good enough or you're not failing. I got a little scholarship to go to the U and so that was like okay, maybe I can do this. It's sort of an accumulation of these little markers that build up over time. So I can't just look to one thing, it's a lifelong series of events I would say and experiences. Then once I graduated with my undergraduate degree, I got a job and I and I feel like I earned that job on my own because I literally went to the high school and put on a little suit jacket and I brought my resume to the principal and just shook his hand and introduced myself. He was like, wow, I've never had anyone do this, sit down and tell me who you are. No one told me to do that, I just felt like assertive, and let's see what happens. The worst that can happen is they say no thank you. So it's just these little markers and then when people say yes you can have this job, and then parents say okay that concert went well, so every year there was some kind of little marker that just kept me going.

Grice: You've already mentioned several, but there might be some more. As you reflect on your journey, please describe your early role models. Describe your role models later in your career and any current role models.

Threinen: Right, so again, I would say all of my teachers. My two formative would be my middle school band director and high school band director. I remember her name middle school, Kathy Warneke and that was Elk River Middle School, in Elk River, Minnesota. She was very formative. Timothy Smith, Elk River High School; Joe Longo, clarinet professor, was in the Minnesota Orchestra. He's since retired. He's been retired for probably 15 years, maybe a little longer. In college, Craig Kirchhoff, Jerry Luckhardt, John Anderson was my clarinet professor, Elizabeth Jackson was my cooperating teacher. Once I started teaching and started teaching in the Saint Paul public schools. I would say my colleague, Nanette Strobel, in the choral department was an incredible role model. Just a beautiful spirit and so devoted to her students. I learned a lot about just being a good quality teacher through her. Then when I pursued graduate work and I was looking at various graduate schools to start my masters in conducting. I met a whole bunch of amazing teachers, many of whom I didn't get a chance to work with, but you

know, maybe worked with in a summer symposium or had the opportunity to see. Who I wound up studying with was Mallory Thompson at Northwestern University. She, of course, is still there. Then my doctorate, I studied with Michael Haithcock at the University of Michigan. Both of those individuals are incredible role models still to this day. Same with Craig Kirchhoff. I feel like those three are on my speed dial if I need them, and have always been incredibly supportive until today, the whole way. Then I would say other role models just include my colleagues I've met and worked with in graduate school and at various institutions. Just people that have been really helpful and lovely. The grad studios and the connections I've made there. All those people have been terrific role models and continue to be throughout my career.

Grice: So the thing that's interesting with your story is you have mentioned several female mentors already. That's very different than the other people that I've interviewed which has been none or at most one. You've mentioned everything from your middle school director to cooperating teacher, who's a high school director, to Mallory Thompson. I think that's really great that you had several female mentors.

Threinen: I do too and I have to say that it never occurred to me that there was a difference between male and female in the job. I just saw music and my music teachers as music and music teachers. In fact, I didn't even know there was a difference, a kind of an issue if you would, a lack of representation of women until I got to college. When all of a sudden, that's when I was introduced to oh, you want to be a female conductor, and I thought, well no, I just want to be a conductor like these people. So even the identity piece that that I feel like we're much more sensitive about or maybe interested in talking about today, just didn't even really occur to me until college. I didn't really know it was a thing. Which might be why I try not to make it a thing today.

Grice: In what ways do you serve as a mentor to your students and graduates?

Threinen: Well, I think that would be a question that they would answer better than I could answer. I know what I try to do and I would say that I try to lead by example. I just try to be a very open, clear, and direct communicator. In all the jobs I've had with my graduate students, I want them to see every element of how decisions are made, how to organize, how to respond, how to lead, how to think through things, and how to take action. Not necessarily in that order. I try to treat my graduate students like they are professionals and they can see behind the curtain. They are exposed to lots of different things, good and bad, right? Wherever I've been where there's been grad students, I have weekly what I call leadership meetings or team meetings. Where we have an agenda, a working document of all the things we have to figure out such as scheduling, the concerts, the events, we need to get like bari saxophone straps, etc. you know whatever we need to take care of in our work. We meet once a week and we just go through all the things that we've got to do. I make sure my TA's see those meetings and see the topics, even if they're not directly affiliated with coordinating this person's residency or decision making on what kind of repertoire we're going to program, or how do we handle this difficult student. Maybe they don't directly have to influence that, but I want them to hear the conversations and hear my thought process and hear how I'm handling all of those issues. So that's one thing that I've done that I don't know that everyone does that. But I make sure that the grad students are always in the loop on those kinds of conversations and decision making. Every once in a while,

especially with my doctoral students, if there is a situation, let's say that I think is something that they can take a lesson from or learn from and it's handled via email or handled in person. I might share those stories or share how I address that with my students, so then when they're in a situation five years from now, they can use that as an example. Like oh, maybe I shouldn't take that so emotionally and I should just respond really matter of fact. Or maybe I shouldn't be so stubborn in this regard and bend a little bit for my colleagues over here. So I think in general that's one way that I try to be a role model for my students is lead by example and share what's behind the curtain and share my process?

Grice: Describe your experiences that you believe related to you being a woman. What supports and what barriers have you faced that you believed were/are related to your gender? Thinking about your conducting career, tell me about experiences where you felt, if you did unequal treatment when compared to your male peers? How did you respond?

Threinen: Yes, so as kind of to bounce off or to follow up from what I said before, I didn't really realize being a woman conductor was a thing until my undergraduate degree and it was not a thing from my teachers. Except, actually, the first person, and I won't say this person's name, but this female professor at the university in my undergrad, said, when they asked me what would I like to be. I said, well I think I want to go into high school band directing. This professor said to me, "well given your lack of experience and the fact that you're a woman, you're probably not going to get hired in the high school setting right away." I was like, oh, I understand the lack of experience, but the gender I just thought well why not. I remember asking this person well why not, or why because I'm a woman? They're like well, because women never get those jobs and you just need to be ready for that. Then I thought oh well, and my personality is a little bit this way, which is if you tell me I can't do it, I'm going to prove to you that I can. Or I'm gonna go down fighting to try to do it. So there's a stubbornness there. I have some Irish in my blood so maybe it comes from that, but don't tell me I can't do it. If I don't want to do it that's different, but if you tell me I can't, then I sort of feel like I want to find a way to do it. So it was a female professor that said that and was encouraging me to aim for elementary and not because elementary was less than, but just that there would be more jobs for me at that level. I like elementary fine, but I didn't have the same desires as I wanted to for high school or middle school. Again it goes back because I so much loved my high school director and though oh I want to do that, right like most kids. I feel like that was foundational, number one is I didn't know it was an issue until actually a female mentor told me that. Then once you get that little trigger in your head, you're like oh well now A. I want to do it because you said I can't and B. now I know this is a thing. I will say that in my undergrad experience I did audition for drum major at the University of Minnesota and they hadn't yet had a female. I did not get that, I was not even 21 yet, of course, crestfallen and dramatic. That was tough, and of course during that process my gender was a thing. People wanted to talk about it. I remember the drum major trainers asking me if I didn't want to use the big mace because of my size and my stature. That maybe I could use like a twirlers baton instead. And of course I'm like heck no, I'm going to use the big mace. They were never discouraging in any way, I want to make that clear. But again, it was made clear that my gender was a thing and something that people were talking about. So those were formative to then kind of the next step.

Grice: Did you ever get to be drum major? Did you ever get to do that later?

Threinen: I've never been a drum major. I know, that's my only regret in life.

Grice: Is that something where you could audition every year or they just had that one opening?

Threinen: At the U, I tried out two different years. One I lost to the incumbent, which I should have, right? This was an older person and he had already been the drum major. He's great, and it would have been a huge upset. I probably wouldn't have done well because everyone would have been mad that the other person first deserved it and he was doing a great job, so he totally deserved it. The second time around, it was a split decision. It was a tough decision. I understand going both ways and it was not in my favor at that time. That is what it is. Those two things were very formative and how I maybe looked ahead and looked forward. As far as answering your question like describe my experiences that are related to me being a woman. I think once the seed is planted like I said oh, you are a woman X. I think I started getting angry about that, to be honest, because I just wanted to do the job. I didn't want the label and then the question was, well, what does it mean? I remember I wore my hair really short and I lived with someone that shaved her head and colored it like a leopard print, you know? We were kind of edgy, like 90's Annie Lennox and Ani DiFranco were like my heroes. Lilith Fair came to Minneapolis and gender identities were being broken into multiple dimensions and shifted. I think women were trying to push away from stereotypes and so forth. I was in my late teens early 20's trying to find out who I was. So I think that went when the woman identity piece at that time was being added to the work it would make me a little more angry and defensive. Then I felt like I had to be more masculine to try to counterbalance that. So wear my hair really short, get super physically fit, you know not feel like I had to really identify with one or the other. So maybe I even sort of felt like I wanted to be more androgynous so I wouldn't be labeled anything other than a musician. Which is sort of ironic, right? So I would say that in my teen years that that was where my head was at. I don't know, I just wanted to be really good at my job. So I tried to not let my gender influence that in a positive or negative way. It was like other people were. I felt like I didn't want to talk about it, but other people wanted to talk about it for me.

Grice: Tell me about moments that were critical in your career - specifically what they were and what meaning did you make from them? Did you have a defining moment where you decided you wanted to be a conductor and how did that shift your journey? You already talked about the conductor being your beginning conducting class.

Threinen: So what I talked about more was starting the conducting career. I would say my conducting career started when I started teaching high school. I was the instrumental music instructor of Harding High School that started in 1999. I had the whole program to myself there and then I started graduate studies in 2002 ending in 2007. Both masters and doctorate and then I started my college conducting career. So high school conducting career 1999 and college career 2007. So as far as thinking about my career, tell me experiences where I felt unequal treatment. Teaching high school I don't feel like I had unequal treatment because I was the only teacher in my field at my school. I had gotten the high school job that I was told I probably couldn't get. My colleague in the choral area was a woman, so it didn't feel odd or different being a woman. When I would do or get involved with Solo & Ensemble contests, I remember I hosted that at our school, and I remember hearing like, uh-oh, she might not know what to do or others feeling worried that I wasn't going to do it well or hearing comments. But I don't know if it was because

of my inexperience or because of my gender. Nobody made it clear and it could have been either. I mean, when you're a new teacher, there are natural concerns like is that new teacher ready to lead the whole conference state Solo & Small Ensemble contest. I can't say it was one or the other and it went well. I didn't fail at it, so it was fine. So when I was teaching high school, it really didn't come to me that my gender was a thing. No one treated me differently in Saint Paul, my administrators were great. It was not a thing at all. Where I noticed I was a woman conductor was when I went to conducting workshops or I'd be a guest at a college workshop somewhere. I would notice that of the 20 people, there are two or three women, because you would notice, right? So again, in my high school experience, I would say I did not experience much overt discrimination in that regard. College and on again I would say I don't feel like I had any discrimination in the jobs that I had. All the jobs I had before Temple, I was the only one so I wasn't a colleague with someone else. I wasn't an assistant, I didn't have to answer to anyone. When I was teaching high school, same thing, so I was sort of naturally used to just running my own show and not feeling like I had to do that. So I didn't experience it there. I will say in my first college job there were some comments again made, but I don't know that they were directly about my gender, or if I was just new. I was new to the state of Virginia and I was new to the systems there. My education and background was different. When you come in from out of state, there's a curiosity. Is this person going to do well here with our community and our culture and our expectations? But I never felt like it was gender bias. I felt like people would say I was young. So I think if anything there might have been like an ageism right. A bias against my lack of experience versus gender if there was anything. The only times that anything was ever overt to me in my professional career, my whole career, is when I go to do an honor band. On more than one occasion, I would have the host who would be male or female say to me, "Dr. Threinen, I'm so glad you're here, I looked around the region to find female college conductors and you're one of two, so that's why I called you." Then I'm like, wow, well do you think I'm a good musician because that would be why I hope you would call and not because you did a search and the lady band director popped up and my name was one of two. So that comment I would hear, and then also I would hear, "It's really important for our female students to see a female role model. Thank you for coming." I would always say thank you, but then I would say semi colon; I also think it's really important for your male students to see a female. I said, I hope all of your students can be inspired by my work. So those would be really the only two overt comments that I've heard. There have been other small little things, but those two I've heard the most. Tell me moments that are critical in your career. You know, again, I think it's accumulation and everything has been critical in my career, so it's hard to just give you these moments. When I started even as an underground, I remember going into this thinking I'm going to trust that my hard work and my persistence is going to get me somewhere. I don't know where, but it's going to get me somewhere. I'm going to get a job doing something in music. Could be elementary, general music, maybe college, I don't know. Something will happen. I'm going to keep working, I'm going to keep giving my best. I had a really open mind. I'm going to just see what's going to happen, I don't have to stay in Minnesota. I can move out, I could go to this school for grad school. I could go here, go there. I wanted to start my journey in education with as wide open of options as possible to decide what will work best in that moment at that time. I do have a partner I'm married to and I got married kind of young. I remember saying to him, I need to chase this thing as far as I can go. If you're going to be my partner, you're going to have to come with me. It might mean we're traveling all over the world, I don't know. But like I have to do this. That's number one for me in my life's mission. He said all right, let's give it a whirl. I didn't start my

grad degree thinking I was going to be college band director. I started my grad degree because I wanted to get better at 'it' and let's see what happens when that's done. I've really lived my whole life that way. I'm not saying I'm not goal oriented, but wherever I'm at in the moment I gave it 120%. I do my best and I see what will open up after that and what seems like the best fit.

Grice: I'm sure that attitude has opened up more doors for you than if you had just had been set on this is where I'm going and this is what I'm aiming for.

Threinen: I think so. I mean I think really just going into the education piece to absorb, just suck it all in, get as much as I can. And then going into the job market like okay what's out there and let's throw all my hats and all the rings and see what happens. Yeah, very open. Of course there have been times when like there's been this path I could or this path and I've had to choose. Of course, but usually there's a couple of paths, a couple of choices, and I think that's because I've tried to have a very open mindset. So moments that are critical, I would say specifically, gosh I mean there's so many. Performing at the CBDNA national conference was a pretty critical moment, a pretty critical event. But again, there's a culmination that happens before that, that doesn't just happen. Doing a recording project, which was a two year project at Temple University, that was pretty critical. I learned a lot through that process and project. I just learned a lot about prepping groups, my ears opened up better, I learned where my own deficiencies are more, and what I need to do to try to get better at that. So I think moments where there are other people really critically evaluating what you're doing or at least reviewing what you're doing beyond your own walls. Those tend to be the most critical, and that's where if you go and present something at a national conference or you put your ensemble out on a national stage and it's peer reviewed and there's lots of people looking at it. So those kinds of events throughout my career I would say were the most critical.

Grice: What are some of your greatest triumphs? It is probably those national events, is there any other greatest triumphs that you would say?

Threinen: You know, it's interesting I actually wouldn't answer that with the national performance. I mean the CBDNA performance was the one where the most people in our profession attended. These are people that have the best ears, they're the most critical, they deal in this world and hear things all the time. They've built their whole career on that. So there's peer reviewed ears and eyes to the situation. Why I wouldn't say that's a triumph. It went well and I'm very proud. I guess yes, it's a triumph, but it's the final product to me is not the goal. It's the process and the experience. Where my students started when I got to Temple versus what we were able to achieve over the course of four years to put that show out. To actually get us to that place where it can go pretty well and a peer reviewed body will be impressed or be moved, or think wow that was a good performance. So yeah, it was a triumph, but it wasn't like that concert was a triumph. It was all the stuff that kind of builds up to that. So I find myself to be more of a process oriented person in general. So my triumphs are that I feel like I was able to take a program at Temple University and grow it into something where now it's where I think people would think of it as a really good school with great band work going on. I would say I felt that way about Shenandoah too. When I got to Shenandoah very few people really knew what was going on in the sort of college band world. I think in the state of Virginia people were more familiar, but maybe a national platform people were a little less familiar. I think the kinds of

conductors that have been there since I've left have been terrific, so that's a marker for me of like, okay, I was moving the program in the right direction to be attractive in this community. That to me is a triumph, that things were growing and moving positively.

Grice: What were some of your tribulations? What kind of constraints and/or obstacles have you had to overcome and how did you deal with them? What sacrifices have you made to achieve your successes?

Threinen: Well, first of all successes, again that's a hard thing for each of us to answer. What may feel successful to me may not feel successful to someone else. Or someone else's definition of my success is theirs, right, maybe not mine. So let's start with that qualifier. I would say I want to answer that question first, as I alluded to earlier, we all have to decide in our life if we want to have a companion and a partner, some people do, some people don't. Either way, no judgment. Life is great either way. I met my husband Luke in college and just absolutely fell in love with him then. But, I also like had this love of music and I think I've shared this in other interviews certainly, which is for me, music is almost like a religion. It came to me as I said in elementary school, I've always had a thing with music, performing music and studying music. So I feel like a level of devotion to it and always have and that's gotten deeper and deeper. Again, like a religion, I would say. That was pretty strong, and is, when I was courting my husband, saying to him, I don't know if we're going to have a family. I don't know what that's going to look like, but I do know that music has to be in my life. So in a way it was like music came first. And for a lot of reasons it needed to right. So I would say like what sacrifices have I made, well in my personal relationships, kind of looking at my partner at this time and basically saying, well music is first chair and your second chair. Or maybe like 1a, 1b, you know what I mean. But just being really honest with my partner about that, and certainly not to say I haven't made a few sacrifices, but I would say that's number one. When you make your personal decisions and you kind of put your career first. If you've got a partner, boy they've got to really be on board with that. So when you do that and when your partner decides okay, let's see what happens. Well then they have to make sacrifices to support you, and that is a sacrifice in your marriage. I will say that we've been married since we were 25 and he and I did have a commuter marriage where we lived apart for six years. I wouldn't recommend that, but you learn if you want to stay together. I mean that's definitely a benchmark to like decide. So the sacrifice was we both went to grad school. We had ten years, I was in grad school for five years and then he started his Ph.D. after that for five years. So for a ten-year window we made zero money and we lost money because we were putting loans out to college. If you think of a decade of making no money and accruing loans. That's not fun. I mean it is, but that's a thing. We didn't buy a house, we didn't start a family, we weren't driving nice cars, we weren't going on vacation for 10 years. That's a sacrifice. For both of us to pursue our career goals, he's got a Ph.D. in economics, so those are some really big sacrifices. I would say maybe they're not sacrifices; they're just displacing other things in life later on. But that's important to know. We're still paying off student loans from that 10 year thing and we will be. But that's a sacrifice slash decision, among others. So we really put our relationship in a well let's see if it can withstand this stress, so to speak. We still couldn't shake each other. We had plenty of opportunities to try, but we just couldn't and we just like still wanted to be and still want to be together. So anyhow, that's number one. Number two tribulations, you know, along the way you get some job offers, you lose some job offers. That happens. You want to be drum major, it's not going to happen. That's a tribulation, right. At the

time when I was 20 years old, boy, that seemed like the only thing I wanted in life was drum major. It didn't happen, you know? I'm totally fine now, you know 25 years ago that seemed like a really big deal. So yes I've lost jobs offers that I wish I would have had, I've had concerts that I wish would have gone better, I've had to live apart from my husband and make no money for six years. I would call those all sort of obstacles and constraints. I've had issues of wanting certain things or a certain situation to happen and it hasn't. Again, defining what success is personal. What is a tribulation, that's personal. We've all lost jobs. We've all wanted to do things and it hasn't quite worked out in that way. I will say nothing has been like devastating. I mean, I've lost my mother, I've lost a sister. These are personal devastations and tragedies. So that is all embedded in the whole mix of all of it. I think because music and making music and being involved in music really is such a core of what I believe in and who I am, that's just something that has driven me forward no matter what bump has come along. So as far as how do I deal with them? I just go back to why I love being involved in music and I just make the best of the situation that's in front of me.

Grice: Are there other aspects of your identities (race, instrument you play, age) that you believe influenced your triumphs and tribulations in your career?

Threinen: Well, as I alluded to a little bit earlier, I know I've answered a lot of questions, kind of on the front side. I would say I think earlier in my career I remember people saying I was young or inexperienced. That was the sort of fancy way of saying you're young. When I started teaching high school, I looked like the students. I mean I was 21 and I think perhaps a youthful 21. Some of the high school seniors were like who's our new teacher, she looks like one of us. I mean was at the time sort of flattering, but not really. So I think that in a lot of environments I've often been the youngest faculty. I'm getting past that stage, which is a little sad. To be honest, it was kind of fun being the young one. People would be like, well you're young, you know what's going on. I never knew what was going on, but people thought I did. I joined Facebook late, I still don't have Twitter, I don't even know what TikTok is. I'm not young at all, but I think at certain stages I've often been the younger or youngest faculty, so I think that has been more of a thing than my gender. So that identity I think is has been interesting. It influences you in the way that your older colleagues think you have young things figured out, administrators want your point of view so you're on a lot of committees. If you're new and you prove that you've got competency or you're competent, more work will get put on your plate to be honest. And if you're young and you fit a minority group, even more work gets put on your plate because all of a sudden you're the voice that represents all young people and all females. It's like okay, first of all, I'm not, but if among the ranks that's what you are, then you become the symbol. I would say my age and lack of experience earlier on and a little bit gender were two of the factors that I think played a role. And frankly, what the role was, was more work. And more opportunities, right. So work not necessarily in a bad way, sometimes you know more administrative work, but more work more opportunities. Someone else did an interview on me earlier and talked about my childhood and wanted more personal information on that. I grew up in a pretty abusive childhood and not a great upbringing. I actually think that has helped me be more autonomous, be more independent, be more comfortable to just be persistent. So I think that I've grown through that identity. If we were to give it an identity, I'm a child abuse survivor, just to put it out there. Nobody talks about it. I talk about it with my friends like the hidden identities. We're not at a stage of talking about that. We're at a stage of talking about visual identities that we can see, the

external. But I think there's a whole dimension of internal identities that people either don't want to share or don't want to be accused of being a victim or whatever. But there's a whole series of hidden identities or unseen identities, and for me that piece is actually really formative I think in who I am and my character. So that answers your question there.

Grice: Alright, thank you. What would you change, if anything if you could go back? What would you tell the beginner conducting you?

Threinen: Yeah, this is a great question. I would say that I think try to be a little less hard on yourself. Keep working hard, keep going after things, take risks where you should and can, but don't beat yourself up too much and overthink. There's no one thinking about you, as much as you. I think that's the biggest thing. Nobody's thinking as much about you as you are, so try to not worry about was that the right thing, the wrong thing, what do they think about me? I think it's important to be reflective and constructive, to look back and learn from mistakes for sure, but I think we can overthink that and get a little too far in our own heads. So that's what I would tell myself, to give myself a little more grace.

Grice: Okay, great. What advice would you have for women entering the field of collegiate conducting?

Threinen: Be the smartest, most well informed, the most expressive, and the most determined that you can be. I would encourage women to try to not compare themselves to men. More importantly, try to not compare themselves to other women. But just to do your very best, to be the best musician, the best teacher, and the best colleague that you are capable of being. As you go, to increase those skills for you and for your students, and to just do your best to not compare with others.

Grice: That's great advice.

Threinen: I also think it's good to just show up and get involved. Show up at conferences, go to CBDNA, go to NBA if you're involved, go to Midwest clinic. Go and get involved, listen, pay attention, join service groups, and get involved in your state. Do what you can with the time you have, which is never enough, but to just be active. If you're mad about a system or like why isn't there more of this or that, well go get involved and find out instead of just being upset about it. Be active and be involved.

Grice: What advice or changes would you have for the field of conducting in general?

Threinen: I would say that especially in wind band, I think we have so many outlets of workshops, points of views, and opportunities. There are almost too many opportunities. I don't know that I would take any of that away, it's great. I mean you can go study with all kinds of people, all kinds of things. The way that these like conducting workshops have been organized, or grad programs are so personality driven, style driven, and pedagogically driven by the person at that institution. If you want to go learn, what are Jerry Junkin's philosophies, sign up and go. If you want to go learn what's Mallory Thompson's philosophy, sign up and go. You want to learn from Marin Alsop, well go to her workshop. There's so much access and so many different

ways that people teach right now. It's very much like this is my philosophy and take it or leave it. It's not like there's right and wrong because it's all so subjective. I think that is beautiful. What's tricky in that is those of us that want to do it right we're like, well shoot, what's the right way. Jerry says to do it this way, and Marin Alsop says to do it that way, and Dudamel says to do it this way. The answer is always you gotta find your own way. The system that's already set up is so open and available. There isn't a school of thought that you must subscribe to and you have to learn these things. It's almost like there's too many options, like a smorgasbord. It's like going to target and trying to find shampoo, just give me the curly product that's all I need. Why do we have 20 different varieties, too much? So in a way I think that's a great thing, right. It's an open market. As far as what advice or changes? I don't know that I have any. I think my advice would just be get on the box as much as you can in all kinds of environments. Stand up in front of the best musicians you could possibly be in front of. That's going to hone your skills, but I think it's also good to stand up in front of developing groups because that hones a different set of skills that I think that can work. If you're only doing high level, great, great, great, great, great stuff, that will only make you better frankly in certain ways. But sometimes then you have a harder shift doing this because then you're like man you can't even hold the instrument properly. If you're always tier then you're never pushing yourself artistically. I do think the artistic push you have to have great musicians in front of you, but I also think it's important to be comprehensive and know how to teach. If there were any changes I wish I guess if there were any changes, I wish that conductors had more access to the highest level of ensembles, and that's just harder to get in front of.

Grice: You've already answered this, did you ever teach in the public schools? I think you said three years at Harding High School.

Threinen: Yep, three years Harding High School which is in the Saint Paul public schools in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Grice: How valuable do you think public school teaching experience is for the collegiate conductor?

Threinen: I think because I did it, I come with a bias, right? I do think I'm pretty aware of my own biases. Like I said, why I'm angry about the gender identity thing sometimes, not always, is because I was told I couldn't or it became a thing, you kind of hold on. Not that I hold a grudge, but these are the seeds that kind of form your mind. Because I lived that, I think I have a bias that I do think it is important to teach at least a few years before you want to pursue collegiate teaching. And here's why, especially in band, if it was orchestra conducting or maybe even chorus, I don't know if I would feel the same way. I'm kind of like a little more loose on that because in the orchestra world and the choral world there are professional jobs where you can be very successful without an educational, a non-academic job. Church choirs, professional choirs, there aren't many, but those jobs exist where you're not affiliated with a college or high school, the academic side. Same with orchestras, certainly there are lots more orchestras. So that's why I'm a little less maybe rigid or biased in those regards. In the band field, the only professional bands we have, are military bands. If you want a military career that's different. That's a slightly different track. But other than that, the band industry is largely attached to academia. I believe being a collegiate director you definitely need to know how high school band programs work at

varieties of levels and variety of locations around the nation, the quality of what they're able to play, what are the kind of fundamental elements, what are some basic skill sets to teach that level, how do you inspire those students? There's literally three months between a high school senior and a college freshman, it's really not that much. That's one thing, just the nature of the development of that, it's very, very important to know. Also our professional work, when we're getting looked at for promotion and tenure and we're asked to guest conduct, or do outreach and community service, all these things. It's going to be with high school bands, high school honor bands, high school All-State bands, band festivals, and clinics. You're going to be working with high school musicians a lot, and so if there isn't any background in that. It doesn't need to be 20 years, but if there isn't a little bit of experience there, it's really hard to recreate that and to try to assume you know how to teach that without having rolled up your sleeves and done it yourself. I personally do believe that some level of teaching is absolutely critical for success in being a college band director. Again, because your guest conducting opportunities and guest work will largely be with that level. Research might relate to that level, and your job in a collegiate setting is going to be working with younger musicians and recruiting and trying to connect with those students in multiple dimensions. I don't think you have to know exactly how to start a beginning bassoonist, very few of us know how to do that. That's why we call up our buddies like hey come over, help me out, but I think you have to understand kind of where they're at, what those students are like, and how to connect with them in a few different ways.

Grice: Okay, great. In Harding did you teach marching band and did you teach marching band at any of the universities that you taught at?

Threinen: The Harding High School Marching Band was a non-competitive kind of a parade style, city style marching band. We did some parades like city parades and festivals. We did halftime shows, but they were very minimal. I think we'd spell like three letters and play a few tunes, so nothing like the competitive, DCI style, or Music For All style. None of that like halftime show competition, staging and so forth. I've certainly been to those events. I've adjudicated a few marching band festivals and competitions. I have not lived the life of that sort of halftime show of the competitive marching band field show work. I'm not in that world, but I've seen it. I've attended DCI competitions just as an observer and an appreciator. I certainly appreciate it, but I never marched and I've not been in that kind of community. My marching band experience has been through the Big 10, so that's like traditional pregame at different institutions and then a halftime show that changes for every home football game, so you're kind of learning new show and drill every two weeks.

Grice: Is that as a performer or as an instructor?

Threinen: Both. I've never been a head instructor of a marching band. I've always been like a colleague, team teach, a TA, running sectionals, doing some ladder conducting. Even at Temple University, it was more like that, again a traditional pregame and then a halftime show that would change every game.

Grice: How do you think men perceive women in the field of collegiate wind conducting over the years? Do you think the 'Good Ol' Boys Club' exists? How do we as women counter that?

Threinen: Oof! Well, I think much like I don't want to be the representative of all women. There are plenty of men that don't want to be the representative of all men, right? You know, I think everyone is an individual entity in and of themselves. I try hard to not like clump all males into one pile or all females into another pile. With that said, I think we all have some level of bias in some capacity in some ways. Women have not been allowed to be in this field for that long, honestly, right? The Minnesota Marching Band, the first time a woman could march was 1972. That's kind of common, if you look at like collegiate bands and look at their history of when women were allowed to march is probably late 60's or 70's. That was just playing in the group, as far as anyone conducting the group, being in charge, or being on staff it's the 80's or 90's. It took time to get there, so we're really only 30 plus years of experience of kind of women in this field. One of our older leaders in band is Paula Crider. She's one of our living legends of someone that led and did and paving the way in her own way. So you know she's still alive, which is great, which means it hasn't been around that long. So obviously, there has to be a shift in male perception of this for sure. I would also think men that have daughters as children impacts perception and maybe feeling a little more open to women doing things that maybe they weren't allowed to do before. I definitely believe there's a shift. I personally have to say that the men that I've engaged with have been nothing but supportive. There have been a few instances of kind of jerky men, but to be honest, there have been a few instances of jerky women, equally as competitive and equally as nasty. It's not just men against women. In some cases, women are harder on each other. They don't like it when a young woman comes in, because all of a sudden that threatens their turf, because they were the only one and now there's another one. They kind of liked being the only one and so there's a thing there. As a woman I felt that with some of my older female colleagues. I could tell they didn't like having a younger female. I actually felt that there was some of that in my career more than men not giving the opportunities. So I would say that I think it has shifted. I've been very fortunate that I've had a lot of really supportive men. I'm sure men have said things about me behind my back. I'm sure they still do, but so do women. I think it certainly has changed, nothing's perfect. I don't know if it will be, but we're much further along today I think than we have been.

Grice: Going along with that shift, do you think more women are applying for collegiate wind band conducting positions and are we succeeding in bridging the gap in male to female conducting positions at the collegiate level?

Threinen: I think it's pretty true that there are just fewer women in the profession right now. There are fewer female graduate students in comparison. The numbers have increased for sure, but we're not at 50/50 and I don't know if and when we will be. I don't think it's because women aren't allowed or aren't encouraged. I just wonder if the job is not that appealing. You asked me what sacrifices I've made. My husband and I put a lot off for a long time to do this work and to chase these dreams. He had dreams too, so for both of us to chase our respective dreams. And then when you're done, it's not like the paycheck is like a million bucks. It's a good salary, but it's not that different than high school teaching, to be honest. In some cases, it's less. The work is so much work and I don't think the inequity is because people can't do it. I just wonder if when a woman or a man, but a woman looks at a trajectory they might be like, I don't want to go to grad school for five years. I don't want to have to move six times before I can find my community. I mean really, like I don't know, and I'm not saying all women. Again, not all women think that way, but if a woman wants to have a family, if a woman wants to build a community wherever

rural/urban, I don't care wherever. But if they want to establish themselves somewhere. In the collegiate band world, you just have to go where the job is. That could be 3,000 miles away from your loved ones, from home, or from wherever. If people want to get established, let's say and settle down, this is a tough career to do that in. So that's why it's not that women can't, women certainly can. It's not like no one holding them back, but at the end of the day when you have to make some tough choices, you're like, well is this really what I want to do? I've had plenty of female students that are undergrads that say I want to be you, how did you there? Then I tell them and then they're like, oh, maybe, I don't want to be you. Well, I mean it's great, but like it didn't just happen. So that's why it's kind of hard to pinpoint the why.

Grice: Do female successes in other fields, such as the first minority woman Vice President of the United States (Kamala Harris) and the youngest US inauguration Youth Poet Laureate (Amanda Gorman), enhance a female's ability to succeed in areas such as wind conducting? Do you think this will help women feel more comfortable applying for jobs that are in a male-dominated field such as wind conducting?

Threinen: I sure hope so. I hope that seeing a woman or any identity let's say or anyone that resonates with you, so whatever that might be, you could be gay or a person of color. When you see someone that looks like you or has identities like you and they're doing high powered jobs, whatever field, doctors, astronauts, jobs that we see as being difficult to do, takes a lot of work, a lot of intellect, talent, great athletes, all that. I think the more we see a greater representation, the more inspired for sure the next generations I hope will become, to want to do that thing, and to want to go for it. I think absolutely, I hope it will help. Again, going back to my earlier comment, there are some professions and there are some jobs that just require more time away, more travel, more moving, more delaying of certain things. I think as long as you know the female is comfortable with all of that I think absolutely seeing more women doing those things will be very inspiring.

Grice: Do you feel that you have ever had to mask your femininity in interviews, dress, language, or on the podium to be respected as a conductor in a male dominated field? If yes, in what ways? I know you talked about to kind of counteract that doing the short hair when you were young and stuff like that, but is there any time that you felt that you needed to do that again with dress or language.

Threinen: Boy, I have some good stories here. So first I will say I call it the Emily androgynous stage, my college career. Again, not that I blame Ani DiFranco on that or Annie Lennox, but you know they were inspirations at the time for sure. I mean the short answer is yes. I have honestly felt in certain contexts like trying to neutralize I suppose, not diminish my femininity, but to not have it be what people notice first. It's kind of hard to hide that. but you know. Like I said the seed was planted when I was younger in college and I think knowing that being a woman X, a woman drum major, and there wasn't a woman drum major yet. Knowing that being a woman high school band director was apparently hard to do. Like all of a sudden it became a thing like oh, what can I do to counter this thing. I think that that was an initial segment. Being a conductor now I will say that more research and focus on what I believe is part of being a good conductor. I actually think philosophically, and this is not to say teacher, let's put the teacher hat over here, but just strictly as a conductor an artistic conductor, a vessel of communication. I do have a

feeling that our personality is important, but our job as a conductor is to put the music through our spirit and to share it. We're like a vessel, a conduit, and what I want to make sure is the most important thing is the music, not my lipstick or my look. Am I moving in a way that's serving the music. I feel like a servant to the score, a servant to my ensemble, and a servant to the audience. My image, my decoration, my outfit; I don't want that to take away from the art. The art is the music. If I were a soloist, that would be different, then it's kind of my time to tell you how I want to sing or play that. But as a conductor, I feel like not that I remove myself, but that I'm going at the music and I'm going at my ensemble and I want the audience to feel that energy. I don't want them to notice, wow, that skirt looks great on her or ooh, she's got big hair today. I mean they might notice that, but I don't want that to be what they notice. I mean, my hair is naturally curly and it's big, okay, and usually that's like a coveted quality, apparently. But I wore it short for years because I didn't want that to be what people saw. I wanted people to watch my baton, watch what I was doing, watch my arms, watch my body carriage, and watch my communication. I wanted to take away anything that would distract or call attention. So I wore short hair, I never wore colored earrings, just little things, no jewelry, modest lipstick. Very kind of just gender neutral outfits. Once in a while I'll wear a dress, I just started too recently, but I think it wasn't because I'm trying to not be a woman. It's because the music is what I'm here for. I want less conversation about what I look like and way more conversation about how I'm expressing and connecting with my musicians. So that's more of a philosophical approach, and what I think a conductor is male or female. It just so happens that when you think about what can I do to not be distracting, well, cut it all off, take it all off, let's get rid of it and button up your jacket and like there you go, then you're set. Then what happens is you start to look more like a male to try to not notice those things, so it's a weird irony there, right. Now I will say I have had, I won't say who of course, but when my hair was longer, like even longer hair in my doctorate, and I remember a very famous composer talking to another composer. They didn't think I could hear, but I overheard them saying, "wow, that Emily Threinen's got to cut off that beautiful hair like no one is going to notice what she's doing with all that gorgeous hair", or something. Now I didn't cut it off because of that, but again, that was a seed planted that I thought man okay, well. I mean I was flattered, but you know, that bothered me because I wanted my art to speak louder than my hair. Some people will comment more on your outfit when you're a woman, whether it's masculine or a feminine outfit they still comment. But a man that walks up in a black suit no one says a word. I don't know if I'm answering your question right now, but these are all related so you know how you look and how you behave. So again, instead of trying to neutralize, earlier I think I tried to be androgynous. Then when I realized it's really my own philosophy, it's about the music, what can I do to focus on that? Then sort of how I look, I've tried to put, I mean I want to look professional for sure, but anything extra I try to not make it be such a thing. Does that answer your question Jennifer?

Grice: Yes, absolutely. Describe your method of score study, rehearsal techniques, and concert programming. Does your programming include female composers? Do you go out of your way to search for female composers?

Threinen: Well, first of all those are huge questions. I've literally done like full workshops on all those questions so okay. I would say score study is certainly, I've been influenced by my own teachers, I have to say that because you know we're all a product of our teachers. I want to make sure that I say that out loud and directly. I remember Mallory drawing this beautiful line, the

head connects to the soul and to the hands. I believe that the only way that we can really as conductors feel connected to our music, to our score, is through as comprehensive score study as possible. What that looks like is different for every piece, but I try to audiate a lot. I try to sing, I try to sing the rhythms, sing the melody, harmony, baseline, use my piano, sing the phrase. I do phrase maps a lot, flowcharts and phrase maps. Where is the music going? Where is this line going? How do I want the note to end? How do I want to release? What should the sound feel like? What's the energy feel like here? I try to take all of the nuts and bolts; history of the composer, history of the piece, why it was written, and analysis of the piece. I do all the homework, but then I try to get it in. And for me to get it in I have to sing, I have to move, I have to feel it. It's not enough just to study. I have to sing. When I sing it or and play, playing doesn't do the same either because I'm not recreating the sound. When I sing all of a sudden I've got some commitment for how I want that to go. I try it different ways, right? Do I want it perky and light? Do I want it heavy? So I sing to get how I want it, but I can't get to that layer unless I know the impetus. So that's one thing, getting it connected. Of course there's more layers to that, but that's the basic thing. Rehearsal technique depends a lot on how much time I've got. I'm doing a concert next Monday, I literally had one rehearsal. For four pieces right? Like okay and I get like 10 minutes to do whatever I can. Let's run through it, let me hit three spots, okay, great next piece. It totally depends on how much time I've got. How hard is the music? What's the preparation of the players? You can only get to so much level of detail. It's all related, so that's a question that's completely context answered. I tend to try to do a macro, micro, macro approach in everything. I mean, I have a luxury of where my life is right now. Usually the music I program the players can play the whole thing through. When I was teaching middle school we may not have been able to do that first rehearsal, okay. I'm in a different place in my career where that's generally where I'm at. If they can't play it all the way through I've programmed too hard of a piece for that specific environment. So generally speaking, first rehearsal run it, whatever happens, and then big picture things, maybe run it again depending on how much time I have, get into it detail, detail, detail, and then come back out. So macro, micro, macro, pretty much consistently. Alright, what was your third question on that?

Grice: Does your programming include female composers?

Threinen: I'm a pretty passionate conference presenter on programming philosophies. Actually Travis Cross, one of my best friends who's out at UCLA. He and I 15 years ago, started doing a program philosophy session. I think our first one was at Virginia Music Educators Association, VMEA. We came together and did this and we went to Spain and did it at a WASBE conference. We've talked a lot about like how to, not so much what my philosophy is, but how to come up with your own philosophy. The whole point of the session is not to tell you what to do or tell you what's good or bad music, but how do you come up with sort of who you are as a programmer and your philosophy? I will say that my philosophy has changed and I imagine it will change as I advance and get older. I think before I tried to do more of a balance of old and new, contemporary and traditional. I'm not an all contemporary programmer and I'm not an all tradition. I would always try to find a healthy balance. I tend to try to find a thread maybe that would connect the next piece to the other. Not a theme because that can get kind of old quickly, but that there's a reason why the pieces are moving. It's not just fast opener, slow tune, but that there's kind of an architecture or a journey that I hope the listeners taken through that kind of works, or that's like super random, and that's also fun. But that's intentionally designed in that

way. I would say now I have been on the board of the composer diversity database. I haven't done very much on the board like admittedly and I know that they're in a lot of change right now, especially after last year. It's not because I don't want to be involved, I just have been so busy it's hard to add extra time. When I got invited to be on the board I said to myself, I'm only going to commit to this if I'm going to commit to have more wide ranging in my programming and to really reflect as my programming representative of what this mission is. If you were to look back at my old programs at Temple University, I would say they're not traditional, but there are a lot of white men, living and dead. I would say perhaps conservative styled programming to some extent, so I'm definitely more conscientious of that. Not that I wasn't before, I did do my best to try to program female composers with the music that I knew and the rep I knew. I would say in the past few years I've been trying to be more intentional and I'm definitely looking at more music, I'm going to more websites, I'm studying more scores, and listening all the time. I've done more of that exploration in the past three years. So I'm trying to be more intentional.

Grice: What areas of collaboration have you used in your programs, maybe with other arts?

Threinen: You know one of the things about collaborating is you need partners on the other side that want to also collaborate, and sometimes that's hard. I remember feeling at Shenandoah, which was a smaller environment. What was lovely about that is the smaller environments was easier to be a little bit more collaborative because there were just fewer pulls in different directions and people were kind of eager to work together in multiple facets. The larger the institution, I'm finding that sometimes the harder it is to make those connections. So for example, at a big university the art department, well, that's a huge entity and program and school in it of itself with their own projects, their own inter-collaborative work, and their own ideas. So to work with the school of music, you've got to know a particular faculty and know their discipline and like kind of have an in there. For example, at the University of Minnesota I really wanted to work with the dance department. I've sent like three or four emails to this group of faculty and no one's ever written me back. I personally don't know those people. The dance department doesn't do a faculty meeting together with the school music. If a dance faculty were to walk in my room, I wouldn't even recognize them because the university is so big that unless there's like a luncheon where we're all coming together and we introduce each other, we just wouldn't know each other. That's one of the tough things at a really big school is like you start the silos seem to get more isolated because of that. I would love to do more collaborative work. I've just find that it's harder to meet people that are also invested in that same work. I would say lately it's been a little bit more narrow to just music stuff.

Grice: You answered this next question with your choir performance of having a solo, but would there be a different 'aha' moment as a conductor and how did that shift your journey? Did you have an aha moment outside of the beginning conducting class?

Threinen: Yes, when I was teaching at Saint Paul public school district, at Harding High School, one of the collaborations was working with all of the choral students. I had a vision that I wanted all the students in choir and in band. We did not have an orchestra at the school at the time. But I wanted all the 9 through 12 grade students to be on stage together and do one piece. I found a band adaptation of *Carmina Burana* I think it was the John Boyd, in the same key as the choral part. It's a suit, not the whole composition. I asked my choral colleague, can we pick two or

three, the *O Fortuna*, of course, and then a couple of others and just do like a big collaboration. She was like, yes let's do this. These were students from all walks of life, the choral students were jazz choir kind of kids, studying music kind of kids, and then some students that choir was like recess. So you have this whole gamut, and band was the same. I had 9th graders just starting instrument for the first time. They didn't start in 5th grade, they started in 9th grade. They're just figuring out is it left hand up on top or right hand on the bottom, all the way through music major prep material. We put them all on stage, probably 200 plus kids and we all practiced of course, you know in our own respective groups. But having everyone on stage and that opening *O Fortuna*, you could just see these students. They hadn't lived in that sound and that big of a group and that strong of a sound. You could just see them like, whoa, just ensconced in that thing, that you know, that if you've never felt it is intense.

Grice: That goosebump factor, as you say.

Threinen: Right, I mean the goosebump factor. Hearing it on a speaker is not the same as doing it, in it. In that environment it's St. Paul so the clientele, it was a very diverse group of students with very different backgrounds, not only experience wise but culturally. They were all just like, I mean there's some girls crying and their faces were like, man this is amazing. It was so exciting. I just remember my whole body just being like, wow, this is the greatest teaching moment ever. So we went through the whole *O Fortuna* and I stopped and you could hear a pin drop and then all of a sudden you hear that was awesome. All these like gritty kids just going crazy. That's when I knew wow, this is such power. This is so powerful, like nothing can replace this.

Grice: Do you have any rituals that you do before concerts? Do you have any routines or activities to help you keep your body and mind at its highest?

Threinen: Well, the pandemic has kind of forced me to get into more routines honestly. One also because I have a child. Well, the child and the pandemic has forced me to get into routines. Some of which I like, some of which I'm like so bored of I could go crazy. But I would say that I started to really exercise. Exercise has in my life up until the pandemic has always been something I felt like I had to do to either lose weight, you know I feel like, oh I'm gaining too much weight in the winter, I have to lose weight, so I'd forced myself to exercise and reduce. But I never had a relationship to exercise that was, well let's just do a little bit all the time and just build it into the sort of routine. It's not goal oriented exercise, it's just stay moving and stay aware, not to try to lose weight, but just to stay healthy. I feel like I've succeeded in that, I jog now. I'm not a runner, I'm not doing marathons, I'm not signing up for the race. I'm not putting pressure on myself to achieve. I'm just doing three times a week, a few miles, and if I get going and it doesn't feel good, I stop. If I go, and I say I'm gonna do two miles today and I feel better then maybe I'll do three. I'm not putting goals; I'm just doing it as a routine. That has made a really big difference in my mindset about exercise and also just keeping my anxiety at bay. So exercise just to do it, to do it, not for a goal. Okay, so that's number one. As far as rituals, I like to be alone. I don't like a lot of people telling me I'm here, knocking on my door. I like to just have some space, at least an hour if I can. It's not always there with honor bands and stuff, it's always like, rehearse all day and kids running in hallway and okay now you go. I don't love that, but I can do it. I would say I don't know that I have like a specific routine or ritual, but I do try to

really center myself, I try to have quiet time, I try to do some breathing exercises and some minimal stretching. I just try to get the noise out, get the energy you know, calm it down, shake out, do some physical things. I don't read a poem or I don't say a prayer. I don't have anything really profound to be honest. But I would say that the quiet time, if I can get that, that's really important and that helps me out a lot to just kind of focus and get my mind set. Try to remove whatever emails are in there or whatever social media and just focus on the task at hand.

Grice: How important is leadership as a quality for any conductor? Were there any leadership roles that you held as a young student in high school or college that you think helped your career pathway?

Threinen: I think leadership is very, very important. I also think that everyone's definition of what that should look like is different. In the jobs I've had prior to Temple University I was the only director. As far as oversight or seeing things through, all the responsibility lied on me, which I think was great because I learned how to do everything kind of by myself. I learned how to figure out websites, I learned how to figure out some social media things, budget management, pacing myself to get ready for a concert, what repertoire, how to order the music. All the things, you kind of learn how to do it, how to organize your time, how to manage things. I would say that those were very, very important and then in that of course, you build up some leadership with your own students and your own classes. As a faculty member and as a colleague, I think as I told you earlier, I was often the youngest one, or newer hires. I learned a lot by watching how other people managed, communicated, delegated, kind of took care of things, and learned what I liked and what I didn't like. I think as band directors, because we're responsible for so much, we get in the habit of like okay we can like get all these plates spinning and we kind of learn what to keep spinning what we can turn away from for a few minutes and start spinning over here and like oh that was wobbling, come back. I think we learn that just through survival of doing the job of running a band program. Then when you insert yourself as a colleague into a school of music, you just have those skills already. Then you can start observing other people doing those things and take a few things and not take a few things. But I do think skills and leadership is very, very, very critical to success in this work. I would say I learned it through just being on my own. When I was in college, I think I told you I was active doing everything. That helped me time manage. Again, I spread myself thin, but it forced me to time manage. In marching band, I was a section leader and rank Lieutenant. You had to apply for that and audition for that. In high school, even though I didn't get drum major high school or college, I still was a leader, and I had to audition through that. That requires communication skills, confidence and direction, getting people to get on task, you know whatever it was. It started relatively at an early age and then just as accumulation factor comes in, I think I just got more confident with it. I think a lot of it's just confidence and the ability to give directions clearly.

Grice: What should young conductors be sure to always and never do? What advice do you have for young conductors? You've already talked some about balancing work and life as far as putting it on hold, but anything that you would tell young people as far as that goes, what not to do, what to do, and then balance of life.

Threinen: These questions are so intense. Well, let me say I don't think I put anything on hold. I decided that in my journey and my sort of like let's see where I can go with this thing. Every

decision was carefully thought through right; I didn't know what was going to happen ahead. I had to look at like, okay, did I get into grad school? Okay great, I got into this master's program, now I'm going to throw my hat in the ring for doctorate programs. I don't know what's going to happen, okay, I got into these now, like it's always a decision right? When I look back and you just look at my resume, oh yeah, that makes sense, she did bam, bam, bam, bam, bam. When it's happening in real time, that's not how it goes. You throw it out there and we'll see what happens. I want to make that clear and I wasn't like consciously like okay, I know I'm going to go to this school and this school, will get this job and I'm going to put my life on hold. It wasn't that. My husband and I had to make decisions every year given the choices that were in front of us. What we're gonna try to do. We didn't look at our years and say we'll live six years apart, that's gonna be great. It was like one year at a time. When he had a commitment that was a five year Ph.D., well then we knew that's a window. Then I was looking to find jobs where he was, but there were no jobs. It wasn't that we were conscientiously putting things on hold. It was that at every year or every juncture you drive and there's a fork and you got to decide. In the nature of how it all evolved we wound up having a child. We weren't sure if we were going to. It wasn't like a make or break situation. We were both sort of like, well, let's see what happens. Because he also wasn't sure what his life would look like too. We just decided once our degrees were done and we were in the same town and we still liked each other, okay now is a good time to think about having a kid, so that's kind of how it worked. Advice what to do, what not to do. I would say what to do is to, and again, one person's perspective, learn from everything. Don't say no to anything, unless you can't do it. I mean, don't spread yourself too thin. I have spread myself too thin a few times and I've reached a point of like critical mass a couple of times where I'm like, okay, there's my line. I didn't think I touched it and I touched it. So within reason, don't say no. Accept the things that may, is it free, but it's going to help you grow, do it. Is it only 50 bucks and it's going to help you grow, do it. Is it \$15,000, great do that one for sure. But don't say no, especially early on. I wouldn't be too discriminating too soon. Again, within reason for your own health and well-being, right? There's something to learn from everything, even going into bad environments right where you're like, whoa, this honor band is going to be a hot mess. Give it your best and learn from it. What's making it a hot mess? How did it start? Why isn't this working? Instead of being like wow, that's a hot mess, oh my gosh, I'm going to be crabby about it all weekend, why did they invite me, I'm better than this. Just go into it, try to help, see what you can learn. Take everything as a teachable moment is number one. What not to do. Try really hard to not burn any bridges. Have a strong personality, be who you are, but don't be so stubborn that you really tick people off. Because you never know when that can bite you later. Try to be a good colleague, try not to be too judgey or opinionated. You're going to see plenty of things that are frustrating, that are maddening, that you can't believe whatever or so and so did this or whatever. Obviously, there's a line. If someone crosses a line and it's illegal behavior that's different. Try to have grace towards situations. Generally speaking, people are really trying to do their best. Try not to say negative things about people and try not to burn bridge bridges or hurt relationships. I'm not saying that you have to be like overly nice and Pollyannaish with everyone, but generally speaking, operating with a kindness in all situations generally works out better than the alternative.

Grice: Great, thank you so much. I really appreciate all the time you've spent answering these questions. Thanks so much and have a great day.

Threinen: You too Jennifer, thank you, bye.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Emily Threinen, personal interview (Google Meet: 22 June, 2021).

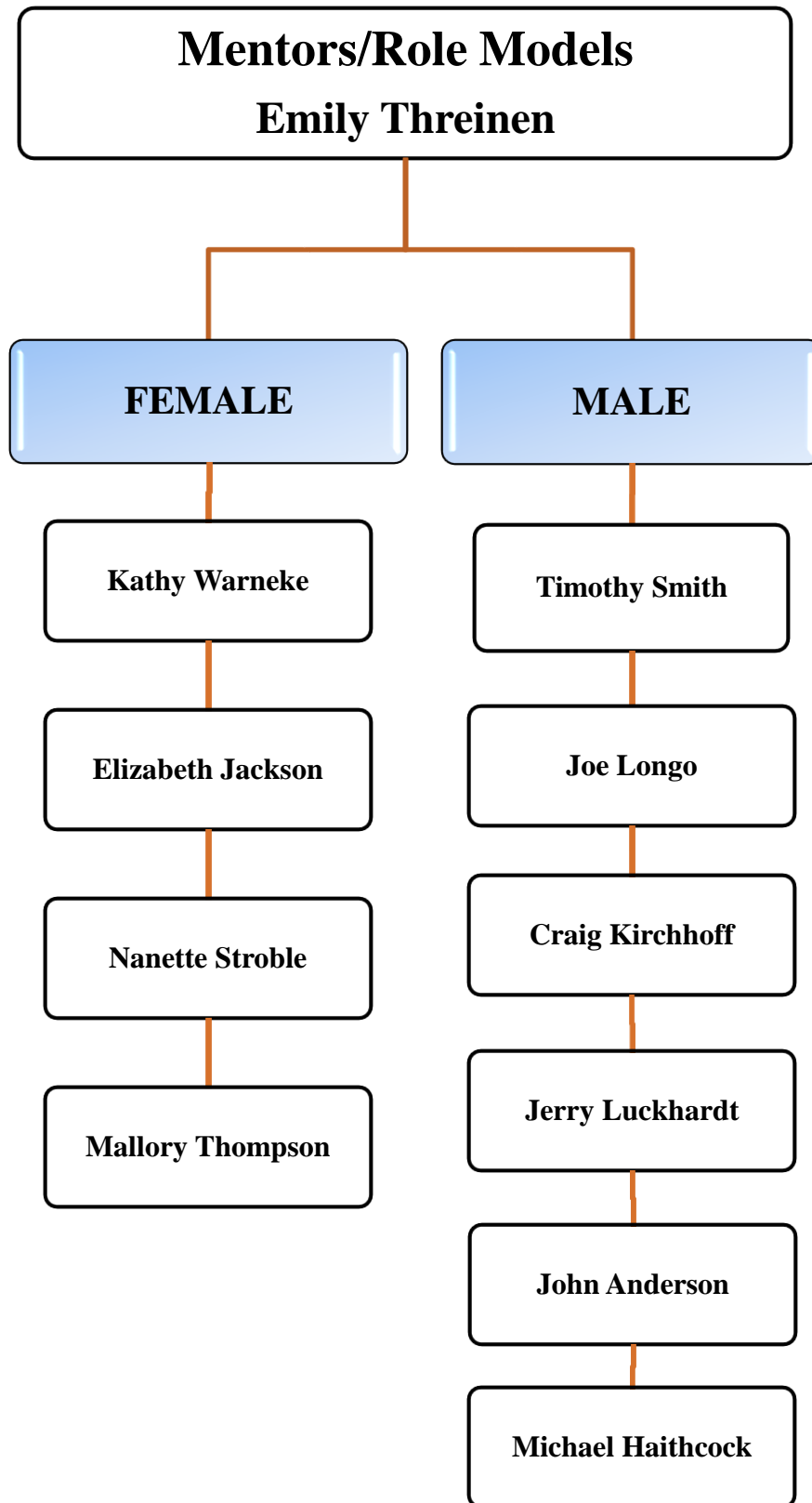


Figure 8. Mentors/Role Models of Emily Threinen.

Emily Threinen Profile

Current Collegiate Position: Director of Bands at the University of Minnesota

Previous Collegiate Positions:

Director of Bands at Temple University

Director of Bands/Assistant Professor of Music at Shenandoah University

Conductor and Artistic Director at Duke University

Conductor and Artistic Director at Concordia University

Degrees:

BM, University of Minnesota

Music Education

Clarinet Performance

MM, Northwestern University

Conducting

DMA, University of Michigan

Conducting

LaToya Webb Interview

Grice: Hi, how are you? Before we start I need to make this statement. Do you LaToya Webb give your consent to have your voice video recorded during this interview for the purposes of my doctoral research?

Webb: Yes, I give consent.

Grice: Could you please begin by telling me your musical journey. For example, things like: Why did you choose to play your instrument and that specific instrument? What were your experiences as a student in public schools and in college? When did you know you wanted to be a conductor? What were the influences that led you to your professional career?

Webb: I started singing in the children's choir at a church in Richmond, VA, where I'm from around 3 1/2 to 4 years old. I sung in the children's choir and then moved up to the youth choir, and eventually moved to singing the adult choir. I didn't sing in the choir much once I went off to college, so it's one of those, come back home, you sing in the church choir and then go back to school. My music journey started in the church and then from there in the 4th grade I was presented the opportunity to try out for band and I selected the clarinet because it looked like a very interesting instrument, and at the time when my music teacher performed on it, I enjoyed hearing the different color tones from each register. Just by me singing in choir, I think I had a better connection to the clarinet because I could sing various ranges, so I thought it was pretty cool. Clarinet is my primary instrument and I have played it all the way through college even in the top ensemble in graduate school at George Mason University. I also played the alto saxophone in my high school jazz band. That gave me a lot of flexibility as well as learning literature and just improvising and all the things that you do in jazz that you really wouldn't get in a concert ensemble. I was also a drum major in high school, so a lot of my attention went to

those leadership roles in high school- being a first clarinet principal player in the ensemble, and being the drum major of the marching band and leading in that capacity. I have various experiences, but many of them revolve around leadership for sure. My public school experience was great. I did everything else that I guess any other kid did. I was able to be part of the band, I was a cheerleader, and I ran track, so I was pretty active. I used to draw a lot as well. I was more so on the arts side of things, but also a little bit on the athletic side as well. I would say thinking about being a conductor, it's one of those things where I have always been in tune or in touch with a conductor, even as a child singing in the children's choir. The conductor is the person that's leading, so I had to pay attention as a child so that I wouldn't sing out loud when I wasn't supposed to or follow that type of instruction in the musical setting. I've always been fixated on the conductor, from singing in the children's choir and on up to just viewing that role and how it shifts from choral to the band side of things. So again, it's always been a fixation, but I believe that I really started to focus more so on conducting, probably in middle school and really in high school when I became a drum major. Because of that type of leadership role, I started to look at more scores. I started to give more instruction, more feedback, and collaborate with the students that I did lead in high school. I remember a particular instance where I asked my band director, Mr. Glenroy Bailey if I could conduct the warm up one day and he looked at me and he said, "well, sure. I think that's fine. You gonna be okay." I said I think so, you know I've been watching you do this every day for class. It's a routine so you know I think I've got it down. He let me lead the warm up for middle school that day and it became a thing where I could do it often. I didn't do it every day, but it was one of those things as I got more comfortable, I just asked and he said yeah, but he could have said no, so I think that really played a big part in it.

Grice: Great, as you reflect on your journey please describe your early role models? Describe your role models later in your career and any current role models.

Webb: Well, let's see I'm the type of person that looks at everyone pretty much as a role model, especially if you're teaching me something that I don't know. You're the expert, you're supposed to be the expert, so I believe that all of my band directors as well as my other teachers in non-music related subjects were role models. I think about the different characteristics and qualities that people portrayed along with their skill sets. There was something to learn from everyone, so I didn't really take that as, oh well, I don't like this or I don't like that. However, I did think about those things. If you don't like the way somebody does something or the way somebody says something, or the way someone carries themselves, turn it into a way to think forward and transfer your knowledge to how you would say or do something. How could I do this better or what type of adjustment could I make? I believe all of my teachers have been role models- I looked up to them all. I've learned so much by taking something from everyone and I don't always put the role model title on them. Everything is just a process for me. People are always watching you no matter what you do and you never know who you are truly inspiring or influencing, so I think it's best just to always set an example.

Grice: One of the things I do for the coding is compare how many female mentors there were versus male mentors. So I can get a list of those teachers afterwards if that would be best.

Webb: I can tell you right now that all of my band teachers have been males if that helps you at all. All of my band directors since elementary school all the way up through graduate school

have been males, but my clarinet applied professor was a female. She's the only female I have been around, so all males and one female when thinking about it, but I've had various female teachers in non- music subject areas such as English, math, social studies, art, and dance.

Grice: Do you think your career path would have been different if you had a female mentor? In what ways do you serve as a mentor to your students and graduates?

Webb: I'm not sure if my experiences would have been different. I think it's just one of those things when you feel affirmed or you see yourself reflected in someone who looks like you. I can't speak to whether the experiences would have been different. I truly don't know. I would say probably not so much. I mean not during my time growing up because those females probably had male mentors as well, so in a way you learned some of those male-like dominant characteristics as a female and those still come out. For my students the biggest thing for me is to think about what I was not provided as a student at any level. Especially in undergraduate and graduate school, thinking about those things that maybe I learned at the next level that maybe I should have gotten at this level. I try to incorporate most of those things and provide any type of support to them in that way and to share what I know. Often times people just don't share what they know, and you have to in order to keep the cycle going and keep this profession growing. I think it's important to always share one's knowledge and experiences. You can always learn from someone else. Everyone has different experiences and approaches and some of us have not faced specific situations, but you never know if that situation will appear later down the road for you or someone else. One of your good friends or family members may be faced with that situation and just by knowing someone else's experience, you could speak about it and provide some insight.

Grice: Great, describe your experiences that you believe related to you being a woman. What supports and what barriers have you faced that you believed were/are related to your gender? Thinking about your conducting career, tell me about experiences where you felt, if you did unequal treatment when compared to your male peers? How did you respond?

Webb: I think one of the biggest experiences that I could speak about me being a woman is when I auditioned in college to be a drum major. I was denied by the panel because I am a female. The drum major at this particular institution has always been of the male image and still is today. I was the third female to audition and no one else who identifies as female has auditioned since then, and that was in 2008. I really worked hard during that audition process, training physically for endurance and mentally because I am a female and I knew that some would not champion me. That never really mattered because I'm a confident individual, so I own who I am. I own my identity and I own my failures and my successes. I gave that audition pretty much everything that I had. It was crucial to show others that hard work was always important to me and knowing that I would be another female auditioning for this position after two were not successful allowed me to push even further; it just gave me a little bit more fuel to keep going and put my best foot forward. The only reason that I was not selected was because I was a female. That's how well I knew that I put the work into this audition because the only thing at the end of the day they could tell me is, oh well, you're a female, you know females haven't held this role, so you know you couldn't be selected. I know for a fact that I was the best candidate and that if I were not a female I would have been chosen. I'm certain of that. Another experience was when I auditioned for DMA programs. In many conducting programs, I felt that my gender and

maybe even my race played a part in at least one or two of those institutions. The main conducting professor had never taken in any students of color in their conducting studio. When I auditioned, I thought everything went great, and I mean, hey, like I said, I'm a confident person and I work really hard, especially when I know people who look like me don't usually go into these programs. The interview was great, the audition was great, my experience on campus and meeting everybody at that institution and the School of Music was great, but at the end of the day, I think me being a female and being black, led to this outcome. I was not selected, but when I looked to see who was selected, it was actually a black male. Again, this person had never taken any black, indigenous, person of color in their studio until this point, and it happened to be a black male and not me (a black female). I think everything went well for the other institution that I auditioned for, but this person also never had a black female in their conducting studio.

Grice: Tell me about moments that were critical in your career - specifically what they were and what meaning did you make from them? Did you have a defining moment where you decided you wanted to be a conductor and how did that shift your journey?

Webb: I would have to say that teaching on the K-12 level was a critical moment in my career to just get out there and do the thing that I had been preparing to do. Some people don't teach on the K-12 level at all, but yet they are in higher education teaching- that's a little disturbing and for another topic of discussion. Teaching is one of those things where you test what you know. We observe many teachers, role models, and mentors in music and in other subject areas over many years. Therefore, teaching allowed me test things out. Can I do what I have observed all these years? Most of us teach how we were taught in the beginning. Hopefully people move on to figure out who they are and what changes they want to make to become their own type of individual, their own educator, their own teacher, their own leader, rather than riding on the coat tails of their mentors and role models. Many things change over time and so should each teacher. Teaching at the high and middle school levels were critical moments in my career. Middle school is tough. Everyone is not built for that level, and it's okay to acknowledge that. No matter the level, one must work hard.

Grice: What are some of your greatest triumphs?

Webb: I would have to say being present. Like I said, there are not many people who look like me in this field. I think it's so important to be present so that others can see you, whether they identify like you or not. It's just one of those things where you don't see it till you believe it. Being present in the field wherever and whenever I can, is important to me. Many of my triumphs are being selected to attend conducting symposiums and workshops, such as the US Army Band Conductor's workshop working with the Pershing's Own Band and working with H. Robert Reynolds for the Reynolds Conducting Institute at the Midwest Clinic. I was also selected and awarded a Diversity Fellowship grant through CBDNA (College Band Directors National Association) to attend a conducting workshop at the Hartt School of Music a few years ago. Additionally, I was selected for a conducting masterclass at the Southern division CBDNA regional conference. Those are some of the big highlights because they are on a larger scale. Overall, my greatest triumph is being present in the music community and doing the things I love to do. I think it's wonderful.

Grice: What were some of your tribulations and we've already talked about some of those? What kind of constraints and/or obstacles have you had to overcome and how did you deal with them? What sacrifices have you made to achieve your successes?

Webb: Well, one of the tribulations is the drum major experience which we have already discussed. I don't know where I would have ended up during that time, or the outcome of my life if I were selected. I don't know if I would have taken the same path or not. I really haven't bumped into too many tribulations going through my experiences other than life in general and school. I've been schooling for a while now, as a student in public school, undergraduate, and graduate school. I'm a lifelong learner. I just want to develop my skills, gifts, talents, craft, further and be the best educator, leader, and conductor that I can be.

Grice: Do you feel like you've had to sacrifice anything to achieve all of your successes? Have you had to give up anything?

Webb: Well, a lot of time. I've given up a lot of time. Time for myself, time for my family, and peers. I don't think I've really sacrificed anything else. I think time is the biggest thing and it's something that you just can't get back.

Grice: Are there other aspects of your identities (race, instrument you play, age) that you believe influenced your triumphs and tribulations in your career?

Webb: Yes, as I stated earlier, I believe race was one of those identities that influenced one of those tribulations of not getting into a DMA program. I could probably say that race again has also influenced some of my triumphs (being black and female). Again, I'm in a field that is significantly dominated by males. We could look around in the profession and see that, but it's also in the research. I think another identity other than race is age. Some people think I'm 16 or 20. However, I wouldn't say that age or the instrument I play is another aspect. Most people get excited when I say clarinet is my primary instrument, and if they're not excited, they're like, oh, another one. It's okay, but I think race is definitely one of those identities, because even now we're still talking about diversity, equity, inclusion, and access. It's become a buzzword here and there; like a trend that comes and goes. Race is one of those things that's not going away. It is what it is, so get with the program and move on. I think more institutions are getting with the program and hiring more black, indigenous, people of color in the profession.

Grice: Do female successes in other fields, such as the first minority woman Vice President of the United States (Kamala Harris) and the youngest US inauguration Youth Poet Laureate (Amanda Gorman), enhance a female's ability to succeed in areas such as wind conducting? Do you think this will help women feel more comfortable applying for jobs that are in a male dominated field such as wind conducting? Do you think this will help women feel more comfortable applying for jobs that are in a male-dominated such as wind conducting, seeing people at such a high level in other fields.

Webb: I'm sure that the success of these prominent females does enhance the ability to succeed in the conducting field. I think it gives them an open perspective to say "okay, well if they can do this, then maybe I could do this." Or maybe other people are now thinking in this way to hire

more females or to encourage and empower more females. One thing I know for sure is that whether you are a female or identify differently, you must be comfortable with who you are. You have to own your identity and know your self-worth. If you are not in that space or place to present confidence in who you are, then success in higher positions will not help you because no one will be there to hold your hand each day. You have to do the hard work yourself, so you must have confidence and own your self-identity and know what you want and go after it because nobody else is gonna do it for you.

Grice: Okay, do you think any of the movements have helped?

Webb: In our area I would say so, but it's still in the same context of what I just stated. I feel like people have their lenses a little bit wider open, so other people are thinking about females in different ways. But it doesn't necessarily mean that they're going to give you an opportunity.

Grice: What would you change, if anything if you could go back? What would you tell the beginner conducting you?

Webb: Oh boy, if I could go back, I would tell my beginner self to start going to conducting clinics, workshops, symposiums earlier and start hanging out in that crowd earlier. That wasn't something that I did until my second masters in instrumental conducting. I've always had a love for conducting, I just wish someone would have shared this information with me earlier. Sharing is caring. Sharing is as easy as saying "oh, there's a conducting workshop here, or there's a conducting symposium there, I think you should look into it" or you know anything of that context. I'm sure I would have gotten an early start on things. Sharing information about my students' interests is a huge part of my mentorship. If I know that a student is interested in conducting or I know that a student is interested in composition or music education, whatever it may be, I'm going to offer some suggestions and provide them with some resources to get them started. I don't just sit on information, especially when I know my students will benefit from the experiences and knowledge.

Grice: Since we're talking about other students, what should young conductors be sure to always and never do?

Webb: Let's see here. Always and never do. I think conductors should always be respectful and kind for sure, and be good listeners. On the flip side of things, I could say vice versa to those things. I'm thinking about the negative connotation of what I just stated, but it's also important that conductors map out their plans, goals, and aspirations when imagining the big picture. It good to think about how they plan to embark upon that journey. Always transfer knowledge across disciplines. Transfer your knowledge across the curricular activities, practices, life, the things that we just learn in life in general outside of the classroom. Outside of music, you know what I notice often from teaching is that students get into spaces where they only see one class as it is and never transfer their knowledge, their skillsets from this class over to another class. For instance, as a conductor, I'm constantly transferring my knowledge of aural skills, music history, music theory, teaching, pedagogy, administration, and so many other things over into what I do as a conductor. I'm not just looking at conducting in tunnel vision. I'm looking at the tree with different branches coming from everywhere. A lot of times students get stuck with saying okay,

I'm in music theory class, this is what I'm focused on. Okay, next I'm going to conducting. I'm only focused on this, but they have to start to transfer the knowledge more. Transferring knowledge is a big one that conductors should do more of and internalizing about themselves. Internalize more about yourself, your thoughts, your personal biases, and figure out why you may feel a certain way about something and think back to your experiences, your upbringing and how what you do affects your views about others and how you may treat others. Sometimes biases get in the way, and if people don't get to the root of why they have that bias, then it starts to live on the subconscious level. We know that people really don't know what's going on or they are not fully aware of the things that live on the subconscious level. You should want to be aware of your biases and know why you have them so that you can work through them. If you are not aware that your biases lives on the subconscious level, then you're not really taking care of yourself, and you're not fully aware of your surroundings; that can be very dangerous territory.

Grice: Okay great, what advice would you have for women entering the field of collegiate conducting?

Webb: Be confident in who you are, what you do, and what you have to bring to the profession. I would also say that conducting is hard and it's a lifelong skill. You're not going to be the best conductor ever the next day you wake up. It's a journey and you're constantly learning. You're constantly developing your skills. You're constantly figuring out who you are, and I think it's important to be vulnerable. Be yourself, be your vulnerable self and you must be okay with that to lead many people in this capacity, so that you can truly put your most genuine self and work out into the world while leading others along the way.

Grice: What advice or changes would you have for the field of conducting in general?

Webb: I think that people should be more honest. I'm talking about professors, peers, and colleagues. I think people just need to be more open and honest. There are some people that are naturally gifted and talented. In the field of conducting, there are some people that have to work harder than others, but they may have the potential, and then there are some who just don't have it and I feel like this profession is growing really fast- everywhere we look someone is graduating with a conducting degree. I don't think there are enough jobs for everyone who aspires to teach on the collegiate level, but certainly there are a plethora of jobs on the K-12 level. People have to obtain this degree for the right reasons and have the skillset to continue learning and leading others. There's a calling for everyone and you have to be okay with knowing that you have it or you do not. Conducting may not be your calling, no matter how bad you may want it to be. Everyone who aspire to be a conductor should think about their purpose and why.

Grice: Did you ever teach in the public schools, which you already said you did in middle and high school? But, what grade levels and number of years? Also, how valuable do you think public school teaching experience is for the collegiate conductor?

Webb: I taught on the high school level for two years as an assistant band director and three years as a director of band in Richmond, VA. Then I did another two years for high school in

Washington DC, so seven years total for high school. I also taught middle school for two years while at the same school in Washington DC; it was a middle and high charter school campus.

Grice: Okay, and then how important do you think that is for somebody to have public school teaching to teach at the collegiate level?

Webb: Oh gosh, it's crucial. Let's put it that way. It is so important to teach at the public school level and not just public school, but any type of school on the K-12 level. In general, you're going to learn so many different skills, especially if you're a band director or music teacher. You're not just the conductor, you're the leader. You're the teacher, the administrator, the person who sets up sound equipment for everyone else in the school. You're doing all the things and you're usually more visible than anybody else in the school. Therefore, it's extremely important because you will become a role model and mentor to students. Students will look up to you. Students are always watching, so you have to figure out if what you're presenting is good and effective. Or if it's not good. If what you present is not effective for your students, then you must make some changes. Students will grow older and some may aspire to go into the same field. It's a circle of life. In this profession, many of us do what we do because we were influenced or inspired by our music teachers. We saw our music teachers doing the thing, or maybe we had other experiences at an honor band, All-State, All-District, or some big festival. We saw another conductor who possibly looked like us, or maybe not. However, they were still leading in the same capacity. You never know what about other's experience, so it's extremely important to be the best you as possible.

Grice: How do you think men perceive women in the field of collegiate wind conducting over the years? Do you think the 'Good Ol' Boys' club exists? How do we as women counter that?

Webb: Well, let's start with the 'Good Ol' Boys' club first, yes I do believe the 'Good Ol' Boys' club still exists, and again, it's another circle of life. This profession has been dominated by men for so long that the cycle continues because little boys and young men see people who look like them doing what they may aspire to do. It's hard to say if the 'Good Ol' Boys' club would ever go away; it's so saturated. I'm hopeful that some of the 'Good Ol' Boys' will let some of the 'Good Ol' Girls' in, who knows. Representation matters.

Grice: I like that.

Webb: Who knows, but how do I think men perceive women in the field? To be honest I have no clue whatsoever. I really don't know. I don't think that there are a lot of men who upset or mad that there are women in the field of collegiate wind conducting. However, I don't think that all men are jumping up and down about this either. It's like a trend; it goes in and out of style. I can't really speak about how many men perceive women. I don't know. I just know that as a woman myself, I just try to put my best foot forward and I try not to exclude myself from the 'Good Ol' Boys' club or from men. I'm going to put myself in their same space. I'm sure that some will be uncomfortable and some will be welcoming and respectful. I think women have to come out the gate swinging. Women have to get out there, be confident, and own who they are. You must own your identity. You must own your self-worth. If you can't own those things, then you cannot insert yourself in a male dominated space because you're already going to feel out of

place. Hence, when you have the confidence and you know who you are, and you own who you are, then it doesn't matter what space you step into, you're going to be fine and the men will view you for who you are.

Grice: Great advice. Do you think more women are applying for collegiate wind band conducting positions and are we succeeding in bridging the gap in male to female conducting positions at the collegiate level?

Webb: I do believe more women are applying for collegiate wind band conducting positions. Absolutely, we are seeing some numbers bump up now with the positions that have just become open. And hey, I'm at UT Austin, so change is happening. It's pretty awesome. I can't say that it's lightning fast, but it's happening. With bridging the gap, we're not there yet, absolutely not. I just finished up a study with some colleagues. We studied band directors at National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division 1 (DI), Division 2 (DII), Division 3 (DIII) institutions that were also National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) accredited. We observed the rank, gender, and title of collegiate band directors. We found that only 9% of college band directors are female.

Grice: Do you feel that you have ever had to mask your femininity in interviews, dress, language, or on the podium to be respected as a conductor in a male dominated field? If yes, in what ways?

Webb: No. Not at all. I don't mask who I am. I am a black female and I own my identity and who I am. It is what it is and I don't want to change it, and I can't change it, so I don't mask it. I always wear a dress because I think it's cool. I like dresses. I like that there are different varieties of them. I would never attempt to dress like a male on the podium. That's just not my style, but I'm not knocking whoever may want to dress like that. I just like being me and that's all I can be.

Grice: Describe your method of score study, rehearsal techniques, and concert programming. Does your programming include female composers? I know you do include females in your programming so any advice on how to go about doing that and including not only female but minority composers.

Webb: My method of score study would be to of course do the historical background. A search on the composer of that time of the context of the piece. I'm a big visionary, so if there's ever an opportunity for me to visualize the context or to grab footage, videos, newspapers, whatever it may be that will help me with the context of the piece, I'm going to dig and find it because those are things that I use in my rehearsals with my students. Again, sharing is caring, so whatever I'm learning, they're learning too whether they want to learn it or not. They're learning it because they have to play the piece and it's important for everyone to be on the same page when they're going to do that. You have to know what you're playing while you're playing it. All of those things become important and even with your conception of the piece or the context or your emotions, your feelings about those things. So that's a big one for me. Then of course getting into the piece. Looking at the orchestration of the piece, I'm a big orchestration person. I love orchestration even though it's not something that I pursued, I still love it. Orchestration is a big thing for me, looking at the voicing of the timbres (the colors), contour of the lines, viewing,

singing and clapping through rhythms is also huge. I think it's because I'm a clarinetist. I've been so used to looking at all the black notes on my music. Rhythm is one of those things that I really dig into, and of course analyzing the piece. The analytical process of analyzing the score. I think about how I'm going to teach certain rhythms, concepts, phrasing, or whatever it may be in the music. I'm thinking about a way to address my learners including my visual learners, auditory, and kinesthetic learners. I'm thinking about all of those ways that I could present this material or this section, or these two measures or whatever it may be that I need to focus on for all those types of learners. Again, I'm a big visual person, but everyone does not learn that way, so it's important for me to reach everyone and to stretch myself as a teacher and leader, so that's a big part of my rehearsal technique. I'm a planner, I'm very organized for rehearsals. I have notes on what we're doing for the day. I also let everyone else know what we're doing. It's not a secret and I don't know why some people make that a secret. No, I want you to know what you're doing when you come into practice, what we're working on, what the goal is for today. How can we achieve this? These are the things that we are nailing today and if something doesn't get done on this list then we'll table it until the next day. I'm really big on planning for rehearsal and I'm big on recording and videotaping rehearsals, and going back and sitting down to listen to those rehearsals afterwards to provide feedback and detailed notes about what I hear, what I don't hear, what I would like to hear differently. Things like that and then getting students feedback as well. They also complete feedback on the recordings. I think that's extremely important, because this is not a me or I type of thing. You know it's a 'we' thing, so we're all in this together. As far as concert programming, again, I'm a visionary and I'm very connected to the things going on in the world. I like to think about programming in a way that goes along with what's happening in the world. What's happening around us? Thinking about the students and what would they would like to play. Is there a piece that the students are burning to play that they have never played? I think about many things, works of merit, about who I could scope out- whose music hasn't really been performed. Of course, programming music by female and BIPOC composers, and pieces that make myself and the students feel good. I don't believe in playing pieces just to play them or just to say that I conducted them because that makes me feel empty and I can't conduct and be vulnerable in such an empty space; that is not artistry. As a conductor, you are a big part of the inspiration and the influence for what's going to take place in rehearsals and at the concert. To inspire and empower others, conductors must lead in that way.

Grice: What areas of collaboration have you used in your programs? This can be with other arts or dance.

Webb: I could speak briefly about this as I'm fresh into the assistant professor role of conducting at UT Austin, so I haven't really dug deep into this area yet. But I can say that I have invited history professors to speak about the historical time/background of pieces. I don't want all information to just come from me because there are professionals who teach on various subjects. There are other experts in these areas and I don't mind them sharing what they know. Therefore, I bring in individuals who are experts in those areas, who would love the opportunity to talk to and present to the students. I think it's good for them to see other people in front of them and not just me or the conductor all the time. The collaboration process presents opportunities for me to build relationships and network. I love to work with composers all the way through the process from the beginning to the end of a piece if and when possible because I want to make sure that we (the musicians and myself) are giving the best representation of their work along with our

interpretation and thoughts. Sometimes I find that composers do not really have an idea or think about every single detail during the composition process. Some of them compose a certain way because it feels and sounds good to them. Some are very open-minded about how conductors will perceive and interpret their work. I think that's awesome.

Grice: What was your 'aha' moment as a conductor and how did that shift your journey?

Webb: I think for me an 'aha' moment as a conductor has been being able to get in front of groups that are not my own. When I was a student in undergraduate and graduate school, I was able to get in front of the top ensembles and conduct because I was confident in myself and had high expectations for everyone, including myself, and I still do. Having that mindset fuels my fire. Again, to lead you must have the capacity to do so while inspiring and empowering others along the way. If I can lead groups of musicians who are not my own but treat them as such, that's a wholesome and rewarding feeling.

Grice: Do you have any rituals that you do before concerts? Do you have any routines or activities to help keep your body and mind at its highest?

Webb: I like to stretch and work on my breathing to channel my energy. I also pray. Additionally, I like to dance to loosen up my limbs.

Grice: How important is leadership as a quality for any conductor? Were there any leadership roles that you held as a young student in high school or college that you think helped your career pathway?

Webb: Well, I've been a leader all throughout my Girl Scout journey, band, dance, in my family, and in many organizations. I've held various leadership roles, many in music. I always knew that I wanted to lead in some capacity. I just wasn't really certain about what that would be when I was younger, but leading is so extremely important for conductors. It's a skill that not everyone possesses; it's one of those skills that I feel many are born with. However, it can be a learned skill. Natural born leaders have an innate ability to lead, while some people do not have that ability. It just means that those individuals might have to put in more work. Also, some people are just not meant to lead, and they have to be okay with that. That's another part about being honest that I spoke about earlier. People have to be honest in this profession. If you know that you have a student or a colleague or someone who is just not the best for leading a project or whatever it may be, I feel that it's your duty to let them know in the most respectful and genuine way as possible and encourage a healthy discussion with solutions.

Grice: What advice do you have for young conductors on balancing work and life outside of work?

Webb: I would say to be organized. Try to get organized, find a schedule, and really build a plan out. A schedule of what you do for work, what you want to do in your regular life, and for conducting things. Sometimes people are just going and going and going like the Energizer Bunny, and just can't remember everything. Nor do they have the energy to give to everything. You can't burn yourself out, so I would definitely say get more organized and be a better

planner. In that way, if something doesn't work out, you can always go back to your plan and move it to another day, or move it to another time in the day without completely neglecting it.

Grice: What experiences/organizations shaped your career? (military, non-musical jobs, travel), and are any of them specifically female-oriented?

Webb: I would say Tau Beta Sigma. In my undergraduate school years there were a lot of things that I did, a lot of activities. Some of those were leadership roles as well. I was involved in a lot of activities, and it allowed me to be visible and to become a more fluid individual. Visibility, being present in the profession is so impactful to me.

Grice: Do you have any thoughts or comments to add that were not addressed in any of the previous questions?

Webb: Well, that's hard to say, I know we covered a lot.

Grice: I think the only thing left that I would like to talk about is when reading your bio I was interested that it said you were a writer on topics of bias, diversity, equity and inclusion. So I wanted to talk a little bit about that specifically, and then also the group that you co-founded. If you could just talk a little bit about the I See You: Affirming Representation and Music. I found both of those very fascinating, so could you just touch on both of those a little.

Webb: I present often about diversity, equity, inclusion, and access. I presented “Let's Go There, Courageous Conversations about Race in Music Education” for the Virginia Music Educators Association about two months ago. We facilitated professional development for the educators. Other presentations outline culturally responsive pedagogy and building relationships. These are the initiatives that I outline in my bio, along with my article “Empowering Female Conductors.” Even though this particular article is focused on women in music, it's really for anybody as long as they transfer their knowledge and the content from the article to fit their situation. I spoke about knowledge transfer earlier and I think it's important that when anyone reads any type of article, whether if it's about females or not, that they take whatever they know and read, and transfer the content so that it's beneficial for them. The “Empowering Female Conductors” article will be published in the January issue of the Teaching Music magazine through NAFME. Much of what I write can be transferred to anybody. The content could be transferred to males or it could be transferred to students with disabilities. It could also be transferred to other intersectionalities. Earlier, I discussed that some people get in their own way and they're in viewing situations through tunnel vision. When I wrote this article about female conductors, I want teachers to think about how they can apply those suggestions and strategies to anyone in their class but especially females and young women who aspire to conduct. I have another article coming out soon; it will also be published in the Teaching Music magazine. The title of the article is “Encouraging Minoritized Communities to Pursue Graduate Music Degrees.” I discuss the things that prospective students should be working on, such as contacting professors that they want to study with or contacting the School or Department of Music. I discuss the dual application process for music auditioning, and how prospective students must apply for both the institution and the music program. I highlight financial aid, scholarships, grants, fellowships, and assistantships, many things that some people are clueless about. I enjoy sharing this information

because I've gone through the process a few times for graduate school and I know there will be more people that come after me, so I'm trying to help the masses get through this process. Whenever I write an article, it will be focused on women in music, minoritized populations, or anything that I think is beneficial to share. I want to help people who aspire to be part of this profession by sharing what I know.

Grice: Okay, and then a little bit about co-founding I See You: Affirming Representation of Music.

Webb: I co-founded this organization with a good friend of mine in music. His name is Dr. William Lake Jr. He is the Associate Director of Bands at SUNY Potsdam in New York and I met him at my very first conducting workshop. This was at UNCG and I was the only black female participating, but get this, I've been the only black female at eleven out of twelve conducting symposiums that I have attended since 2013. I'm out here by myself being visible, just pounding my way through, sitting in these uncomfortable spaces and places just so that I can get to the end goal of what I've always dreamed of doing. It was William's first year of the DMA conducting program and he came over to me before the start of the UNCG concert and introduced himself. He was very thoughtful and welcoming. He said "I see that you're sitting by yourself and I just wanted to say hello and let you know that I see you." He said, thank you for coming. I get emotional just thinking about it. It's powerful when people 'see you'. It's a different experience, especially when you're the only person who identifies as you in that particular space. It takes a lot to put yourself out there. You have to get comfortable with being uncomfortable in many spaces in order to grow and to move forward, which I have, but when I reflect on those spaces and places, I become overwhelmed with emotions because many do not know what it feels like to not belong or to be the 'only one'.

Grice: I like the title of this organization that you founded. Is that what he said to you?

Webb: Yes, and it's something that we thought about down the road. We always discussed the vision about starting an organization to help minoritized students in music. We decided on 'I See You' because it was something that William said to me when he introduced himself and we want others to know that we 'see them' as well. He noticed me at my very first conducting clinic when many others chose not to see me. His kindness and gesture was very profound.

Grice: What's the goal of the organization?

Webb: The goal of the organization is to provide mentorship and networking opportunities for BIPOC students within the music field. We want them to know that we see them and that we know they see us. We are in the profession and are ready and willing to help. I'm at UT Austin and he's at SUNY Potsdam. We're both in great positions at awesome institutions. It's powerful when students are affirmed and reflected because they see someone who looks like them doing what they aspire to do. I didn't see black female band directors or conductors growing up. I only saw males and my applied clarinet professor. I've never had a female wind band conductor in front of me doing what I aspired to do, not even as a guest conductor.

Grice: Not at All-State, not at any honor bands at all, or any other performances, until this date, up until now?

Webb: Yeah, I think so. That says a lot, doesn't it?

Grice: Does this organization like Women Rising to the Podium, have a Facebook page where bipoc students or professors can go on and ask questions and ask for advice and stuff like that?

Webb: They can ask questions through messenger, but we provide many services to students. During our very first session I See You: Aspiring to be a Music Major we highlighted information about the dual application process for high school students. That's our biggest population, so we are focused on our high schoolers because we feel that oftentimes high schoolers don't know the information that they need to know until they're a senior or maybe a junior, but that's a little too late. It's an issue everywhere. I think more people have to get to the freshmen and the sophomores in high schools, and if they're not really certain about what exactly they want to do, at least provide them the opportunity, a conversation or something and don't just not include them because they have more years before they graduate. They should know about the process if they want to. They should have that opportunity to say yes or no or I'm not ready yet. We are working really hard with to target the high school population because we want to get them to be ahead. For these very reasons we present much information for students that want to pursue a music career. They deserve to learn this information. Unfortunately, some of them just don't get the opportunity or a head start until it's too late.

Grice: If high school students want to learn and be a part of this, how do they seek that out?

Webb: They can follow our Facebook page @ISeeYouRep and look out because whatever we do, we promote through our page and we also promote through colleagues and email. I send emails out to all different types of music education coordinators and applied faculty, and so does William. It's our network which becomes bigger and bigger over time. We just need people to share the content. Another session that we did was the I See You: Going to School. These are students that are already in a music program somewhere and they speak about their experiences. We just asked them candid questions about their background, what they aspire to do in the profession, what their previous teachers taught them, what kind of advice do they have for teachers that also have BIPOC students? I feel like information like that is so valuable because sometimes people just assume, but when you hear it from those students' mouths, then you know it's real. This is their life; it's what they experience and what they want you to know. They want their teachers to be better skilled with working with students who identify like them- learning about their personal journey. There is a recording up on our Facebook page for anybody to view. We had a group of eight students with various disciplines in music education, composition, music media, and performance. We'll do a graduate session as well with much of the same material, but with graduate students. We will also do some another session with BIPOC professors in higher education. We want to talk to them about their experiences and upbringing

in the music profession. Our content is for BIPOC students of all levels but it's also a resource for everyone to learn how to champion a more equitable music environment.¹⁰²

Grice: Thank you so much for your time today.

¹⁰² LaToya Webb, personal interview (Google Meet: 30 June, 2021).

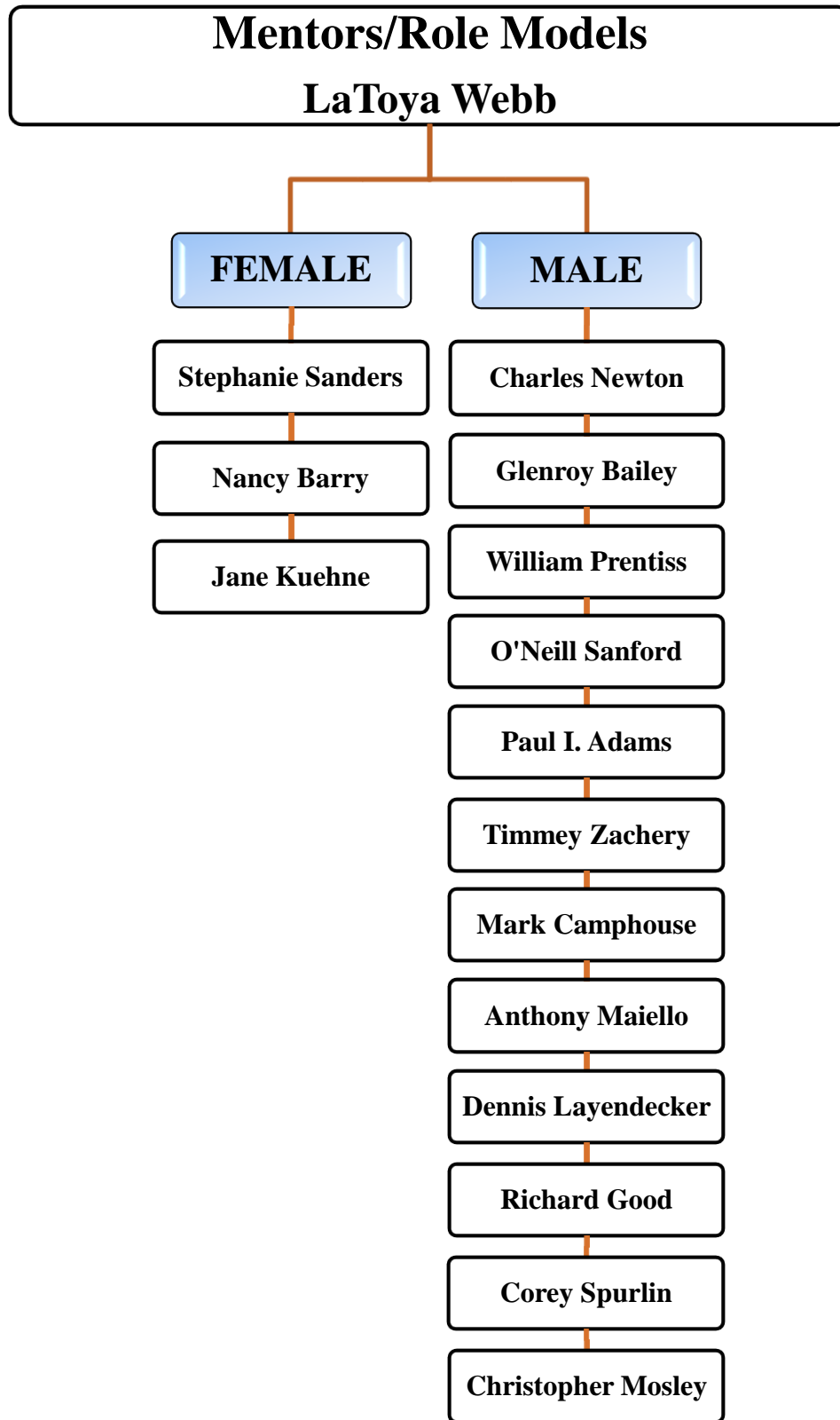


Figure 9. Mentors/Role Models of LaToya Webb.

LaToya Webb Profile

Current Collegiate Position: Assistant Professor of Practice in Conducting & Assistant Director of Bands at The University of Texas at Austin

Previous Collegiate Positions:

Instructor at Grambling State University

Instructor at Auburn University

Degrees:

BM, Norfolk State University

Interdisciplinary Studies (music and education concentrations)

MM, Norfolk State University

Music Education

MM, George Mason University

Instrumental Conducting

PhD, Auburn University

Instrumental Music Education

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Conductor Results Summary

This chapter delves into the analysis of the main purpose of this study, which is investigating the past and present status of women wind band conductors in higher education. Although all the conductors were unique, they all had some similarities. They all valued mentors and role models, were goal oriented, were highly educated, had strong personalities and philosophies, had empathy, and were willing to sacrifice. They placed different emphasis on various areas such as role models and mentors and differences in the degree they changed in certain areas that were important to them.

They were unique in that all of their stories were different and interesting. Their humor was evident in the stories they shared. They were all highly motivated but with different and unique paths. The conductors came from various parts of the country, had varying amounts of experience, and all had experienced challenges they had to overcome. There were discussions on discrimination and the various ways discrimination had impacted them or changed them. They discussed specifics on how they overcame the challenges they faced such as change in dress, language, presence, and attitudes.

To obtain a perspective on some of the ideas presented in this inquiry, Ray Cramer was asked questions by the researcher to give some of his ideas on the music profession and on his perceptions of the status of women in music. His comments included positive experiences he had encountered and in expressing encouragement for women in the future. Upon interviewing Ray

Cramer, he spoke about starting teaching in the early 1960s. He explained there were not a lot of female band directors he knew of when he started teaching. However, Cramer mentioned he followed two women band directors' careers at the start of his career. The first was Patricia Ann Frazier at Harlan High School in Iowa. Cramer said Patricia was well-respected by the students and had a fine band. The second was Barbara Rankin at Parma Senior High School just outside of Cleveland, Ohio. She had taken the Parma Senior High School band to perform at The Midwest Clinic in 1966. Cramer stated,

I considered Barbara to be one of the great forerunners of the female band directors in our profession. Barbara had built a fantastic program over the course of 14 years. Not only had they performed at the Midwest Clinic, but also at the Mideast Band Clinic when it existed. They were also the Ohio Band of the Year for 12 straight years. Out of the 180 band members in the program when I took over, 75% of those students studied privately with professional musicians in the Cleveland area including members of the Cleveland Orchestra. This was all accomplished by Barbara Rankin. I felt nothing but a deep respect for both Patricia and Barbara as music educators, conductors and musicians. The number of opportunities for female directors during that era in the late 50's, early 60's were more limited because there were fewer women in music education degree programs. That lack of numbers changed pretty quickly in the decade of the 70's.

When asked if Dr. Cramer knew of any college females teaching at the collegiate level when he joined the faculty at Indiana University, he stated there were a few females teaching in the profession at that time. He spoke of Paula Crider who was a tremendous success at both the high school level and at the University of Texas. He stated,

She was the leader in the state, and the nation. Paula eventually became the marching band director at the University of Texas and was perhaps the first director of a major marching band position. Another trailblazer in our profession was Linda Morehouse, who was hired as the Associate Director of Bands at LSU with Frank Wicks. One can't forget the founder of the Women Band Directors National Association [now known as WBDI], Gladys Wright. Gladys has had a tremendous impact in the growth and the female voice in our profession. I think that she's done a marvelous job. She's been a great ambassador and inspiration.

In becoming more aware of women in the conducting field, Dr. Cramer stated,

I noticed the change during the first 12 years at Indiana when I was the Associate Director of Bands and was the marching band director. During these years I saw a huge growth in the number of women becoming high school and middle school directors. They were doing a great job. Outstanding programs began to blossom around the country. When I became the Director of Bands, the Department of Bands saw an increase in the number of women interviewing for graduate assistantships. Our wind conducting program started in 1991. Over the next few years we were able to include women in our graduate program. As we moved further into the 90's more universities began to develop wind conducting programs which resulted in more women applying for conducting positions. From that point on you began to see an increase in the number of women securing positions at the university level.¹⁰³

Conclusions

Although women have been marginalized in the field of wind conducting in higher education, the numbers of women in the field have been going in an upward trajectory. The successful women interviewees in this study provided guidance and optimism to those women aspiring to enter the field. Figure 10 shows the percentages of the upward trajectory in the numbers of women compared to men in wind band conducting positions in higher education.

When looking at the interviewees' mentor/role models, no single person had more female mentor/role models than men mentor/role models. Even though all of the women interviewed said they would have benefitted from having a woman, or more women, mentors/role models, this was not available in their lives due to the limited number of women in the field of wind band conductors in higher education. The total number of female mentor/role models that were listed for all of the interviewees was sixteen. The total number of male mentor/role models from the combined interviewees was forty-one. The two largest ratios of mentors/role models in the interviewees results were 2:11 and 3:12 with females versus males. The interesting fact about these two ratios was they were derived from the results of the most experienced and youngest conductor. It was shocking that some of the interviewees had never seen a female conductor until

¹⁰³ Ray Cramer, personal interview (Google Meet: 5 July, 2021).

later in college, even in honor bands. The number of mentor/role models mentioned in the interviews ranged greatly between two total to fifteen total.

All eight of the interviewees had the themes of positive experiences and negative experiences that made their career paths more difficult. The positive experiences among the eight interviewees included the support of families, the great role models/mentors they had, people “taking a chance” on the interviewee, and being a lifelong learner. Additional positive experiences identified included travel, exciting opportunities, valuing their sensitivity, recognizing a “sixth sense,” being positive, and having great knowledge of the skills required. Receiving respect and giving respect were two important common themes. Receiving praise and respect from students and peers, giving respect to their students and role models/mentors, and gaining respect from men were common themes. Setting examples for girls and women, having a strong sense of self, having a hard work ethic, and a conviction that they were good enough to play with the ‘Good ‘Ol’ Boys’ were important ideals for the interviewees. Their willingness to foster equity improvement and their love and dedication to their profession, their striving for a more equitable playing field, including a desire to hear from other women in the field, were important components of their success. Having the strength and help of women music associations and social media inspired them to be mentors and inspirations to future women and to all students.

Gender Inequality
Percentages of Music Wind Conducting Positions
An Historical Perspective

FEMALE	MALE	Footnote
2% Early 70's	98% Early 70's	104
1.25% 1979-1980	>98% 1979-1980	105
>5% 1976-2000	<95% 1976-2000	106
3.81% 1984-1986	>96% 1984-1986	107
5.63% 1994-1995	>94% 1994-1995	108
6.5% 1995-1996	>90% 1995-1996	109
<10% 2005	>90% 2005	110
10.13% 2009	>88% 2009	111
6%-10% 1992-2009	>85% 1992-2009	112
5.2% 1993-1994 <i>Category "Bands"</i> <i>(Category Conducting 8.1%)</i>	95% 1993-1994 <i>Category "Bands"</i> <i>(Category Conducting 91.9%)</i>	113
10% 2016 <i>Midwest Clinic Panel</i>	90% 2016 <i>Midwest Clinic Panel</i>	114

Figure 10. Gender Inequality.

¹⁰⁴ Jackson, *The Relationship Between the Imbalance*, 2.

¹⁰⁵ Feather, *Women Band Directors in Higher Education*, 74.

¹⁰⁶ Gould, "Cultural Contexts of Exclusion," 1.

¹⁰⁷ McElroy, *The Status of Women Orchestra and Band Conductors*, 134.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 134.

¹⁰⁹ Jackson, *The Relationship Between the Imbalance*, 15.

¹¹⁰ Gould, "Nomadic Turns," 147.

¹¹¹ Hartley and Sheldon, "What Color Is Your Baton, Girl?," 40.

¹¹² Foley, *Patriarchal Killjoys*, 18.

¹¹³ Payne, "The Gender Gap," 98.

¹¹⁴ Bushman and others, "The Woman as Band Director," 1.

The challenging and negative experiences among the eight interviewees included harassment, jokes, and having to change their appearance to obtain a more masculine persona (see Table 1). They often felt the need to be better and stronger than male candidates and to continually prove themselves. They felt the need to be one-hundred percent sure that they were ready for a job in order to compete with the ‘Good ‘Ol’ Boy’ stereotype. They observed attitudes that women should stay with younger students while men were with older students. They felt they were more apt to not be selected as guest conductor or clinician or to have their ensembles selected to perform. Time constraints, lack of time for family, long hours, lack of balance in life, needing to move locations to get ahead were common themes. They also experienced bullies, negative perceptions, and racial as well as gender discrimination. The interviewees felt that people were not willing to change to accommodate women, and were not being understood by their male counterparts, which led to their isolation.

Table 1. Historical Chart of Challenges and Positives Found in Research

Challenges	Positives
‘Good ‘Ol’ Boy’ Club	Women organizations
Negative attitudes	Cultural/law changes
Rank/salaries/prestigious positions	More women and minorities in field in prestigious positions
Moving	Need to attend institutions that are excellent and attain excellence
Workload	Strong personality/confidence
Attire	More female mentors are becoming available
Need to be more competent	
Having and taking care of a family	
Low numbers of female mentors/role models	
Need more female mentors/role models	

Another theme in the study that emerged among all eight interviewees was the description on how they began the musical part of their lives. Almost all of the eight interviewees had a strong family support system, many had family members that played instruments, and most started on piano. A couple of the interviewees did not have early strong family support and discovered music in a school setting. One history was unusual in that while she was in a very musical family, her father refused to pay her way to higher education if she majored in music. She ended up being in music as accounting was not her passion.

Recommendations for Further Study

Music education has had problems in distributing information about contributions by women in the field of music due to a history of excluding, or not acknowledging, women in the music making world. Lucy Green examined the problem of this unequal amount of material presented, and the types of music examples presented, that diminished women's roles and accomplishments in music. This sent a message that women were not as important as men in our field or in certain ensemble or instrumental settings. Green stated, "Until recently, the field of music education has ignored gender. Countless books and articles *about* music education, syllabuses and curriculum materials for use *in* music education, have been produced as though women have played barely a part in the history of music other than as the wives, mistresses, mothers or sisters of famous male musicians."¹¹⁵ Therefore, until this century, there was little progress for women equity in the more prestigious music positions. Women were more in a "sub" category or support category when it applied to good positions in the music arena. Green gave practical advice of how to present a more equitable representation in a music education

¹¹⁵ Lucy Green, *Music, Gender, Education* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 230.

curriculum where “materials could give a factually balanced picture of the achievements of both men and women throughout the history of music up to the present day, showing that women musicians have always been active, although with restrictions.”¹¹⁶

The assessment of music and texts of music were discussed by Green. Music textbooks have been culpable in having questions or pictures that lead more to a gender specific identity and type of response. This requires further research to show progress as well as how we can improve in providing questions in assessment tools and examples in texts, whether written or pictorial. From the history reported about problems encountered by women in Lucy Green’s research to the interviewees’ statements provided in Chapter IV, there have been challenges and obstacles for women in the field.

Music textbooks were also discussed by Julia Eklund Koza, who examined the illustrations and examples in music textbooks to determine if there was a bias toward males or females. She found the textbooks were heavily biased toward males and that males were not only represented more often in pictorial form and written form but certain activities were more often depicted in a male or female environment. For example, females were more often represented in a singing category while males were represented more often in an instrumental setting. Koza recommended that textbooks be more thoroughly examined by publishers and by the consumers to insure a more equitable gender distribution in content through words and illustrations.¹¹⁷

There have been skewed numbers between percentages in the men and women in the field of wind band conducting in higher education. Most showed advantage toward men even

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 233.

¹¹⁷ Julia Eklund Koza, “Picture This: Sex Equity in Textbook Illustrations.” *Music Educators Journal* 78/7 (March 1992), 28-33.

though women were approximately fifty percent of those in music education. What is needed is more information about, and exposure to, successful women in the field and more information on how these women succeeded. More interviews, surveys, articles, films, social media, composing, and clinicians need to be available for women and men to overcome the stereotype that men are more suited to these roles. More research is needed on the extent of accomplishments from women conductors. This would include more interviews provided with more insights into women that have been successful, more commissioning of musical works, more clinicians, more speakers, and more events that herald women success stories in this field. Research that deals with the dissemination of news and strategies for the future of women in this field is needed. Research has been done on many of the trailblazers and the most notable women in the field. Further research needs to be done on young and more recent female wind conductors and on men's perceptions about how they view women in the wind conducting field. New data are needed on current percentages of women in wind conducting in two- to four-year higher education institutions. The encouraging outlook for women is enhanced by the wonderful role models available and ready to commit to helping the future for women in the wind band conducting field and the steadfastness women have shown in the past to move forward no matter what the challenges. The rewards are worthy of the efforts aspiring women make to achieve their goals and fulfill their passions.

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APPENDIX A
CONTACT LETTER

**SAMPLE CONTACT LETTER
PERMISSION TO INTERVIEW**

DATE

Name

Title

University

School Address

School City, State, Zip

Dear Name,

This letter formally invites you to participate in a study I am conducting as part of my doctoral degree in the School of Music at the University of Northern Colorado. Members of my committee include Russell Guyver (Director of Orchestras), Wesley Broadnax (Director of Bands), Jason Byrnes (Professor of Music, Tuba and Music Education), and Linda Black (Professor of Applied Psychology and Counselor Education).

I will be working closely with my committee co-chairs, Dr. Russell Guyver and Dr. Wesley Broadnax, to produce a dissertation that examines the gender issues faced by women university wind band conductors. The data I collect will examine and share a unique female point-of-view and serve as a catalyst for aspiring young women conductors throughout the United States.

Participation in this study will involve an interview of approximately one hour in length. You will be given questions in advance. You may answer as many of the questions as you wish (not all may be relevant to you). Interviews will be conducted at a mutually agreed-upon time and using a medium of your choosing by audio/video conferencing, phone, or email. Please look the questions over beforehand. Interviews will be audio/video recorded and transcribed. I will send you a copy of the transcript so you can confirm not only the accuracy of our conversation, but also add or clarify any points that you might want to elaborate upon further.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact me at 859-351-2987 (cell) or by email to gric1988@bears.unco.edu. While I hope you will participate fully, know that should you withdraw from this project, you may do so without penalty. If you withdraw please advise me in writing, so I may have time to make other arrangements.

I very much look forward to speaking with you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project.

Sincerely,

Jennifer L. Grice
Doctoral Student, Wind Conducting
University of Northern Colorado

APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT



Informed Consent Form for Participation in Research

Title of Research Study: *Prominent Women Wind Conductors in Higher Education: Trials, Triumphs, and Recommendations for Improving Gender Equity in the Field*

Researcher: Jennifer Grice, School of Music

email: gric1988@bears.unco.edu

Research Advisor: Russell Guyver

Phone Number: (970) 351-2278 email: russell.guyver@unco.edu

Procedures: We would like to ask you to participate in a research study. The study will examine the gender issues faced by women university wind band conductors. The data collected will examine and share a unique female point-of-view and serve as a catalyst for aspiring young women conductors throughout the United States. Participation in this study will involve an interview of approximately one hour in length. You will be given questions in advance. You may answer as many of the questions as you wish (not all may be relevant to you). Interviews will be conducted at a mutually agreed-upon time and using a medium of your choosing via audio/video conferencing, phone, or email. Please look the questions over beforehand. Interviews will be audio/video recorded and transcribed. A copy of the transcript will be sent to you to confirm not only the accuracy of our conversation, but also add or clarify any points that you might want to elaborate upon further. Excerpts from the interview may be included in this dissertation and/or future publications.

Questions: If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to contact Jennifer Grice at 859-351-2987 or gric1988@bears.unco.edu. If you have any concerns about your selection or treatment as a research participant, please contact Nicole Morse, Research Compliance Manager, University of Northern Colorado at nicole.morse@unco.edu or 970-351-1910.

Voluntary Participation: Please understand that your participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate in this study and if you begin participation you may still decide to stop and withdraw at any time. Your decision will be respected and will not result in loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Please take all the time you need to read through this document and decide whether you would like to participate in this research study.

If you decide to participate, your completion of the research procedures indicates your consent. Please keep this form for your records.

APPENDIX C
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL



Date: 02/19/2021
 Principal Investigator: Jennifer Grice
 Committee Action: **IRB EXEMPT DETERMINATION – New Protocol**
 Action Date: 02/19/2021
 Protocol Number: [2102021683](#)
 Protocol Title: Prominent Women Wind Conductors in Higher Education: Trials, Triumphs, and Recommendations for Improving Gender Equity in the Field
 Expiration Date:

The University of Northern Colorado Institutional Review Board has reviewed your protocol and determined your project to be exempt under 45 CFR 46.104(d)(702) for research involving

Category 2 (2018): EDUCATIONAL TESTS, SURVEYS, INTERVIEWS, OR OBSERVATIONS OF PUBLIC BEHAVIOR. Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met: (i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; (ii) Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or (iii) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by 45 CFR 46.111(a)(7).

You may begin conducting your research as outlined in your protocol. Your study does not require further review from the IRB, unless changes need to be made to your approved protocol.

As the Principal Investigator (PI), you are still responsible for contacting the UNC IRB office if and when:



- You wish to deviate from the described protocol and would like to formally submit a modification request. Prior IRB approval must be obtained before any changes can be implemented (except to eliminate an immediate hazard to research participants).
- You make changes to the research personnel working on this study (add or drop research staff on this protocol).
- At the end of the study or before you leave The University of Northern Colorado and are no longer a student or employee, to request your protocol be closed. *You cannot continue to reference UNC on any documents (including the informed consent form) or conduct the study under the auspices of UNC if you are no longer a student/employee of this university.
- You have received or have been made aware of any complaints, problems, or adverse events that are related or possibly related to participation in the research.

If you have any questions, please contact the Research Compliance Manager, Nicole Morse, at 970-351-1910 or via e-mail at nicole.morse@unco.edu. Additional information concerning the requirements for the protection of human subjects may be found at the Office of Human Research Protection website - <http://hhs.gov/ohrp/> and <https://www.unco.edu/research/research-integrity-and-compliance/institutional-review-board/>.

Sincerely,

Nicole Morse
Research Compliance Manager

University of Northern Colorado: FWA00000784

APPENDIX D

BROAD INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

SAMPLE BROAD INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Could you please begin by telling me your musical journey starting out on why you chose to play an instrument, what your public school experiences were like as a student, college experiences, when you knew you wanted to be a conductor, and then into your professional career?
 2. Who are your mentors/role models, both past and present, and were any of them women?
 3. Have you faced any gender inequality since you began your conducting career?
 4. What was your 'Aha' moment as a conductor and how did that shift your journey?
 5. What are some of your greatest triumphs?
 6. What were some of your tribulations? What kind of constraints and/or obstacles have you had to overcome and how did you deal with them? What sacrifices have you made to achieve your successes?
 7. What would you change if anything if you could go back? What would you tell the beginner conducting you?
 8. As a minority in the field, what advice do you have for future female conductors?
- Do you have any thoughts or comments to add that were not addressed in the previous questions?

APPENDIX E
SPECIFIC INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

To Be Selected From The Following:

Role Models/Mentors

1. Who are your mentors/role models, both past and present, and were any of them women?
2. Do you have someone who served as your mentor? How did this person help you achieve your goals?
- * 3. Do you think your career path would have been different if you had a female mentor? In what ways do you serve as a mentor to your students and graduates?

Training

4. What is your educational background, and when did you know that you wanted to be a conductor?
- * 5. Did you ever teach in the public schools? If so, what grade levels and number of years? Also, how valuable do you think public school teaching experience is for the collegiate conductor?
6. What instrumental/vocal training do you think conducting students should have?

Equity

7. Have you faced any gender inequality since you began your conducting career?
8. What kind of constraints and/or obstacles have you had to overcome and how did you deal with them? What sacrifices have you made to achieve your successes?
- * 9. How do you think men perceive women in the field of collegiate wind conducting over the years. Do you think the 'Good Ol' Boys Club' exists? How do we as women counter that?
10. How can we help young women succeed in the wind conducting profession?
11. What can we do to attract more women and minorities to the field of conducting, and do they need to demonstrate higher competency in order to attain more prominent positions?
- * 12. Do you think more women are applying for collegiate wind band conducting positions and are we succeeding in bridging the gap in male to female conducting positions?
- * 13. Do you feel that you have ever had to mask your femininity in interviews, dress, language, or on the podium to be respected as a conductor in a male dominated field? If yes, in what ways?

14. What can be done in undergraduate music education to encourage and inspire young women to pursue higher degrees and collegiate wind conducting jobs?

15. For female wind conductors, is there a difference in building collegiate camaraderie with women compared to men?

16. When female college students tell you they aspire to have a university conducting job position, what advice do you give them?

Score Study/Rehearsal Techniques/Conducting

* 17. Describe your method of score study, rehearsal techniques, and concert programming. Does your programming include female composers?

* 18. What areas of collaboration have you used in your programs?

* 19. What was your ‘Aha’ moment as a conductor and how did that shift your journey?

20. What is your greatest achievement as a conductor?

21. Has your conducting style/technique changed over the years?

* 22. Do you have any rituals that you do before concerts? Do you have any routines or activities to help keep your body and mind at its highest?

Other

23. What are some of your greatest triumphs?

* 24. How important is leadership as a quality for any conductor? Were there any leadership roles that you held as a young student in high school or college that you think helped your career pathway?

* 25. What should young conductors be sure to always and never do?

* 26. What advice do you have for young conductors on balancing work and life outside of work?

* 27. Do female successes in other fields, such as the first minority woman Vice President of the United States (Kamala Harris) and the youngest US inauguration Youth Poet Laureate (Amanda Gorman), enhance a female’s ability to succeed in areas such as wind conducting? Do you think this will help women feel more comfortable applying for jobs that are in a male dominated field such as wind conducting?

* 28. What experiences/organizations shaped your career? (military, non-musical jobs, travel), and are any of them specifically female-oriented?

29. What would you change if anything if you could go back? What would you tell the beginner conducting you?

30. As a minority in the field, what advice do you have for future female conductors?

Do you have any thoughts or comments to add that were not addressed in the previous questions?

* Questions in the Sample Interview Questions that were usually asked in addition to the Broad Interview Questions.